

# Leadership in the church

## **Biblical leadership is not like worldly leadership**

The Church has had diverse patterns of leadership as they attempt to be faithful to the bible and speak to their particular culture.

### **Biblical leadership is:**

1. **Servant leadership**  
*Matthew 20:25-26, 1 Peter 5:1*
2. **Delegated leadership**  
*Colossians 1:18, 1 Corinthians 12:28*
3. **Done by those who meet biblical (not worldly) qualifications**  
*1 Timothy 3:1-13*
4. **Dependent on the Holy Spirit**  
*John 15:5, Phil 4:13, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11*
5. **Authoritative leadership**  
*Matthew 28:18-19, Hebrews 13:17, 1 Corinthians 5:12-13*

## **Qualifications**

The detailed qualifications given for leaders are the clearest indication of what their 'job descriptions' were, e.g. "able to teach"

## **Three types of leaders in the New Testament.**

Not three ranks, although people may well move from one to another as their leadership matures.

Deacons, the interchangeable terms elder/ overseer / pastor and apostles.

- **Deacons** serve and lead in some specific ministry within the church which may be 'spiritual' or practical
- **Elder / overseer / pastors** oversee the whole church to bring order and direction
- **Apostles** equip churches for the 'what next' mission of God

## **A note on gender**

- The New Testament gives some clear qualifications about the character (and a little on the skill) of church leaders.
- The language suggests that leadership *in the 1<sup>st</sup> century* was predominantly male.
- There are plenty of other texts that suggest that women took a significant place in leadership: as deaconesses<sup>1</sup>, as owners of homes where the church met<sup>2</sup>, teaching doctrine to emerging apostles<sup>3</sup>, as prophets<sup>4</sup>, and amongst the apostolic teams.<sup>5</sup>

In WCC men & women work together at all levels of our leadership and ministry teams

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<sup>1</sup> Romans 16:1; 1 Tim 3:11

<sup>2</sup> Romans 16:3-5; Col 4:15; Philemon 1:2;

<sup>3</sup> Acts 18:26

<sup>4</sup> Acts 2:17; 1 Corinthians 11:5; Acts 21:9

<sup>5</sup> Philippians 4:3; Romans 16:7

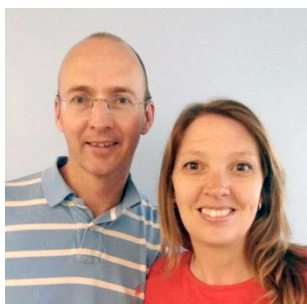
# Leadership in the church

## At Walsall Community Church

### Overseers

Equivalent in the New Testament to Elders or Pastors

Tim & Heidi Summersby, Chris Loh, Dave Neale & Oliver Russell.



In the biblical image of the church as family, these are spiritual parents and have oversight of all areas of church life, in particular setting the tone and vision for the things we do together and helping other leaders to develop and coordinate their activities.

### Leaders

Deacon is probably too churchy a term to be used so we will just call this type *leader*.

*Leaders* are usually heading up a team of volunteers and are focused on one area of church life. They may be a specialist themselves in that area and they carry their leadership with delegated authority from the overseers.

This group is a little more fluid than the overseers as people may take up a role for a season and then move on, or teams may be merged or multiplied. Some of those who have more defined role are:

- Sarah Neale – Children's Work
- Joel Hunt – Worship
- Hayley Russell – Pastoral Care & Discipleship
- Katy Dean – Sunday Morning Planning

And others coming into emerging roles of responsibility in youth, hospitality, engaging with students and those from specific ethnic groups etc.

### Our response to leaders

1. **Pray for them**
2. **Honour them**  
*1 Timothy 5:17, Philippians 2:29, Romans 13:7, Acts 28:10*
3. **Make their service a joy**  
Hebrews 13:17
4. **Imitate them**  
*Hebrews 13:7; 2 Thessalonians 3:7, 1 Corinthians 11:1*
5. **Try to take the right problems to the right person**
6. **Expect God to raise up more leaders, and to increase your cap too**