

*Silver Beach Community Church*

# *Philosophy of Ministry*

*Our Purpose*

*Our Pillars*

*Our Programs*

*Our People*

*"...we are members of one body."*

*Ephesians 4:25*

## **What is a philosophy of ministry?**

At Silver Beach Community Church (SBCC), pleasing God in everything we do is our primary objective. Our ministries should promote a biblical understanding aimed at fostering a proper fear, love, and service of God. One means of evaluating current or potential programs is with a document such as this: a philosophy of ministry.

A philosophy of ministry is based on *non-negotiable biblical principles* that guide all the choices and decisions in the ministries of SBCC. These principles are drawn from a careful investigation of both the explicit and implicit teaching of Scripture.

Our philosophy of ministry recognizes that while there are many ways to do things, the reasons for what we do impact even our methods for carrying out our mission. Therefore, this philosophy of ministry has importance for both the *why* and the *how* of our ministries at SBCC.

Our philosophy of ministry is not a detailed doctrinal statement, nor is it a detailed list of the distinctives of SBCC (for such particulars, please see “Our Doctrines, Our Distinctives”). Instead, it is a statement of the underpinnings of our ministries, along with helpful questions to aid in evaluating those ministries in light of our purpose and goals.

## **Why is a philosophy of ministry important?**

We hope having a clearly stated philosophy of ministry for SBCC will:

- Encourage unity by having a clear direction of ministry here at SBCC.
- Draw clear lines between our month-to-month and year-to-year goals and our overall purpose and direction.
- Give us a means to biblically examine the ministries we have and might consider in the future.
- Guide us in understanding our biblical priorities for ministry.

## **Our philosophy of ministry is composed of four sections:**

**Our Purpose** – Why does SBCC exist?  
– What are our priorities?

**Our Pillars** – What are the biblical immovables that guide our ministry?

**Our Programs** – What methods do we employ?

**Our People** – How does our philosophy impact people?

## **Our Purpose**

**Our purpose at SBCC is to glorify God by making disciples of Jesus Christ** (1 Cor 10:31; Col 1:28-29; Matt 28:18-20).

A God-glorifying disciple of Jesus Christ is a person who is saved, maturing in his obedience to the greatest commandments (Matt 22:36-40) and the great commission (Matt 28:18-20). Therefore we seek to bring glory to God by loving Him supremely, by loving our fellow believers and building them up in their Christian walk, and by loving unbelievers (locally and globally), sharing the gospel with them.

As individual disciples and a disciple-making church we are driven by our purpose to three priorities:

- Worship** – Exalting the Lord  
– our Upward Ministry to God
- Edification** – Equipping the Saints  
– our Inward Ministry to other Believers
- Evangelism** – Evangelizing the Lost  
– our Outward Ministry to unbelievers



These are three priorities that God has commanded for every church and individual disciple (Ps. 95:6; Eph. 4:11-16; Acts 1:8). All three of these priorities are essential to building a healthy local church.

## **Our Pillars**

The pillars of our philosophy of ministry are biblical “foundation stones” that serve as a philosophical base for the ministries of our church. While all of Scripture is foundational to our life in Christ, these six pillars particularly guide and direct the ministries of Silver Beach Community Church.

These pillars are meant to be as broad as possible while still conveying the biblical truths which are distinctives of SBCC. These foundational pillars are truths which should be clearly seen in every ministry of our church.

With each of these foundational pillars, a brief set of questions is provided to help us gauge the effectiveness of the ministries of SBCC.

### **Pillar 1: A High View of God**

Our ultimate goal at SBCC is to preserve and display the glory of God. Our ministry must exalt God, producing a greater awareness of who God is. He is perfect in holiness, entirely sovereign, and is also loving and personally involved in His creation. A high view of God includes the pre-eminence of Christ as the head of the church and a reliance on the Holy Spirit as the agent of ministry in the life of the Christian.

Do our ministries:

- Seek to please God rather than men?
- Foster a reverence for the character of God?
- Lead to a meaningful, orderly experience of worship?
- Encourage dependence on God through prayer?
- Rely on the Holy Spirit and not on our own power?

## **Pillar 2: A High View of Scripture**

The Bible in its original language is the very Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16) and is therefore without error and entirely trustworthy, being inspired by the Holy Spirit. Every decision and aspect of ministry must be submitted to the scrutiny of Scripture; to disbelieve or disobey the Word is to disbelieve or disobey God. Scripture is therefore both authoritative and sufficient for all aspects of ministry, demanding our belief and obedience.

*“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”*

*2 Timothy 3:16, 17*

Do our ministries:

- Comply with the teaching of God’s Word?
- Encourage humble and willing submission to the authority of God’s Word?
- Point to God’s Word as *the* answer to problems?
- Teach God’s Word in an applicable, real-life way?

## **Pillar 3: A Biblical View of Man’s Depravity**

Though made in God’s image, man without Christ is spiritually dead and blind; therefore no amount of human logic or persuasion is sufficient to open his eyes and free him from his sin. Man on his own does not desire or seek God; the Holy Spirit alone, sovereignly using the Word of God, is able to save and sanctify sinners (Romans 1:18-24; 8:2-11). Therefore our ministries must prayerfully focus and rely upon the power of Scripture, rather than other methods, to transform lives.

Do our ministries:

- Teach people about sin and its deception?
- Aim to expose and confront sin, not to please people?
- Present a true picture of life without Christ?
- Assume that man is essentially evil rather than good?

## **Pillar 4: An Emphasis on the Priority of the Church**

The church is comprised of all who have repented of their sin and placed their faith in Christ. The church is God’s primary vehicle for working in this age; all believers must identify with, function in, and submit to the leadership of the local church (Eph. 1:22-23). Believers in the church should edify one another with their spiritual gifts in a way that promotes the purpose and priorities of the church (see “Our Purpose”).

Do our ministries:

- Aim to edify people, or maintain programs?
- Have a proper definition of “success?”
- Facilitate further ministry by our people?
- Encourage identification and use of members’ gifts?

### **Pillar 5: A Biblical View of the Family**

The church ought not compete with the family but rather promote intergenerational fellowship. A correct view of the intergenerational church life implies a church structure and programs that help rather than hinder family life at home (Eph. 6:1-4). Our church must edify its members in building marriage and family relationships that promote biblical living at home. Our church should not preempt or replace the parental role, but rather edify and promote biblically sound family relationships.

Do our ministries:

- Support biblical roles of men and women?
- Reflect a biblical view of the family?
- Reveal a biblical view of leadership in the home and church?
- Complement the home, or compete with it?

### **Pillar 6: A Commitment to Biblical Leadership**

True biblical leadership will model servant leadership, following the example of Christ. The qualifications for leadership are non-negotiable; they are not just skills or abilities but inner character qualities. Biblical leadership impacts every aspect of ministry and is a key component of God-honoring service.

Do our ministries:

- Have leaders that are biblically qualified?
- Have proper oversight by church leadership?
- Hold leaders to a high standard of accountability?
- Help train up biblical leaders from the flock?

### **Our Programs**

We do not start with programs. The programs we offer are designed to accomplish one or more facets of our *purpose* and must be consistent with our *pillars*. Our goal is to provide comprehensive balanced programs that help to build obedient disciples of Jesus Christ who are being equipped for life and ministry in all three priorities.

Our pillars lead us to commitments, such as a commitment to biblically qualified leadership, to biblical evangelism and discipleship, to God-centered ministry and body life, and to building strong marriages and families. Our methods, from programs to informal body life, are aimed at fulfilling these commitments.

Questions to consider in evaluating our programs:

- How does/will this program help accomplish our purpose?
- Is the program in question consistent with our pillars?
- Is qualified leadership committed to overseeing this program?
- Is there a better program that we are able to offer?
- Do we need this program? Is this program distracting us from more important priorities?

### **Our People**

***Our purpose at SBCC is to glorify God by making disciples of Jesus Christ.*** Therefore, a critical element of our philosophy of ministry is our focus on people.

We are not just an organization, but an organism. Our goal is not focused on increasing attendance, but on building individuals who truly love and serve God.

We value people above programs and strive to bring each individual to full maturity in Christ. We will do our best to provide individuals opportunities for spiritual growth. However, we also affirm each member's responsibility to participate both in his or her own growth and in the working of the church as a whole.



We as a church are bound together by a common purpose in unity. Our philosophy of ministry is not meant to hinder the working of God in our church, but to clearly state what we as a church believe is a biblical, God-glorifying way to think about ministry. We affirm our own inability but for God's enablement and power. We continue in much prayer as we desire to excel still more.

Questions to consider in evaluating our philosophy of ministry's impact on people:

- Do our ministries focus on maturing and growing people or on maintaining programs?
- Have our ministries resulted in people who reflect Christ in their lives and hearts?
- What is the fruit of our labors? How is that fruit reflected in the lives of our members?
- Do our ministries promote unity rather than divisiveness?
- Is prayer critical to our ministries?



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