



Philosophy of Church Governance

Antioch Community Church Dallas

Church Governance:

Jesus is the head of the Church, His Body. We believe that the purpose of all church leadership and governance should be to facilitate faithfully following Jesus Christ.

[As a church movement](#), we have put prayerful consideration and in-depth study into a leadership model that we believe is both biblically faithful and fruitful for the glory of God and the good of the world.

Our larger movement of churches provides apostolic oversight toward our shared vision and mission. Apostolic oversight comes in two forms: The Antioch Movement Oversight Team and our church's External Board of Advisors.

- The Movement Oversight Team provides leadership toward our larger purpose towards being a movement of church-planting churches shaped by encounters with God, life-on-life discipleship, and mission through the local church.
- The church's external board of advisors specific counsel, care and accountability for our specific church.

Under that umbrella, each local church within our movement of churches is Lead Pastor led, Overseer guided, Staff run and Volunteer driven.

- Lead Pastors of Antioch Churches are responsible for providing spiritual leadership for the church through Biblical teaching, prayer, and personal example as well as providing leadership in the area of church vision and through developing healthy leadership teams.
- Overseers contribute to the health of the church by setting the goal lines (guidance) and the guard rails (guarding the flock) while empowering the staff to implement the vision while also holding them accountable as they do so.
- Staff are empowered by the overseers for equipping the church for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4) as well as organizational and operational functions of the church (Acts 6 & 7).
- We are a volunteer-driven church because we believe the church is at its best when all its members are engaged and on mission together. We believe that serving in the local church is foundational for individual discipleship to Jesus and is the lifeblood of the church and her ministry to Jesus and our generation.

Additional Notes:

Overseers vs. Elders:

The New Testament uses the word "overseer" to describe an important role of leadership in the church (Acts 20.28, Php 1.1, 1 Tim 3.1-2, Titus 1.7). An image generally associated with the role of being an overseer of a congregation is the image of a shepherd watching over a flock, both guarding the flock and guiding the flock through dark times and into green pastures (John 10 & Psalm 23). It is synonymous with the term elder. We use the term overseer because it is both biblically faithful, and is simpler to communicate in explaining the vision and purpose of the role.

Qualifications:

We believe that Scripture teaches that most ministry roles within the church for both men and women are based on the anointing and empowering of the Holy Spirit (spiritual gifts), as well as an individual's character and experience, and are not a function of gender. At the same time, we affirm that gender is important and is an important part of who we are.

Additionally, we believe that Scripture shows that men and women both bear the image of God and are at their best when working alongside one another for the glory of God and the good of the world.

If you have questions on men and women serving in these roles, here is a position paper on [Women in Ministry from the Antioch Movement](#).

Lead Pastor Led / Overseer Guided:

Antioch churches are Lead Pastor led and overseer guided. It is our understanding that Scripture gives a number of examples of a plurality of overseers (Acts 20.28, Php 1.1, 1 Timothy 3.1-2, Titus 1.7, 1 Peter 5 and Hebrews 13.17), this is why we develop teams of overseers.

At the same time, based on Acts 15.13-21, it seems in at least one case (and in all likelihood many cases, due to the church and Jerusalem's influence) that one overseer would have primary leadership, as James did. We call this position Lead Pastor or Lead Pastor.

While acknowledging the value and drawbacks of different models, at present we desire that our overseer team is no less than 3 members, and are a mix of non-paid members and paid staff.

Overseer Role Description

Purpose:

An overseer's purpose is to shepherd and lead Antioch Dallas with a spirit of unity and deep love for one another by continually submitting to the headship of Jesus.

Qualifications: An overseer must demonstrate the following qualities

Demonstrates *Godly* Character

*“So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: 2 shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; 3 not domineering over those in your charge, **but being examples to the flock.**” 1 Peter 5.1-3*

- Personal commitment to Jesus evident in all aspects of life
- Consistently demonstrate personal discipleship to Jesus through spiritual disciplines, lifestyle choices and relationships both in the church, in the home and in the city.
- Model love of Jesus to those they interact with in every aspect of life
- Show integrity in all aspects of life (work, financial, etc.)

Demonstrates the *ability to provide spiritual oversight*

- Lives a life marked by power of the Holy Spirit
- Has and continues to develop a healthy knowledge and understanding of Scripture
- Able to pastor Antioch Dallas families and individuals
- Able to effectively communicate Antioch Dallas's mission, vision and values
- Experienced leadership gifting and skills, especially to raise up, train, and support leaders in the church
- Maintain confidentiality of sensitive information

Demonstrates a *commitment to Antioch Dallas vision, values and mission*

- Must have attended Antioch Dallas for at least 3 years
- Must have served in a significant capacity and participated in Lifegroup for at least 2 years
- Must consistently tithe to the church
- Must attend, or commit to attend, the Antioch Discipleship School

Demonstrates an *attitude of mutual submission and love*

- Be a team player in terms of the overall mission of Antioch Dallas by praying for, pastoring, and encouraging the staff and lay leaders
- Has a calling to be a part of the overseer team and is committed to walking in mutual submission to the Lead Pastor, who leads the overseer team, and the rest of the overseers as we seek the leading of Jesus together

Responsibilities: An overseer's responsibilities include the following.

Note: Scripture teaches that Jesus is the head of the Church, thus overseers are not owners of the church, but have been entrusted with a stewardship and as such are to guard, guide, and govern the mission and vision God has given to our church as we seek to follow Jesus, our Leader.

To guide the body

"This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you" Titus 1:5

- through the example of their personal lives
- through prayer, teaching, discipling, encouraging, and giving vision (Acts 6:4)
- through praying for the sick (James 5:14)
- by making decisions and carrying final authority for what happens in the big decisions that affect the life of the body
- by approving pastoral and leadership appointments
- by providing oversight and accountability to the church staff and lay leadership*
- by overseeing and stewarding the finances of the church (Acts 11:29-30)
- as part of a team of 3 to 7 overseers whose mission is to follow Jesus as the head of the church

To guard the body

"He must have a strong belief in the trustworthy message he was taught; then he will be able to encourage others with wholesome teaching and show those who oppose it where they are wrong." Titus 1:9

Scripture is authoritative for the life and practice of the church as well as her members. Overseers help ensure we are teaching good theology that is rooted in Scripture.

- against false doctrines and divisiveness (Titus 1:9)
- against people who speak perverse things and carry sheep away with them (Acts 20:28-30)
- Ensuring the church's teachings and practices reflect accurate biblical theology

- Working with our Board of Advisors in the responsibility of hiring, firing, and reviewing the Lead Pastor.
- by participating in the church discipline process as needed

Time Commitments: An overseer must have capacity for the following commitments.

- Able to attend at least one meeting monthly (overseer meetings are monthly and overseer/spouse meetings are semi-annually), and an annual Board of Advisors meeting
- In addition to regular overseer meetings, additional time may be required as various needs arise either in person or via email
- Term of an overseer is at least 3 years. An overseer may step down from the board with written communication to the Lead Pastor and the team of overseers. An overseer may be asked to step down from the role if they prove unfit for the role. They may also be invited to stay on at the end of their term.

Compensation: Volunteer

The overseers provide the general spiritual direction and oversight of the church, but the Lead Pastor and staff serve as the main implementers of the vision. Overseers should focus on covering, empowering, and supporting those entrusted with these roles.

If an overseer is on staff, then their staff position will be accountable to the staff leadership structure and will be separate from their role as overseer.