



## LAUREL RIDGE Community Church

### **Laurel Ridge Church Community Group Leadership Agreement**

*I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*

-Jesus, John 10:10b

To follow Jesus is to live a full life, a life of abundance and adventure. At Laurel Ridge we want to help people to live that kind of life, and if we are to lead people into that, then we must model it for them.

The abundant and adventurous life is one that is full regardless of circumstances, a life built on a foundation that can withstand everything that comes our way (John 16:33b). The Apostle Paul—who had been beaten, imprisoned, shipwrecked, and rejected by his own people—wrote while under house arrest:

*I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.*

***I can do all this through him who gives me strength.***

-Philippians 4:11b-13

The abundant life is not about material wealth or freedom from pain but rather is one that in every situation is full of the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control.

God calls us to do two things if we are to have this life of abundance that he promised us:

*“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”*

If we are to live lives that are the envy of those both inside and outside of the church, lives that are worth modeling, lives of abundance and adventure, then we must love God and love others.

The Christian life is not about following a list of rules, it is about responding to a passionate God on a relentless pursuit of the people He loves. Much of the New Testament is about how we can be people of love. We’ve distilled a few things that we believe paint a picture of a Christ-like life, a life guided by love. Part of being a leader at Laurel Ridge is committing to seek lives that reflect this image.



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#### We love God by:

##### **Keeping Jesus at the center.**

Jesus is not just the first in a list of priorities but the lens and filter through which we view every aspect of our lives. No matter who we're with or what we're doing, our first question is, "Who am I in Christ, and what does that mean for this situation?"

##### **Actively pursuing Him.**

A relationship with God is just that, a relationship. Like any other healthy relationship, we must spend time talking, listening, and simply being with. We often call these things when they relate to God, "spiritual disciplines," but really, it's more like hanging out with our Dad. One key component of pursuing a relationship with God is to follow His call to be baptized.

##### **Being united with one another.**

One of Jesus' biggest concerns was that we love one another and be united. A few of the ways that we unite as a church are:

- Prioritizing time together Pursuing God in weekend services, Building Community in small groups, and Unleashing Compassion locally and globally.
- Completing Next Steps so that we can share a common language and understanding of what it means to Pursue God, Build Community, and Unleash Compassion.
- Committing to Laurel Ridge's core beliefs.
- Following the spiritual leaders God has placed over us.
- Cultivating a heart of gratitude and avoiding grumbling.

##### **Striving for excellence.**

God is a creative God. He created the entire universe, and he called it good. We were created in God's image, and one of the ways that we reflect that image is to create, to do new things, to be productive, and to do everything we do with excellence.



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We love others by:

#### **Actively pursuing them.**

Jesus' last command was to help other people come to know and follow Him. He calls us to help people take steps in their faith journey, whether those are the initial steps a person takes by simply becoming open to the idea of God; the step of putting one's faith in Christ; the steps a follower of Jesus makes towards a more Christ-like life; or the steps from observer to participant to leader.

**Living with integrity.** We are called to be people who honor God and each other by living as we were designed to live. A tape-measure can be used as a hammer and an iPhone as a coaster, but how much better when we use them in the way the manufacturer intended! Four ways that we can live with integrity are to:

- Enjoy sex in the context of marriage between a man and a woman and practice celibacy of both body and mind outside of this context—even when in a committed, monogamous but non-marital relationship.
- Be wise in our use of alcohol, avoiding drunkenness and dependency.
- Be trustworthy and above board in our business and financial dealings.
- Honor state and federal laws.

#### **Placing their needs above our own.**

Philippians 2 teaches us that Jesus, even being God, humbles himself to the point of death on a cross for us. This heart of service and sacrifice should characterize our lives and leadership. One key way that we do this is by honoring others, speaking well of them both when they're around and when they're not.

#### **Exercising wisdom and discernment.**

The Apostle Paul teaches us that we are free in Christ but that we must not use our freedom in a way that is harmful to others (1 Corinthians 8). Shortly thereafter he writes us that everything is permissible, but not everything is beneficial (1 Corinthians 10). We are called to lay down our preferences for the good of others. A few ways that we exercise wisdom and discernment are:

- Living separately from our romantic partners before marriage. Even if we are practicing celibacy, it is unwise to place ourselves in such a tempting situation. And others will not assume we are remaining celibate, sending them mixed signals about how to best enjoy sex.
- Ensuring our conversations remain healthy and productive, and that nothing we say or do would dishonor God or cause someone to think that to be a follower of Jesus you have to hold a particular political, social, or moral perspective.
- Expressing ourselves with grace in every situation, whether speaking to a crowd, sitting in a small group, or posting on social media.



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#### **Stewarding our time, talent and treasure well.**

God has given us all gifts, and he calls us to use them for His glory and the benefit of those around us.

- Time – Does our calendar reflect our priorities? Are we fully present with the people God has entrusted us to lead?
- Talent – Are we using our God-given skills and abilities to further the Kingdom and serve those around us?
- Treasure – We serve a generous God, and He calls us to be a generous people. Are we giving generously or focusing our finances on ourselves?

#### **Seeking peace.**

Peace does not always mean the absence of conflict. In ministry and working with people, challenging situations may occasionally arise. When this happens:

- We seek peace by building bridges amongst peoples who are divided, be those divisions social, racial, political, religious, or economic.
- We seek peace by pursuing wholeness and reconciliation in our personal relationships. We don't simply sweep problems under the rug. Rather, we confess our own sin, gently confront others' sin, speak the truth in love, make amends, and forgive one another.

I have read this agreement in full and will pursue the Christ-like life it describes. I will engage others in the body of Christ for support in areas of struggle, and if I find myself significantly out of alignment with this picture of a Christ-like life, I will take the steps necessary for my own growth and health and am willing to take a step back from leadership for a season if needed.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_