

Warrenton Bible Fellowship Philosophy of Ministry

Introduction

Warrenton Bible Fellowship's philosophy of ministry is a developing document that reflects the elders' current understanding of scriptures in areas of importance to WBF.

While some of these subjects may concern doctrinal issues, many will simply explain how we choose to operate as a church.

The elders recognize that there can be a variety of scripturally-based interpretations of the scriptures in some of the areas that will be covered and a variety of appropriate ways in which a church may choose to operate. Each church must choose the scripturally-sound way that is appropriate for that particular congregation.

Individual members in the church may hold different views on these subjects but, to avoid confusion, teaching and practice in the church will remain consistent with the Philosophy of Ministry.

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Offering, Tithe & Fundraising Guidelines - *Adopted 2005*

In order to fully comply with the legal requirements as a not-for-profit organization and in keeping with Biblical principles, Warrenton Bible Fellowship (WBF) has established the following guidelines for gifts, offerings and fundraising.

Tithes and Offerings – This is the normal type of giving as prescribed in the Bible. These funds are used by the church to cover the on-going costs of the church. WBF encourages each of its members to give regularly according to the scriptural mandate. This giving will benefit both the giver and the church. These offerings may be made by cash, check, stock, bonds, or other legal tender. The elders will be responsible for disbursing these gifts in accordance with the congregation-approved budget and the needs of the church.

This type of giving is the primary source of funding for WBF. While guests are not precluded from participating in this giving, supporting WBF is primarily the responsibility of its members. Fundraising activities and other types of offerings must never interfere or discourage members from giving their regular tithes and offerings.

Special Offerings – From time to time it may be necessary to request a special offering from the congregation. These may include the monthly Benevolence Offering for the deacons to use for the urgent financial needs of those in our community as well as special offerings for outreach events, guest speakers, scholarships, food/clothing for the poor, capital equipment and various types of love offerings. The special offerings may be collected during a regular service, at a specific ministry event or even by mail. When announcing a special offering, it should be clearly stated that this giving is to be done only after normal tithes and offerings and that the request is aimed at church members, not guests.

The elders must approve any special offerings for WBF members by church or partner ministries. Solicitations to the community come under the guidelines for fundraising below.

Special Gifts – Sometimes individuals will recognize a specific need and make a gift to meet that need. Not all such gifts are tax-deductible. For instance, someone may designate a gift for the use of a specific individual in the community or congregation or even for a specific pastor or other minister. These gifts, however, are subject to the same limitations, when given through the church, as if they had been given directly to the recipient and are generally *not*

tax-deductible and are subject to gift tax limits. This is true if the gift is to be given to the individual directly or to pay for something that will be used by or for the benefit of that individual.

All gifts given to the church are tax deductible only if the church leadership has the authority to decide the final use of the funds. Requests may be made for the donation to be used for specific purposes, but the final decision for the use of the funds is to be made by the elders. The wishes of the donor will be honored to the fullest extent allowed by the law. However, if the gift is designated for a regularly budgeted expense, the specifically designated offering may be used to fund that budgeted item and general funds that would have been used for that purpose may be allocated elsewhere.

The elders reserve the right to refuse a special gift if the source of the funds or the designated use is not consistent with church doctrine, direction or policies. For instance, a gift offered from gambling proceeds or a gift designated for a specific organization or event may not be honored if the elders feel the church cannot generally support the activity, organization or event for any reason.

No one should be discouraged from making special gifts, but special gifts should always be made only after regular tithes and offerings.

Fundraisers – Fundraising activities fall into several categories.

- The first is similar to the request for a special offering but is presented on behalf of an outside organization to the congregation (i.e. a request for the congregation to fill baby bottles with cash for the Crisis Pregnancy Center);
- the second is one sponsored by a WBF ministry or partner ministry that solicits the community as well as the congregation for funds or goods (i.e. a request to ask your neighbors to contribute to a food drive); and
- the third is where a WBF ministry or partner ministry offers a product or service to the congregation and/or community in exchange for money (i.e. a car wash or bake sale).

All three of these types of fundraising activities must be approved in advance by the elders and will be evaluated according to how well they reflect on the Lord, on WBF, whether these offerings will have a positive or negative effect on the givers and recipients of the funds, and if these activities will contribute or detract from the work that God is doing through WBF.

Other types of gifts –

Property gifts: Vehicles, computer equipment, real estate or other items of value may be donated to the church. The church will provide a receipt for the goods reflecting the value of the gift according to current IRS regulations. Gifts such as these may be tax-deductible provided elders may determine the end use of the

item(s) donated. The elders must approve the receipt of any gifts of property and may refuse to accept property gifts that are deemed to be not useful to the church or its ministries.

Endowments: Members of the congregation may wish to fund the future needs of the church through endowments or by making WBF the beneficiary of life insurance policies or by charitable remainder trusts. For information about how this may be done, contact a reputable financial advisor. The Evangelical Free Church also has estate planning resources available through the Evangelical Free Church of America Foundation at <http://www.efca.org/foundation/index.html>.

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Spiritual Gifts – *Adopted 2005*

We believe that all genuine gifts of the Holy Spirit are valid and are given for the common good. Gifts primarily for self-edification should not be expressed in our public fellowship (I Corinthians 14:f). We do not believe that attaining a specific gift denotes divine approval or Spiritual achievement (Romans 12:3-8).

Vocal gifts must be submitted to an Elder prior to being expressed before the congregation.

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Men & Women in Ministry – *Adopted 2005*

Men's and Women's Roles at WBF

The Staff and Elders want to acknowledge that this area of the ministry has many perspectives and has been the subject of much debate over the life of the church. While we do not maintain that our position is the only position, we do see the need for a position to be taken so as to avoid confusion and miscommunication as we go forward. After much study, prayer and discussion of the Scriptures, in particular 1 Timothy 2:9-15, 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 and related passages, the Elder Board would like to make the following statements recognizing that the governing bodies of other Bible believing, Christ centered churches may have come to different conclusions. These statements should not be construed as the only interpretations of the texts but are provided as a way of making a clear statement to the body at WBF on how we will conduct our affairs while allowing WBF to cooperate freely with other Christ-centered churches in the community for the cause of the gospel. It should be recognized that, ultimately, the Elder Board has the responsibility to make any decisions within or outside of the guidelines of this Statement.

Governing authority positions/activities that can be occupied by men only

1. Senior Pastor
2. Associate Pastor
3. Elder
4. Presiding over a baptism or communion service
5. Giving spoken judgment on a prophecy given to the congregation
6. Permanent leader of a Home Fellowship group with male/female members
7. Formally counseling one man
8. Formally counseling a couple
9. Deacon ⁽¹⁾

Governing Activities that are open to men and women

1. Committee Chairperson
2. Director of Christian education
3. Sunday School Superintendent
4. Missionary responsibilities
5. Choir Director
6. Leading music on Sunday morning⁽²⁾
7. Moderating a discussion in a home Bible study group

8. Administrative Assistant to the Senior Pastor
9. Church Treasurer
10. Church Secretary
11. Meeting periodically with the Elder Board to provide counsel and advice
12. Regular conversations between Elders and wives over matters coming before the Elder Board with the understanding that confidentiality must be maintained
13. Formally counseling one woman
14. Speaking in congregational business meetings
15. Voting in congregational business meetings

Teaching Activities that are restricted to men

1. Preaching regularly to the whole church on Sunday morning
2. Occasional preaching to the whole church on Sunday morning
3. Occasional Bible teaching at less formal meetings of the whole church
4. Teaching an Adult Sunday School class⁽³⁾

Teaching Activities that are open to men and women

1. Teaching a high school or junior high school Sunday School class⁽⁴⁾
2. Bible teaching to a Women's Sunday School class
3. Bible teaching to a women's group during the week
4. Evangelistic speaking to large groups of non-Christians
5. Working as an evangelistic missionary
6. Moderating a discussion in a small group Bible Study
7. Reading Scripture aloud on Sunday mornings before the whole church
8. Reading Scripture in other, less formal meeting of the church
9. Giving personal testimony before the congregation
10. Participating in a discussion at a home Bible study
11. Teaching children's Sunday school class
12. Singing with the worship team or a solo on Sunday morning
13. Singing in the choir

Public recognition that is restricted to men

1. Ordination as a Pastor

Public recognition that is open to men and women

1. Bring licensed to perform ministerial functions over women
2. Paid member of pastoral staff (youth worker, music director, counselor, administrative director or any position the Elder Board approves of except Pastor or Elder)
3. Making announcements on Sunday morning
4. Taking the offering
5. Public reading of Scripture
6. Public prayer
7. Singing on Sunday mornings with the worship team or as a solo
8. Giving personal testimony before the whole church

9. Giving a prayer request
10. Being a member of a praying team that prays for people individually after the service
11. Being a greeter
12. Editing the church newsletter

(1) Women may perform many of the duties of a deacon but the appointed office of a deacon at WBF is reserved for men.

(2) A woman may serve as worship leader under the oversight of a pastor or elder who has overall responsibility for that portion of the service. That Pastor or Elder, if he chooses, may occupy a place on the stage during the worship portion of the service.

(3) While it is not forbidden for a woman to lead a co-ed adult Sunday school class, it is inappropriate for a woman to be in the position of establishing or declaring doctrine through preaching or teaching. This will limit the type of classes that a woman may lead.

(4) While it is preferred that co-ed Jr. High and High School Sunday School classes be led by men, a woman may serve in that capacity with appropriate oversight by the elders.