

# EVERY MEMBER A MINISTER!!

THE OAKWOOD MINISTRY STATEMENT  
(Our Philosophy of Ministry)

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## WE BELIEVE...

### ABOUT MINISTRY

- Salvation in Jesus Christ automatically includes a call to ministry. Every believer is created, saved, called, gifted, authorized, and commanded to minister.
- Ministry is the heart of the Christian life. (Matt. 20:28)
- Function follows form in ministry. How God made me determines what He intends for me to do. God has uniquely shaped each individual for a specific ministry.
- God has given all his children gifts that can be developed and effectively used in ministry. Everyone has something special to offer. Developing and using your gifts is an act of good stewardship and of worship.
- You discover your gifts through ministry, instead of discovering your ministry by identifying your gifts.
- The evidence of the right match between my "*shape*" and my ministry is fruitfulness and fulfillment.

### ABOUT THE BODY OF CHRIST

- God intends for ministry to be performed through the context of the local church. Membership includes a commitment to ministry. Our slogan is: *Every member a minister.*
- The Holy Spirit has provided our church body with all the spiritually gifted people needed to do everything He wants done. Our task is to discover, enlist, train, and support these people in ministry.
- The church is to operate on the basis of spiritual gifts, rather than elected offices. We do not elect people to ministries.
- The church is a Body, not a business; an organism, not an organization. Therefore we should streamline the structure in order to maximize ministry and minimize maintenance. We do not bury ministries under procedures.
- The mobilization of every member as a minister is the key to balanced growth of the church.
- The greater good of the whole Body must always take priority over the needs of any single ministry. There is no place for "turfism" in God's Family.

### **ABOUT THE ROLE OF ELDERS AND PASTORS**

- The equipping of the members for ministry is the number one priority of the elders and pastoral staff. The people are the ministers.
- Every member deserves *personal* assistance in discovering a meaningful place of ministry. We value the individual more than the ministry.

### **ABOUT ACCOUNTABILITY**

- We become what we are committed to. Therefore we encourage growth in commitment to Christ and his Church.
- Everything rises or falls on leadership. No ministry can exceed the commitment of those leading it.
- One mark of a maturing church is that the standards for leadership are raised every year.
- There must be periodic reviews of all ministries. We do what is inspected, not just expected. Best intentions are not enough.

### **ABOUT TRAINING**

- Every leader is a learner. The moment you stop learning, you stop leading.
- We emphasize on-the-job training more than pre-service training. We learn best by doing. We delegate to develop people.

### **ON DIVERSITY OF MINISTRY**

- We have unity without uniformity. We believe diversity in ministries simply illustrates the unique giftedness of individuals.
- Every ministry must fulfill one or more of the basic purposes of the church or we don't do it.
- Ministries have life-cycles. If a ministry isn't effectively meeting a need any more, we will give it a decent burial. There are no sacred cows!
- Most ministries require a one year commitment but we allow people to change ministries gracefully, without guilt. We don't lock people in permanently.
- Your *primary* ministry commitment should be in the area where you are gifted. Your *secondary* ministry includes serving in any other area of the Body where you are needed.
- You are not ready for ministry, until you are willing to serve *anywhere*.

### **ABOUT PERFORMANCE**

- We expect excellence in ministry, not perfection. Excellence is doing your best. God deserves our best.
- We encourage creativity and innovation in ministry, which assumes mistakes will be made. "No mistakes" means you're not growing or trying anything new. We have no "failures" in ministry at Oakwood, only "experiments that didn't work!"

- A failed project does not mean a failed person. In terms of gifts, there are no "wrong" people only "right" people in the wrong ministry!

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