

STATEMENT OF FAITH AND PRACTICE OF WESTLAKE CHURCH NYON

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Art. 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Association Westlake Church Nyon (hereafter referred to as “AWCN”) was founded on 25 February 1988 to establish an English-speaking Evangelical Church (Westlake Church Nyon, hereafter referred to as “Westlake Nyon”) on the west side of Lac Léman, in accordance with New Testament teaching and practice.
- 1.2 It is recognized that the effective ministry of the church cannot be ensured by mere legislation, but is entirely dependent on the guidance and inspiration of God the Holy Spirit.
- 1.3 The Statutes of AWCN create the legal form of Westlake Nyon.
- 1.4 This Statement of Faith and Practice is intended to complement the official Statutes of AWCN.

Art. 2. Statement of Faith

As well as other biblical teaching, the church professes the following basic doctrines and principles:

- 2.1 The divine inspiration and authority of the Holy Scriptures as originally given, and their supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
- 2.2 The unity of God in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- 2.3 The creation of all things, both visible and invisible, by the Word of God; all creation being in, through and for Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God.
- 2.4 The universal sinfulness and guilt of mankind since the Fall, rendering him subject to God’s wrath and condemnation and necessitating the regeneration of his whole being.

- 2.5 The believer's redemption from the guilt, penalty and power of sin solely through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, the only Representative and Substitute for mankind; this redemption is received through personal faith in Jesus Christ.
- 2.6 The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
- 2.7 The second coming of Jesus Christ.
- 2.8 The resurrection of mankind, and the eternal blessedness of the redeemed and the eternal punishment of the impenitent.
- 2.9 The work of the Holy Spirit, convicting mankind of sin, bringing the sinner to repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ.
- 2.10 The indwelling and work of the Holy Spirit, granting new life and power to the believer and granting gifts to the Church.
- 2.11 The unity and common priesthood of all believers, who together form the one Universal Church, the body of which Christ is the head.
- 2.12 The believers' common objective to live Christ-centred lives (Ephesians 4:1–3) under the Lord's authority and to make disciples of Jesus Christ according to His commandment (Matthew 28: 19–20).

Art. 3. Biblical Ordinances

In accordance with New Testament teaching, two ordinances shall be taught and observed in Westlake Nyon, namely:

- 3.1 The Lord's Supper (otherwise known as the Communion Service) shall be observed throughout the year, as often as the Elders decide, and shall be made available to all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 3.2 Baptism, normally by immersion, shall be administered to those who profess repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and whose lives bear evidence of their Christian profession.

Art. 4. Mission

The mission of Westlake Church Nyon is ... **"Enabling people to become lifelong followers of Jesus Christ for the glory of God and the good of the world"**.

In order to grow in and sustain the life of a lifelong follower of Jesus Christ, we encourage and train our people in our core commitments for growing disciples, which are to:

- 4.1 **GROW IN FAITH** through our worship and teaching;
- 4.2 **GROW IN COMMUNITY** through involvement in our small groups and fellowship events;
- 4.3 **GROW IN SERVING** through supporting and being involved in our various ministries and mission projects;
- 4.4 **GROW IN INTIMACY** through developing a personal and enriching relationship with God.

Note: This Mission statement was elaborated by the entire Westlake Nyon congregation under the leadership of the Elders in May 2021, and it encapsulates the previous Mission statement which, for historical purposes, is attached in the Appendix.

Art. 5. Membership

- 5.1 Westlake Nyon admits, on request, professing Christians convinced of their biblical duty to belong to a local body of believers and who, voluntarily, by virtue of their becoming members of the church, accept its privileges and responsibilities.
- 5.2 Membership is open to all believers who unreservedly approve Westlake Nyon's Statement of Faith and Practice (this document; see Art. 2) and who are in agreement with the Mission of the church (Art. 4). Membership also implies acceptance of AWCN Statutes.
- 5.3 The purpose of membership is:
 - 5.3.1 First and foremost, to be the intentional, public demonstration of commitment and belonging to the body of Christ here at Westlake Nyon;
 - 5.3.2 To provide coherence and stability to the organisation of Westlake Nyon;

- 5.3.3 To provide the basis for corporate government of Westlake Nyon's affairs;
- 5.3.4 To constitute a way for members to encourage each other in community to participate in the mission of the church as stated in Art. 4.
- 5.4 Membership may be required as a prerequisite to holding certain ministry positions within Westlake Nyon as specified in the policy statements of the respective ministries.
- 5.5 Westlake Nyon recognizes the necessity of a firm but loving discipline in order to maintain, as far as possible, the purity of the Church and a witness honouring to Christ.
- 5.6 Members shall seek, in accordance with Scripture and empowered by the Holy Spirit:
 - 5.6.1 To live a life of personal purity and holiness consistent with their high calling in Christ;
 - 5.6.2 To share in an active and responsible manner all aspects of the work, worship, witness and financial support of Westlake Nyon, according to their callings, gifts and opportunities;
 - 5.6.3 To exhibit to one another at all times the Christian virtues of "compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience" so that "bearing with one another and forgiving one another as the Lord forgave us, we may be bound together in the perfect unity of Christian love".

Art. 6. Church Government

- 6.1 Westlake Nyon is a local expression of the Universal Church of which Christ is the Head (Colossians 1:18). Recognizing the supreme headship of Christ, the government of Westlake Nyon shall be collegiate rather than hierarchical and shall be administered by the Elders (of whom one or more may be a paid pastor), the Executive Board and the various Ministry Leaders. They, together with all the members, shall earnestly seek, under the Spirit's guidance, the will of God concerning Westlake Nyon.

The church leadership shall be appointed in the manner set out in the Statutes and shall carry out their responsibilities in humility and love and in accordance with scriptural principles.

Art. 7. Annual General Meetings and other General Meetings

- 7.1 Annual General Meetings (AGM) and other General Meetings are occasions when all the members together, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, seek the mind and will of Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, in relation to the major issues in the life and work of Westlake Nyon. In doing so, it can aid communication and provide for the encouragement of the membership. It is the occasion for the Elders, and others, to report to members on various aspects of the church's life, as required. At General Meetings, the membership takes direct responsibility for the matters outlined in the Statutes and for matters of doctrine and policy when further clarity is needed.

Art. 8. Council of Elders

- 8.1 The Elders in Westlake Nyon will exercise their ministry according to their gifts and calling.
- 8.2 The Elders shall consist only and at all times of those persons who unreservedly approve the foregoing Statement of Faith and Practice and fulfil the scriptural requirements as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7.
- 8.3 They will individually and collectively exercise responsibility for the pastoring, preaching and teaching ministries of Westlake Nyon, to ensure its continual growth in the knowledge of the Lord, to maintain the unity of the faith and to prepare it for service and outreach (Ephesians 4:11-13).

However, they may divide among themselves particular responsibilities for various areas of the church's spiritual life.
- 8.4 As the need arises, the members will propose from among themselves candidates for the Eldership. These names must be submitted to the Elders, who will first ascertain which people have received the most support. If the existing Elders believe that these people fulfil the requirements for Eldership (see 1 Timothy 3:1-7) and are willing to serve, then they will recommend them to the membership. Any such recommendation should be communicated to each member one month before the meeting where the new Elder's ministry is due to be approved. During this period, the membership shall prayerfully consider the recommendation of the Elders. Any information relevant to the decision that a member feels should be kept confidential should be communicated to the Elders during this time. There will be time for open discussion at the meeting in which members are asked to take a decision.
- 8.5 Before seeking renomination, Elders should seek carefully the Lord's will concerning their calling and ministry.

- 8.6 The Council of Elders shall hold an annual review of the Pastor's performance and update the plans and objectives of the church for the coming year(s).
- 8.7 Every three years, in parallel with the annual performance review, the Council of Elders shall review the question of continuing the church-pastor relationship. The Elders shall inform the members in writing of this process at least 30 days before the review and provide a means for members to provide their views.
- If the Council of Elders is content to continue the church-pastor relationship then, if the Pastor agrees, the Pastor's contract would normally be extended for three years.
 - If not, the Council of Elders will give the Pastor one month to consider his response. Thereafter, if necessary, the Elders will give notice of termination of the contract.

The Council of Elders may decide that the whole or part of the notice period should not be worked.
 - The Council of Elders will inform the members of their decision in writing. They may decide to call a subsequent meeting to further explain the decision.

Art. 9. Executive Board

The Executive Board performs a diaconal role as the administrative body of AWCN and Westlake Nyon.

Art. 10. Ministry Leaders

- 10.1 The role of Ministry Leaders is to perform a diaconal role by assisting the Elders and the Executive Board in the government, administration and running of activities of Westlake Nyon.
- 10.2 The office of Ministry Leader shall be open to those members whose spiritual character and gifts qualify them to undertake various responsibilities in the service of the church (1 Timothy 3:8-13).
- 10.3 The Ministry Leaders shall be carefully and prayerfully chosen from among those who are probably already exercising their gifts in roles of responsibility within Westlake Nyon. They will be proposed by their respective ministry teams or by the general membership and formally appointed by the Elders.

Art. 11. Staff

Pastor

- 11.1 It is recognized that the church may employ a full-time Pastor (as distinct from additional Pastoral staff) who fulfils all the conditions for membership and Eldership in the church and is suitably qualified and experienced for the pastoral ministry envisaged.
- 11.2 The Pastor is a de facto elder of equal status with the other Elders, set apart specifically by God and the local church for the ministry of preaching, teaching and pastoral oversight. He is accountable to the Elders.

Additional Pastoral Staff

- 11.3 Additional Pastoral staff must fulfil all the conditions for membership in the church and be suitably qualified and experienced for the ministry or task envisaged.

Non-Pastoral Staff

- 11.4 Non-pastoral staff must fulfil all the conditions for membership in the church and be suitably qualified and experienced for the ministry or task envisaged.

Art. 12. Other responsibilities

- 12.1 Members may be appointed to such roles or responsibilities within Westlake Nyon as deemed fit by the Executive Board or the Elders provided also that they fulfil the requirements set out in the policy statement of the relevant ministry (where such a policy statement exists).

Art. 13. Finance

- 13.1 AWCN has tax-free status and is classified as a religious association ('but cultuel'). In the canton of Vaud, donations to AWCN are not tax deductible by Vaud residents.
- 13.2 AWCN was established in 1988 to provide a legal entity and framework to enable the activities of Westlake Nyon; these include the ability to hire staff, hold bank accounts, procure insurance policies.
- 13.3 According to the Association Statutes, the official AWCN representatives to external entities, including authorities, are the elected Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Treasurer of the Executive Board (EB).
- 13.4 AWCN finances are governed by two detailed policies: "Finance Policy" and "Expense Policy and Procedures" approved by the EB and Elders. Together they provide a sound basis for good stewardship of church assets and all gifts made by the congregation. These policies ensure efficient and transparent management of AWCN financial matters by ensuring that strict financial controls are in place.
- 13.5 An annual audit is carried out by two Association members appointed by the AGM. The results of the annual audit are then presented to the AGM for approval.
- 13.6 All AWCN monetary assets are held in several bank accounts at the Banque Cantonale Vaudoise (BCV). At any point in time the sum of all cash reserves deposited in the BCV must be equal to or exceed 50% of the current budget spending for one year, i.e. cover six months of spending.
- 13.7 Westlake Nyon is strongly committed to the support of Missions. All money donated to a specific Mission will be integrally transferred to that Mission. More details are provided in the "Finance Policy".
- 13.8 AWCN employs an external accounting firm ("Fiduciaire") to assist in the execution of several key activities, such as maintenance of a General Ledger (GL), annual Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss account, annual tax declaration, salary slips for paid staff including payments for social charges (e.g. AVS, LPP, insurances). This provides good protection for all finance-related activities with respect to paid staff, external entities and authorities.
- 13.9 The EB is assisted by an appointed external insurance broker who regularly reviews all insurance coverage required for the safe operation of all church activities, including those related to staff and volunteers.

Art. 14. Amendments

- 13.1 This Statement of Faith and Practice may only be amended with the consent of two-thirds (2/3) of the membership of Westlake Nyon.

Appendix Previous Mission Statement

- 4.1 Westlake exists to glorify God through
 - 4.1.1 Reaching up in worship, developing a life-changing vision of God's greatness and His glory;
 - 4.1.2 Reaching deeper in discipleship, living a life worthy of the Lord, bearing fruit in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God;
 - 4.1.3 Reaching round in care, providing support that enables each one to realise their potential in Christ;
 - 4.1.4 Reaching out in evangelism, bringing the Gospel to the English speaking community of Geneva-Lausanne area;
 - 4.1.5 Reaching further through equipping, training those who leave the area for a lifetime of Christian ministry, and supporting mission throughout the world;
 - 4.1.6 Reaching forward to the next generation, helping bring them to faith in Christ and equipping them to live out their faith as they make the transition toward adulthood.

Approval Date

This modified Statement of Faith and Practice was proposed at the General Meeting of 22 November 2022, and approved unanimously by 44 members, representing more than the required majority of two-thirds (2/3) of the total members (50). The present Statement of Faith and Practice replaces the previous version dated 23 March 2021.

For the Council of Elders

For the Association of Westlake Church Nyon