

LEADERS VALUES POLICY

This document outlines the expectations for those in a leadership role at Four Oaks Baptist Church.

This policy sets out the biblical convictions, spiritual commitments and behavioural expectations that shape the character and conduct of all recognised leaders within Four Oaks Baptist Church.

Our desire is that leadership in our church models scripture, reflects the character and service of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, and allows us to model this character in service to the church and wider community.

Biblical foundation

We affirm that:

- Jesus Christ is the Lord of our Church (*Matthew 16:16, Colossians 1:18*)
- The Bible is the inspired and authoritative Word of God and our final rule for faith and practice.
- Leadership is a calling to servant-hearted ministry (*Mark 10:42-45*)
- Character is as important as gifting (*1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9*)

What is a leader?

It may help to define what a leader is in comparison to other relationships to the church:

A church attendee is someone who attends one of our services or activities, this is open to everyone in the community irrespective of age, gender, race, faith, and will only be restricted if the attendee's behaviour puts other people's wellbeing at risk. Attendees may help practically with activities where they are normally a part of that activity.

A church member is open to all who profess Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, have been baptised, and who are in agreement with the aims, values and core beliefs of Four Oaks Baptist Church. These are defined in the Church constitution, the Baptist Union and Evangelical Alliance statements of faith.

A church leader is someone who organises or leads a church activity or ministry; they will be perceived by the attendees as having responsibility. This may be evidenced in an up-front public role, or a welcoming and administering role. Leaders will usually be responsible for a team of volunteers and will be the point of contact for prospective team members. Leaders will normally be Church members, but in addition to holding to the values of the church as a member, they will also have a greater expectation of resonance between belief and action. James 3:1 and other passages make this clear; "those who teach will be judged more strictly."

Our Core Leadership Values

Christ-Centred

Leaders seek to keep Jesus at the centre of all ministry, decision-making, and relationships. We prioritise prayer, worship, and dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Biblical Integrity

Leaders uphold the authority of Scripture in teaching, conduct, and decision-making. We aim to live lives consistent with the gospel we proclaim.

Servant Leadership

Following the example of Christ, leaders serve rather than dominate. Authority is exercised with humility, gentleness, and accountability.

Spiritual Maturity

Leaders commit to ongoing spiritual growth through prayer, study, fellowship, and personal holiness.

Unity and Peacemaking

We seek to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:3). Leaders avoid gossip, divisiveness, and public criticism that harms the body.

Accountability and Transparency

Leaders operate within agreed structures of accountability, including church meeting governance, safeguarding requirements, and financial oversight.

Missional Heart

We share in God's mission, seeking to proclaim the gospel and serve our community with compassion and justice.

Expected Conduct of Leaders

All recognised leaders (including trustees, elders, ministry and team leaders and staff) are expected to:

1. Seek to serve Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.
2. Have a current and ongoing prayerful relationship with God.
3. Be active members in good standing of the church for at least three months, attending regularly outside of their active duties, as part of the regular Church congregation.
4. Affirm the church's vision statement and constitution.
5. Model a lifestyle consistent with Christian discipleship: having financial integrity (including not gambling), sober (not an abuser of any drug, solvent or drink), of good speech (free from gossip and foul language), dress in a way that honors God and the values of FOBC and abstaining from sexual activity outside of heterosexual marriage.
6. Maintain confidentiality appropriately
7. Avoid conflicts of interest and declare them where necessary.
8. Support collective leadership decisions publicly, even where personal views differed in discussion.
9. Undertake appropriate safeguarding training and DBS checks where required.

Personal Character Expectations

Leaders should demonstrate:

- Integrity in relationships and finances
- Faithfulness in family life (where applicable)
- Emotional maturity and self-control
- Welcoming, friendly and loving
- Honest and truthful
- Forgiving and merciful
- Servant hearted
- A teachable spirit
- A willingness to receive correction

Persistent conduct inconsistent with these values may result in a review of leadership responsibilities in accordance with the church constitution. Should a person holding responsibility be struggling to practice a Christian lifestyle in the above areas the Leadership Team may seek that person's resignation from that post until such time as their lifestyle has become more stable.

Diversity and Inclusion

As a Baptist church, we recognise the priesthood of all believers and value the contribution of every member. Leadership appointments are made prayerfully, based on calling, character, gifting, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Safeguarding and Care

We prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children, young people, and vulnerable adults, complying with relevant UK safeguarding legislation and church policy. In addition to this lifestyle when serving the church, leaders will be expected to follow our good practice guidelines which are found in our Safeguarding Policy.

All leaders will be asked to read this policy annually and confirm the reading and understanding of it by the designated person for safeguarding at FOBC.

Commitment

All leaders will be asked to:

- Read and affirm this Leaders' Values Policy annually.
- Participate in regular review, prayer, and encouragement with fellow leaders.
- Commit to ongoing development and training.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.