

## Session Three

### I. Government at Real Life Christian Center

1 Cor 3:11

11 For no one can lay any other foundation than the one we already have — Jesus Christ.

NLT

This is simply an important reminder to say that we recognize Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, as the foundation of all good church government.

While the Bible has much to say about church government; it is incomplete and we are left filling in the gaps of our understanding as best we can. I think this is apparent by the fact that world wide thousands upon thousands of hours have been utilized in the pursuit of the correct church governing structure but no consensus exists on what that should look like. There are several examples of what wise, Godly men and women have come up with but they all have their strengths as well as their weaknesses.

#### Church Leadership Narrative

One of the greatest challenges for a young church is establishing effective, efficient leadership. More importantly than its effectiveness, however, church leadership must be Biblical and God-honoring, as well as life-giving and supportive to the membership of the local body. At Real Life Christian Center, we have attempted to capture these ideals in establishing our leadership structure.

The leadership team at RLCC is comprised of 4 distinct but collaborative entities. Those are: the Pastoral Staff, Board of Overseers, Board of Advisors and Board of Trustees.

#### Pastoral Staff

This team is currently comprised of the Senior Pastor and Associate Pastor of Real Life Christian Center, and their wives. These are the individuals who were led by God to start RLCC, and who continue to lead the church. As RLCC continues to mature, this team will adapt and grow, potentially including additional members.

The function of this team is to receive and guide the vision of the church as given by the Holy Spirit, serve in a Pastoral role to the body of Real Life Christian Center, and to lead the church in good decision making as we carry out the ministry duties God has given us to accomplish.

The current individuals who make up this team are Dr. Steve and Kristi Nickisch, Pastor Sam and Dana Shuman.

### Board of Overseers

This team is comprised of three individuals currently pastoring in their own local churches.

Those serving as overseers are nominated by the Senior Pastor and approved by the advisors.

The function of this team is to provide prayerful guidance and support to our Pastoral Staff, prayer coverage of RLCC, and to provide disciplinary action as needed for the Pastoral Staff. The Overseers are not involved in the daily operation or ministry of RLCC, except as indicated here.

Disciplinary action would be needed in the case of heretical teaching, illegal or immoral activities or a situation by where the Senior Pastor is acting in a manner contrary to scriptural mandates for his position. The need for disciplinary action is determined and requested by the Board of Advisors.

Current overseers: Pastor John Clement, Pastor Chris Davis, Pastor Jim Shuman

### Board of Advisors

This team is comprised of local members of Real Life Christian Center that have established themselves as providing Godly counsel and guidance for the Pastoral Staff and membership of the church. This board is made up of spiritually mature couples whom have demonstrated a willingness to serve and support what God is doing at RLCC.

The purpose of the Board of Advisors is to:

- 1) Provide Godly counsel to the Pastoral Staff as they lead the church, including assisting with decision making, planning, and implementation.
- 2) Love and support the membership of RLCC by providing Godly counsel, biblical teaching, and prayer
- 3) Assist and support the Pastoral Staff in carrying out the vision of RLCC
- 4) Act as an interface between the Pastoral Staff and the congregation of RLCC in order to facilitate effective and efficient communication, problem solving, and understanding
- 5) Determine ministry needs to achieve the vision of RLCC (such as new church ministries and programs), and to implement strategies to guide RLCC in doing God's work

Advisors are appointed to their positions by the informed decision of the Pastoral Staff. As additions are needed to the Board of Advisors, church members will be given the opportunity to participate in nomination by congregational vote.

The current individuals serving on the Board of Advisors are Paul and Becky Lamb, Dale and Lori Dawkins, Andy and Beth Ferguson, Lane and Mandy Wraith, and Jason and Ruth McEndoo.

### Board of Trustees

This team is comprised of local members of Real Life Christian Center that have established themselves as providing Godly counsel for the Pastoral Staff and membership of the church relating to business, management, and financial planning. This board is made up of individuals that have demonstrated both Godly lives, but also strong business and financial skills.

Those serving as Trustees are nominated by the Senior Pastor and approved by the Advisors.

The purpose of the Board of Trustees is to:

- 1) Support the vision of RLCC and its ministry needs by providing financial guidance on decisions to fund the work of the ministry.

2) Provide monetary support from the church budget to accomplish the needs of the ministries of RLCC.

These needs are established by the Board of Advisors and Pastoral Staff. The Trustees will assist as needed in preparing ministry budgets and guidelines and will assist in managing the budgets of the ministries of the church. The goal of the Trustees should be one that determines the most appropriate way to utilize church funds in performing the necessary tasks of the ministries of the church.

The trustees are the only ones able to build buildings, by land or incur debt on behalf of RLCC.

The current individuals serving on the Board of Trustees are Kevin Davis, Andy Ferguson, Jeff Galyen, and Jay Winchester. Additional roles of note within the Board of Trustees are: Kevin Davis – Facility Manager, and Andy Ferguson – Financial Manager.

The tenure of the leadership team is as follows:

Pastoral Staff – considered permanent, except in case of disciplinary removal by the overseers, resignation, retirement, illness, or death.

Board of Overseers, Board of Advisors, and Board of Trustees – Serving six month terms, which are considered automatically extended under mutual agreement. Board members are requested to serve out each of their terms fully, but may resign at any time.

Board members may also be removed by the Pastoral Staff at a rate of not more than one (individual or couple) per six calendar months according to the guidelines of the RLCC decision-making process set forth later in this document. If disciplinary action is being undertaken no changes to the Board of Overseers can be made until its work is completed.

## II. Church Decision-Making Process

Our desire is to seek and embrace wise, Godly counsel.

"There is only one way to stand still, but there are many ways to change." Winston Churchill

The underlying goal of the entire leadership team is to use Godly discernment and wise counsel to make decisions that will support the vision of RLCC, and ultimately, lead to effective church ministry to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandment.

### III. Benefits and Expectations of membership

#### **Benefits**

##### 1. Support and encouragement for life

Heb 10:24

24 Think of ways to encourage one another to outbursts of love and good deeds.

NLT

Gal 6:1-2

Dear brothers and sisters, if another Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. 2 Share each other's troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ.

NLT

##### 2. A place to discover and use your gifts

1 Cor 12:4-7

4 Now there are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but it is the same Holy Spirit who is the source of them all. 5 There are different kinds of service in the church, but it is the same Lord we are serving. 6 There are different ways God works in our lives, but it is the same God who does the work through all of us. 7 A spiritual gift is given to each of us as a means of helping the entire church.

NLT

##### 3. Protection of Godly leaders

Heb 13:17

17 Obey your spiritual leaders and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they know they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this joyfully and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit. NLT

Acts 20:28

28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

NIV

## **Expectations**

2 Cor 8:5

5 Best of all, they went beyond our highest hopes, for their first action was to dedicate themselves to the Lord and to us for whatever directions God might give them.

NLT

John 13:35

35 Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

NLT

1 John 3:16

16 We know what real love is because Christ gave up his life for us. And so we also ought to give up our lives for our Christian brothers and sisters.

NLT

Commit #1 -to Christ (through salvation and baptism)

#2- to each other (through fellowship and sharing life)

#3- to maturing (through discipleship)

#4- to ministry (servant leadership, living on behalf of another in the name of Christ)