

OUR CORE VALUES AND FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

Relationship And Agreement

Pathway Church is very much founded on principles of relationship and agreement (Amos 3:3; Matt 18:19). Those who are willing to become a part of what God is doing feel very much at home with us. Not everyone needs or desires this level of intimacy in church, but it is nevertheless a part of our makeup as a church to attempt to build deep and lasting relationships with all who call Pathway Church their spiritual home. We are a friendly and open church, and we like it that way!

Spiritual Authority

We have a strong emphasis on the area of spiritual authority, although this is very much in a relational sense rather than an autocratic or dogmatic one. Diversity of thought and expression are strongly encouraged within the boundaries of healthy relationships.

Understanding spiritual authority is foundational for sound Christian doctrine, and necessary for a mature understanding of how the Body of Christ is supposed to function. In a world full of lawlessness and rebellion, even among some churches and believers (Matt 7:23), submission to spiritual authority, and honouring one another in love (Rom 12:10), can be so unusual as to be attractive to those looking for security and liberty in Christ.

God created us to be in relationship to one another, and to achieve this he ordained that three primary authority structures should surround us, guide us, and protect us. These structures are:

- ◆ The Government
- ◆ The Church
- ◆ The Family

We must all learn to relate to each of these structures as God directs.

Understanding spiritual authority, especially as it relates to the church, is imperative if we are to agree together, tear down the strongholds, and see the kingdom of God established in our region, and in our generation.

We value leadership that empowers people

We believe that the church should be led by those with leadership gifts, and that their primary task is to create an environment in which people can be inspired, equipped, and released to serve God and fulfil His purpose for their lives. (Eph 4:11-16).

We value the organising of ministry around people's gifts

We believe that every Christian believer has gifts to serve God and His Church. Some have many. Identifying and understanding these gifts determines the role each person should play (Rom 12:3-8). Most people's gifts are also connected, in some way, to their passion, which motivates and enthuses them to excel.

We value passionate Christian living

We believe full devotion to Christ is normal for every believer. A fully devoted follower of Christ (i) has a passionate desire to read the Bible regularly; (ii) is committed to a growing prayer life; (iii) continually meets with other believers to build each other up and doesn't neglect the Church family; (iv) seeks opportunities to share their faith with unbelievers; and (v) manages their time, talents and treasure for the honour of God who entrusts them to us. (Rom 12:11-12)

We value church structures that work

We believe in good organisational structures, and infrastructure within the church, which enables ministry function successfully and without hindrance. Leadership, based on biblical principles, is key to developing an effective church. We are committed to simplified structure and “uncluttered Christianity” (Mark 2:27). Sunday services should also be dynamic, relevant and inspirational to our target audience at all times.

We value Small Groups

We believe that personal and spiritual development happens best in small groups. A lively and caring Small Group is one where believers (i) are challenged to put the Bible into practice in their daily life; (ii) receive encouragement and help to meet real needs; (iii) use their gifts to minister to others in the group; and (iv) work together to reach out to new people (Acts 2:46-47).

Our Strategy

DYNAMIC AND RELEVANT MEETINGS

Meeting at least weekly for dynamic worship and inspirational teaching, in a manner that is relevant and welcoming to the unchurched as well as regular believers.

Church Services

We believe that going to church should be a joy and not just a duty. We believe it is irresponsible to take the most exciting news in the world and bore people to death with it. We are committed to presenting church services that are dynamic, relevant and user-friendly.

The three most common complaints that people today continually register about attending church meetings are:

1. Church services are boring.
2. Church is irrelevant to me.
3. I don't understand what's going on.

Even some committed church members sympathise with these statements. They attend church faithfully out of a sense of duty, but it is sometimes an exercise in endurance more than a life-giving, life-changing, life-challenging experience. Very often Christians express reluctance to invite their family and friends along with them to church for fear that they will react negatively.

Worse than this is the reaction that unchurched people have when they don't understand what is going on, and they find church boring and irrelevant. They often choose never to come back, and this is a tragedy churches in this position must address if they wish to stay relevant.

Small Groups

Meeting around common interests, our Small Groups vision is dynamic and flexible in nature. To remain intimate and relevant, all churches require a Small Group emphasis.

The primary function of Small Groups is to connect people relationally for the purpose of growing together spiritually, integrating together through sharing common interests or needs, working together to build the kingdom of God and the local church.

The second function is to integrate new people into the life of the church, and to help them to grow in their faith and overcome any obstacles they may encounter.

The third function is to reach unchurched people in a non-threatening environment around common interests.

General Principles

In our meetings we believe in, and practice:

-  Bright, contemporary music, with great lyrics and good musicians in right relationship with God and one another.
-  Positive, inspirational, Bible-based, practical messages that minister to real needs and answer real questions.
-  A friendly, welcoming atmosphere – a place you like to bring your friends along to because it's so good.

What we will NOT do is ...

- Use language or practices that newcomers cannot readily relate to;
- Embarrass people; and
- Become so locked into our routines and traditions that we cannot break away from them and change things when required.

We are committed to making our meetings occasions where people can experience God first-hand and gain a real understanding of His great love for them in a style and language they can easily relate to.