

New Hope Leadership Philosophy & Structure

Spring 2009

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Revised 4-29-2011

We find a helpful biblical leadership framework in Ephesians 4:11-16:

And He personally gave ***some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers***, for the training of **the saints** in the work of **ministry**, to build up the body of Christ, until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, growing into a mature (corporate) man with a stature measured by Christ's fullness. Then we will no longer be little children, tossed by the waves and blown around by every wind of teaching, by human cunning with cleverness in the techniques of deceit. But speaking the truth in love, let us grow in every way into Him who is the head – Christ. From Him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body for building up itself in love **by the proper working of each individual part.**

The above text answers some very important questions regarding church leadership structure:

What does new covenant leadership look like?

- “And He personally gave ***some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers...***”
 - Observations:
 - **Variety:**
 - *Apostles* – sent out ones...usually to start new works among and with new people
 - *Prophets* – sent by God to declare God's truth and/or call people back to God's revealed truth; sometimes included foretelling future events
 - *Evangelists* – those gifted not only in declaring the Gospel, but who are also gifted to train others in how to engage their world with the Gospel
 - *Pastor-Teachers* – 2 roles are interconnected; he to whose care and control others have committed themselves, and whose precepts they follow
 - **Multiplicity:**
 - Not just the one man gang
 - NT leadership was team or communal leadership
 - “...for the training of **the saints** in the work of **ministry...**”
 - Observations:
 - **Biblical leadership equips and empowers others:**
 - Provide training
 - Provide vision
 - Provide opportunity
 - But eventually these “others” have to act & engage...

Who are “the saints”?

- “the most holy ones”
 - We find that a common objection is “I can't help with spiritual stuff, because I don't know enough spiritual stuff & am not leading a good enough life.”
 - Though we value growth in holiness, we do not think that one needs to achieve some level of perfection before engaging in ministry. In fact, New Testament holiness is largely about “wholly” giving ourselves to minister the Gospel to others around us.
- Rightly understood, “saints” are followers of Jesus...believers...Christians...disciples

- Those who know they are not holy, but who have turned to the Holy One for grace and forgiveness
- And that means that all believers are included among the “each one of us” to whom the Messiah has given gifts for the work of ministry in the Ephesians 4 text.

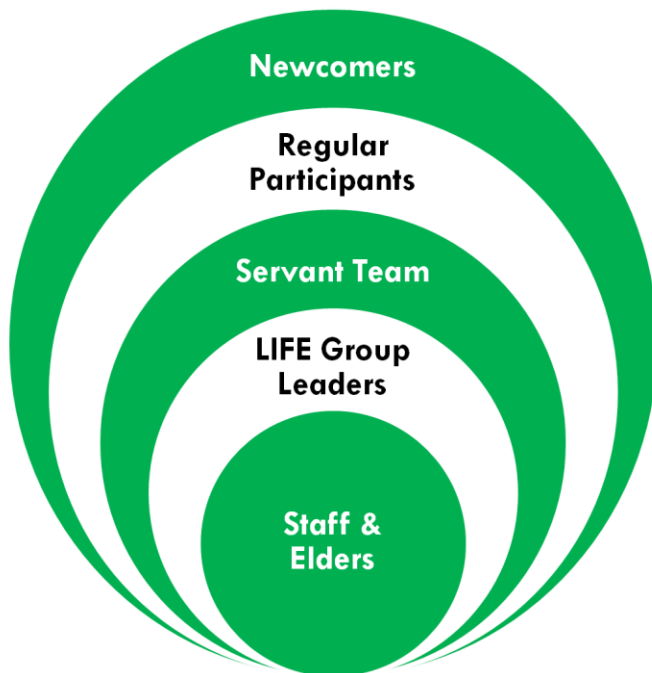
What is “the work of ministry”?

- “to build up the body of Christ, until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God’s Son, growing into a mature (corporate) man”
- “the work of ministry” is to give ourselves to others to help them become like Jesus
 - It is each believer being empowered to discover and also released to use his/her gifts to love others and empower others to embrace Jesus’ way as the way of life!
 - As we engage in this we grow individually and corporately into maturity & walk in a manner worthy of our calling

How does the church “grow”?

- All aspects of growth happen “by the proper working of each individual part.”
 - If we don’t each do our part, the church body is inevitably handicapped in the truest sense of the word...the body is placed at a significant disadvantage limiting it from living up to its fullest potential.
 - All of us are called to lead and serve in some way, and our sphere of influence typically expands as we grow in Christ and experience effective ministry to others.

Below is a picture of how this philosophy is expressed in New Hope’s life together as we each move to more focused circles of involvement and investment...



The Elders

Functions of the elder team:

- To intentionally seek to discern God’s direction for New Hope Church (Acts 13:1-3)
- To oversee the general direction of New Hope Church, paying particular attention to transformed lives and the healthy teaching of the Word of God (1 Timothy 4:16)
- To lead the way by progressively embodying New Hope’s vision of *pursuing relationships that change the world by...*

- Equipping & empowering others for works of ministry (Ephesians 4:11-16)
- Intentionally multiplying leaders (2 Timothy 2:1-2)
- Actively leading a LIFE Group (Acts 2:42-47)
- To oversee the administration of New Hope
 - The hiring, salary benefits, evaluation, and dismissal of staff
 - Evaluating and approving New Hope's annual budget (developed and proposed by the staff)
 - The appointment of any leader or sub-teams to fulfill any of these administrative functions

Selection of the elder team:

- Proposed elders must meet the following requirements:
 - Their character must be demonstrably reflective of the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9
 - They must have a history of ministry congruent with the values and vision of New Hope (experience leading a LIFE Group, investing personally in individuals, actively engaging non-believers, etc.)
 - They must be members of the *New Hope Servant Team*
- Proposed elders must be nominated by a fellow *Servant Team* member
 - Nominations must be submitted to the current elder team by the close of the annual *Servant Team Retreat*
- Proposed elders must be interviewed and approved by the current elder team
- Other selection distinctives:
 - Ultimately, we are seeking to find the most qualified and effective servant leaders to serve as elders in New Hope. This means that age, secular leadership effectiveness, and mere length of time as a believer will not be the primary evaluative criteria in elder selection.

Terms of service:

- It is our desire to typically have 6-8 people on the elder team. However we require at least three other elders besides the pastor.
- All elders submit to an annual process of evaluation. The current elder team and others in the elder's sphere of leadership (LIFE Group, ministry focus area, etc.) participate in this simple evaluation process. This process is designed to provide affirmation and encouragement for the elder and the elder team. However, it is also intended to provide an opportunity for the elder to step away from serving in this capacity, and for other elders to offer focused counsel and perspective to each other. Serving as an elder is very demanding at times, and we anticipate regular turnover in this role. In order to plan effectively, this evaluation and commitment process must be completed prior to the annual *Servant Team Retreat*.
- Being an elder is not only a functional position, but also a habitual style of life. In light of this, we periodically consult former elders in decisions that warrant broader input. Specifically, in the rare event that an elder has become disqualified for service, a majority vote of current and former elders who are active on the *Servant Team* is required for dismissal. This action can be taken at any time, and any current or former elder who is currently active on the *Servant Team* can initiate this process. However, for the sake of confidentiality and the elder's reputation, this process is required to stay within the circle of current and former elders until a clear decision has emerged.

Staff

Functions of the staff team:

- To partner with the elder team to intentionally seek to discern God's direction for New Hope Church (Acts 13:1-3)

- To implement the vision of New Hope within their defined area of ministry by pursuing the annual strategic initiatives set by the elder team (Acts 6:1-7)
- To lead the way by progressively embodying New Hope's vision of *pursuing relationships that change the world by...*
 - Equipping & empowering others for works of ministry (Ephesians 4:11-16)
 - Intentionally multiplying leaders within their area of ministry oversight (2 Tim. 2:1-2)
 - Active involvement in a LIFE Group (Acts 2:42-47)

Selection of a staff member:

- Proposed staff must meet the following requirements:
 - Their character must be demonstrably reflective of the deacon qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. (NOTE: If their position will include service as an elder, then they must meet the previously described elder qualifications.)
 - They must have a history of ministry congruent with the values and vision of New Hope (experience leading and learning in community, investing personally in individuals, actively engaging non-believers, etc.)
 - They must be skilled within their proposed area of staff leadership
 - They must be members of the *New Hope Servant Team*
- Proposed staff needs will be communicated to the Servant Team. As much as possible, the elder team will seek to do this at the annual Servant Team Retreat. However, there will likely be occasions when this communication and opportunity for input must take place at other times of the year.
- Proposed staff members must be interviewed and approved by the current elder team. The elder team's interview and evaluation will include conversations with those in the proposed staff person's current and future spheres of leadership. This process will also include time for focused input from the *Servant Team*. The final hiring decision will rest with the current elder team.
- Other selection distinctives:
 - Ultimately, we are seeking to find the most qualified and effective servant leaders to serve on staff with New Hope. This means that age, secular leadership effectiveness, and length of time as a believer will not be the primary evaluative criteria in staff selection.
 - As much as possible, it is our desire to develop New Hopers who will be qualified and ready to fulfill various staff positions. We think this approach provides the greatest continuity of vision, relationship, and long-term effectiveness. In addition, it sends a powerful message to the congregation that ministry is not just for a professionally certified group of people.

Terms of service:

- All staff submit to an annual process of evaluation. The current elder team (or their appointee) and others in the staff member's sphere of leadership (LIFE Group, ministry focus area, etc.) participate in this simple evaluation process. This process is designed to provide affirmation and encouragement for the staff member and the elder team. However, it is also intended to provide an opportunity for the staff member to assess his/her suitability for service in this capacity and for others to offer focused counsel and perspective to the staff member. In addition, this annual evaluation provides all involved a chance to alter the staff member's job description in order to more accurately reflect the needs and opportunities before us. In order to plan effectively, this evaluation and commitment process must be completed prior to the annual *Servant Team Retreat*.

LIFE Group Leaders

Functions of LIFE Group Leaders:

- To help implement the vision of New Hope by pastoring these house churches

- To shepherd people in their Group
- To develop and multiply leaders through personal discipleship
- To grow the Group by reaching the lost through relational networks and incorporating newcomers from the Central Gathering
- To eventually plant a new Group with the same core DNA

Levels of LIFE Group Leadership:

There are three levels of LIFE Group leadership. All three work together as a LIFE Group Leadership Team.

- 1) Point Leaders are directly responsible for all facets of leading the Group. In addition to leading normal LIFE Group members, they are responsible for leading the leaders, protecting and casting vision, and discerning overall direction and emphases for the Group. They have a history of leading LIFE Groups and have been invited to be point leaders for their new Group.
- 2) Co-Leaders are also recognized leaders in the Group and are involved in discipleship of Group members. They help shoulder the burden of leadership with the Point Leaders and healthily submit to their leadership. They are held to the same standards (see below) as Point-Leaders, but may have less experience.
- 3) Apprentices are up-and-coming leaders from within the Group. They are being disciplined by other Group Leaders and may even be discipling others in the Group and have been invited by their group's leaders to join the Leadership Team. They are not held to as high of a standard as other Group Leaders, but must demonstrate a general hunger for the Gospel and movement towards Christ.

Selection of LIFE Group Leaders:

- LIFE Group Point Leaders and Co-Leaders must meet the following requirements:
 - Their character must be demonstrably reflective of the deacon qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
 - They must have a history of ministry congruent with the values and vision of New Hope (experience leading and learning in community, investing personally in individuals, actively engaging non-believers, etc).
 - They must be invited to lead by current LIFE Group Point Leaders or Elders.
 - They must be members of the *New Hope Servant Team*
 - Apprentice Leaders are also required to be on the Servant Team.
 - *LIFE U.: Leadership Training* track:
 - Point Leaders must have completed this track.
 - Co-Leaders must be in the process of this track.
 - Apprentice Leaders are not required to be in this process (yet).

Terms of service:

- All LIFE Group Leaders submit to the current elder team. Leaders are under no compulsion to lead longer than they wish. But as long as they desire to lead and are deemed healthy enough, they are invited to continue leading. Our hope is that this type of discipleship and leadership would become a normative lifestyle among New Hoppers. However, we understand that life circumstances and general weariness will necessitate breaks and sabbaticals from leading a Group, though "resting" leaders are still encouraged to remain plugged into a LIFE Group.

Servant Team

Information about the philosophy behind the *Servant Team*, the qualifications and expectations of the *Servant Team*, and the *Servant Team Covenant* are available in other documents.

The following ministry roles require membership in the *Servant Team*:

- Elder team
- Staff team
- Point leadership roles:
 - Children’s ministry director(s)
 - Children’s ministry point teachers
 - Youth leadership team (FuLe)
 - Worship director(s)
 - Missions Strategy Team
 - LIFE Group leaders & assistant leaders
 - Any other point leadership roles that are created to equip and teach others

Regular Participants & Newcomers

The fact that we include “regular participants” & “newcomers” in a leadership document reflects our vision that everyone needs Christ, every believer is called to ministry, and every believer has the opportunity to lead others in some way, shape, or form. One of our distinctives is that we constantly seek to call believers *beyond consumption and toward contribution* to the advance of the Gospel. We see this process powerfully playing out in 1 Thessalonians 1:2-10. The Thessalonians **observed** Paul and his companions’ life and faith. They believed and began to **imitate** this life and faith. Finally, they themselves became **models** to others. This organic, relational process is what we call all New Hoppers to. Below is an image that has helped us wrap our minds around this process...

