REFUGE-MINISTRIES.COM

ABOUT US

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A letter from our pastor



Pastor Russ & Jennifer Cochran
Lead Pastor

Thank You for wanting to know more about Refuge Ministries. We are a multiple campus church that wants to be a part of your story. As a pastor with more than 30 years of experience, welcoming new members to our church family is one of my greatest privileges.

Here at Refuge, we are fortunate enough to form a growing and loving community. We would love for you to share in our mission to be a place of refuge where each person can find help changing their story by believing in Jesus, becoming a disciple, belonging to family, & building God's Kingdom.

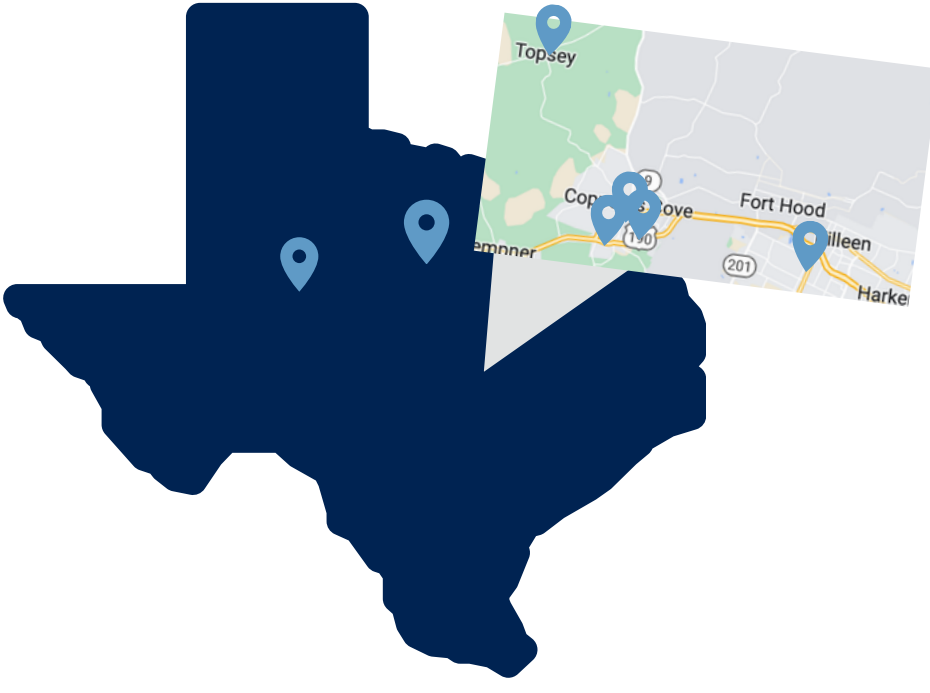
Our church is a place that you can turn to for refuge. It is my privilege to lead and feed the church spiritually. Our vision for accomplishing this is to see people find refuge in Jesus, Be renewed by the Spirit, & released by the Father.

I look forward to seeing how your story will help build our story here at Refuge and around the world.

In Christ, Pastor Russ

Our Locations

Abilene Campus	Abilene,Tx.
Casa Campus	Copperas Cove,Tx.
Cove Campus	Copperas Cove,Tx.
Downtown Campus	Copperas Cove,Tx.
Killeen Campus	Killeen,Tx.
Odessa Campus	Odessa,Tx.
Topsey Campus	Topsey,Tx.



OUR STORY



OUR HISTORY

Refuge-Ministries began as Hillside “Community” Church and met in a storefront in Cove Terrace Shopping Center. Wanting accountability, fellowship, and the doctrinal distinctness of Holiness, Hillside became affiliated with the Evangelical Methodist Church. On April 1, 1984, they became officially known as Hillside Evangelical Methodist Church. In September of 1985, Hillside Church held groundbreaking ceremonies for the new site of their future building on South FM 116 in Copperas Cove, Texas. In May 1986, construction began on a worship center, and in April 1987, the members of Hillside dedicated their new building to the Lord. Hillside started with a handful of charter members and has now grown to over 300 in attendance for worship services.



OUR NAME

On November 23rd, 2014, Hillside became Refuge-Ministries. We believe the name change was essential to better represent who we are, and our purpose is to be a place of Refuge, Renewal, and Release.

OUR PURPOSE

Refuge Ministries has built a culture to be a church of God's unconditional love, where lives are transformed and reconditioned for partnership with God in accomplishing His will in the world. The word church, or ecclesia in the original text, means "those who are called out." The church is not a place; it is a people whom God has called for a task.

The Biblical metaphor for a church of refuge is found in the story told in I Samuel 22:1,2. Soon to be, King David was hiding from King Saul in the Cave of Adullam. Saul was told that God had anointed David to be the next king, so feeling threatened, he pursued David to kill him. While David hid from Saul, 400 men came to join him. The men who joined him were family members, friends, and former soldiers of Saul.

The Bible says these men were distressed, in debt, and discontented. They were running from something and trying to find purpose, hope, and a reason to live. David welcomed them, loved them, and trained them. These same men who joined David later became known as David's Mighty Men, the greatest fighting force the world has ever known. This story can be seen as a metaphor for what the church of Jesus Christ is called to look like in our day. The church can be a place where the broken, hurting, and hopeless can find a reason to live.





A PLACE OF REFUGE FOR PEOPLE

David provided a refuge.
He welcomed all of these men. This reminds us of Jesus, who, rather than spending time with the religious folks of his day, spent time with tax collectors, prostitutes, and those whom the church never welcomed. A church of refuge needs to be a place where God's unconditional love is taught and modeled by all who attend. Everyone is welcome in a place of refuge, even if they are the ones the church has traditionally shunned.

A PLACE OF RENEWAL FOR PEOPLE

David inspired them to be renewed or transformed.
A church of refuge is a place where renewal and transformation is expected. We welcome anyone, but we don't apologize for holding one another spiritually accountable. Sin (which means to miss the mark) separates man from God. Any spiritual story that does not address sin's destructive power will not result in renewal & transformation. If we are real followers of Jesus, we are not to leave the "Cave" the same way we came in. We come into the presence of His unconditional love, not simply to bask but to be changed. Those men didn't spend time decorating the cave; it was only a place where their lives were to be changed. Our buildings are simply the "caves" where we gather to be changed for God's glory.

A PLACE OF RELEASE FOR PEOPLE

David inspired these men to boldly proclaim a new kingdom.
The church of today needs to demonstrate that there is a new King in town! His name is Jesus. By following Jesus, acting like him, and allowing our lives to be shaped by His Holy Spirit who lives within us, we can partner with God to accomplish His will in the world. When God does what He does, He does it through people. The people that He uses to help establish His reign are those who have found Him to be loving and trustworthy and whose lives His Spirit has transformed. Once we are renewed we are then released to do ministry.

Refuge Theology



We need to always be talking about REFUGE, RENEWAL, & RELEASE to keep us on track and to constantly keep us aware of why we exist.

The church may meet in a cathedral or a storefront, but wherever it meets, it is simply a cave where broken lives are to be transformed in order to partner with God

And remember every person who comes in should find refuge, renewal, and release.

(For more information on Refuge Theology see the book Refuge: Moving from Pain to Purpose by Jim Halbert)

Vision & Mission



VISION

Our vision is to see people
find refuge in Jesus,
be renewed by the Spirit,
& released by the Father.

MISSION

Our mission is to be a Place of Refuge
where each person can find help changing their story
by believing in Jesus, becoming a disciple,
belonging to family, & building God's Kingdom.

Our Faith

"Watch your life and your doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers." 1 Timothy 4:16

We believe in the one true and living God, the Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, and Ruler of all things. He is infinite, eternal, unchangeable, and is revealed to us as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We believe that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God..." (II Timothy 3:16)

We believe that salvation is the gift of God's grace. It cannot be gained or made more secure by good works, but is freely bestowed upon all that put their faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ at Calvary. (John 1:12; Acts 16:30-33; Romans 10:9-10; Ephesians 1:7)

According to the scripture, we believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins and that his shed blood redeems all who believe in Him. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ and in His ascension into heaven; He is our High Priest and Advocate. (John 1:1-3, 14; 3:1-7, 16; Hebrews 10:4-14; I John 2:2)

We believe that until the return of Christ, it is a Christian's duty and privilege to seek the fulfillment of Christ's great commission and to minister in His name to a needy world. We are to be instruments of Jesus Christ, as the Holy Spirit ministers redemption and reconciliation in the world. (Matthew 25:31-46; 28:18-20)

We believe that Satan is a real being, the author of sin, the reason for the fall of man, and is destined to the judgment of eternal punishment in the Lake of Fire. (Acts 5:3; II Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 20:10)

We believe a person truly born again has assurance in their relationship with God. We refer to three scriptures passages regarding such; (1) John 10:28-30, (2) Romans 8:1-14, and (3) I Thessalonians 4:16-17. We cannot be 'snatched' out of God's family, but we can choose to walk out on it. (James 5:19-20, II Peter 2:20-22, 2 John 1:8-9) We have the freedom (free will) to choose. Thus, we encourage you to walk carefully & cheerfully with the Lord, strive to serve Him, and not let yourself be focused on the "what if's" of your relationship with God. Those who have made a commitment to the Lord, are striving to do their best in serving Him, and have a heart "bent" on doing the right thing, have nothing to fear.





FAITH
OVER
FEAR




JWRS

REFLCE

GU
Hello Kitty

Our

AFFILIATION



In comparison with other denominations, the Evangelical Methodist Church is a young denomination. The roots of our denomination stretch back to the early Methodist movement of John Wesley. The Evangelical Methodist Church still holds to the historic form of religious expression, which flourished and bore fruit in 18th century England. Many Historians have credited this religious expression as having saved England from a violent and bloody civil war. Dr. James H. Nichols of Princeton Theological Seminary said, "...it was the most important ecclesiastical development in Protestantism since Puritanism."

In September 1725, John Wesley graduated from Oxford University and was ordained a priest in the Church of England. Trained in theology, Biblical languages, and the classics, he was still trying to find out who God really was and was attempting to save himself through good works.

Wesley went to America as a missionary and spent some time in Georgia preaching. In his journal he wrote, "I went to America to convert the Indians; but oh, who shall convert me?" Wesley returned to England and on May 24, 1738 in a church meeting on Aldersgate Street in London, he found the peace for which he had been longing. He wrote, "I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation, an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

Wesley began to preach and teach the doctrine of justification by faith. He began to challenge all of England to give their hearts, and lives to Christ and experience full salvation from sin. Wesley was an ordained priest in the Church of England and a teaching fellow at Oxford; thus the pulpits of the entire church were open to him! But soon church after church began to close to him under orders from the Bishops of England who opposed him. Wesley began to preach in the streets and fields, and the gospel message spread at a rapid pace. A revival had begun.

People who were converted were placed in nurturing classes to help them learn the basics of Christianity. These classes were called societies' and soon they became known as "Methodists" because of the methodical way Wesley had them organized. While Wesley received many requests from his followers to break from the Church of England, it was not until 1780, eleven years before his death that he began to train lay leaders. That decision and action was the beginning of "Methodism". In America, Methodism experienced varying degrees of success, although after original sin, denial of the necessity of 'conversion' to Christ, questions about the authority and validity of Scripture itself had adverse effects upon Methodism.

Within the Methodist Church there have been various attempts at renewal and reform. Sometimes those efforts led to church splits and the emergence of new denominations who attempted to recapture the revival spirit of early Methodism and Holiness.

On May 9, 1946, a small group of pastors and laymen met in Memphis, Tennessee. They were deeply troubled by the denial of a great many of the foundational doctrines of the church, such as the Virgin Birth of Christ, the deity of Christ, the inspiration of the Scriptures, the miracles recorded in the Bible, the denial of the necessity of the "new birth," and the doctrine of sanctification. After long discussions and longer hours in prayer, these pastors and laymen felt led of God to organize an Evangelical Methodist Church, which later became its name.

Two things have characterized Methodism throughout its history. The first is a firm commitment to the great commandment. The great commandment is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Matthew 22:36-40). Our love for God motivates us to live lives that are "in the world, but not of the world" (Matthew 5:8 and Hebrews 12:14). Related directly to this is loving our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:39). The early Methodist were concerned about the whole man (spirit, social, physical, etc.) and establish ministries to meet those human hurts.

A second characteristic of early Methodism was its concern to fulfill the "Great Commission" (Matthew 28:18-20). The early Methodists, out of love for God and our neighbors, were committed to obeying the words of Jesus to "disciple the nations". Early Methodism evangelistic zeal was so powerful that they could boast of building a church per day on the American frontier.

The Evangelical Methodist Church was raised up by the hand of God to return to these basic values while being relevant to the society and culture of our time.

Dr. J.H. Hamblen, of Abilene, Texas was elected as the first General Superintendent of the Evangelical Methodist church in November 1946 at the first annual conference in Kansas City, Missouri. His prayer at the conference was simple and direct, "Oh, Lord, if this movement be of Thy will, bless and prosper it; but, Lord, if not of Thy will, then let it die here and now".

The Evangelical Methodist Church is both congregational and connectional in affiliation.

Congregational in that all properties are owned and maintained by the local congregation, and the local congregation calls its own pastor. It is connectional in that the entire church operates under the constitution and by-laws of the general conference of the Evangelical Methodist Church

Our Hope for your story

"...We hope that your faith will grow and that our work among you will be greatly enlarged."
2 Corinthians 10:15 (NLT)



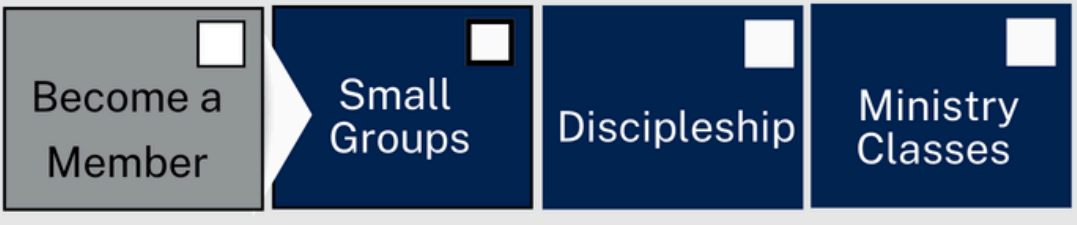


OUR HOPE FOR YOU

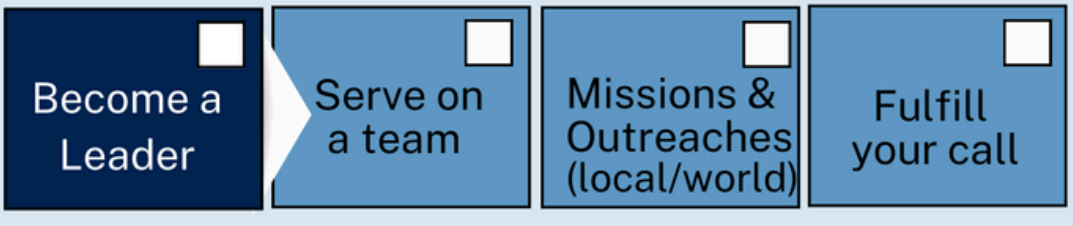
Refuge - Connect



Renewal - Growth



Release - Serve



MEMBERSHIP

At Refuge-Ministries we recognize the need for formal membership. We ask you to commit to membership for four reasons:

01 A BIBLICAL REASON

Christ is committed to the church.
"...Christ loved the church, and he gave his life for it."
Ephesians 5:25 (GN)

02 A CULTURAL REASON

It is an antidote to our society.
We live in an age where very few want to be committed to anything: a job, a marriage, our country. This attitude has even produced a generation of "church shoppers and hoppers." Membership swims against the current of America's "consumer religion." It is an unselfish decision. Commitment always builds character.

03 A PRACTICAL REASON

It defines who can be counted on.
Every team must have a roster. Every school must have an enrollment. Every business has a payroll. Every army has an enlistment. Even our country takes a census and requires voter registration. Membership identifies our family.

04 A PERSONAL REASON

It produces spiritual growth.
The New Testament places a major emphasis on the need for Christians to be accountable to each other for spiritual growth. You cannot be accountable when you're not committed to any specific church family.

- Must give testimony of having received Christ (Born Again)
- Must have been baptized following conversion or fulfill that Scriptural practice here at Refuge-Ministries (Acts 2:41)
- Make attendance a priority
- Be faithful with your Time, Talent, Testimony, & Tithe
- Join a Small Group
- Participate in a ministry team. (Gift assessments are available)
- Refuse to gossip - (Negative comments, criticisms, etc. are not what we are about. Go to the person and deal with the issue Biblically)
- Be submissive to leadership (a voluntary act of your will to trust those leading you, pray for them, and encourage them)

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and being in agreement with the values and ideas presented in the Membership class, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Refuge-Ministries family.

In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

1. Have you received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, and will you acknowledge Him publicly?

We do.

2. Will you try to bring others to Christ in as many ways as God leads you?

We will, God being our helper.

3. Will you be loyal to Refuge-Ministries & The Evangelical Methodist Church in the following four ways: Time, Talent, Testimony, and Treasure

We will endeavor to do so.

4. Will you protect the UNITY of your church in the following three ways?
Refusing to listen to gossip or be a part of it, take concerns to your Pastor(s),
To handle all differences Biblically according to Matthew 18:15-19 & other related passages.

We will.

5. Will you support the leadership of the Church in the following three ways:
Prayer, Participation, and Protection?

We will, God being our helper.

7. Do you believe that God is adding you to this body of believers known as Refuge-Ministries?

We believe this to be God's will.

MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

Our Structure

Believers who invest their hearts, time, families, and finances in the building of a local church deserve to have confidence in church leadership. People are looking for leaders who conduct themselves with integrity and respect when making decisions that affect their lives.

The Evangelical Methodist Church uses a connectional and congregational form of church government.

CONNECTIONAL

All local congregations affiliated with the Evangelical Methodist Church operate under the Discipline of the Evangelical Methodist church. This Discipline contains the Constitution and by-laws adopted by all the local churches affiliated with the denomination.

All the churches of the denomination meet together at a specified location each year and this is called the General Conference. The General Conference is made up of ministers and lay delegates from all the local churches affiliated with the church. They meet to discuss matters of general interest to the denomination.

The local church is also connectional in that it sets up its organization the same as all the other local Evangelical Methodist Churches across the nation. Basically, the local church has two boards and then various committees, which then operate the church.

*Board of Elders (Stewards): This Board is composed of three or more members elected by the congregation. They are charged with the responsibility of carrying out the programs and business of the church and, along with the pastor, ensuring that Biblical teaching and integrity are being exercised by the other leaders of the church in their programs/ministries.

*Board of Trustees: This Board is composed of three to nine members who are empowered under state laws of incorporation to:
1. Hold title to all church property, accept bequests, endowments, and such other valuables as the church may acquire, except the tithes and offerings of the regular church budget, and then administer the same in accordance with the wishes of the donor.
2. Transact all legal business of the Church as it pertains to property as directed and authorized by the local church.

Committees: In addition to the two boards, the local church is composed of various committees that help to provide oversight on matters relating to the administration and operation of the church. These committees are answerable to the Board of Elders.

Note *** We renamed most of our committees - Ministries. Committees tend to meet and do nothing. Ministries figure out what needs to be done and do it!!!

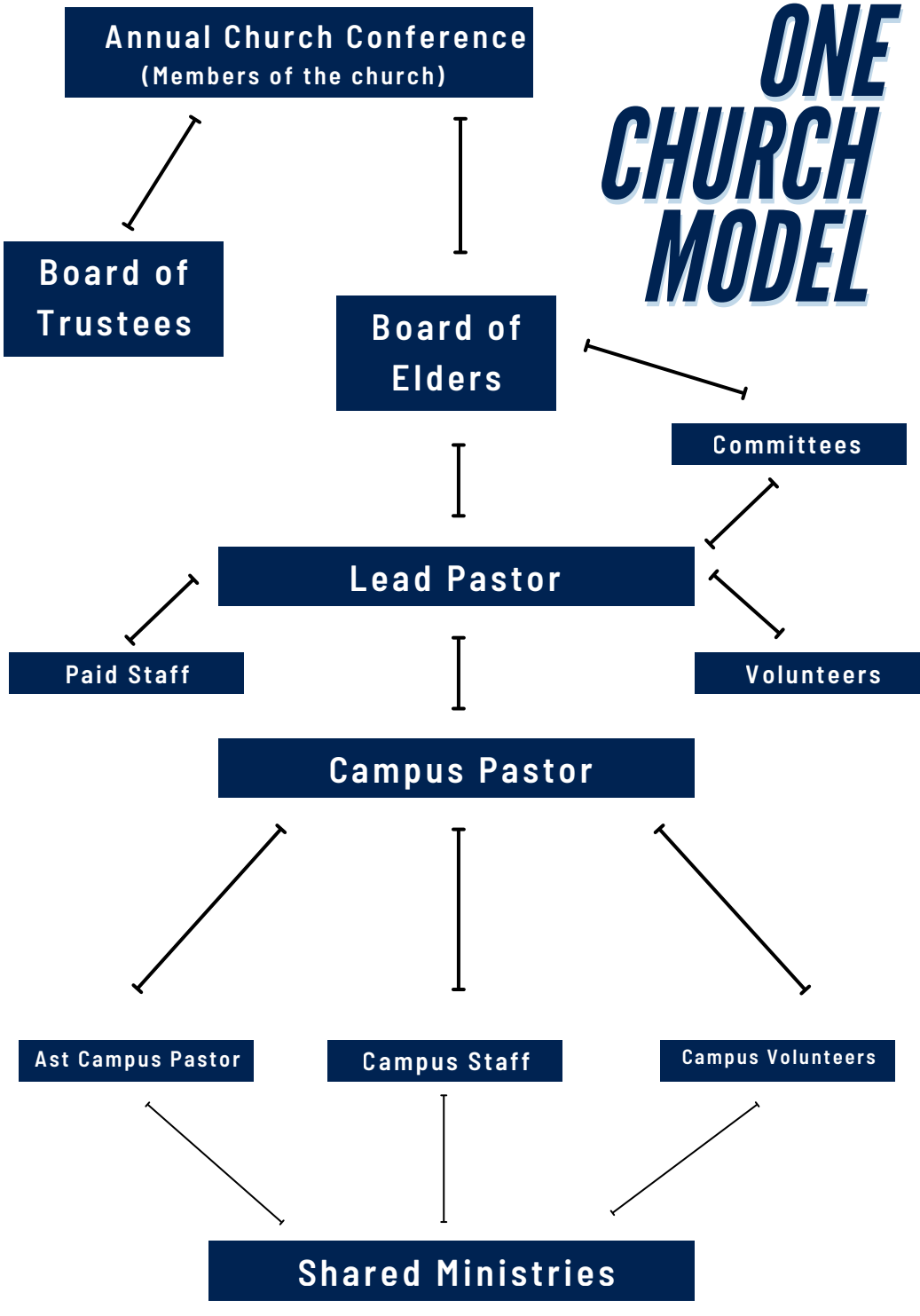
CONGREGATIONAL

The local church is congregational in three main ways:

Annual Church Conference: The annual church conference meets once a year to set the budget, and elect Elders, Trustees, and committee members. They also receive reports of action from the previous year.
Property: Property rights are vested, with respect to ownership and maintenance, in the local church and held in the trust to the local church by the trustees of the local church. The Discipline explains other items in relation to property rights and also the guidelines for the local church and trustees in handling church property matters.

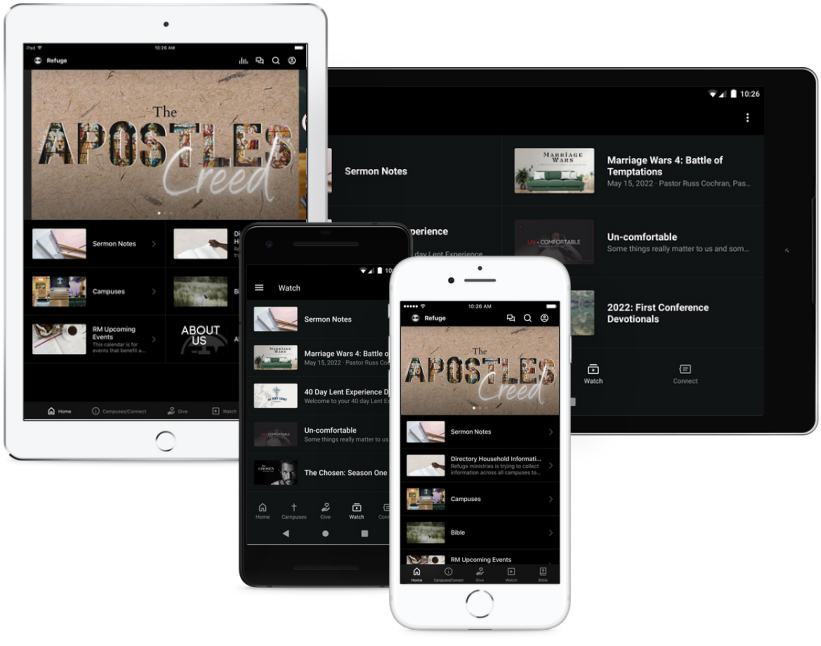
The choice of a pastor is vested with the local church for its final authority, subject to the Discipline as authorized and declared by the Conference. The local church solicits names from the Conference Superintendents. The responsibility for narrowing pastoral candidates for a local church belongs to the local church's Pastoral Relations Committee. The forming and responsibility of this committee is found in the Discipline.

ONE CHURCH MODEL



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Sundaymoments,encouragement & more

SCAN • FOLLOW • CONNECT

One church. Multiple campuses. A place to belong.

Notes:

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ABOUT US

Refuge Ministries story started with a handful of people who wanted to establish a church that was spirit-filled in worship, holiness in preaching, and Wesleyan in doctrine. On April 1, 1984, their dream became a reality. A focus on Biblical-based teaching, discipleship, and fellowship allowed the church to begin to grow. In 1987, they dedicated their first Worship building to the Lord. God had begun to bless this group of believers.

Today, Refuge Ministries has grown into a multi-site church and has campuses all over Texas. Our campuses come together for camps, retreats, revivals, and missions. Each campus has a campus pastor who works with our lead pastor to minister to their specific community needs. Each week through worship services, discipleship, small groups, events, and outreaches, people's stories are changed by Jesus.

You can find out more information about Refuge Ministries by visiting our website at Refuge-Ministries.com or contact the central office at 254-547-3349.