

LIVING STONES CHURCHES



ETHOS OF LS NETWORK

Living Stones is formed by the following characteristics:

Living Stones is a Bible driven, theologically rich, Christ-centered, missional focused and contextual church that desires to plant more churches.

WHY DO WE EXIST?

To See Outsiders Become Insiders

Like Jesus, Living Stones Churches strives to do everything possible to make outsiders insiders in the Kingdom of God.

WHAT IS OUR MISSION?

We are Disciples Making Disciples

(see discipleship chart for a description of “disciple”)

HOW WILL WE FULFILL OUR MISSION?

In the City, for the City

(physically, culturally, spiritually)

Each church will be responsible with carrying out this vision through events and presence in their city/town.

HOW WILL WE MULTIPLY?

Churches Planting Churches

Living Stones firmly believes that church planting is the most effective way to see people come to Jesus.

Each church will be responsible for contributing financially 10% to church planting as well as participating in church planting events and trainings.

HOW DO WE OPERATE?

Living Stones has a **simple church** strategy.

Primary: Weekly Worship Gatherings, Community Groups, Mission to our City

Supplements: Classes, conferences, retreats

WHAT BELIEFS DISTINGUISH LIVING STONES FROM OTHER CHURCHES?

Gospel Centered - The gospel is the center and ultimate motivator of all we do as a church.

Reformed Soteriology - God is sovereign in all aspects of salvation. Apart from God’s intervention, no human would choose him of their own free will. He elects, died for, draws and preserves his people.

Complementarian - Men and women are created equal but have different roles which complement each other in the leadership in the church and in the home. The office of Elder is reserved for qualified men only.

Marriage & Sexuality - Living Stones holds marriage as a God-given gift to humanity to show his personality and relationship to his Church. We believe that from cover to cover the Bible holds marriage between one man and one woman and that any expression of sexuality outside of that covenant is outside of God’s created will and sinful.

Spirit-Empowered Continuationists - All the gifts of the Spirit listed in the Bible are present and active in his church and free to be used by members according to the guidelines of the Scripture.

Missional - The church is on a mission to seek and save the lost and make disciples of all nations as assigned by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Liturgical - Sunday liturgy is planned with care so that the entire service is a demonstration of the gospel to the glory of God. Every service walks through elements that proclaim the storyline of the Bible including Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Restoration.

Sunday Driven - The engine of Living Stones Churches is the Sunday Worship Gathering when the church gathers for singing, prayers, the preaching of the Bible, the sacraments, the edification of the people, and the sending out of the people on mission. This is the front door of Living Stones and requires the majority of resources and leadership attention.

Bible Driven - Living Stones has the Bible at the center of all of its worship. Sermons, Community Groups and events are centered around expounding Scripture. The Bible is the final authority of the church and Living Stones strives to not go beyond what is written.

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Covenantal Hermeneutic - Living Stones believes that all sixty-six books of the Bible tell one story that details God's relating with humanity. This story's progression can be summarized under the headings of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration (consummation). The progression of the story follows a pattern of covenants in which God chose his people, commands obedience, offers grace for disobedience, and sacrificially acts to redeem them to himself. Therefore, God has one plan of salvation for his one people which is demonstrated in both the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament God fulfills his plan through the line of Adam, Seth, Noah, Abraham, and Jacob. In the New Testament God continues to fulfill the same plan through Jesus and the church.

Five Solas of the Reformation -

Sola Scriptura - Scripture alone has the authority of God
Sola Fide - Man is saved by faith alone in Christ Jesus and not by good works.

Sola Gratia - Salvation is granted by grace alone and is not merited by man in any way.

Solus Christus - Christ alone is the only way to salvation
Soli Deo Gloria - All glory is goes to God alone

Common Graces - Living Stones believes that all humans are made in the image of God and in many ways display His nature and character. This means that there are some graces God gives to all people, even though some people do not receive the special grace of salvation. Some of these graces include: the ability to marry and experience the benefits of marriage, the ability to learn and communicate truth, the ability to create beautiful things, and the ability to work together for the common good of humanity. These are examples of a few common graces that Living Stones highlights and acknowledges as truth and grace from God.

The Arts - Living Stones believes that art and music are powerful gifts that God has given to humanity to display his beauty. Therefore, Living Stones uses art as a means for people to engage with God. Sometimes Living Stones uses or displays art that is created by secular artists if it displays Biblical truth on the basis that all truth, if it is really true, is from God.

Credo Baptist - Living Stones believes that baptism is a confession of one's personal faith in Jesus. It is a sign that a person has been regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit, trusted in Jesus for salvation, and has committed to living their life for his glory.

WHAT PRACTICES DISTINGUISH US FROM OTHER CHURCHES?

Elder Ruled - Each Living Stones Church is lead by biblically qualified pastors (elders) who have been entrusted with the leadership, governance, and care of the church. Each church's elder team differs according to size and stage of the church, but each church has a plurality of elders and a lead elder to guide the team (the Lead Pastor).

Deacon Led - Each church's elder team will appoint Biblically qualified Deacons to assist the elders in leading and caring for the church.

Member Served - Each Living Stones church will have committed members who serve, pray for, financially give to, and faithfully participate in the worship and mission of the church.

It is not the responsibility of the LS network, but rather the responsibility of each local LS church to develop and appoint elders, deacons and members.

Sermon Series - A major benefit of the LS Network is that every church is on the same page with sermon series. Since we are a Sunday driven church, this creates momentum, excitement, and unity across all churches. For this reason the LS Network continues to participate in the same sermon series at each local church.

Sermon Series are suggested by the Directional Leadership Team and approved by Directional Team.

Material created by the network is used by all churches as a way to maintain quality and branding.

If a local church would like to do a short sermon series of their own to address an acute need of their congregation, this may be allowed only at the approval of the entire directional team.

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DIRECTIONAL TEAM

This team is entrusted with the direction and oversight for the Living Stones (LS) network. It is composed of the lead pastors of each church and is lead by the Directional Leadership Team.

Network Lead (Harvey Turner)

Network Coach (Kyle Bateson)

Network Executive (Kyle Wetzler)

NETWORK SUPPORT STAFF

In order the for the network to run efficiently there are some keys roles to serve all of the churches. These roles will be compensated according to the percentage of the work they do for the network. The majority of their salary 3will come from their local church.

Network Lead (Harvey Turner)

Provide main direction and influence for network.

Network Coach/Church Plant Residency (Kyle Bateson)

Provide coaching, unity, and wisdom for the lead pastors and future LS churches.

Network Executive (Kyle Wetzler)

Carry out the workings of all business documentation, legal needs, and network administrative tasks.

Network CFO (Mark Lieske)

Maintain fiscal responsibility and wise financial planning for the network.