

## **Women in Leadership Planning Team: Terms of Reference Feb. 2021**

### **Background**

The Alliance Church in Canada moved to accept an Egalitarian position (Men and women are equal in all areas of ministry) in regards to membership on an Elders' Board approximately 20 years ago with a further update at the Assembly 2016 which included the ability to hire (including Lead Pastor) according to theological convictions. The denomination leaves the decision to each church to make or not make those transitions in their own time. SGAC has enjoyed having women in leadership for many years with a number serving as pastors on staff. The Elders Board recently did an overview of the literature and recommended that the church maintain a position that would encourage women to participate in all forms of leadership except the role of elders.

The Board of Elders formally distributed a document to the congregation in January 2021 where they outlined their understanding of the scriptures as the basis to "recommend to the membership that Spruce Grove Alliance Church should remain complementarian."

Subsequently at the Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting on January 24, 2021 a motion was passed "that a team be formed as soon as possible to plan and execute education and congregational discussions on the scriptural basis of both viewpoints of women in church leadership and on the Board with the intention of these discussions happening in the April to June time frame of 2021."

### **Purpose**

The Women in Leadership Planning Team will plan and initiate a process designed to enter into a transparent discussion of this key issue with the intent to build unity regardless of the final position taken by the congregation.

### **Objectives**

- Identify various approaches and possible best practices
- Outline a plan to include congregational participation and learning opportunities regarding the scriptural basis and differences of the various positions
- Identify the parameters for discussion
- Identify risks of differing perspective and provide mitigating strategies to encourage unity
- Provide opportunities for the congregation to discuss the topic openly and ask related questions
- Share a plan to bring to conclusion this issue as a congregation.
- Promote effective, ongoing communication with the elders, staff and congregation throughout the process

### **Team Description**

The Women in Leadership Planning Team will be formed as an ad hoc group of the Elders' Board accountable to them. The team will work together with the Transitional Leaders and provide communication with the Elders, and include a plan to solicit the input of the congregational members and staff.

### **Team Composition**

The team will be made up of a cross section of the congregation representing diversity of gender and generations.

### **Characteristics of the Team Members**

- Respected individuals within the congregation with a heart for the Body of Christ at SGAC
- Individuals with a heart to pray and listen for God's direction
- Individuals who understand and/or represent the character of the current SGAC

### **Frequency and Method of Meetings**

- Every 2-4 weeks and/or as required
- Meeting dates will be jointly agreed upon and circulated by email

### **Deliverable**

- A Plan/Timeline that includes opportunities for education and discussion with the congregation that can be presented to the Elders Board at their April 2021 meeting,



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- Complete the educational/discussion component of the plan prior to the September 2021 Annual General Meeting of the membership.

### **Accountability**

- The transition leaders will work together with the Elders' Board to select members for the team
- The transition leaders will support the team as required
- A Chairperson will be named by the group and will provide updates to the congregation as required.
- Where possible the group will operate by discussion and consensus, making group recommendations.

The Women in Leadership Planning Team will be dissolved after the objectives have been met or under the direction of the Transitional Leaders in collaboration with the Elders.