



# Student Ministry

*Policies & Procedures*

## HANDBOOK

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**GOD-CENTERED.**  
**BIBLE-FOCUSED.**  
**GOSPEL-DRIVEN.**

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### The Word of God

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

Mark 13:31; John 8:31-32; 20:31; Acts 20:32; II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20-21

### The Trinity

We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons; that these are equal in every divine perfection, and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence and redemption.

Genesis 1:1, 26; Matthew 28:19; John 1:1-3; 4:24; Romans 1:19-20; Ephesians 4:5-6

### God the Father

We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe that He has decreed for his own glory all things that shall come to pass, foreknows all that shall come to pass, that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

Matthew 23:9; Luke 10:21-22; John 3:16; 6:27; Romans 1:7; Ephesians 1:11, I Timothy 1:1-2; 2:5-6; I Peter 1:3; Revelation 1:6

### Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and personal visible return to earth.

Matthew 1:18-25; 20:28; Luke 1:26-38; John 1:1; 20:28; 20:30-31; Acts 1:11; Romans 5:6-8; 6:9,10; 8:24, 9:5; II Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:4; I Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 7:25; 9:28; I Peter 2:21-23

### The Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ at conversion, and that He is an abiding helper, teacher and guide.

John 14:16-17,26; 15:26-27; 16:7-14; Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; Galatians 5:22-26

### Salvation

We believe that man was created by God in His own image; that he sinned and thereby incurred physical, spiritual and eternal death, which is separation from God; that as a consequence, all

human beings are born with a sinful nature and are sinners by choice and therefore under condemnation. We believe that salvation is wholly of God by grace on the basis of the redemption of Jesus Christ, the merit of His shed blood, and not on the basis of human merit, works, initiative on one's own part, or is God's anticipation of what one might do by their own will. We believe that those who repent and forsake sin and trust Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit and become new creatures, delivered from condemnation, persevere to the end, and receive eternal life.

Genesis. 1:26; 2:17; 3:19; 5:2; Psalm 51:7; Proverbs 28:13; Ecclesiastes 2:11; Jeremiah 17:9; John 1:12-13; 3:14-16; 5:24; 8:1, 12; 10:26; Romans 3:19; 5:19; 9:22; II Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 1:4-14; II Thessalonians 1:9; Titus 3:4-7; James 1:14-15; I Peter 1:2,18-19; I John 1:9; Revelation 19:3, 20; 20:10, 14-15; 21:18

## **The Church**

We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, work, and fellowship. We believe that God has laid upon the members of the local church the primary task of giving the gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world.

Acts 1:8; 2:42; Ephesians 2:19-22; 5:19-21; Hebrews 10:23-25

## **Christian Conduct**

We believe that a Christian should live for the glory of God and the well-being of his fellow men; that his conduct should be blameless before the world; that he should be a faithful steward of his possessions; and that he should seek to realize for himself and others the full stature of maturity in Christ.

John 14:15, 23-24; Romans 12:1-3; I Corinthians 4:2; 10:31; II Corinthians 9:6-9; Colossians 1:9-10; Hebrews 12:1-2; I John 2:3-6

## **The Ordinances**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church, baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of the believer in water into the name of the triune God. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 6:3-5; I Corinthians 11:23-26

## **The Last Things**

We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal felicity of the righteous and the endless suffering of the wicked in a literal eternal hell.

Matthew 16:27; Mark 14:62; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; I Corinthians 4:5; 15:1-58; Philippians 3:20; I Thessalonians 4:16-18; II Thessalonians 1:7-10; II Timothy 4:1; Titus 2:13; Revelation 20:4-6, 11-15

**Providence Bible Fellowship is a GOD-CENTERED, BIBLE-FOCUSED, GOSPEL-DRIVEN church.**

**WE ARE GOD-CENTERED** because we believe that the Triune God has sovereignly worked all things in human history for His own glory. That is, every event from creation to consummation has been accomplished by God to reveal Himself. Because we love Him, we are motivated to celebrate Him as the reason for our existence and to glorify Him in everything we do.

**WE ARE BIBLE-FOCUSED** because we are God-Centered. God has revealed Himself to us in His Word, the Bible. God has declared that all Scripture has been inspired by Him and is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness so that we may be complete, prepared for every good work. Therefore, the Bible drives our convictions, shapes our priorities, and directs our decisions.

**WE ARE GOSPEL-DRIVEN** because we are Bible-Focused. In the Bible we find the gospel story of God's work in Christ on our behalf for His own glory. The Father, being rich in mercy and love, sent His sinless Son to redeem those who hate Him from the just condemnation of their sins. All who turn from their sin, surrender their lives to Christ, and trust Him to save them, are adopted by the Father, inhabited by the Holy Spirit, and made fellow heirs with the Son. This glorious gospel is the power of all God's saving work, from regeneration to glorification. Therefore, we proclaim the gospel to sinners and saints alike.

**These intertwined convictions are manifested in numerous ways...**

**OUR WORSHIP** is both formal and informal. In our formal worship, God, His Word, and His gospel are at the center of the lyrics we sing, the words we pray, the gifts we give, and the fellowship we share. Because God's Word is quite simple in its description of the worship and function of the local church, our worship and function is also quite simple. In our informal worship throughout the week, we value vibrant, individual fellowship with the Lord, seeking Him in prayer, listening to Him in the Word, and interacting with Him in His Body, the church.

**OUR TEACHING** holds high the Word of God. Our sermons consists of deep, expository preaching through books of the Bible with a pointed gospel-focus. Our various teaching ministries value text-driven theology over theological systems, kingdom-prioritized application over man-centered pragmatism, and growth in love for God in Christ over mere growth in knowledge. Our biblical counseling ministry uses God's Word alone—no human wisdom or philosophy—to help people to apply gospel truths to all matters of life and godliness and to grow in their love for the Lord.

**OUR DISCIPLESHIP** is characterized by organic, intentional, intergenerational relationships within the body of Christ whereby members stir one another to love and good works. Because following Christ means doing what He does, we strive to make disciples by: (1) pursuing relationships with the lost around us, sharing the gospel with them, so as to gather more worshipers into His Body; (2) using our Christ-given gifts to minister the gospel within the Body to help one another grow to maturity in Him; and (3) leveraging our personal experience and maturity to help train one another to be better disciple-makers.

## CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully renew our covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this Church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to educate our children in the Christian faith; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment, to avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger; to seek God's help in abstaining from all drugs, food, drink, and practices which bring unwarranted harm to the body or jeopardize our own or another's faith.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will, if possible, unite with a church where we can carry out the articles of this confession and the spirit of this covenant.

## MEMBERSHIP

Throughout formal teaching and informal conversation, students will be encouraged to pursue membership with parent/guardian approval. For more information concerning membership at Providence Bible Fellowship (PBF hereon), refer to Article 7 of the church's bylaws ([providencebiblefellowship.com/docs](http://providencebiblefellowship.com/docs)).

## SAFETY

The student ministry of PBF is staffed by volunteers who strive to provide and maintain a safe environment for all activities. Students requiring learning assistance and/or special accommodations (e.g. access to wifi network for personal health monitors, first floor activities due to a lack of wheelchair accessibility, etc.) will be promptly secured. Students and parents should contact the student ministry overseer to discuss necessary arrangements as soon as possible prior

to attended events. PBF operates with medical and threat safety teams, which are active during *most* church activities. In addition, *most* volunteers are trained in basic first-aid and CPR.

## **REPORTING & DOCUMENT SECURITY**

Should an incident occur affecting a student's safety or wellbeing, an incident report will be completed, discussed with necessary parents/guardians and volunteers, and filed for potential future reference. If a volunteer leader is unsure whether an incident report should be completed, the general rule outside of speaking to the ministry overseer is to file a report. To access PBF's incident report, please visit: <https://www.providencebiblefellowship.com/incident-report>. All student documents/information will be handled confidentially, except in cases when mandatory reporting is required according to the State of Ohio Revised Code, Section 2151.421 and sections referred to within. Copies of incident reports, background check reports, volunteer acknowledgement forms and any other sensitive information related to youth protection will be stored in a locked filing cabinet located within PBF's administrative assistant's office. Only the elders of PBF, volunteer leaders, administrative assistant, and parents/guardians will have access to pertinent content.

## **VOLUNTEER QUALIFICATIONS, SCREENING & TRAINING**

All volunteer leaders are PBF members (at least age 21, 18 if laboring as an intern with pastoral oversight) selected by the ministry overseer (with elder input) and required to complete a background check prior to serving in any capacity. In addition, new members must wait at least 6 months before occupying a position of leadership.

Volunteer leaders must read and discuss a pre-selected equipping resource with the ministry overseer prior to occupying any leadership position. Optimally, this will occur during the 6 month waiting period mentioned above. Ongoing training/sharpening will be provided through 2 mandatory meetings per year (January and May). The ministry overseer will schedule all meetings and provide an agenda beforehand. Should illness or a valid circumstance (approved by ministry overseer) prevent training attendance, the absentee should discuss a make-up plan with the ministry overseer as soon as possible.

## **COMMUNICATION AND VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS**

Generally, ministry events (and event cancellations) will be communicated via PBF's Midweek Memo and Church App. All events will be listed and announced at least 3 months in advance in the church-wide calendar, which can be found by visiting: <https://www.providencebiblefellowship.com/home>. Special announcements will be emailed directly to parents/guardians. Questions and concerns should be addressed to the ministry overseer for remediation.

All volunteer leaders and assigned staff will arrive at least 15 minutes prior to events and stay at least 15 minutes after the event's close. Special arrangements should be discussed with and approved by the ministry overseer. Volunteer leaders and assigned staff are expected to uphold

PBF's *Statement of Faith*, *Vision Statement*, *Church Covenant*, and any other document deemed necessary by PBF elders (refer to PBF bylaws, Article 7). A minimum of 2 adults must be present at all activities (1 male, 1 female). Though the State of Ohio only requires 1 teacher per 25 students in a public school setting, the ratio to be maintained during all student events is 1 adult per 10 students.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY, MENTORING & COUNSELING**

Students desiring personal accountability and/or mentoring must have a parent/guardian contact the ministry overseer for consideration. Formal mentoring relationships, in general, are limited to high school juniors and seniors. Formal counseling requests must be submitted by a parent/guardian to the counseling ministry overseer. If a student completes an online counseling request form mentioning parental abuse, the counseling ministry overseer will recruit the aid of parties deemed necessary to legally resolve the situation.

## **DRESS CODE**

With Scripture emphasizing parents/guardians as primary disciplinarians (Eph 6:1-4), staff and volunteer leaders expect parents to guide their student(s) concerning the appropriateness of attire required for any particular function. In general, students are expected to dress to serve the maturation of peers and volunteer leaders, publicly commending the gospel to the world. Should an issue of attire surface, the ministry overseer and necessary parties will troubleshoot as soon as possible.

## **DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION & CONSEQUENCES OF MISCONDUCT**

For students functioning as couples (as well as volunteer leaders), no public displays of affection are permitted outside of handshakes, high-fives, and fist-bumps. Married volunteers will act in ways that appropriately picture Christ's love for His Church, commending the gospel and beauty of marriage to students. Uncertainty regarding the appropriateness of actions should be addressed with the ministry overseer. Student misconduct concerning displays of affection will result in an immediate conversation between the ministry overseer and their parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss and chart a course of action. Volunteer misconduct is subject to immediate dismissal from ministry involvement.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation *to and from events* will generally be handled by parents/guardians. Should a student need to commute with a licensed student driver, the arrangement must be agreed upon by associated parents/guardians and promptly communicated to the ministry overseer or event point person. Students will not be allowed to ride alone with less than 2 volunteer leaders unless



the student is a child of the leader. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by the ministry overseer and associated parents/guardians prior to departure.

Transportation *during an event* will only be offered by staff and volunteer leaders at least 21 years of age with a valid Ohio driver's license or by means of a contracted transportation service. Approved drivers will have no record of DUI for the past 5 years or record of driving with a suspended/revoked license or reckless endangerment. Approved drivers must have readily-accessible proof of insurance and ensure vehicles are never occupied beyond documented capacity. Seatbelts must be worn by all vehicle occupants and cellphones/smart devices must be utilized only in accordance with Ohio law (e.g. hands-free calling, GPS, etc.) All drivers must obtain and store a record of student emergency medical release forms during the entirety of the event, as well as have immediate access to a charged device with programmed/saved emergency numbers.

## **SPECIAL EVENTS**

Great care will be taken to ensure all special events entail a clean, safe, gender-segregated, and accommodating environment for sleeping, showering/bathing, dressing and all other requirements for spending time away from one's home. Students and volunteer leaders/chaperones are expected to respect one another's privacy at all times. When an overnight event involves male and female students, both male and female volunteer leaders will be present. Only registered students and volunteer leaders/chaperones will be granted access to named special event. Predetermined curfews will be upheld by all participants and no student will be given permission to leave the premises without parent authorization and adult supervision. Students will not be granted access to available wi-fi networks unless necessitated (e.g. personal health device, sports management app, etc.) and requested by a parent/guardian and communicated/arranged with an attending leader. Smart devices are highly discouraged in order to promote a distraction-free environment.

## **EXCEPTIONAL SITUATIONS**

Only under the rarest and most unusual circumstances should a volunteer leader or staff be alone in a car, room, or other accommodation with a student. This could include a circumstance in which a student is severely ill or incurring a medical emergency. In such cases, the volunteer leader or staff must make every effort to enlist the assistance of another student, volunteer leader, or staff.

If there is a unique need for a volunteer leader to discuss a matter in private with a student, the volunteer leader must opt for a location in plain, public view. At all events, volunteer leaders, staff, and parents must acknowledge there is the potential for abuse and/or bodily harm. May God spare us from such an occurrence, but as a mark of wisdom and care waivers and medical release forms will be kept current and readily available at all events.

Spring, summer, and fall breaks to be observed will be communicated via church-wide calendar and in-person announcements. Students are encouraged to capitalize on spending spiritually meaningful time with family (targeted spiritual investment) as well as pursue opportunities to serve within other PBF ministries. To uphold this ministry philosophy and to guard the impressionable minds of young individuals, formal or informal group studies will not be offered by ministry volunteers or members of PBF. Summer breaks are also designed to give ministry leaders ample time to rest and prepare for the upcoming school year.

## TEACHING EXPECTATIONS & CURRICULUM

Only male leaders will teach in large group settings attended by male and female students. Female leaders are equipped and deployed to *lead* study and prayer groups not attended by male students. Only the curriculum approved and distributed by the ministry overseer will be utilized. Volunteers who desire to teach supplemental material must obtain written approval (email is sufficient) at least 2 weeks prior to the material being offered. As with the general volunteer expectations listed above, all teachers must arrive within their classrooms at least 15 minutes prior to each scheduled class. Teachers will also be required to remain in the classroom for a minimum of 15 minutes after the close of each session or until the last student has departed.

A general, thematic curriculum structure is listed below. Details for each thematic block will be communicated to students, parents/guardians, and volunteers as necessary. Questions or concerns about student curriculum should be directed to the ministry overseer.



# VOLUNTEER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

By signing below I attest to a full, personal reading of this handbook and will faithfully strive by God's grace to adhere to and uphold all elements therein. In signing I also acknowledge that revisions to this handbook may occur at any time and will be disseminated at least one month in advance for my consideration. Should I disagree with any revision, I will discuss the concern promptly with the ministry overseer. I understand that by violating any tenet of this policy I may be removed from participating in this ministry of PBF.

## VOLUNTEER LEADER SIGNATURE

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## VOLUNTEER LEADER NAME (printed)

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## DATE OF SIGNATURE

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## STUDENT MINISTRY OVERSEER SIGNATURE AND DATE

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## NOTES

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