

An Invitation to Be Exemplary

Expectations for Ministry Leaders at
Summit Ave Presbyterian Church

“...set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.”

- 1 Timothy 4:12 (TNIV)

“Set an example.” That was the charge which the Apostle Paul gave to the young church leader Timothy. “In what you say, in the way you live, in how you love others, in how you love God, and in your integrity, be a model for others to imitate.” This timeless instruction from Scripture must still guide leaders in our church today.

To be involved in leadership in the church is both a privilege and a responsibility. Everyone is invited and encouraged to participate in the life and ministry of our congregation, regardless of what you may be struggling with or where you are in your spiritual journey. Yet, understandably and appropriately, leadership roles come with greater expectations and higher qualifications.

Therefore, we invite Summit’s leaders to be exemplary in their lifestyle. This includes pastors, elders, deacons, staff members, children’s ministry leaders, youth advisors, prayer ministers, adult teachers, small group leaders, mission team leaders, and others. This is not an invitation to perfection or a mandate for sinlessness. It is a call to deepening discipleship to Jesus Christ, which includes not only the good news that God loves us just the way we are, but also the power of God to transform us into people who are whole and holy.

Using Paul’s five-fold challenge to Timothy as a guide, below are some expectations of the exemplary life we invite Summit’s leaders to live. These should not be viewed as arbitrary standards which others will enforce or impose upon you, but rather as standards to which we trust our leaders will hold themselves accountable. If you have had an ongoing problem with any of these areas in the last 12 months, please schedule a time to talk with a pastor or your ministry leader. This does not automatically mean that you will be removed from your position or prevented from serving. *Our desire is to have conversations and to take grace-filled actions that will enable us to be faithful to Christ as a church and to mature in Christ as individuals.*

1. Exemplary in SPEECH

- Be honest and truthful in my relationships with others, and refrain from gossip and abusive speech.
- Respect the privacy of individuals and not divulge information obtained in confidence without express permission, unless an individual is a danger to self or others and/or I am a legally mandated reporter.
- Avoid obscenity and coarse joking, including using humor at the expense of another person.

2. Exemplary in CONDUCT

- Be a faithful steward of and fully account for all funds and property entrusted to me.
- Honor the sacred trust of relationships in the church by observing appropriate relational boundaries, by being judicious in the exercise of the power of my position, and by refraining from exploiting relationships for personal gain or gratification, including sexual harassment and misconduct.

- Utilize social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) only in ways which build up others and which do not diminish or distort the church's witness to Jesus Christ.

3. Exemplary in LOVE

- Show respect, give support, and provide encouragement for others in leadership, including those who have preceded or will succeed me in my position.
- Make allowances for others' faults; forgive others as the Lord has forgiven me; and avoid judgment for past mistakes, believing in the transforming power of God's grace.
- Practice hospitality, welcome strangers, and receive guests regardless of appearance, disposition, ethnicity, language, personal affinity, or spiritual condition.

4. Exemplary in FAITH

- Practice the spiritual disciplines of study, prayer, worship, stewardship, and service.
- Maintain an attitude of repentance, humility, and graciousness, including submitting to the discipline of the church and the appropriate guidance of those to whom I am accountable in my ministry.
- Bear witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, acting with mercy and justice, and speaking the truth in love.

5. Exemplary in PURITY

- Submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life, living with faithfulness and integrity in my personal relationships.
- Abstain from viewing pornographic, sexually erotic, or overly violent material.
- Maintain healthy patterns of eating, shopping, gambling, alcohol consumption, and other activities; and avoid addictive or binge behaviors.

This list of expectations should be understood to be illustrative rather than exhaustive. Moreover, we recognize that none of us is without sin, and we are all in process as God works in our lives. Our intent with this invitation is simply to be faithful to Christ, seeking and serving God's call. *These guidelines are held up not to be legalistic or punitive, but to encourage personal wholeness and transformation in individuals where needed, and to inspire trust from the congregation in our leaders wherever we serve.* To that end, we invite all of Summit's leaders to respond.

My Response

Recognizing both the privilege and the responsibilities of Christian leadership, I hereby accept this invitation to be exemplary, and I will strive to live my life in accordance with these expectations. If I am unable to uphold these exemplary standards, whether now or at some point in the future, I agree to meet with a pastor or my ministry leader to discuss the situation and to develop a plan for deepening my discipleship in Christ.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please sign and keep this copy for yourself.