**St Stephens**

**Leith Valley & Student Soul**

**Guiding Principles**

**Contents**

A] Mission Principles

B] Boundary Principles

C] Accountability Principles

D] Constitutional Interpretation

E] Statements of Position

E 1 Sexuality and leadership

Appendices

A1 Background of the PCANZ

A2 LVPC Statement of Faith

A3 Guidelines for suitability of a person for Eldership

**Red denotes documents not yet finalized in the Guiding Principles**

**Preamble**

The following document is intended by the council of Elders (Council) to implement an accountable leadership model for the St Stephens Christian Community. The guiding principles fall into three categories: Mission principles, Boundary principles and Accountability principles and are subject to ongoing revision by the Council.

***Through its Mission Principles*** the Council prescribes for the Lead Pastor and Ministry Leadership Team (MLT) the major end to be achieved by St Stephens.

***Through its Boundary Principles*** the Council sets limits on the means that may be used in pursuit of those ends prescribed through the Mission Principles. However, these means are described in general so that the specific leadership and management of St Stephens remains with its Lead Pastor and the MLT.

***Through its Accountability Principles*** the Council outlines the clear accountability responsibilities of the Lead Pastor and MLT, and the integrity of the Council’s own process.

***Through its constitutional interpretations*** the Council sets out how it is operating in relation to the PCANZ book of order in areas where there is discretion, lack of clarity, or variations have been required due to the size and nature of the parish’s work.

**Our Vision and Values**

**VISION STATEMENT: Leith Valley - Growing great community**

**Another alternative: Loving God, growing great community, bringing life to others**

**Following Jesus, growing great community, serving others**

**VALUES: The heart of Leith Valley Presbyterian Church beats for the following four values:**

**All people matter to God.   
We need to grow  
We need to be in community  
We need to serve**

**Expanded Mission Values:** These values are summaries both of what we believe God is calling us to and how we live.

**All people matter to God - reminds us that…**

* + God created all of us and loves us passionately. (John 3:16; Luke 2: 10; Romans 5:18)
  + We are all different but equally precious.
  + We want to show respect and love for one another and in doing so
* We try to understand differences and to be non-judgmental.
* We value being loving and compassionate
* We encourage participation
  + Our children and young people are especially important. We want to support and encourage them and help them get to know God.
  + Those who are poor and vulnerable, both in our local community and far away from us, are especially important. We want to support them and provide resources that they really need.

**We need to grow – reminds us that…**

* We are disciples of Jesus and we can’t stay the same (2 Cor 5:17, Eph 4:19)
* There is lots to learn about how to be people who truly love God and others. (Eph 4:13)
* Our most important resources are:
* The transformative power of God’s Word
* The power of the Holy Spirit and prayer
* The work of thinking through and acting on our understanding of God

**We need to be in community - reminds us that…**

* Relationships matter to God. He has always intended for us to be in community with Him and with each other. (Eph 1:4)
* Being in a community together helps us to grow – both individually and as a group. (Matt 1814-30, John 151-17)
* We respect, learn from and seek to include the diversities people bring.
* We want the way we love each other in this community to reflect how God loves us so people looking on will notice. (John 1334,35).
* In this community it’s ok to have a go, to stuff up, to disagree and to be real.
* We show we care about each other in our community by practising humility and teachability;

balancing love and truth; being encouragers of one another; caring for spiritual and emotional safety and having transparent and accountable leadership.

* Because we live in Creation a key responsibility in community is to steward our resources.

**We need to serve - reminds us that:**

By serving:

* we express our amazement at God's love for us and show God we love him back.
* we reflect the nature of God who loves and serves.
* we give our praise and worship back to God.
* we become who and what we were created to be: mature individuals gifted by God and functioning as part of the Body of Christ.
* we fulfill the mission of Christ for the world.
* we hope people will wonder what we are up to.

**OUR CORE MISSION:**

**These are the core mission areas that LVPC places emphasis on and which guide the Parish Council and Ministry Leadership Team in setting goals and programming.**

1. **CHILDREN, YOUTH AND 20 SOMETHINGS**
2. **DISCIPLESHIP and SPIRITUAL FORMATION**
3. **REACHING OUT**
4. **PASTORAL MINISTRY**
5. **WORSHIP SERVICES**

**CORE MISSION OBJECTIVES:**

**1. MINISTRIES TO CHILDREN, YOUTH AND 20 SOMETHINGS that are:**

* Christ-centred; challenging and growing young people to enter into relationships with Christ, each other and the wider church community
* cultivating a Christian lifestyle and teaching biblical foundations
* pastorally caring for young people
* attractive to people who are not yet part of our community
* fun for the people we are trying to serve.

**2. Focus on DISCIPLESHIP and SPIRITUAL FORMATION with the intent to:**

* develop a lifestyle which is Christ centred and Christ-led
* seek to be filled with the Spirit and develop spiritual gifts
* mature in prayer and worship (Heb 5:12-6:3)
* explore the Bible and learn to become more like Jesus
* understand culture through the eyes of Jesus
* be transfromed and have a transformational impact on the world around us
* learn to express our faith simply and concisely
* develop relationships with people of different beliefs.

**3. REACHING OUT with the intent to:**

* Train, empower and release compassionate followers of Jesus into local outreach and strategic global mission to fulfill the Great Commission (Acts 1:8, Matthew 28: 18)
* reflect a commitment to global, cross cultural mission in all aspects of what we do as a church  
  (including our budget)

**4. PASTORAL MINISTRY with the intent to :**

* Grow as a family- a place of belonging and care for all as a prime means of witness to others.  
  We care enough about each other that we make time, and put in an effort for each other. We share the good and the bad in each other's lives. We notice if we haven't seen you for a while and we do something about it. We laugh together, cry together, walk beside each other. Everyone in our community knows they're cared for, and they're prepared to care in return.
* grow emotionally and relationally healthy people…gracious community, offering the wholeness of Christ.
* Share our gifts and strengths and build teams together

5. **WORSHIP SERVICES that:**

* glorify God
* are outward looking and clearly articulate the Gospel
* are accessible to people who are new
* provide inspirational sung worship
* allow the Holy Spirit to lead us
* invite participation
* speak in everyday language
* are youth and kids friendly

**B] Boundary Principles**

Define the means by which the Lead Pastor and MLT are authorized to use in achieving the mission

**B 1.0] Ministry Leader Authorisation**

The Council authorizes the Lead Pastor to have full responsibility and authority for the implementation of the vision and mission of the Church.

The Lead Pastor is authorized to form a Ministry Leadership Team (MLT) to support him/her in the fulfillment of the mission of the church.

* The MLT shall take the form and function that the Lead Pastor deems most suitable.
* Appointments to and removals from MLT are to be made by the Council on the recommendation of the Lead Pastor.
* MLT members are under the leadership of the Lead Pastor
* The MLT facilitator (chair), if distinct from the Lead Pastor, is appointed by the Council and will attend Council meetings. This role is established at the discretion of the Council in consultation with the Lead Pastor and they will then become accountable to the Council.

The following specific authority, entrusted to the council by the book of order, is delegated to the Lead Pastor in conjunction with the MLT.

* Admission of members, authorization of dedications, baptisms and renewal of vows.
* Occasional alterations to day and time of worship services for particular purposes (permanent changes require the authority of council).
* Setting of the dates and times of communion.
* Employment of staff other than MLT members.

**B 2.0 Comprehensive boundary statement**

The Lead Pastor together with the Ministry Leadership Team members and staff shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision or organizational circumstance that is unlawful, imprudent, unethical or unbiblical.

***B 2.1 Biblical and moral integrity***

2.1.1 Life and Witness: The Lead Pastor (LP) and each member of the MLT is to live a life consistent with the life of Christ. Personal moral character underpins and is pivotal to, the entire credibility and mission effectiveness of the church and must not be compromised at any cost.

* 'integrity of their calling' and 'personal moral character' means living a life consistent with the biblical imperative *to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with God* (Micah 6v8b). Furthermore it also refers to propriety, accountability and transparency in all financial management, as well as a lifestyle that in all aspects at all times upholds and models a clear Christian witness. This will also include a standard of sexual behaviour consistent with the present position of the PCANZ as at October 2012.
* ‘must not be compromised at any cost’ means that any breach of these requirements has potential to negatively impact and jeopardize the mission effectiveness of the church. Any such compromise will result in discipline appropriate to the nature of the breach, and in serious cases, termination of employment.

**2.1.2 Ministry Duties:** With regard to the teaching, leadership and membership of the church, the Lead Pastor and each member of the MLT shall not fail to uphold high standards of Christian teaching and behaviour.

* 'high standards of Christian teaching and behaviour’ refers to preserving a worldview consistent with the orthodox, historic and evangelical interpretation of the biblical meta-narrative as expressed in the Kupu Whakapono of the PCANZ.

The lifestyle of the Lead Pastor and each member of the MLT are to be consistent with these beliefs.

* **“ uphold” means to teach and model but also to take every reasonable step to ensure** 
  + **those who lead or minister in a formal capacity reflect these same standards in their lives.**
  + **those under the church’s pastoral care are taught, challenged, discipled to live lives that express the life Jesus called us to.**

***B 2.2 Mission planning***

The Lead Pastor together with the Ministry Leadership Team shall commence each new year with a council endorsed annual mission plan that implements the vision and mission of the congregation and the multi-year strategic vision.

.

2.2.1 Mission initiatives beyond those that are consistent with the plan can be undertaken as long as the overall plan is not compromised and due regard is paid to the sustainability of the work of the parish and staff and leaders in particular.

***B2.3 Financial Management***

*Commentary on Financial responsibilities: With respect to the financial management of the church all Financial Management roles will be fulfilled through a team of people, who report to the Ministry Leadership Team, the leader of such a team e.g. the Parish Manager, may be part of the MLT but not the Lead Pastor.*

*The Financial Management principles are expressed in relation to the Lead Pastor for clarity throughout the organization. However it is understood that their responsibility is to ensure a suitable team is in place; that the team understand these principles and to show reasonable care in checking that day to day practice aligns with these principles.*

*The Lead Pastor is also responsible to ensure they understand the implications of these principles and, with the MLT to see that the day to day operations of the church remain within them.*

*With respect to the actual, ongoing financial conditions and activities, the Lead Pastor shall ensure that material deviation of actual expenditures from Council priorities established in Mission Principles does not occur.*

***B 2.4 Financial Planning***

Financial planning for any year shall follow the Council’s Mission Principles, and not risk financial jeopardy, or fail to support the annual mission plan.

* + 1. An annual budget reflecting the mission plan shall be presented to the Council for its endorsement no later than one month prior to the start of the new financial year.

2.4.2 The Lead Pastor shall ensure budgeting that:

* Enables credible projection of revenues and expenses, separation of capital and operational items, relation of expenditures to Mission Principles, and disclosure of multiyear planning assumptions.
* Limits expenditure in any financial year to funds than are conservatively projected to be received in that period, unless special circumstances are adequately described including a realistic plan to make up the deficit within the following financial year.
* will see general unencumbered cash reserves exceed two months normal budgeted expenditure or current assets exceed current liabilities by more than 125%
  + 1. Total regular expenditure can move beyond the budget by up to 5% as long as key financial ratios specified herein are maintained.
    2. Capital expenditure outside the budget (items over $1000 and projects over $5000) require the authorization of Council
    3. No debt is to be incurred without the authorization of council.
    4. The Lead Pastor requires the authorization of council:-
* To spend any long term reserves
* To make a single purchase of greater than 5% of the annual budget, aside from staff and non-discretionary expenses.
* To acquire, encumber, or dispose of real-estate, or fixed assets with a value in excess of $1000.
* expend more funds than have been received in the fiscal year to date unless the following debt guideline is met.
  + To indebt the church in an amount greater than can be repaid by reliable, otherwise unencumbered revenues within ninety days.
  + To settle payroll and debts in a timely manner nor allow tax payments, if any, or other government-ordered payments or filings to be overdue or inaccurately filed.

2.4.7 External funding cannot be sought from sources that primarily derive their income from gambling or the sale of alcohol (e.g. lottery grants, licensing and gaming trusts).

***B2.5 Asset Protection***

The Lead Pastor shall ensure the assets of the church are protected, adequately maintained and not unnecessarily placed at risk.

2.5.1 Insurance: The Lead Pastor shall ensure all assets are insured against theft and casualty losses to at least 80 percent of replacement value and against liability losses to Council members, staff, and the church itself in an amount greater than the average for comparable organization.

2.5.2 Facilities and Equipment The Lead Pastor shall ensure the facilities and equipment are not subject to improper wear and tear or insufficient maintenance.

2.5.3 *Liability:* The Lead Pastor shall not unnecessarily expose the organization, its Council, or its staff to claims of liability.

2.5.4 *Purchases:* The Lead Pastor shall not make any purchase 1) wherein normally prudent protection has not been given against conflict of interest; 2) of over $1,000 without having obtained comparative prices and quality; and 3) of over $5,000 without a stringent method of assuring the balance of long-term quality and cost.

2.5.5 *Information Protection:* The Lead Pastor shall not fail to protect intellectual property, information, and files from loss or significant damage.

2.5.6 *Auditor:* The Lead Pastor shall not receive, process, or disburse funds under controls that are insufficient to meet the Council-appointed auditor’s standards.

2.5.7 *Security of investments:* The Lead Pastor shall not invest or hold operating capital in unsecured investments, or long term investment instruments without an investment grade credit rating or in or in non-interest bearing accounts except when necessary to facilitate ease in operational transactions.

2.5.8 *Public Reputation:* The public reputation of the church is a vital asset in the fulfillment of her calling. The Lead Pastor shall not endanger the organization’s public image or credibility, particularly in ways that would hinder its accomplishment of mission.

***B 2.6 Staffing and remuneration***

The Lead Pastor is responsible for the recruiting, care and maintenance of an adequate team that would enable the church to reach its goals and objectives.

2.6.1 MLT appointments can only be made by Council on a recommendation by the Lead Pastor.

2.6.2 The Lead Pastor shall not allow those in the employ of the church to engage in ministry in a way that compromises their health, wellbeing and sustainability in ministry.

2.6.3 The Lead Pastor may not cause or allow conditions that are unfair or undignified for paid or volunteer staff.

2.6.4 The Lead Pastor shall not operate without a set of concise personnel & remuneration policies that the Council has endorsed. Such policies shall:-

* clarify rules for staff, provide for effective handling of grievances, and protect against wrongful conditions such as nepotism and grossly preferential treatment for personal reasons.
* not breech the employment law nor best practice for organizations of our nature.
* ensure a regular appraisal of each team member’s ministry and progress in relation to the strategic vision of the church, and that their roles stay within the defined values and objects of the congregation.
* be administered in such a way that does not cause or allow jeopardy to the church’s fiscal integrity or public image.
* not establish current remuneration and benefits that deviate materially (in terms of being higher than) from the geographic or equivalent remuneration for the ministry role being undertaken.
  + 1. *Notice:* The Lead Pastor shall ensure staff are acquainted with their rights according to these policies.

2.6.6 *Grievance:* The Lead Pastor shall not prevent staff expressing a grievance to the Council when (1) internal procedures have been exhausted, and (2) the employee alleges either that Council principles have been violated to his or her detriment or that Council principles do not adequately protect his or her human rights.

2.6.7  *Lead Pastor Compensation:* The Lead Pastor shall not change his or her own compensation and benefits.

2.*6.8 Promise of Employment:* The Lead Pastor shall not promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment without due process.

***B 2.7 Relationship with the Council***

The Lead Pastor shall not permit the council to be uninformed or unsupported in its work.

2.7.1 The Lead Pastor shall ensure that the council receives monthly information regarding the overall development of the congregation in relation to the strategic vision of the church and the team performance in relationship to that development.

2.7.2 The Lead Pastor shall not operate without clear, agreed measures for “how will we know we have achieved our vision” that the Council has endorsed.

2.7.3 The Lead Pastor and MLT shall not through speech or actions undermine the council or its members, or act in a manner which disrupts a God honoring relationship between the MLT and the council.

**B 3.0] Key Relationships**

The Lead Pastor and MLT shall at all times seek to lead our church in a manner which upholds the value of how deeply people matter to God.

***3.1 Relationships with outside agencies and organisations***

In dealing with outside groups the Lead Pastor shall not allow decisions or actions that result in our conduct as a church evidencing anything less than the highest standards of **Christian integrity.**

3.1.1 The conduct of our church, namely the organisational conduct in the church’s name, in any area of behaviour, relationships, financial dealings, confidences undertakings and communications shall not compromise the integrity of Jesus Christ and His church.

3.1.2 While maintaining the dignity and freewill of other groups the Lead Pastor shall not allow our engagement with those of other faiths to compromise our commitment to the centrality of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the only way of Salvation.

***3.2 Relationship with followers of Christ who are under the pastoral care of the Parish.***

The Lead Pastor and MLT shall not relate to members of the church in a manner which is inconsistent with their position as fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, and our common need for the grace and mercy of God.

3.2.1 With respect to interactions with members and associate members, the Lead Pastor shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decision that are unsafe, undignified, unnecessarily intrusive, or that fail to provide appropriate confidentiality or privacy.

3.2.2 The Lead Pastor shall not allow the “weaker” among us to be bypassed or treated in any way that doesn’t reflect scriptures call for special care and dignity.

***3.3 Relationships with those who don’t know Jesus***

The Lead Pastor shall ensure that every reasonable step to ensure that our church does not relate to unbelievers in a manner inconsistent with the model lived out by Jesus.

* + 1. The witness of the church is to be expressed in a way that demonstrates God’s love as inclusive and indiscriminate and the offer of God’s grace and mercy being for all.
    2. In being faithful to our call we will seek to relate in a positive and respectful way to all people and take care to express God’s particular heart towards the poor and disadvantaged.
    3. The Lead Pastor shall be vigilant in ensuring those who minister in the name of the church do not place themselves in a position where their Christian witness is compromised, or makes them vulnerable to accusation. This includes:-
       - maintaining a consistent belief system in the face of a pluralistic world
       - lives which are true to being “in the world but not of it”
       - being vigilant in dealing with members of differing gender, age, and status.

**B 4.0 Board of Managers.**

The book of order (7.4.3) allows flexibility in the governance structure of a congregation. For the sake of establishing clear lines of authority and due to St Stephen’s governance/leadership model including a day to day leadership function (MLT), the council shall appoint a finance team which will be a resourcing team under the leadership of the MLT or their representative.

The relationship of the finance team to the council will be through the MLT and not as a committee of Council.

**B 5.0 Trusts established by the church**

No legal entities shall be established by the church without the consent of the Council.

* + 1. The Lead Pastor shall not allow related trusts and church leaders to operate in a manner other than one which recognizes that we serve together for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
    2. Trustees and representatives of related legal entities shall commit to conducting their relationships with the church in the utmost good faith and in a manner which expresses Jesus’ call to servant leadership. Our communication will exhibit a heart to believe for the best in one another and remaining clear, open and positive.
    3. Related legal entities cannot be formed unless they:-
* Have constitutional documents approved by the Council of Elders.
* Include in their constitutional documents the requirements that
  + Trustees or board members are to be endorsed by the Council of Elders prior to their appointment.
  + Their boards will have a majority of trustees/members who are members of St Stephens.
    1. Trustees shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision or organizational circumstance that is unlawful, imprudent, unethical or unbiblical, or in conflict with the guiding principles of St Stephens.
    2. All staff appointments are to be in accordance with the St Stephens employment and remuneration policy unless authorized by Council of Elders.

**B 6.0 Integration or Formation of new congregations by the church and ongoing relationship with such congregations.**

No congregations may be integrated or formed without the consent of the Council. The formation or integration of such congregations is with the understanding that we are one people worshipping in many congregations.

6.1.1 The Lead Pastor shall not allow extension congregations and their leaders to operate in a manner other than one which recognizes that we serve together for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

* + 1. Leaders and representatives of extension congregations shall commit to conducting their relationships with the church in the utmost good faith and in a manner which expresses Jesus’ call to servant leadership. Our communication will exhibit a heart to believe for the best in one another and remaining clear, open and positive.
    2. Extension congregations cannot be formed unless they:-
* Are located within the broad mission area the church is called to.
* Have an agreed to the memorandum of understanding with the Council of Elders as set out in Appendix two.

Such a memorandum shall include commitments that:

* + The Council will remain the overall governing body for the new congregation and the spiritual leadership to which they are accountable.
  + The membership of the local leadership team of the congregation are Eldership appointees, they would need to agree to the terms of the memorandum as a condition of being appointed.
  + Finance, property, human resources and mission planning of the congregation are to be managed in accord with St Stephens’s policy and procedures.
  + All staff appointments are to be in accordance with the St Stephens employment and remuneration policy unless authorized by Council of Elders.
  + The local leadership team will ensure that all aspects of its work cohere with the vision, values and theological position of St Stephens.
  + That the Lead Pastor shall ensure the wider St Stephens team support and resource the extension congregation in whatever way possible.

6.1.4 In the event of an extension congregation being disestablished all property, equipment, or assets of any nature, including intellectual property, shall remain in the ownership of St Stephens unless expressly agreed otherwise.

**C] Accountability Principles**

The book of order places in the hands of the elders the responsibility for spiritual oversight, leadership in mission, pastoral care, and governance (Clause 7.2). The Council is responsible before God and on behalf of those in the North of Dunedin who need to be led to Jesus and grown in him to ensure that through the leadership of the Lead Pastor and MLT St Stephens fulfills its Mission while operating within its boundary principles.

**C 1.0 Accountability to Christ for our relationship to those he calls us to serve.**

The Council shall always recall that Christ is Head and King of the Church and our responsibility is to the people of God gathered here and to the people Christ has called this church to serve.

***1.1 Known by and knowing those we are called to serve:-***

1.1.1 The council will invest energy and resources into knowing and understanding the needs of:-

* The gathered community of Jesus’ followers
* Those we are called to serve who aren’t yet followers of Jesus.
  + 1. will work to ensure the people we serve know their Elders and that a relationship of trust is developed and maintained.
    2. will adopt Jesus’ model of servant leadership in the way we serve as Elders
  1. ***Devotion to prayer and the Word of God***

1.2.1 The Lead Pastor will assist the council to give attention to corporate prayer and the study of scripture.

* + 1. The Council will be committed to a culture of ‘learning” through reading, reflection and contemplation on all things worthy and wholesome.
    2. A personal commitment to the essential role of prayer, worship and study of God’s word is required of Council members.

**C2.0 Accountability for how we will do our work**

The Chair will ensure that the council conducts itself with God honoring discipline and integrity in fulfilling its calling.

***2 .1 Role and conduct of the Council***

The council’s responsibility is to govern (not manage). They will focus on the ends of ministry, goals set in conjunction with the Lead Pastor, not the means of ministry. As individuals, however, council members may practice their gifts in their areas of strength in various aspects of church life. As elders they will have an extra mandate as they practice their gifts to the benefit of those they serve.

2.1.1 The council will govern with an emphasis on a) Outward facing mission – those who don’t yet know Jesus, the poor, broken and marginalized, b) encouraging diversity of views, c) strategic leadership rather than administrative detail, d) releasing staff into their role of management, e) collective rather than individual decisions, f) future rather than past or present, g) proactivity rather than reactivity.

2.1.2 The council will have done their job well when

* There is a strong link between the ends of ministry achieved and the people God has called us to serve
* People are able to serve well within clear and healthy guiding principals
* The Lead Pastor and MLT are well supported, able to function well within healthy boundary principals, and are held accountable in a God honoring way.

2.1.3 The council are committed to governing out of Biblical relational community together. We will therefore:-

* Work to foster and preserve relationships with one another, taking care to use biblical tools for healthy resolution of difficult matters.
* Represent un-conflicted loyalty to the interest of Christ regarding those whom he has called his church to serve (Matt 28:18-20). This loyalty supersedes any personal group interest among or outside those whom the church serves.
* Disclose any conflict of interest and withdraw from decision making affected by it.
* In matters of substance make decision by way of consensus (not unanimity or majority), resolving to where necessary take time in order to reach consensus before the Lord rather than be rushed to decision. In minor matters a simple majority of 75% is required.
* Honor and represent the principles and decision of the Council acting as a whole. Not to foster dissent or attempt to exercise individual authority over the staff or the organization except as explicitly stated in the guiding principles.
* Respect confidentiality relating to Council issues and avoid facilitating gossip or other ‘triangulation’ against the practice of direct biblical resolution.

2.1 .4 The standing orders of the PCANZ for meetings are suspended, in favor of a consensus approach, unless reinstated by the Chair due to an impasse being reached.

***2.2 The structure of the Council***

2.2.1 Executive roles

An executive comprised of the Chair of the Council, the Lead Pastor and the Chair of the MLT shall serve the Council by preparing the agenda for Council meetings together and acting in the name of the Council where essential between meetings or in the case of urgent action. Their actions and decisions in this regard are always subject to review by the full Council.

* Chair - is elected by the council and is responsible for ensuring the effective functioning of the Council and that it discharges its responsibilities while conducting itself in accord with its values. They are responsible for preparation and circulation of the agenda, accurate record keeping and ensuring all administrative responsibilities of the Council are discharged on a timely basis. The chair also leads the council executive and is the point of contact for those wishing to communicate with the council.
* The Facilitator (Chair) of the MLT may be an elder or an ordained Minister. They are mandated by the Council to lead the MLT. They become non-voting members of Council by virtue of being the Chairperson of the MLT.
* The Lead Pastor is a non-voting member of the Council. As a member of the Council they play a particular role in providing visionary leadership in all respects of the Councils work except the monitoring of their own performance. If there is any uncertainty as to process the Lead Pastor will defer to the judgment of the Council chair.
* Chaplain to the MLT – provides pastoral care and support personally to the members of the MLT. This may include from time to time attending MLT meetings. This is not intended as a formal supervisory or management role purely as pastoral care and support.

2.2.2 The Facilitator of MLT (if distinct from the Lead Pastor) attends council as a non-voting member. As a member of the Council they play a particular role in providing a strong link to the MLT and in resourcing all respects of the Councils work except the monitoring of the Lead Pastor’s performance. If there is any uncertainty as to process they will defer to the judgment of the Council chair

2.2.3 Any other ordained ministers who attend council in their capacity as either staff or MLT members do so as non-voting members. As a member of the Council they play a particular role in providing a strong link to the MLT and in resourcing all respects of the Councils work except the monitoring of the Lead Pastor’s performance. If there is any uncertainty as to process they will defer to the judgment of the Council chair.

2.2.5 Minute secretary – a non-Eldership position, which can be established as required, assisting the chair in their work.

2.2.6 Other roles

* Communion coordination
* Presbytery Representative
* Coordination of Elders for praying with sick or particular need.

***2.3] Accountability for the support and oversight of the Lead Pastor***

The Council’s sole formal connection to the operating organization of the church, its achievement, and conduct shall be through the Lead Pastor and the chair of the MLT.

2.3.1 The Council shall not allow the Lead Pastor to express ministry in a manner which fails to maintain a healthy balance between the demands of ministry and leadership and the personal health and welfare of the Lead Pastor and their family.

2.3.2 Unity of authority: *Only decisions of the Council acting as a whole are binding on the Lead Pastor.*

2.3.3 Accountability of the Lead Pastor: The Lead Pastor is the Council’s only link to operational achievement and conduct, so that all authority and accountability of staff, as far as the Council is concerned, is considered the authority and accountability of the Lead Pastor.

2.3.4 Delegation to the Lead Pastor: The Council will instruct the Lead Pastor through written principles that prescribe the mission to be achieved and establish the boundaries to be avoided, allowing the Lead Pastor to use any reasonable interpretation of these principles.

2.3.5: Performance of the Lead Pastor: Monitoring of Lead Pastor and the other ordained leaders’ job performance will be solely against the only expected Lead Pastor job outputs: church accomplishment of the Council’s Mission Principles and church operation within the Council’s Boundary Principles.

2.3.6 Annual Goals of the Lead Pastor and MLT The Lead Pastor and MLT will be required to express in the mission plan goals each year that correspond to each of the Council’s mission principles. These goals for each mission principle must include some that project growth in the number of people who benefit or participate.

2.3.7 Annual Review of the Lead Pastor Each year, the Council shall review the results achieved by the Lead Pastor on each of the annual goals.

**D] Constitutional Interpretation**

We are a congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand (PCANZ) the constitutional framework and background to the PCANZ is set out in appendix one. As such we are responsible through the local Presbytery to the General Assembly of the PCANZ and bound by the requirements of the:-

* Book of Order
* Church Property Trustees

along with such regulations as the Presbytery or General Assembly shall pass from time to time.

**D 1] Council of Elders and Eldership**

The book of order places in the hands of the congregation’s elders the responsibility for spiritual oversight, leadership in mission, pastoral care, and governance. The following is how we believe we are to order our affairs most appropriately within the particular context of St Stephens.

***D 1.1 The role distinctions of Elders within St Stephens***

A council of Elders shall be formed from among the ordained Elders of the parish, typically this shall be between 8-12 in number (or such size as the council deems necessary to fulfill its calling). In overseeing the discernment and fulfillment of St Stephen’s calling the council of Elders shall provide governance, spiritual oversight and pastoral care of its members and leadership in mission, and has ultimate responsibility for its finances and property.

Other ordained Elders shall serve in particular areas of responsibility, at the discretion of Council, but shall have no role in the governance responsibilities of the church.

***D 1.2 Membership of the council***

1.2.1 A person must be an ordained elder within the PCANZ to become part of the council of Elders.

1.2.2 If the council determines that it requires further members to fulfill its calling they shall:-

* Discern the names of suitable people (either currently ordained as Elders or suitable for ordination) taking into consideration the current gift mix and abilities of the council. In this process they may call for suggestions by the congregation however the final decision as to who is considered for Eldership and membership of the council remains the prerogative of the council of elders.
* Place the names of suitable people before the congregation at a congregational meeting. Support of 80% of valid votes is required for a person’s call to become an elder and/or a member of the council to be sustained.

1.2.3 People ineligible for membership of the council include:-

* Any direct relative or spouse of a core staff team member of the congregation.
* Any direct relative or spouse of a senior staff member of related trusts.
* Staff members & core volunteer ministry team members of the congregation.
* Senior staff members of related trusts
* Any spouse of another serving council member or their direct relative.
* A person whose life style or attitude is not in accord with the statement of faith and suitability (Separate policy) for eldership.
  + 1. Ordained staff within the team shall retain the right to attend Council meetings although they may retire this right from time to time. This is to be reviewed periodically and as the staff team grows.

***D 1.3 Provisions for Elders serving on the Council***

1.3.1 Sabbatical, special & parental leave – from time to time but not less than every six years a serving council member shall seek leave for typically up to 12 months for the purposes of personal refreshment and spiritual renewal, special circumstances, or where a child is born to the family. This period can be extended to 24 months at the discretion of Council; re-entry to council at the conclusion of such leave is at the Council’s discretion. Leave beyond 24 months will be treated as a resignation.

1.3.2 Retire (original option) – where an elder reaches the age of 75 they will retire from the council. In special circumstances, such as particular expertise required or circumstances within the council or parish the council may decide to extend this date on a year by year basis.

1.3.3 Resignation/Dismissal – An elder my resign or be dismissed by the council for reasons of a change of conviction, personal circumstances or in the case of unsuitability or matters of discipline. At that time they may, at the discretion of the council remain as an Elder actively serving in some other capacity within the parish. An elder who resigns or is dismissed from council must be re-nominated and re-elected should they wish to rejoin the council at a later time.

1.3.4 Associate – a person may be associated with council for a particular project, in order to test their call to eldership or to supplement their preparation for ordained ministry. Associates will have no voting rights. Associate status would not normally extend beyond 12 months.

***D 1.4 Elders outside of council***

1.4.1 Serving Elders - From time to time the council shall recommend for ordination and/or election as Elders people who will serve in that capacity but outside of the council. Serving elders are available to minister in communion services. As elders they will uphold the vision, theological position and values of St Stephens but express their Eldership in a particular context agreed to be the council.

* + 1. Emeritus Elders – where a person has retired from active eldership after either a lengthy or distinguished period of service the council can confer the status of Emeritus Elder. Such Elders can be called upon in times of emergency and are available serve in communion.

***D 1.5 Provisions for Elders outside of Council***

1.5.1 Sabbatical & parental leave – from time to time a serving elder can seek leave for typically up to 12 months or the purposes of personal refreshment and spiritual renewal, or where a child is born to the family. This period can be extended to 24 months at the discretion of Council re-entry to the role in those circumstances would also be at the Council’s discretion. Leave beyond 24 months will be treated as a resignation.

1.5.2 Retire – where an elder reaches the age of seventy five they will retire from service outside of council. The council may decide to extend this date on a year by year basis.

1.5.3 Resignation/dismissal – for reasons of a change of conviction, circumstances or in the case of unsuitability or matters of discipline. An elder who resigns or is terminated must be re-nominated and re-elected should they wish to resume active service at a later time.

**Appendix one – Background of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand**

(Extracted from chapter one of the PCANZ book of order).

**Standards**

(1) The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand (which in this Book of Order is referred to as “the Church”) is part of the one holy, catholic and apostolic church recognizing Jesus

Christ as its Lord and Head.

(2) The supreme rule of faith and life and the supreme standard of the Church is the Word of God contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

(3) The Kupu Whakapono and the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms are the subordinate standards of the Church.

(4) The Declaratory Act 1892-3 of the General Assembly of the Church sets out, in regard to certain doctrines what is required from those entering upon office.

(5) The *Directory of Worship (1995)* and *The Westminster Form of Church Government* set out generally the order of worship, discipline and government in the Church.

(6) The Church itself has the right, in dependence on the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, to formulate, interpret or modify its subordinate standards, always in agreement with its supreme standard and the fundamental doctrines of the Reformed Faith contained in its subordinate standards. The Church itself will be the sole judge whether this formulation, interpretation or modification is in agreement with its supreme standard.

.

**1.2 Background**

(1) The Church is part of the reformed tradition of the church and derives from the Presbyterian heritage within that tradition. As such the Church stands within a heritage of confessions of faith that give living expression to the Word of God.

(2) The character of the Church derives also from its New Zealand heritage. The Church acknowledges a bicultural commitment and rejoices in its multicultural character.

**1.3 The Church**

As part of the one holy, catholic and apostolic church, the Church shares in the wider church of Jesus Christ throughout the world and is committed to sharing in God’s mission to the world, and seeking to announce, with the promised guidance and power of the Holy Spirit, the good news of God’s transforming love in Jesus Christ.

**1.3 The Church**

As part of the one holy, catholic and apostolic church, the Church shares in the wider church of Jesus Christ throughout the world and is committed to sharing in God’s mission to the world, and seeking to announce, with the promised guidance and power of the Holy Spirit, the good news of God’s transforming love in Jesus Christ.

**1.4 A Presbyterian Church**

(1) The Church derives its reformed and evangelical character from the 16th century European Reformation that spread to Scotland and led to the formation of the Scottish Presbyterian Church.

(2) The character and structure of the Church owes much to the Reformation including commitments to

(a) Jesus Christ as Lord over each individual, society and all of life,

(b) the responsibility of members of the Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, to study the Scriptures,

(c) the responsibility of the Church’s ministers, guided by the Holy Spirit, to expound the Scriptures, and

(d) the potential for study, teaching and proclamation of the Word of God to change lives and transform society in accordance with God’s purpose in the world.

(3) The Church stands within a heritage of confessions of faith that give living expression to the Word of God.

(4) The Church is a Reformed church, ever requiring reformation, listening and responding to the Word of God in dependence on the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit.

(5) The Church has set aside ministers and elders to guide and govern the Church’s life.

(6) Government of the Church is vested in local church councils, regional presbyteries, synods, Te Aka Puaho, and the General Assembly of the Church.

**1.5 A multicultural Church with a bicultural commitment**

(1) The Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi):

(a) was signed in 1840 by the Crown and Tangata Whenua,

(b) made extensive settlement of New Zealand by Europeans possible,

(c) retained certain specified rights for Tangata Whenua, and

(d) has been characterised as a “partnership”.

(2) It is within the context of the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi) that the Church recognises a bicultural partnership between Te Aka Puaho and its other church courts. These bicultural partners work together within the mission of God.

(3) The Church has become a multicultural church. Immigration from Pacific Island and other nations throughout the world have transformed, continue to transform and contribute to the

multicultural character of the Church.

**1.6 A Church committed to unity**

(1) The Church seeks to honour Jesus’ prayer that his followers “will be one with each other, just as you and I are one”. (John 17:11)

2) The Church is itself a church born of union. In 1901 the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, as it was known when it was established in 1862, and the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland founded in 1866, agreed to unite as one church.

(3) In 1967 the Church participated in an Act of Commitment with the Associated Churches of Christ, The Anglican Church in New Zealand, the Congregational Union of New Zealand and the Methodist Church of New Zealand.

(4) The Act of Commitment has enabled and continues to enable the emergence of uniting congregations. These congregations are members of Uniting Congregations of Aotearoa New Zealand and are still members of their partner denominations.

(5) Another sign of unity was the decision in 1969 for 28 churches of the Congregational Union to join the Presbyterian Church, bringing with them their Pacific Islander members.

(6) The Church continues to give expression to the union all Christians enjoy in Jesus Christ.

**1.7 The Formula**

(1) Ministers and elders and other office bearers must make themselves accountable to the Church by subscribing to the following formula:

“*I believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and other subordinate standards of this Church. I acknowledge the Presbyterian government of this Church to be agreeable to the Word of God, and I promise that I will submit to and agree with that government. I promise to observe the order and administration of worship and public ritual as these are or may be allowed in this Church.”*

**1.8 Alteration of this Chapter**

Sections 1 and 7 and this section 8 cannot be altered, amended or deleted in any way except in accordance with the special legislative procedure.

**Appendix 2:**

Statement of Commitment and Belief for Staff, Key Volunteers and Ministry Leaders of St Stephens/Leith Valley Presbyterian Church

I …………………………………………………………………………………………

agree with the confession of the PCANZ otherwise known as the Kupu Whakapono.

I am or agree to become a member of St Stephen’s / Leith Valley Church (Circle one)

I concur with and agree to abide by the relational and ethical standards of the PCANZ church as contained in the Book of Order and other major documents of the PCANZ.

I consent to the Church requesting a police check of myself.

Signed:

Date:

**KUPU WHAKAPONO (Confession of Faith)**

From this land of Aotearoa New Zealand  
we confess that we believe in and belong  
to the one true and living God,  
who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
Love before all love.

We believe in God the Father,

sovereign and holy,

Creator and nurturer of all,

Father of Jesus Christ,

sender of the Holy Spirit,

and Judge of all the earth.

We believe in God the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour,

truly human and truly divine,

who lived among us full of grace and truth.

For our sin he was crucified  
and by the power of God was raised from death,

forgiving us, setting us free and bringing to birth God’s new creation.

Now ascended, he calls us to repentance and faith

and restores us to God and to one another.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit,

the giver of life at work in all creation,

who inspired the Scriptures and makes Christ known,

who transforms hearts and minds

and gathers us into the community of Christ,

empowering the Church in worship and in mission.

We belong to this triune God,

women and men,

young and old,

from many nations,

in Christ *he iwi kotahi tatou,* [we are one people]

witnesses to God’s love in word and action,  
servants of reconciliation,  
and stewards of creation.

As God’s people,

we look forward in hope and joy

to the return of Christ,

to the new heaven and earth,

where evil and death will be no more,

justice and peace will flourish,

and we shall forever delight in the glory of God.