

South Abbotsford Church Council Covenant

The Church Council functions as a leadership team, working together with the Lead Pastor to provide strategic direction and overall spiritual leadership for the church. In addition to the South Abbotsford Council Requirements as listed in our Bylaws, we add this Covenant. The Covenant adds language that expresses our spiritual desires as a leadership team.

I/We commit to:

TRANSFORMING COMMUNITY

- Being unified in our commitment to be transformed in Christ's presence as a community.
 - We want to be guided by the Holy Spirit so we can discern and do the will of God.
- Starting our meetings with prayer and providing space for any member stopping us throughout our meeting to pray is welcomed.
- Conducting one-word soul checks during our Council meetings.
- Working on our personal Rule of Life.
 - Everyone in the leadership group is on an intentional journey of personal transformation with each leader engaging the disciplines that enable them to regularly offer themselves to God
- Attending regular Council meetings and coming prepared by reviewing meeting materials in advance, and attending prayer and/or book discussions in-between regular Council meetings is required.
- Reading "Pursuing God's Will Together" by Ruth Haley Barton when joining Council

TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATION

- Creating a safe place for honesty and valuing differing opinions.
- Honoring confidentiality and not gossiping nor partaking in any "hallway meetings" after the meetings.
- Hearing each other and making room for each other's perspectives. We commit to maintaining a listening posture using the following guidelines:
 - Become settled in God's presence
 - Listen to others with your entire self
 - Do not interrupt
 - Pause between speakers to absorb what has been said
 - Do not formulate what you want to say while someone else is speaking
 - Speak for yourself, steer away from making broad generalizations
 - Do not challenge what others say – rather ask good questions that enable you to wonder about things together.
 - Listen to the group as a whole- pay attention to who has and hasn't spoken and draw out those who haven't.
 - Leave space for anyone who may want to speak a first time before speaking a second time yourself
 - Hold your desires and opinions and convictions lightly. Be willing to be influenced by others whom you respect. (From RHB Pursuing God's Will Together-pg. 207)

- Slowing down when feeling rushed or anxious and taking time to listen to God and others while paying attention to our deep sense of life-giving connection with God & others. Speaking up when we sense this lacking.

GRACE-FILLED LEADERSHIP & TEAM DISCERNMENT

- Asking God to bring us to the place where we want “God’s will, nothing more, nothing less, nothing else” so that we can pray the prayer of indifference – “not my will but Yours be done.”
- In matters of discernment, regularly making space for the test of indifference in our group before moving forward.
- A shared affirmation that discerning and doing the will of God is how the Council intends to lead in spirit-led democracy. Discernment is the heart of spiritual leadership.
- Bearing each other’s burdens and praying for one another.
- Practicing conflict transformation along the lines of Matthew chapters 5 and 18.
- Continuous improvement and collaboration.
- Speaking as one voice once a decision is made because unity is our high value.
 - Unity requires all to support the decision made in the name of all, even when opinions may still differ (unity rather than unanimity or consensus).