

# Staff Expectations and Covenant

Spring Woods UMC

*Our staff, along with our lay leaders, fulfill the biblical roles of elders and deacons, shepherds and teachers. Throughout the New Testament, leaders are called to be examples to the rest of the church and are held to higher standards. Paul sets forth lists of attributes of elders and deacons; leaders should be “above reproach” and “not be puffed up with conceit.” Peter, likewise, challenges leaders to be “examples to the flock” and exercise leadership with a willing heart. Because leaders are held to a higher standard, James says, “not many of you should become teachers, because we who teach will be judged more strictly.”*

*We model the Christian faith and the Christian life. As staff, we set the tone and pace and have a significant role in shaping the heart and character of the entire congregation. It is vital that we walk the Christian walk. Spiritually healthy leaders will produce a spiritually healthy church.*

*With this in mind, the following expectations and covenant were developed to guide our life together as a staff team. We use these standards to hold ourselves accountable to pursuing the Christian life. And we do so with gentleness and respect, recognizing that it is God's grace that calls forth our faithful response, and it is God's grace that brings such transformation in our lives.*

## I. The Goal of the Christian Life: Sanctification

Jesus summarized the goal of the Christian life with two commandments: love the Lord our God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength; and love your neighbor as yourselves. John Wesley spoke of this goal as *sanctification, Christian perfection, or holiness*. In our Methodist tradition, three **General Rules** were designed to help Christians pursue this goal. As a Christian leadership team, we commit to:

**1. Avoid things which are inconsistent with the life of faith, separate us from God, and bring harm to others, such as:**

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- Moral compromise (sexual misconduct, greed, dishonesty)
- Self-centeredness and pride
- Malice (harboring resentment, acting in anger, backbiting)
- Wasting of resources (the church's, your personal resources of time, talent, finance)

**2. Do good of every possible sort and practice our faith, such as:**

- Live a life of love
- Share our faith inside and outside of Spring Woods UMC
- Care for our families
- Build others up
- Be engaged with those in need, both inside the church and out

**3. Pursue growth in our spiritual lives, such as:**

- Attend worship each weekend, except when sick or out of town
- Participate in a small group for accountability and spiritual growth
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## II. Attributes of a Staff Member

The following *attributes* describe essential aspects of how we go about our work. While not exhaustive, the list outlines important characteristics of our working culture. Because constructive feedback is so highly valued, we use this list as a guide for professional development and employee evaluation.

**Ministry Perspective** *Without a vision, the people perish. Proverbs 29:18*

- Devoted to the vision and purpose of Spring Woods UMC
- Effectively communicates the relevance of the ministry
- Strives for ministry excellence

**Teamwork** *From Christ, the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. Ephesians 4:16*

- Demonstrates a team spirit, valuing input from all team members
- Shows Christ-like love, respect and grace in addressing and resolving conflicts
- Demonstrates loyalty, publicly and privately communicating support for the ministry of others

**Volunteer Management** *It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. Ephesians 4:11*

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**Results Orientation** *Be diligent in these matters: give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. 1 Timothy 4:15*

- Identifies opportunities to improve the process, procedures and programs
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**Job Knowledge** *Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people. 2 Chronicles 1:10*

- Shows evidence of continual learning on the job
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**Leadership** *A good leader motivates, doesn't mislead, doesn't exploit. Proverbs 16:10*

- Leads with humility, integrity, joy and authenticity
- Raises criticism in an effective and helpful manner
- Communicates a positive attitude towards their work and work environment

### III. The Faith and Character of a United Methodist

Spring Woods UMC is a United Methodist Church. We expect our leaders to honor our denominational heritage and to pursue ministry in keeping with our tradition.

United Methodists are people who seek to love and serve God with our head, our heart and our hands. They are orthodox in faith, generous in spirit, passionate and deeply devoted to Christ, and desire to be wholly surrendered to God. They bring together both the evangelical and social gospel—inviting people to a life-transforming relationship with Jesus Christ, and then equipping and challenging them to live their faith in the public sphere, being engaged in the issues of our time and seeking to shape a world that looks more like the Kingdom of God. Methodists have been known as “reasonable enthusiasts”—valuing both a personal, passionate faith and one that is intellectually informed. Methodists are constantly looking to connect our faith to the world in meaningful, relevant ways. Methodists value spiritual disciplines and a “methodical” approach to growing in the faith. They strive for both personal holiness and social holiness.

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*Our staff, along with our lay leaders, fulfill the biblical roles of elders and deacons, shepherds and teachers. Throughout the New Testament, leaders are called to be examples to the rest of the church and are held to higher standards. Paul sets forth lists of attributes of elders and deacons; leaders should be “above reproach” and “not be puffed up with conceit.” Peter, likewise, challenges leaders to be “examples to the flock” and exercise leadership with a willing heart. Because leaders are held to a higher standard, James says, “not many of you should become teachers, because we who teach will be judged more strictly.”*

*We model the Christian faith and the Christian life. As staff, we set the tone and pace and have a significant role in shaping the heart and character of the entire congregation. It is vital that we walk the Christian walk. Spiritually healthy leaders will produce a spiritually healthy church.*

*With this in mind, the following expectations and covenant were developed to guide our life together as a staff team. We use these standards to hold ourselves accountable to pursuing the Christian life. And we do so with gentleness and respect, recognizing that it is God's grace that calls forth our faithful response, and it is God's grace that brings such transformation in our lives.*

## I. The Goal of the Christian Life: Sanctification

Jesus summarized the goal of the Christian life with two commandments: love the Lord our God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength; and love your neighbor as yourselves. John Wesley spoke of this goal as *sanctification, Christian perfection, or holiness*. In our Methodist tradition, three **General Rules** were designed to help Christians pursue this goal. As a Christian leadership team, we commit to:

**1. Avoid things which are inconsistent with the life of faith, separate us from God, and bring harm to others, such as:**

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- Moral compromise (sexual misconduct, greed, dishonesty)
- Self-centeredness and pride
- Malice (harboring resentment, acting in anger, backbiting)
- Wasting of resources (the church's, your personal resources of time, talent, finance)

**2. Do good of every possible sort and practice our faith, such as:**

- Live a life of love
- Share our faith inside and outside of Spring Woods UMC
- Care for our families
- Build others up
- Be engaged with those in need, both inside the church and out

**3. Pursue growth in our spiritual lives, such as:**

- Attend worship each weekend, except when sick or out of town
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**Ministry Perspective** *Without a vision, the people perish. Proverbs 29:18*

- Devoted to the vision and purpose of Spring Woods UMC
- Effectively communicates the relevance of the ministry
- Strives for ministry excellence

**Teamwork** *From Christ, the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. Ephesians 4:16*

- Demonstrates a team spirit, valuing input from all team members
- Shows Christ-like love, respect and grace in addressing and resolving conflicts
- Demonstrates loyalty, publicly and privately communicating support for the ministry of others

**Volunteer Management** *It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. Ephesians 4:11*

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**Leadership** *A good leader motivates, doesn't mislead, doesn't exploit. Proverbs 16:10*

- Leads with humility, integrity, joy and authenticity
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Spring Woods UMC is a United Methodist Church. We expect our leaders to honor our denominational heritage and to pursue ministry in keeping with our tradition.

United Methodists are people who seek to love and serve God with our head, our heart and our hands. They are orthodox in faith, generous in spirit, passionate and deeply devoted to Christ, and desire to be wholly surrendered to God. They bring together both the evangelical and social gospel—inviting people to a life-transforming relationship with Jesus Christ, and then equipping and challenging them to live their faith in the public sphere, being engaged in the issues of our time and seeking to shape a world that looks more like the Kingdom of God. Methodists have been known as “reasonable enthusiasts”—valuing both a personal, passionate faith and one that is intellectually informed. Methodists are constantly looking to connect our faith to the world in meaningful, relevant ways. Methodists value spiritual disciplines and a “methodical” approach to growing in the faith. They strive for both personal holiness and social holiness.

United Methodists are not afraid to ask difficult questions, to take on tough subjects, and to admit that they do not always understand the answers. They are “people of the Book”—holding the Bible to be the inspired Word from God and encouraging people to read, study and live by its words. “While acknowledging the primacy of Scripture in theological reflection, our attempts to grasp its meaning always involve experience, tradition and reason. Like Scripture, these become creative vehicles of the Holy Spirit as they function with the church.”<sup>1</sup> Methodists also believe the Bible came to us through people who heard God’s Word in the light of their own cultural and historical circumstances. And hence, they study the scriptures carefully, making use of scholarship and asking critical questions. And, as Methodists encounter theological differences amongst Christians, they bear in mind John Wesley’s approach, “In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in all things, charity.”

Methodists are people who love God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength and love their neighbors. They pursue acts of piety toward God and acts of mercy toward others. They value passionate worship, relevant preaching, small groups to hold Christians accountable to one another, the need to address the social issues of our time and the need to be people whose faith is firmly rooted in and built upon the scriptures. Methodists value the full participation of women and men, people of all races, classes and backgrounds in all facets of fellowship and leadership within the church and society.

This is our heritage, and it continues to shape Spring Woods UMC in every area of our ministry.

### IV. Denominational Standards of Practice

All staff members are encouraged to strive, with God’s help, toward the highest standards of self-discipline and both personal and social holiness. For our ordained clergy, the denomination has specified certain standards of faith and practice. At Spring Woods UMC, since clergy and staff share leadership somewhat fluidly, our church also calls upon lay staff members to strive toward these same personal standards. Additionally, commitment to uphold these standards is a position *requirement* for all Ministry Staff. Our denominational standards include the following:

For the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world and the most effective witness to the Christian gospel, and in consideration of the influence of an ordained minister on the lives of other persons both within and outside the Church, the Church expects those who seek ordination to make a complete dedication of themselves to the highest ideals of the Christian life. To this end, they agree to exercise responsible self-control by personal habits conducive to bodily health, mental and emotional maturity, integrity in all personal relations, fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness, social responsibility, and growth in grace and in the knowledge and love of God.<sup>2</sup>

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#### Staff Expectations and Covenant

I am committed to living my life and pursuing ministry consistent with these expectations, and desire to do so at Spring Woods UMC. I understand this is not a contract and my status remains as an employee-at-will.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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<sup>1</sup> 2004 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, ¶ 104

<sup>2</sup> 2004 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, ¶ 304.2.