

# Leader's Manual 2024



Dear Leader,

Thank you for your commitment to leadership at NewHope in 2024. The church is the gathered body of believers who each utilise their giftings for the work of God's Kingdom. To be who God is calling us to be as NewHope we need each other and we need you. Our call is to be leaders who lead with faith, humility, respect and a deep love for Jesus and those whom we serve.

This leaders manual has been designed to support your leadership within NewHope this year by providing practical information and expectations for all leaders at NewHope. You may receive additional information and training for your specific context of leadership and I encourage you to engage regularly with your ministry leader throughout this year.

I believe that through the power of the Spirit we can do far more together than we could ever ask or imagine. I am eager to serve with you this year as we invite God to lead our shared activity across NewHope. May you be blessed as you lead this year and may you experience God using you to bring health, life and faith into the lives of others.

God Bless,

Lance Blythe

Associate Pastor & Director of NewHope Community Care  
NewHope Baptist Church

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# NewHope Values

NewHope is committed to a culture in which life-giving relationships can flourish, a culture in which:



## PEOPLE Matter Most

We **empower each other**. We recognise diversity in gifting, skill, perspective and calling. We work hard to build and maintain healthy communities.

We **carry each other's burdens**, and we do the things that are ours to do.

We make every effort to see things from the other person's perspective. We seek first to understand, then to be understood. We **listen wholeheartedly**.



## There is Always HOPE

We always keep the Lord before us (Ps 16:8). We **choose an eternal perspective**.

We always **seek God's Kingdom**. We follow Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit. We are motivated and energised by heaven-sent expectations.

We invite each other to **live in God's big story**. We align our vision of the world and each other with the way of Jesus.



## GRACE Changes Everything

We **receive grace**, we **respond in grace**. We seek to be reconciled rather than to prove we are right. We keep each other accountable. We live generously.

We make it safe for one another. We **speak in loving ways**. We have honest conversations. We forgive others.

We **leave everything better than we found it** (e.g. the planet we live on, people we talk to, teams we work with, spaces we use, even the kitchen sink).

# Our Theology of Mission

We do not have a mission of our own, we participate in the mission of God in the world. At NewHope we emphasise three aspects of our role in this mission.

Kingdom • Jesus • Disciples

Together we proclaim the kingdom of God.

God's kingdom is the range of God's effective will. It is the all encompassing, eternal and loving rule of our creator God (Ps 103:19, 1 Cor 4:20), promised through ancient Israel (Isa 9:7) and a central theme of the bible.

God's kingdom has come and is coming. The healing and righteous reign of the Creator has already arrived in Jesus Christ (the Messiah), AND it is yet to come in its fullness and all embracing supremacy (1 Cor 15:24, Luke 13:29). We are always seeking the kingdom in our daily experience (Mark 4:26-33, Matt 6:33), and waiting for it's ultimate unfolding in the new creation (Rev 11:15, 21:1-5). We pray, 'your kingdom come' (Matt 6:10).

Proclaiming the good news about God's kingdom is what Jesus did and what he instructed his disciples to do (Luke 4:43, 9:2, Matt 4:23, 10:7-8). It is what Peter (2 Peter 1:11), Philip (Acts 8:12) and Paul did (Acts 28:23,31) and so it is what we do as well. We are co-workers for the kingdom (Col 4:11).

What difference are we seeking to make?

Lives grounded in the freeing reality that there is One who is greater than 'I'.

People Affirm: There is a God who loves me.

People experience a sense of love and belonging, a relief from pretending, an emerging purpose, and true hope.

## Together we make Jesus known.

Jesus opens the way for us. He rescues us from the kingdom of darkness and brings us into God's kingdom. He welcomes us, heals us, and gives us abundant life (Luke 9:11, John 10:9-10, Col 1:13). He takes away sin and reconciles the world to God (John 1:29, Heb 9:28, 2 Cor 5:18-20). Jesus' cross and empty tomb are the centre of his extraordinary story of participation in God's mission and we are invited to join ourselves to him by faith – to participate in Jesus' death and resurrection – so we can live a new life (Matt 11:29-30, John 5:24, Rom 6:4). Jesus is our living hope. At this very moment he is both with us (incarnation) and with our heavenly Abba-Father (ascension). He prays for us, mentors us and gives us the Holy Spirit enabling us to enter fully into God's kingdom. He asks us to put our undivided trust in him – to believe he is the truth, the way and the life (John 14:6). We must be ready to give witness to our experience of his love, peace, forgiveness and joy. (1 Peter 1:3, 3:15).

What difference are we seeking to make?

Lives grounded in the Good News of who Jesus is.

People Affirm: Jesus is my saviour and Lord; my model and mentor.

People experience friendship with Jesus, purpose anchored in eternity, and genuine grace as something received and something to be offered.

## Together we make disciples.

Disciples are servants in God's kingdom and learners who are being mentored by the living Lord, Jesus Christ (Matt 4:19, Rev 1:6). We practice habits of formation, inherited from centuries of tradition, that align our will and ways with God. Disciples mature into Christ-likeness (Eph 4).

Disciples form community and exercise care for each other. Together we proclaim the kingdom of God and make Jesus known (Acts 6:1-7, Eph 4:32). We go through hardships together, share blessings and build each other up in faith (Acts 14:22, Heb 10:24-25). We do good work (Matt 5:16, Eph 2:10, Phil 2:13). Jesus instructed us to make disciples and we expect the number of disciples to grow. (Matt 28:19, Acts 6:7).

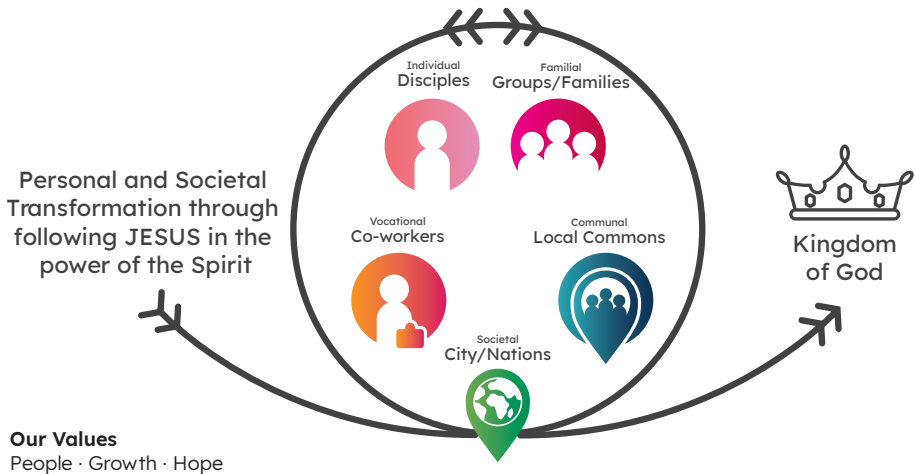
What difference are we seeking to make?

Lives grounded in the Way of Jesus.

People Affirm: Jesus defines my identity, shapes my character, and gives me a pattern for loving God, others and creation.

People experience the vitality of faith and life in the Spirit, and joyfully share stories of God's work and active presence.

## NewHope's Life-giving Relationship Circles



### Our 'Way of Life'

We each walk a unique path among different people in dynamic relational networks. But as we follow Jesus wholeheartedly, our WAY OF LIFE is profoundly similar. This is why the early Christians were called 'Followers of The Way' (Acts 9:1, Eph 4:20, 5:2). At NewHope we encourage one another towards commitments and postures that characterise this 'Jesus Way of Life' and foster life-giving relationships in all five circles. Our paths are dynamic and different, but our behaviour as disciples embodies Jesus' Way of Life.

## Individual Disciples



## Familial Groups/Families



## Vocational Co-workers



### COMMITMENTS

- Be with Jesus
- Become like Jesus
- Do what Jesus did

- Be with others
- Love like Jesus
- Making more followers

- Be with colleagues
- Become a visible expression of the person and love of Christ

### POSTURES

1. Prayerful (Spirit led)
2. Intentional (Deliberate Practice)
3. Learning (Reflective)
4. Emotionally Healthy

1. Open (Vulnerable)
2. Loving & Generous
3. Forgiving
4. Relationally Healthy

1. Gracious & kind
2. Humble & gentle
3. Steadfast Faithfulness (Integrity)
4. Servant-hearted

## Communal Local Commons



## Societal City/Nations



### COMMITMENTS

- Be with our Neighbours
- Love our Neighbours as a local, visible, long-term expression of the body of Christ

- Be with other Churches
- Become a valued partner in service to God's mission in the city and globally

### POSTURES

1. Care
2. Connection
3. Belonging
4. Celebration

1. Justice seeking
2. Peacemaking
3. Truth telling
4. Community builders



# Your personal and Spiritual Growth

No matter the role you have volunteered to lead in at NewHope we are passionate about you growing in your connection with Jesus through this ministry opportunity. Your spiritual growth will require intentionality and ongoing perseverance through the different seasons of life. The daily practice of 30 minutes with Jesus is about the intentionality and practice of laying our lives down before Him and inviting the Spirit to bring wisdom and guidance to our lives in response.

Here are a few things to consider as you consider your spiritual growth this year:

**Your Time:** Devote specific time to your own journey with God. Practice both speaking to Him and seeking to hear from Him. We believe scripture speaks to us and when we give it time, it allows the Holy Spirit to uncover truth for us each day. Give time to prayer and to the scriptures in your life.

**Your Others:** Consider who the 'others' in your life are. Who are you intentionally invested in and in turn, they are intentionally invested in you? Jesus' invitation in Luke 10 was to go on mission in twos. Being on the journey of faith with others is critical to our spiritual growth. Bless and be blessed by the intentional 'others' in your life.

**Your Heart:** When it comes to faith in Jesus we never know it all and we never stop learning. Make this a pre-set of your heart this year. When we are open to God revealing new truths to us we position ourselves for an exciting journey of faith. God is always before us and our understanding of Him always has the chance to expand!

**Your Vocation:** You are volunteering in a ministry at NewHope, but we understand that the majority of your life is spent in another ministry setting - Your Vocational setting. Allow God to lead you as His ambassador in this place and to use you to reveal His character. You are the person for this setting at this time!

# Responding to an Allegation or Concern

We take all concerns, allegations and conflicts seriously at NewHope Baptist Church. As a result, we have set up procedures that outline our response to any issue or concern that arises with respect to our safe church organisation policy.

A Safe Organisation concern is anything that raises serious concern for a leader with respect to the safety of people in our care. This could include, but is not limited to, a complaint, an issue that a leader or volunteer witnessed, evidence of abuse, unsafe conduct or inappropriate behaviour of another leader. Leaders are responsible to know the policies (attached in the appendices of this manual), participate in relevant training (this manual) and commitments ([www.newhope.net.au/training](http://www.newhope.net.au/training)) and exercise wisdom at all times.

We are committed to being a safe place for all. Our first response to a concern or allegation is completed by the leader who has had first contact with the issue. The responsibility for a leader who a concern or has received an allegation is outlined through the following steps:

- Provide immediate intervention / support as required (and appropriate)
- Take notes: what has occurred? Who was involved?
- Report your concern immediately to your ministry supervisor

Your ministry supervisor is to follow necessary steps in response to your report. NewHope's Safe Organisation Concerns Team (SOC) ultimately responds to allegations of harm or concerns of harm to any of our people. The SOC team seeks to ensure that NewHope ministries fulfil NewHope's moral and legal responsibilities to any issues of harm or abuse. Members of the SOC team in 2024 are Lance Blythe (chair), Alicia Demond, Phil Gaudion and Tim Spencer.

# Where Children are present

All leaders at NewHope should exercise wisdom and caution in their interactions with children. When children's parents are present the children are under the care of their parent/guardian. (Unless they are concurrently signed into a NewHope program). Within these contexts an acceptable level of incidental interaction between children and leaders may occur. Where the level of interaction between leaders and children is more than incidental or children will be within a ministry context without their parents, all adult leaders must follow ministry specific guidelines as outlined by their ministry supervisor.

The following are some expectations of leaders and volunteers in relation to Working With Children Checks:

- In all roles where a leader or volunteer will have more than incidental contact with children, he or she will need to obtain and provide a copy of an appropriate and valid Working With Children Check or equivalent registration.
- NewHope may request volunteers who are working with 'vulnerable people' to obtain a Working With Children Check even if the role does not specifically relate to children.
- It is the responsibility of the leader or volunteer to inform NewHope in the event that an interim negative notice or a negative notice is issued to him or her.
- In the event that a notice is issued, the leader or volunteer will be required to either temporarily or permanently stand down from his or her position.
- In the event that a WWCC expires or is revoked at any time, the leader or volunteer will be unable to continue in that role until a new WWCC has been issued to him or her.

## Guidelines for 'Safe Touch'

All leaders at NewHope should be aware of what 'safe touch' looks like in their interactions with others. These guidelines around safe touch can be applied to interaction with any person:

- Only touch neutral 'safe' zones (from shoulder to elbow on the outside of the arm and above the top third of the back)
- Be aware of the personal space of others. Consider standing/sitting next to someone rather than in front of them. This may enable a leader or volunteer to remain close enough to provide physical comfort, but also maintain reasonable personal space

- Avoid initiating touch (ie a hug) when not in full view of others
- Ask permission when hugging another person

If for example a small child climbs onto a leader's/volunteer's lap respond with warmth.

Rather than removing the child immediately, it may be wiser for the leader to allow the child to sit there for a short while (ie less than 20 seconds) then remove them by offering another seat or game.

#### Child Supervision

No leader or volunteer should be alone, one on one, with a child or young person. This includes in a car or private home. The parent or caregiver is responsible for toileting their child.

(Information adapted from BUV Safe Church Manual 2014)

## Guidelines for leaders in response to Victoria's Suppression Act

The Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practises Prohibition Act 2021 will come into effect in the State of Victoria on February 17 2024. The Act was developed to outlaw abusive practises employed in psychiatric, religious or other contexts in **order to change or suppress people's sexual orientation or expression**. Such practises have caused significant suffering and trauma. NewHope supports the prohibition of abusive practises.

An in depth guide has been created by the BUV and can be reviewed at [newhope.net.au/training](http://newhope.net.au/training)

As leaders we are responsible for the care of those we lead and interact with in all contexts at NewHope. The following guidelines are to support your leadership and create expectations as to how we as a community seek to respond.

In the light of the Gospel of grace through faith in Jesus, as a community our hope is that every and any person can experience a life giving relationship with Jesus. In relation to marriage, NewHope

affirmed at a members meeting that it maintains a traditional interpretation of marriage.

NewHope affirms the historic Baptist view of religious freedom, the truth of God's Word, and the priesthood of all believers. We hold in tension the reality that every person's experiences and perspectives shape their own convictions, with the biblical vision of discerning God's truth together in community.

It is our sincere hope that regardless of sexual orientation, everyone has the opportunity to experience welcome, connection and ultimately encounter Jesus at NewHope. We as leaders will create space for others to encounter Jesus and will prioritise relationships.

Leaders of NewHope are required by law to not engage in behaviours focused on the changing or suppression of one's sexuality. These may take the form of instructing, pressuring or coercing someone to change their sexual orientation or prayer which is focused on changing one's sexual orientation.

Leaders are able to share their perspectives on what the Bible says as long as they are clear that this is their understanding of the scriptures and are not using this perspective to place pressure on an individual to change. However, a leader does not need to intend to instruct, pressure or coerce for this conduct to be perceived by the recipient as behaviours focused on changing or suppressing one's sexuality. A breach of the law can be based on how the recipient interprets the conversation.

### **What if I am asked to pray for someone in regards to their sexuality?**

- **Prioritise relationship:** Whatever perspective you hold this is a deeply personal aspect of life and no resolution to this request will ever be found in one interaction. Focus on maintaining relationship for the long term and not seeking resolution in the short term.
- **Invite dialogue:** Genuine interest and conversation is a powerful discipleship tool. Assume that you know nothing of their story and embrace the exciting journey of learning and understanding as we engage in dialogue together. Ask questions like: 'Why would you like me to pray for that?' 'What experiences have you had previously in Christian communities?' 'How do you understand God and his love?'

- **Follow up:** Ongoing relationship matters most. Seek to connect again and continue genuine connection and mutual support. If you would like additional support, ask if the individual would be willing to meet with a pastoral team member. Our pastors are willing to engage in dialogue and are available to anyone asking questions of sexuality. You are invited to join in these conversations and engage with the journey of life giving relationships.

The BUV believes that a prayer such as the following may be a reasonable response to being asked to pray for an individual's sexuality: *"God, we ask that you help this person to discern your will for them in this and to act according to it."* (Please note: this is still a legally untested suggestion).

These guidelines and recommendations are based on the BUV Code of Ethics for Pastoral Leaders which can be reviewed at [newhope.net.au/training](http://newhope.net.au/training).

Please engage in conversation with the pastoral team at NewHope if you wish to discuss further and whatever your personal perspective, always engage sensitively and prayerfully with others in this area.

## First Aid Response

If during the course of your leadership someone is injured or becomes physically unwell, respond within the appropriate level of your prior first aid/medical training. Some basic pointers to follow as the recognised leader in an incident such as this are as follows (DRSABCD):

- **D** - Look for any immediate danger to yourself, the patient or those around you
- **R** - Check for a response from the person
- **S** - Send someone to find a staff member or first aid person, first aid kit and defibrillator - if required
- **A/B** - Apply first aid to the level of your training
- **C** - Call 000 if further assistance is required or if the situation is life threatening - DO NOT DELAY
  - Follow the call taker's instructions
  - If at NewHope campus send someone to the main entrance / carpark to direct the paramedics
- **D** - If at NewHope campus and instructed to do so utilise Defibrillator - located at Springfield Road entrance doors

# Mental Health Awareness

Mental health conditions are extremely prevalent within the community. As a leader within NewHope part of your role may be to offer support and provide pastoral care for those who are experiencing challenges in their Mental Health. We do not expect, or want you to do this on your own and we are not here to diagnose or provide treatment for individuals. As leaders we have the opportunity to provide love, support, acceptance and warmth to anyone in need and to guide people towards appropriate help and support. Please ask your ministry supervisor for assistance if required.

All pastors at NewHope are available for pastoral care support. Prayer for Healing is a tremendous ministry of prayer support to anyone seeking to receive prayer for any degree of healing and can be arranged through the NewHope Reception (9890 7999). NewHope Medical offers professional counselling support to our wider community (9066 1145).

## **Mental Health First Aid Response – Action Plan**

The basic skills of mental health first aid are summarised by the 5 steps below (ALGEE), which can be used as a tool by anyone for providing mental health first aid.

Just as we use the steps of DRSABCD in physical first aid response, ALGEE can be used in mental health first aid response.

- **A – Approach** the person, assess and assist with any crisis
- **L – Listen** and communicate non-judgmentally
- **G – Give** support and information
- **E – Encourage** the person to get appropriate professional help
- **E – Encourage** other supports

For more information, you can speak to our current New Hope staff that are trained and accredited mental health first aid responders - Adam Southwood, Phil Gaudion, Sam Farbod, Hannah Freeman and Miranda Lewtas, who can provide you with extra support and guidance in this area.

# Evacuation of the Blackburn Campus

Evacuation maps and procedures are located around the church building, and more specifically near the entrance of each room. Make sure you are familiar with the policies and procedures in the case of needing to direct people out of the building. Under no circumstances would you be required or expected to re-enter the building once you have evacuated; your main purpose would be to assist others out in a calm manner.

## Appendix A

### NewHope Safe Organisation Policy

#### PREAMBLE

We affirm that all people have the right to be emotionally and physically safe; to be respected; and to have their views and opinions valued at all times. We also acknowledge that our country legislates for people's safety.

God calls his body to minister to vulnerable people. God identified classes of vulnerable people who were to be protected and given special care and treatment in society because of their powerlessness (Ex 22:21-22, Deut 10:17-19, Jer 22:2-4, James 1:27).

The NewHope Safe Organisation Policy enshrines behaviours valued as part of NewHope's Leadership Culture:

- We always keep the Lord before us. (Psalm 16:8)
- We make it "safe" for one another so we can speak the truth in love.
- We have the honest conversations. We never shame one another.
- We make every effort to see things from the other person's perspective.
- We seek first to understand, then to be understood. We listen wholeheartedly.
- We seek to be reconciled rather than to prove we are right. We react in the opposite spirit.
- We recognise gifting, skill, diversity and calling, and we defer to one another often.
- We make certain everyone on every team knows: (a) what we are aiming to do together (vision), (b) what we want them to do



(responsibility) and (c) who they must answer to (accountability).

- We speak well of each other at all times. We have each other's backs.
- We learn from failures. We reward personal growth.
- We are always trying to move the ball up the field. Every meeting ends with actions. Every week is punctuated with Sabbath. We keep each other accountable.
- We leave everything better than we found it – whether rooms we meet in, kitchen sinks, teams we work with, ministries we lead, people we talk to, etc.
- We celebrate people added to our width and depth added to our people.

This policy has been developed to help us live out our Biblical mandate and our responsibilities under Australian legislation.

**The NewHope Safe Organisation Policy applies to all Staff Members and Volunteers associated with any of the NewHope Organisations.**

## AIMS

The NewHope Safe Organisation Policy aims to:

- Ensure that all people are respected and valued.
- Minimise the risk of abuse, ministry misconduct and the misuse of positional power.
- Ensure that all cases of suspected abuse and ministry misconduct are handled thoroughly. Ensure that leaders, volunteers and programs are safe.

## COMMITMENTS

### **1. Safe recruitment of Leaders and Volunteers.**

NewHope will screen all prospective Leaders and Volunteers before they are appointed.

### **2. Adequate training of Leaders and Volunteers.**

NewHope requires all Leaders and Volunteers to attend role-specific training as required, including Safe Church (or SCTA endorsed) workshops and other external workshops (where appropriate).

### **3. Continued supervision of Leaders and Volunteers.**

- NewHope commits to the supervision and support of Leaders and Volunteers.

- Every Leader and Volunteer will be provided with a role-appropriate Code of Conduct.

#### **4. Responding to allegations of risk of harm (abuse) and serious ministry misconduct.**

- Where reporting requirements arise, all Leaders and Volunteers will report disclosures or suspicions of child abuse, according to role-specific procedures and legislative requirements.
- Where an allegation of misconduct is made against a Leader or Volunteer, NewHope will provide support to alleged victims and perpetrators and seek or provide appropriate assistance to ensure a just, fair and timely resolution.

#### **5. Safe environments in our programs.**

- Ministry and Program Coordinators will complete a written Ministry/Program Approval Process annually, or as often as is appropriate for the ministry/program.
- All programs will be run in environments assessed as suitable by the Safety Team.
- All Leaders and Volunteers will discharge their duty of care through the use of forms, checklists and templates for establishment and maintenance of Safe Environments in our ministries/programs.
- Where spiritual leadership is exercised, we will serve participants as servants of Christ, commit to the good news of Jesus and lead in spiritually non-abusive ways.
- We will afford participants a say in the programs and the activities in which they participate by fostering and valuing their ideas and encouraging participation.
- We will obtain appropriate information relating to the program participants, including health and family situation, to ensure that we are able to care for their physical and emotional needs.
- We will comply with standards of privacy applicable to equivalent organisations and will publish a separate Privacy Policy for information collected by NewHope.

## DEFINITIONS

**Child:** any person (including Leaders and Volunteers) who is under the age of 18 years.

**Code of Conduct:** a ministry/program-specific document setting out the minimum expectations of Leaders and Volunteers involved in that ministry/program.

**Leader:** a Staff Member or Volunteer who is responsible for a ministry/program, including completing safety management plans and recruiting a team to run the ministry/program.

**Ministry/Program:** an event (or series of events) falling within a certain ministry/program title (for example, “Children’s Ministry”) that is run by or in the name of NewHope.

**Ministry/Program Approval Process:** an accountability process whereby Leaders obtain written approval from Ministry/Program Coordinators for a ministry/program to take place in the name of NewHope.

**Ministry/Program Coordinator:** a person appointed from NewHope’s senior leadership group (in recognition of the significant positional power inherent in the role) to oversees a group of ministries/programs (for example, family ministries).

**Safe Environment:** an environment where those in our care are safe from spiritual, physical, sexual or emotional abuse (including bullying) or neglect and which meets WHS requirements.

**Safe Leader/Volunteer:** a Leader or Volunteer who has been through a recruitment process, understands and has indicated acceptance of responsibilities, is supervised and is accountable.

**Safe Organisation Concerns Team:** the team responsible for the Safe Organisation Policy (as well as supporting documentation and processes) and to whom Leaders and Volunteers report breaches of the Safe Organisation Policy.

**Safe Program:** all foreseeable risks have been assessed (and plans put in place to mitigate against those risks) and all events have been thought through and planned. Safe Programs are approved through an appropriate Ministry/Program Approval Process.

**Safety Team:** the team responsible for overseeing the drafting and implementation of WHS.

**SCTA:** Safe Church Training Agreement under the National Council of Churches in Australia.

**Staff Member:** a person who is remunerated for the services that they provide to NewHope.

**Volunteer:** a person who provides services to (or on behalf of) NewHope without receiving remuneration for the provision of those services.

**WHS:** Work Health and Safety; including but not limited to fire safety, building safety, first aid, food safety, transport, incident and emergency procedures.

## Appendix B

### Legal requirements/information for Leaders at NewHope

#### Positional Power

Within all relationships there is a balance of power. Relationships can have an equal power balance when both parties contribute equally and with respect towards one another. However, whenever an individual is asked to exercise leadership or influence over another person a power imbalance occurs. At times this power imbalance may be necessary and acceptable, for example in the teacher and student or doctor and patient relationship. The responsibility is always on the individual in the more powerful position to act in ways that respect, empower and look after the interest of the person in the less powerful position.

In ministry we are given positional power whenever we take on a leadership position. A power imbalance is immediately in place as those that we lead will look to us for guidance, spiritual input, support and respect as we lead. The onus is always on the leader to respect the boundaries of their relationships and to constantly look for ways to empower those they are asked to lead. A leader must not act in any way which seeks to undermine, weaken or hurt those who are under their leadership. It is also important to consider these principles in relation to how we deal with children, as a power imbalance is always in place in the relationship between an adult and a child.

Abuses of positional power occur when an individual chooses to act in ways which abuse the power they have been given. Whether the actions are deliberate and calculated or accidental and naive the consequences are always harmful because there has been a violation of personal boundaries.

These boundaries include areas such as spiritual, physical, financial, emotional, sexual and other social boundaries. The reason's why an abuse of positional power may have occurred can be separated into 3

groups:

### **1. Non-Offender (Boundary Respector)**

This is when an individual realises they have overstepped a boundary in their relationship and they immediately take steps to correct the situation.

### **2. Wanderer (Boundary Rider)**

This is when an individual operates right on the edge of a boundary while seemingly being unaware how close they are to abusing the power given to them in their relationships. Often accountability and education can help to correct this behaviour.

### **3. Predator (Boundary Violator)**

This is when an individual deliberately crosses a boundary without hesitation. Their aim is to breakdown a person's boundaries and to take full advantage of the position of power they have.

NewHope seeks to screen and train all potential leaders to prevent the abuse of positional power occurring within our work. To ensure you are not breaching the boundaries of those you lead consider always leading in the following ways:

- Always be a part of a team so that others can keep you accountable
- Listen to verbal signs and observe the body language of those you lead carefully to ensure you do not miss any hints that they may be feeling uncomfortable
- Do not push into areas of conversation where those whom you lead do not wish to discuss
- Ask yourself regularly "What are my motivations here...really?"
- Apologise quickly if you ever sense that you may have over stepped someone's boundaries

At NewHope we seek to operate in teams where mutual accountability is used to help us never abuse the positional power which has been given to us. We seek to honour God by not only making wise choices in our own leadership but also by empowering one another to not overstep boundaries in one another's leadership. If you are ever concerned that an abuse of positional power has taken place at NewHope, we encourage you to speak to your ministry supervisor.

## Grooming

'Grooming' is the process in which a child sex offender takes steps to build trust in their relationships with potential victims. The grooming may not only be directed towards a child but may also occur towards

parents, family or any adult who has responsibility for the safety of the child. Grooming may take place over months or even years and will have the intent to build such a relationship that secrecy is held within the relationship even after abuse has begun.

Some grooming techniques may include the following:

- Spoiling children or adolescents with gifts that may gain 'favor' with the child and/or family
- Paying a particular child 'special attention' above other children
- Asking children to keep secrets from adults, siblings and friends. (These secrets may not be of an overly harmful nature but may be used to 'test' the relationship with a child)
- Having sexualised conversations with a child
- Inappropriate touch of a child. This may start as 'harmless games' but gradually begin to progress in nature
- May seek to gradually isolate child from others including parents

As of the 1st January 2017 the Victorian Government has introduced legislation which makes it a criminal offence for any adult to engage in grooming behaviour with a child under 16 years of age. For further information regarding this legislation and information in regards to grooming place click on the "Betrayal of Trust Factsheet" attached below.

At NewHope we seek to provide environments which are safe, accepting and comfortable for all who attend. However, leaders and volunteers at NewHope are advised to be careful in how these environments are created and to not engage in behaviour which in any way could be seen as grooming. Ministry leaders at NewHope train their teams in ways to engage safely in relationships with children.

Behavioural standards which provide guidelines for things such as appropriate touch are to be adhered to by all members of NewHope ministry teams. If you suspect any form of grooming or abuse to be taking place report this to your ministry supervisor immediately.

## Child Abuse

As NewHope ministers to a diverse range of people we can come across the sad reality of child abuse in our society. Often abuse may be uncovered through a child or youth confiding in their leader that something has happened to them or there may be visible signs of abuse on a child.

NewHope is a community which firmly believes shining light into darkness allows innocent children to be protected. When we act according to these convictions, families can be assisted to break free of these abusive and destructive behaviours.

It is important to understand that child abuse comes in many forms. None are more or less impacting on an individual and all are serious. There are certain behaviors which may alert us to potential child abuse. When these appear, it is time to observe and listen. It is also the time to make your leader aware of your concerns, even if you are not quite sure if abuse is occurring. There are 5 main types of child abuse which we need to be aware of; Physical, sexual, emotional, family violence and neglect.

Let's explore briefly what they are and some classic signs to help alert us.

### **1. Physical abuse**

Childwise, Australia's leading international child protection agency informs us that physical abuse is 'the intentional or careless causing of physical harm.

Signs may include...

- wariness and distrust of adults
- wearing long sleeved clothes on hot days
- potentially hiding visible injuries
- fear of specific people
- unexplained absences
- behavioural change or disengagement.

### **2. Sexual abuse**

Can occur in the form of physical acts or exposing children to view sexual acts or images.

Signs may include...

- Displaying sexual behaviour or knowledge that is unusual for the child's age
- difficulty sleeping
- being withdrawn
- physical signs such as unexplained bleeding or pregnancy

### **3. Emotional abuse**

Can occur through threats, rejection, isolation, bullying or verbal attacks. It can include derogatory name-calling and put-downs, or persistent and deliberate coldness from a person, to the extent where the behaviour of the child is disturbed or their emotional development is at serious risk of being impaired. Serious emotional or psychological abuse could

also result from conduct that exploits a child without necessarily being criminal, such as encouraging a child to engage in inappropriate or risky behaviours.

Signs may include...

- Delays in emotional, mental, or even physical development
- self harming
- low self esteem
- headaches or stomach aches
- aggressive behaviour
- high anxiety
- Withdrawing and/or unusually emotional.

#### **4. Family Violence**

Occurs within a family environment (present or past relationships) and can present as physical or emotional domination.

Signs may include...

- Depending on the type of abuse inflicted may include signs already mentioned in other forms of abuse.

#### **5. Neglect**

This is where 'children's basic needs for food, shelter, supervision and physical and emotional care' are lacking

Signs may include...

- Frequent hunger
- malnutrition
- poor hygiene
- inappropriate clothing
- stealing food
- aggressive behaviour
- misusing drugs or alcohol
- Removal of education opportunities

You do not need to have proof to report any concerns you have about the safety of a child under 16. If events or observations lead you to suspect abuse share this with your ministry leader so that these concerns can be discussed and considered carefully. NewHope has clear reporting and support processes which your ministry leader is aware of so they will be able to guide your conversation and help discern the next action.

In October 2014 the Victorian Government introduced legislation which states that any adult over the age of 18 has an obligation to report



to authorities if they form a 'reasonable belief' that a child has been sexually abused. Failure to report on this 'reasonable belief' is therefore now a criminal offence in Victoria. To read more about this click on the 'Failure to disclose fact sheet' below.

At NewHope we are committed to reporting and following up on all forms of abuse. So, as mentioned above, if you have a reasonable cause for concern, or if a child or youth have confided potential abuse to you, speak to your ministry leader without delay. If you believe that a child is in immediate physical risk call 000 immediately for assistance from Police.

\*Information gathered from:

Baptist Union of Victoria Safe Church manual

Child Wise - Wise up to sexual abuse. A guide for parents and carers. Booklet.

For more information, visit [justice.vic.gov.au](https://justice.vic.gov.au)

## Appendix C

### Privacy and Online Leadership at NewHope

Leaders at NewHope will always act in a way which honours the call of leadership from God. We will seek to always encourage connection, acceptance and welcome of every person under our leadership and will ensure the safety of each member physically, emotionally and spiritually to the best of our ability.

Through the NewHope Planning Centre Online database, Group Leaders will be given access to the phone and email addresses of people in their Groups. As a commitment to the privacy of all people whom we lead, NewHope Groups Leaders will Uphold and follow the NewHope [privacy policy](#).

When utilising the NewHope Groups database, Group leaders must not:

1. Pass on the details of any person in the database to any third party under any circumstances. These details are private and are only to be distributed by the person themselves.
2. Utilise these details to interact with anybody in a way that would appear to harass or pressure them

Group Leaders may use the details to:

1. Provide Pastoral follow up with members of their Group
2. Send Group communication to all members of their Group

### 3. Share resources with their Group

Leaders who breach the purpose and conditions of use of the NewHope Groups database may be asked to step down from leadership.

## Appendix D

### NewHope Online Communities Policy

This policy seeks to outline guidelines for safe Digital Communication and wise use of technology that helps to foster life-giving relationships and grow community.

Jesus said, “I came that you may have life to the full.”

At NewHope, we encourage one another towards commitments and postures that characterise this ‘Jesus Way of Life’ and foster life-giving relationships.

#### **Purpose**

- This policy seeks to enable, empower and support healthy, safe and life-giving connections amongst NewHopers
- This policy relates to online digital communication, digital gatherings, and online communities (which include audio-only, text chat and video conferencing), their use and accountability.
- ‘Digital gatherings’ refer to gatherings within approved NewHope ministries, including gatherings with adults, children and youth. These may be open or closed to the public, depending on their setting.
- ‘Digital communication’ may be conducted via various platforms, however, closed digital gatherings are limited to platforms that provide password protection for all guests.
- ‘Online communities’ can exist in any online setting (group chat, Facebook group etc.) where the commonality between the members is NewHope or a particular ministry. These may exist in official (created by a NewHope Ministry) or independent self-governing capacity.
- The NewHope Digital Communication Policy sits in addition to NewHope Safe Church and Communication policies.
- All leaders of closed group gatherings require Working with Children Checks and Police Checks where applicable and are trained and empowered by the relevant NewHope ministry Pastor or supervisor.
- All leaders engaged in leading digital gatherings must have signed the current Code of Conduct.

## **Digital Gathering Guidelines:**

### **Invitations:**

- All closed digital gatherings must use a meeting ID that is sent as a personal invitation only. No disclosure of the meeting link is to be published on a public platform.
- All closed digital gatherings require a password to protect against people hacking the meeting.
- The start and end time of the digital gathering should be included in the meeting invitation.
- A new person to the closed digital gathering (either a friend of a group member or someone responding to the website) must receive the digital gathering link from the group host/s.

### **The content of the digital gathering:**

- The host/s of the digital gathering must be approved NewHope Ministry Leaders.
- Backgrounds for all leaders and members must be appropriate and considerate of the other members.
- Language and conversation topics must be appropriate and encouraging of those gathering, in line with the Code of Conduct.

## **Digital Communication Guidelines:**

- Ministry Leaders must not knowingly send, receive, or save any communication that is discriminatory or harassing; derogatory to any individual or group; obscene, sexually explicit or pornographic; defamatory or threatening; in violation of any licence governing the use of software; for any purpose that is illegal or contrary to our conduct code.
- Ministry Leaders must not use someone else's phone, email, Facebook or any other communication tool with the intention of misrepresenting that person.
- Do not give out any details of group members or fellow leaders publically, e.g. name of school, email address, home address, phone numbers, or details of time and place for a meeting in public. This is in accordance with the NewHope Privacy Policy.

## **Online Communities Guidelines**

Online communities are places where NewHopers connect via online platforms (Facebook Groups, WhatsApp Chats etc.). An online community may be affiliated with NewHope when the commonality between the group members is NewHope Baptist Church or its ministries. These may exist in official (created by a NewHope Ministry) or independent self-governing capacity.

## Accountability

Responsibility of the Online Community is assessed on three levels.

### 1. Perception

If a group is official or perceived to be official, accountability is assessed on the next level. If a group is independent and there is no perception that the group is an official NewHope Ministry, then accountability remains with the group's admin as a self governing group.

Example of Official: Awe & Wonder

Example of Independent (but perceived to be Official): NH Kick Ons

Example of Independent: Group chat of friends who happen to attend NewHope

### 2. Open vs. Closed

If a group is Open to the general public (via signage, QR Code, link on our website etc.), the NewHope Leader in the group holds the accountability, and a member of the NewHope Communications Team needs to be made an admin.

If a group is Closed to the general public, accountability is assessed on the next level.

Example of Open group: NewHope Bible Readers

Example of Closed Group: Young Adult Retreat Facebook Group

### 3. Presence of Children

If children are members of the Online Community, a Leader with Child Safe Training needs to be present and holds the accountability.

If no children are present, the NewHope Leader in the group holds the accountability.

Example of children present: Shift Youth Small Group Chat

Example of no children present: NewHope Groups Group Chat

Independent	Official (or Percieved Official)		
	Open	Closed	
		No Children Present	Children Present
Group Admin (Self Governing)	NewHope Leader with NewHope Comms Team member as an additional Admin	NewHope Leader	NewHope Leader with Child Safe Compliance

In the event an Independent Online Community is perceived to be Official, any NewHope Leaders active in the group take on accountability. As the accountable person, the NewHope Leader must do the following:

- Notify the NewHope Communications Team of the group and its nature.
- Notify a NewHope Generations Staff member if any children (anyone under 18 years of age) is a member of the group.
- Ask the admin to either:
  1. Make you an admin and continue accountability as an official online community\*
  2. Update the group description to clearly state the independent and self governing nature of the group (see below) and remove NewHope's name and image from the group.

\* Please note, if children are present the leader needs to have up to date Child Safe Training and compliance.

## **Descriptions and Rules**

Clear group descriptions help NewHope Members and Supporters understand which groups are official and who has accountability. Many Online Communities also choose to name some rules of engagement in the description too.

### **Example of Official Group Description:**

This is an Official NewHope online community.

- Be kind, courteous and supportive
- No hate speech, bullying or bad language
- No spam
- Our values are: People matter most. There is always Hope. Grace changes everything.
- Group members are welcome to share independent community events (if clearly stated as such), all official NewHope Ministry Events will also be listed on the NewHope website
- Adhere to NewHope's Privacy, Social Media and Digital Communities Policies.

### **Example of Independent Group Description:**

This is an independent group. Please note that all members are solely responsible and accountable for their transactions and opinions.

- Be kind, courteous and supportive
- No hate speech, bullying or bad language
- No spam

## **Social Events**

A key part of community is spending time together. NewHope Leaders are reminded that even when they are present at social gatherings, they are ambassadors of Christ and are accountable to NewHope's Code of Conduct.

When planning and advertising independent member led events in Online Communities, ensure group members are made aware that these social activities are independent of NewHope. These events don't fall under any of NewHope's insurances and people participate at their own risk.

At NewHope one of our key values is People Matter Most. This value helps give us a framework as NewHope leaders to be mindful of others, particularly vulnerable people (including children) even at independent events.

### **Where Children are present**

All leaders at NewHope should exercise wisdom and caution in their interactions with children. When children's parents are present, the children are under the care of their parent/guardian. Within these contexts, an acceptable level of incidental interaction between children and leaders may occur.

No leader or volunteer should be alone, one on one, with a child or young person. This includes in a car, private home or online. The parent or caregiver is responsible for toileting their child.

*Adapted from the NewHope Leader's Manual.*

## **Appendix E**

### **Volunteer Policy**

Effective as from 1 January 2023

Definition: NewHope is NewHope Baptist Church and NewHope Community Care Inc.

#### **PRELIMINARY:**

This policy has to be read in conjunction with the Leaders Code of Conduct and the Leadership Manual. All volunteers need to read and confirm by signing both documents.

## **1. Introduction**

1.1. This Policy demonstrates NewHope's commitment to, and management of, volunteers - to show volunteers that they are valued, acknowledged, managed, and supported.

## **2. Purpose**

2.1. The purpose of this policy is to articulate the framework that ensures volunteering at NewHope is guided by fair and consistent principles and procedures that provide a positive experience and outcomes for volunteers, visitors and staff at NewHope.

## **3. Scope**

3.1. The Volunteer Policy applies to all volunteers taking part in NewHope volunteer roles and staff supervising and/or working with volunteers at NewHope.

## **4. Principles**

4.1. Volunteers at NewHope make a significant contribution to the ongoing delivery of our operational success, and we recognise and value the skills, experience, passion and insights they bring.

4.2. Volunteer roles are clearly defined, well managed and volunteer management practices are continually reviewed and improved.

4.3. Volunteers complement, and do not replace, the contributions of paid staff.

4.4. All staff are expected to comply with this Policy and to report any behaviours they observe that are not in line with this Policy.

4.5. Effective volunteer involvement requires organisational leadership and a culture and structure that supports and values the role of volunteers.

4.6. Volunteers have rights, which include the right to work in a safe and supportive environment with appropriate infrastructure and effective management practices.

4.7. Volunteers have responsibilities, which include acting responsibly, being accountable for their actions to NewHope, and respecting NewHope's values and practices.

## **5. Responsibilities & Expectations**

NewHope Leadership Team (NLT) and Ministry Leaders

5.1. It is the responsibility of NLT and Ministry Leaders to:

5.1.1. support appropriate and meaningful volunteering opportunities;

5.1.2. appoint and support Volunteer Supervisors within their teams;

and

5.1.3. ensure high standards of professional conduct are maintained with all who have dealings with NewHope and its volunteers.

#### Supervisors

5.2. It is the responsibility of Supervisors to:

5.2.1. ensure that volunteers are appropriately selected, supported and inducted into NewHope with consistency across programs;

5.2.2. ensure that volunteers are recorded on the Planning Center as a volunteer in the specific ministry area

5.2.3. supervise and train volunteers;

5.2.4. arrange reimbursement of agreed expenses; and

5.2.5. where the occasion arises, complete and submit an incident report in collaboration with the relevant ministry leader.

#### Volunteers

5.3. It is the responsibility of Volunteers to:

5.3.1. maintain appropriate standards of conduct, in line with NewHope's Values and Code of Conduct and NewHope's policies;

5.3.2. obtaining and maintaining a valid Police and/or Working with Children Check according to role specific requirements;

5.3.3. complete training as directed and satisfy other commitments as outlined by the relevant Volunteer Supervisor;

5.3.4. complete and sign:

5.3.4.1 confidentiality agreement (if required for your role)

5.3.4.2 Code of Conduct;

5.3.4.3 online form to confirm you have read and agree to the guidelines in the Leadership Manual.

5.3.4.4 volunteer agreement (if required for your role)

5.3.5. give notice before leaving.

## 6. Practice

6.1. Volunteering contributes to the NewHope's strategic goals by supporting the delivery of NewHope services, ministry programs and events. Volunteers enhance the work of paid employees, never replace or supersede it.

6.2. Volunteers at NewHope will be a positive contributor to NewHope and uphold NewHope's values while contributing to a safe working environment for other volunteers, paid employees, and members of the public.

6.3. The roles that can be performed by volunteers are determined by the NewHope Leadership Team in consultation with Supervisors and their relevant team members. Volunteer roles could be either public-facing or back-of-house roles.

6.4. NewHope will communicate clear expectations and generally provide written role descriptions relevant for each volunteer role. Role descriptions must be approved by the relevant NewHope Leadership



Team member or Staff Ministry Leader.

## **7. Who Can Volunteer**

7.1. Volunteers must be at least 18 years old (with the exception of Kids Ministry or the approval of a member of the NewHope Leadership Team)), and legally permitted to volunteer in Australia (e.g., under any applicable work visa).

7.2. NewHope employees interested in volunteering will be considered to do so on a case-by-case basis by the relevant Supervisor in consultation with the NewHope Leadership Team. Approval is required to ensure that the employee is supported and able to carry out their regular work activity.

7.3. Former employees interested in volunteering, will also be considered to do so on a case-by-case basis by the relevant Supervisor in consultation with the NewHope Leadership Team.

## **8. Volunteer Recruitment, Induction and Engagement**

8.1. Recruitment processes including advertising and role descriptions require approval by the Supervisor before volunteer recruitment can commence.

8.2. Volunteers must provide references and relevant checks in support of their application.

8.3. NewHope may choose not to engage a person that does not satisfy any of these checks or whose skills, motives or objectives are inconsistent with the specified role.

8.4. NewHope is committed to maintaining an equal opportunity workplace, including for volunteers.

8.5. Each Supervisor in conjunction with relevant personnel, will provide an appropriate induction program, including an explanation of NewHope's expectations, values and behaviours and ensure completion of relevant compliance checks, including a Code of Conduct form.

8.6. Some roles also require a confidentiality agreement and / or volunteer agreement to be signed.

## **9. Cessation of Volunteers**

9.1. The volunteer programs and services delivered are at the sole discretion of NewHope, and at any time NewHope may cease volunteer engagement.

9.2. Possible grounds for cessation, other than reaching the natural conclusion of volunteer engagement, may include, but are not limited to breaches of policies, procedures and the Volunteer Agreement.

## **10. Volunteer Agreement**

10.1. All volunteers will be required to read and agree to the Code of

Conduct and Leadership Manual which also includes complying with this Policy.

10.2 Some volunteers will be required to read and agree to the Volunteer Agreement before volunteering commences. This sets out commitments and expectations of volunteers including complying with this Policy.

## **11. Policy Breach**

11.1. It's the responsibility of Volunteer Supervisors and Volunteers to understand and comply with this Policy. Non-compliance is a serious matter and may result in disciplinary action, which could include the cessation of a volunteer arrangement or (for paid staff) other forms of discipline.

11.2. If you observe behaviour that you know or suspect is not in line with this Policy, you're expected to report it. Please speak with your Supervisor or a NewHope Leadership Team member.

## **Related Documents**

This policy applies in conjunction with the following documents:

Code of Conduct

Leadership Manual

NewHope Delegation of Authority

NewHope Induction Checklist

NewHope Leadership Culture (Values)

Volunteer Agreement (if required)

Confidentiality Agreement

# **Appendix F**

## Child Safe Standards

NewHope follows the Child Safe Standards set forth by the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) to keep children and young people in our society safe.

1. Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued

2. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture

3. Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
4. Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
5. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
6. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
7. Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused
8. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
9. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed
10. Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved
11. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

## Appendix G

### Guidelines of Spiritual practice at NewHope

Vitality and unity in the body of Christ are mission critical (Jn 14:12, 17:20,21). If we are to fulfil our [Mission and Vision](#) as a local church we must give visible expression to the vibrance of a Spirit filled church. At the same time we must have one heart, one mind and one spirit in the Lord. In practical terms this means working together well by living [our Values](#), embedding dynamic governance and discernment structures, and aligning the behaviours which we embrace as spiritual practices.

**Governance.** As followers of Jesus we are accountable to each other. NewHope is a congregationally governed church, oversighted by a Church Council, and led by a team of Pastors. Our shared spiritual practices and the environments in which they are exercised are made safe and life-giving by robust governance, accountable structures and

healthy relationships. We will continually review and strengthen our structures to ensure appropriate training, monitoring, reporting and development for leaders and volunteers. Oversight and leadership are spiritual practices as well.

**Discernment.** Spiritual experience is not static. The scriptures speak often of God doing new things. As we walk in the Spirit we are always discovering, discerning and deciding anew. We do this individually and together as a church family. Guidelines like those set out in this document, are always subject to review and revision. Our passion is to allow the Holy Spirit of the living Word to guide us (Rom 8:14).

**Our Spiritual Practices and Experiences.** The list below is not exhaustive. Its purpose is to remind us of the wealth of opportunity and the need to participate in spiritual practices that are accountable and aligned in the body of Christ at NewHope. Our experiences will be different, but our aspirations in Christ and our commitment to God's mission must be aligned.

Our spiritual practices should encourage and deepen our relationship with God. They should help us to become more like Jesus and should build up the church in unity and in love. Our practices must always be a response to God who moves towards us in lavish love and abundant grace.

## THE GUIDELINES

**Scripture Reading.** We believe the bible is 'alive', it is God's gift to us. We are nourished by it and live together under its wisdom and guidance. Followers of Jesus develop personal habits of regular (daily) engagement with the bible. This is nourishing and life-giving. Our Pastors are responsible to study the bible and teach it. This helps us determine the norms that will guide us. (Heb 4:12)

**Private Prayer.** Like Jesus, we each nurture a habit of praying to the Father ('Abba'). We know God to be creator and Lord of all; all-compassionate and giving. Prayer is conversation and communion with God. It aligns our hearts with God and opens up unthinkable possibilities. (Mk 1:35, 1 Thess 5:17)

**Corporate Worship & Prayer Gatherings.** We meet together regularly to celebrate who God is and connect our thoughts, hearts, and wills to God's purposes and God's glorious future hope. All such gatherings have an appointed leader who holds a delegation of authority and is accountable within the governance structure of the church. There is

usually a support team as well to share the load and foster diversity. (Ps 96:8, Heb 10:25)

**Friendship, Spiritual Direction and Groups.** We flourish in our spiritual growth when we open our lives to other people who help us grow in our relationship with God. As people listen to our thoughts and feelings and participate in our experiences, they can help us discern God's presence and guidance in our life. We can share our burdens and encourage one another. We can receive the wisdom of others who know and love us. All of this helps us to live more deeply into God's purposes and ways. (Rom 15:14)

**Testimony, Listening, Learning.** We tell our stories to one another, sharing what God is doing in our lives. As we listen to each other, we suspend judgement, seek to understand, expect to learn. We are open to each other and to the Spirit. We also correct each other and call one another out. The bible is full of stories of people's experiences with God. We know this is critical to our formation as a healthy church. (Acts 11:4)

**Fasting, Self-denial & Giving.** From time to time we choose not to eat or deny ourselves in other ways as an act of earnest devotion and spiritual concentration. People often do this before Easter (Lent). This is simply an elevation of the self-denial that undergirds our constant generosity and the spiritual practice of giving. Some followers of Jesus are gifted with big hearts and extra capacity to contribute substantial support for God's mission. (Acts 14:23, Rom 12:6-8)

**Healing, Faith, Miracles.** God is active in our world demonstrating the presence of the kingdom of God in many amazing ways. We align our expectations and our present hope with the promise of a new creation, and we pray boldly for wholeness and renewal and blessing of every kind. Some people are uniquely gifted in this area and they pray with great effect. (Matt 4:23, 1 Cor 12:9)

**Tongues Speaking.** The praise, prayer and devotional experience of many followers of Jesus is enhanced by a special language experience. In rare cases people are given the ability to speak someone else's language without ever learning it. But most often the gift is a personal-language that enables heartfelt praise and prayer. At all NewHope gatherings the priority is always on intelligible speech and people use their tongues gift primarily while singing or praying. When tongues is used in gatherings to build up the church, it comes with an interpretation. Many followers of Jesus do not speak in tongues. We respect this difference among us. (1 Cor 14:18, 12:27-31)

**Prophecy, Words of Wisdom and Knowledge, Promptings.** God guides the church. Followers of Jesus expect to receive insight, direction and encouragement from God in our minds through the work of the Holy Spirit. Scripture tells us we should eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy (1 Cor. 14:1). Our Pastors exercise these giftings when they preach. Some individuals are uniquely enabled to help build up the church as they share what they receive from the Lord. We expect these gifts to foster unity and empower our corporate obedience to God's mission. We provide training and we hold each other accountable for health in the body, escalating concerns to leadership as required. (1 Cor 14:12)

**Sabbath, Solitude, Silence, Meditation.** Practices of rest, re-creation, retreat and quiet allow us to connect more deeply with God. This habit (like others in this list) calls us away from a busy life focused on self, things, power and reputation. (Ps 46:10)

**Falling Down in God's Presence.** As individuals respond to God occasionally they become so overwhelmed with the presence of God that their knees weaken and they fall. Often this is accompanied by a sense of deep and restful peace. We make every provision for people's autonomy, dignity and safety in this experience. We do not manipulate or contrive, our leaders simply respond to and support what God is doing. (Acts 9:4, Numb 20:6)

**An Overflow of Emotion.** Occasionally people have an exaggerated emotional response to the presence of God. This could be tears, laughter, wailing or dancing. Often there is a deeply personal story (testimony) that emerges from such experiences. At these vulnerable moments we care for and respect each other. During formal gatherings we give priority to our shared experience, and during times of response (usually at the end of a gathering) we support and make space for private encounters with God. (2 Sam 6:14, Rev 5:4)

**Confronting Evil.** On rare occasions evil manifests in tangible ways. We believe God's power is greater than any evil experience and we pray with confidence against evil. We look first for natural explanations and trust evidence based medicine and leadership, but we know that 'spiritual forces of evil' are our true enemy (Eph 6:12, Mk 1:21-28)

**Corporate Discernment.** Drawing on all that God gives us we seek to discover God's direction together. In doing so we are beholden to the scriptures, the Spirit, and one another. Authority is delegated to Leaders

to discern insitu and matters are escalated as required to Supervisors, Pastors, Church Council and Members Meetings. Members are the moral owners of NewHope Church and have a responsibility to seek God and discern together through formal members meetings. Our passion is obedience, unity, faithfulness, and love in Jesus. Our aim is to say in earnest, 'It seems good to us and the Holy Spirit' (Acts 15:28)

## DISCREDITED PRACTICES

Some practices are not appropriate. These are often contemporary expressions of very old dysfunctions. Sometimes they are subtle variations of otherwise good practices. They can be doorways to unhealthy spiritual experience and it is therefore important to name these and be on our guard. (1 John 4:1)

**Special knowledge (gnosis).** Beware of claims of 'secret, inside' knowledge and special (superior) groups. The mysteries of God are being made known in Christ, they are not hidden for the special few. (1 Tim 4:1-2,7; 2 Tim 4:3-5)

**Magic, special phrases/incantations.** Beware of special words or phrases and the promise of more power when they are used 'correctly'. Not even the names of Jesus can be used in this way (Acts 19:13-16).

**Prosperity teaching.** The promise of material wealth and special personal blessing. Beware of teaching that suggests we can manipulate God's power for our personal ends. (Matt 6:19-21)

**Control and abuse of others.** As we submit to one another in love, we lead by example, never coercion. We oppose the misuse of power and authority (1 Peter 5:3)

**Grandstanding.** In all our spiritual practices we attend to God's purposes and the well-being of each other. We do not showcase our spirituality (Matt 6:5), misuse corporate gatherings (1 Cor 14), or elevate ourselves in pride (Phil 2:3-4). It is wrong to use any spiritual practice to judge others.

# Appendix H

## Leaders Code of Conduct

As the leaders of NewHope, we acknowledge that everyone who attends our churches needs to be confident that they will be cared for, nurtured and encouraged as they grow and at the same time, protected from spiritual, physical, and emotional harm, therefore we commit to the following ministry standards.

### **We minister out of a relationship with God. Maintain a healthy relationship with God by:**

- Joining regularly in the life and ministry of the Church
- Studying the Scriptures in private and in groups
- Praying regularly in private and in fellowship with and for the people and ministry of the Church
- Giving of our time and finances to the work of the Church, as an expression of your gratitude to God.

### **We serve others in the context of healthy relationships. We will engage in healthy friendships with those to whom we minister by:**

- Loving and caring for our families; paying attention to the effect of ministry on them.
- Treating others with respect; teach and exercise authority respectfully
- Upholding confidential information; do not disclose to anyone (including spouse) any confidential information without the consent of the person providing the information. (There is an exception where there is a legal obligation or a duty of care issue.)
- Being a team player; cooperating with other ministry leaders, there will be areas that overlap and someone else may have the information/expertise that you need.
- Using words that build up; do not ridicule or embarrass people.
- Respecting the boundaries of people over whom we have leadership or pastoral responsibility.
- Avoiding professionally counselling people with whom we have personal relationships.
- Making alternative arrangements for pastoral ministry for any person if you begin to develop romantic relationship with them.



## **As Christian Leaders we will:**

- Be accountable to our team, watch out for each other and protect each other's integrity, e.g. when ministering to children have a buddy system in place - never alone with one child or vulnerable adult.
- Act in the best interest of those we serve.
- Not take property belonging to others, including intellectual property (copyright) and knowingly making false, misleading or deceptive statements.
- Not engage in bullying, emotional or psychological abuse, harassment, physical abuse, sexual abuse or spiritual abuse of any person, including behaviours focused on the changing or suppression of one's sexuality.
- Not act violently or intentionally provoke violence when engaged in civil disobedience.
- Be responsible in our use of addictive substances and services (e.g. prescription/alcohol)
- Not use any prohibited substance.
- Act with sexual purity. Sexuality is a gift from God. We will express our sexuality in healthy and God directed ways.
- Act with financial integrity including having accountable and transparent practices in place for financial matters.
- Not engage in tax evasion
- Not seek personal advantage or financial gain from your position, other than in wages, recognised allowances and deductions.
- Staff members have an obligation to identify, manage and disclose any circumstances where duty of loyalty may be perceived to be in conflict with your other duties, This need to be disclosed to the supervisor as well as the person responsible for Human Resources and filed in the personnel folder.
- Disclose to the church leadership if we are or have been investigated for any criminal offences.
- Treat every program participant equally, 'no favourites'.
- Communicate with integrity, including accountable and wise use of electronic communication, commit to following our team guidelines for electronic communication.
- Acknowledge when we are out of our depth and/or do not possess the required skill in difficult pastoral situations, such as helping a victim of abuse, or a person who needs professional counselling, and seek help from a supervisor or denominational leader
- As leaders we uphold the NewHope values.

## When the code is breached

**I. Minor:** Everyone is capable of sin but can repent and be forgiven (1 John 1:8-9). It stands to reason then, that the code can be breached. When this happens in an area that is not a breach of civil or criminal law, simply cease the conduct. If this is difficult, the person should see their team leader or supervisor about receiving help (e.g. counselling). In some cases it may be necessary to step a person aside from their duties whilst this takes place. It is crucial to deal with such matters confidentially and sensitively.

**II. Unknown:** Not all leaders will understand 'unacceptable' behaviours. Even after explaining the code some may be unaware they are exhibiting unacceptable behaviours. Leaders need to be open to correction and humble enough to modify behaviours so as to not discredit the gospel. As above, stepping a person aside from their duties may be necessary.

**III. Constant:** There are breaches that are not a breach of civil or criminal law, but still unacceptable behaviour in a ministry context. Where a leader has been made aware of their behaviour and yet refuses to change:

- a. The ministry coordinator meets with the person for behaviour review meetings.
- b. If behaviour continues, a small group of church leaders are to arrange a meeting to address the behaviour. Stepping aside is appropriate at this point.
- c. If the behaviour/s continue/s beyond this meeting, then respectfully, and upholding confidentiality, the person will be stood down for a set period. They will be offered help in changing their behaviour via counselling if they are willing.

NB. Written notes of all meetings to be carefully taken and a copy given to all parties.

**IV. Breaches of the law or allegations of abuse:** Allegations of abuse or serious misconduct are to be referred to the appropriate government authorities, in line with our denominational processes.





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