

Theological and Philosophical Statements

Our Mission

The Mission of the Association of Vineyard Churches is to participate in the advancement of the Kingdom of God through the work of local Vineyard churches that communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed.

Our Purpose

To build and maintain an Association of Vineyard Churches which is committed to and models the historic Vineyard convictions, values, priorities, practices and leadership standards which are stated hereafter.

To support and strengthen pastors of local churches by providing pastoral care, relationship, resources for ministry and a means for bringing biblical discipline, if needed.

To support and strengthen local churches by providing general counsel, training materials, and potential new or additional pastoral leadership.

To assist local churches in achieving their mission by providing assistance in defining, strategizing and implementing their mission, and by designing missions strategies and outreaches in which they may join.

To plant and nurture new churches which are committed to and model the Vineyard convictions, values, priorities, practices and leadership standards.

To bring renewal to the larger Church of Christ around the world, both through direct ministry and through the stimulation of our example.

Our Values

- We value THE PURSUIT OF GOD. We are hungry to know God's presence, hear His voice and follow hard after Him. (Psalm 63:1-3)

- We value CHRISTLIKENESS. We desire that through the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus' love, mercy, grace, truth, purity, power, and integrity would shine through all that we are and do. (Ephesians 5:2)

- We value BEING SPIRIT-LED. We honor Jesus as our Head and the Holy Spirit as our Counselor. We seek to be responsive to the Holy Spirit in life and ministry. (Galatians 5:5; Romans 8:14)

- We value PRAYER. We believe that prayer is essential, because it is our primary means of communion with God, and because it is God's primary means of accomplishing His purposes in the world. (1 Thess. 5:16-18; Philipians 4:6)

- We value DISCIPLESHIP. We aim first to grow as disciples of Christ ourselves and then to make disciples of others. (Matthew 28:18-20)

- We value THE KINGDOM OF GOD. We aim to move in the signs of the present fulfillment of the kingdom, invoking the Spirit's powerful presence, ministering through the Spirit's gifts, and seeing God heal and work wonders. (Mark 1:14,15)

- We value the MERCY OF GOD. We believe that mercy is fundamental to all that God does in salvation. We, therefore, aim to extend mercy to one another and to all to whom we minister. (Colossians 3:12,13)

- We value INTEGRITY. It is important for us to speak the truth, deal honestly, and live uprightly. (Ephesians 4:15)

- We value SERVANT LEADERSHIP. We believe that Christ has put significant leadership authority in the hands of the pastor and associates. We aim to exercise that authority with humility, selflessness, grace, care for the sheep, and a sincere desire to build up the Body of Christ. (Mark 10:37,44-45)

- We value THE INDIVIDUAL, single or married, and we want to enable and support mature relationships and family growth. (Romans 12:9,10)

- We value UNITY. We are convinced that all who belong to Christ are one in His Body, the Church. We aim to maintain unity by honoring all who call on Jesus' name and by seeking reconciliation with all parts of the Church. (John 17:21-23)

- We value COLLEGIATE RELATIONSHIPS. We are honored by every person whom God adds to the Vineyard. We aim to work together to build the Church through maintaining mutual respect, open communication, determined cooperation, and believing and speaking the best about each other. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

- We value REALITY. We aim to walk in the Spirit and see real supernatural works of God. We aim also to function on the natural plane based on God's leading in conjunction with excellent, relational thinking. (James 1:5)

- We value SIMPLICITY. We wish to do nothing for "religious effect" but rather to operate in natural low-key, non-hype patterns. We desire to do the ministry of Christ with joy. (Philippians 4:4)

- We value being CULTURE CURRENT. We aim to develop an atmosphere of ease, and to speak, act, and dress in ways in which our culture can respond positively. For example, we reflect this value through worship music that is of a popular style. (1 Corinthians 9:19-23)

Our Priorities

Worship

We desire to worship God with our whole being. We want Jesus at the center as our Lord. We hunger for the fullness of the Spirit... His glory resting upon us! (Philippians 3:3, Hebrews 13:15, Psalms 42:1, 2, John 4:24, Psalms 63:1-5, Romans 12:1)

We desire Spirit-enabled worship in a style that is intimate, dynamic, culture current, and life changing. (1 Peter 2:4, Ephesians 2:19-22, 1 Corinthians 14:26)

The Word

We want to hear the Word of God taught in a practical, inspiring way, in conjunction with His current prophetic word. (Romans 15:4, 2 Timothy 3:16, 17, 1 Cor 14:26)

We aim to hear and obey God's Word to us to be "doers of the Word" who are being transformed into the likeness of Christ. (Matthew 7:24-27, James 1:22)

Fellowship

We are the family of God, one Body in Jesus Christ, joined together as brothers and sisters forever. (John 17:20-23, Romans 12:3-5)

We seek to develop real, intimate, enabling friendships together, built on covenant love, mutual responsibility and faithfulness. (Hebrews 3:12-14, Philippians 2:3-5, Ephesians 4:11-16, Colossians 3:12-15)

Ministry

We believe that all Christians are called to serve Christ in the power of His Spirit, in ways that build up the local church. (1 Peter 4:10,11, 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, Acts 1:8)

We are called to do the ministry of Christ in the world today, for example, to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, persuade men to repent and believe in Jesus, heal the sick, care for the poor and those in need, counsel those in need of God's wisdom, teach believers to follow Christ, give our resources to the work of Christ, train Christians to serve the Lord. (Luke 4:18,19, James 1:27, Acts 26:18, Matt 28:18-20)

Training

We believe that all Christians should be trained to "do the works of Christ." (Matthew 28:18-20, 2 Timothy 2:2)

We are committed to the "show and tell" model of "on the job" training, in which trainees are introduced to doing ministry functions with trainers and then are taught during and after the training experience. (Luke 11:1-4)

We aim to provide training for all aspects of responsible Christian life and ministry. (Ephesians 4:11-16)

Sending

We aim to renew, refresh, and enable existing churches by sending trained personnel out on short-term ministry trips. (Matthew 10:5-15, Luke 9:1-6; 10:1)

We aim to build the Church of Jesus Christ by sending trained personnel to plant churches around the world. (Revelation 5:9,10, Romans 15:20)

The Practices We Aim To Instill

Prayer Skills

- Prayer of praise and adulation (Psalm 34:1)
- Prayer of petition (Philippians 4:6)
- Prayer of intercession (Romans 8:26,27, 1 Timothy 2:1)
- Prayer of tongues (1 Corinthians 14:14,15)
- Prayer of faith, in healing and expulsion of demons (James 5:15, Mark 1:25)

Marriage and Family Skills

- Intimacy
- Communication
- Child-rearing
- Financial planning
- Life management (Ephesians 4:22-33, 1 Peter 3:1-7)

General Ministry Skills

Communication skills—the ability to speak

- The ability to witness—sharing your experience with others (Matthew 28:18-20)
- The ability to counsel—sharing God's Word with others (Ephesians 4:15)
- The ability to teach—sharing God's Word with others (2 Timothy 2:24-26)

Community skills—the ability to relate

- Ministry to the Lord in
 - Worship ([John 4:24](#))
 - Fellowship ([John 15:4](#))
 - Obedient service of all kinds ([Mark 10:45](#))
 - Giving ([John 4:34](#))
 - Personal Bible study ([2 Timothy 2:15](#))

- Ministry to the Body
 - Giving and receiving forgiveness ([Matthew 18:21-35](#), [Matthew 6:14](#))
 - Laying on hands ([1 Timothy 4:14](#))
 - Exercise of gifts ([1 Corinthians 14:26](#))
 - Fellowship -- sharing and relating to one another ([Hebrews 3:12-14](#))
 - Healing the sick-- spiritually, socially, emotionally, bodily, demonic ([James 5:13-16](#))

- Ministry to the world
 - Care for the poor
 - Care of the lost
 - Care of the sick and broken-hearted ([Luke 4:18,19](#))

Our Leadership Personnel Requirements

Sincere love for and pursuit of Jesus Christ demonstrated in regular personal worship, meditation on the Word, and prayer. ([Psalm 1:1-6](#), [Psalm 18:1-3](#))

Demonstrated fullness of the Holy Spirit, of faith and of wisdom. ([Acts 6:3](#))

A perception of leadership not as grasping for position, or title, or power, or authority, or respect, or privilege, but as a commitment to humble service and self-sacrifice. ([Mark 10:37, 42-45](#), [John 13:12-16](#), [Philippians 2:5-9](#), [1 Peter 5:1-5](#))

Personal exposure, loyalty and commitment to their pastors, and to those whom they are pasturing. ([Mark 3:14,15](#))

Trustworthiness, with the ability to resist being bribed or bought. ([Exodus 18:21](#))

Commitment to the "Barnabas-style" of open, loving communication, to solving relational problems, to processing anger constructively, to encouraging and building up and maintaining confidences strictly. ([Acts 4:36,37](#), [Ephesians 4:25-32](#))

Willingness to be a "team player" and to help one's pastoral associates to succeed. ([Philippians 2:3,4](#))

A strong, loving marriage in which both the husband and wife sense the call to minister. ([Acts 18:26](#))

Capable and respected, mature in the faith, and with proven ministry ability. ([1 Timothy 3:2-7](#))

Willingness to be judged by strict standards and to accept reproof. ([James 3:1](#))

Love for people and for Jesus, without desire to benefit personally at the expense of the sheep. ([John 21:17](#), [Ezekiel 34:1](#), [1 Peter 5:1-5](#))

Commitment to equipping others for ministry through active recruiting, training, deploying, monitoring and nurturing. ([Mark 3:13-15](#))

Commitment to doing excellent work, taking responsibility seriously, being proactive, planning and executing well. ([Ezra 5:1,2](#))

A committed, cheerful giver who tithes regularly to the fellowship. ([Malachi 3:8-10](#))

