

## **Elders and HG Leaders**

### **Embracing Complementary Men and Women's Ministry**

Complementarianism is the belief that the Bible teaches that men and women are created by God as equals in worth and dignity, yet have distinct roles and responsibilities.

This view has traditionally been the standard position and practice of the global church. However, in recent decades, it has sparked considerable debate, especially in Western contexts.

Much of this disagreement stems from changes in society that have influenced and challenged the church.

Here are three areas that may shape women's ministry in evangelical churches:

- Separatism
- Close focusing on boundaries of men and women's ministries
- Individualism

In contrast to a "reluctant" complementarianism, we want to increasingly embrace the ministry of women, as well as men, at Christ Church!

Therefore, we want a culture where, within appropriate biblical parameters, women are given every opportunity to serve as leaders, teach the Bible, and input in a meaningful way to decision-making that happens within the church.

### **For discussion this evening:**

➔ At Sunday services, is the role of the Pastors solely to preach, or to also work hard at preparing and predominantly leading the rest of public worship

in the service? If both, why?

→ How important do you feel “*up front*” congregational participation in public worship is, in contrast to Mark/Gareth/Steve/Katie/Bethan leading everything? Why?

→ How important is it to see suitably gifted women, such as our Youth and Children’s Workers, women HG leaders or Women@ChristChurch leaders, regularly co-leading Sunday services alongside say, one of the Pastors or another suitably gifted man? Why?

→ (1) How often, and (2) in what different ways, do you perceive our church members are *already* participating in leadership of our Sunday services?

→ There is a certain level of spiritual gifting and involvement in church life that is needed for anyone to lead “up front”, whether reading the Bible, praying, interviewing or more broadly “leading the service”. Try to identify what these spiritual gifts may be:

→ Women@ChristChurch is thriving and a significant area of women’s leadership at Christ Church. Women are equally represented on mixed church teams such as the Global Mission Team, Evangelism Team, Pastoral Care Team, to name three significant church teams. *In what other ways can we encourage women to flourish in ministry and leadership within church life?* (This is a deliberately broad question... think as widely as possible)

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→ Mark said yesterday in his sermon from 1 Tim 2:9-15, *“In light of Paul’s teaching, it’s clear that to set apart a woman to be a pastor or elder—a church leader—is not appropriate. That includes the primary authoritative teaching role in the church, which for most FIEC churches including us here at Christ Church is expressed primarily in the Sunday service teaching and preaching ministry to the mixed congregation.”*

In what ways is leading a HG Bible study (discussion) here at Christ Church similar or different in nature from Sunday preaching? (It might help you to think about some recent home groups meetings/studies.) Does that have any implications for the leadership of the HG Bible Study in particular?

→ In what ways can, and should, our emphasis on the regular participation of women in Sunday services be reflected in the way we run our HG’s in the

meeting itself (for example, welcoming everyone, opening in prayer, facilitating the time of share and prayer).

→ How can a complementarian approach with suitably appointed male oversight (in line with our Church Handbook) be helpfully expressed in HG if or when a woman leads the Bible study discussion?

→ Share ideas about whether, and if so, how the Elders could facilitate women having an appropriate 'voice' in discussions and decisions that they as Elders may make from time to time?