

Open Leadership

Leading like Jesus
at Open Road

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might." - Deuteronomy 6:5

"You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord." - Leviticus 19:18

2 If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing. 3 If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing. - 1 Corinthians 13:2-3 NLT

God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. - 1 John 4:16 ESV

If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. 11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. - John 15:10-12 ESV

39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. - John 5:39-40 ESV

5 The purpose of my instruction is that all believers would be filled with love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and genuine faith. - 1 Timothy 1:5 NLT

The Big Picture

If we have not love, we have nothing.

There's more to life.
We know it. We feel it.
Jesus confirmed it.

Life is for love.
We were designed for it. We desire it.
Jesus lived it.

Jesus' life of love *is* **God's vision for your life.**

Our vision isn't for *us*, it's for *you*.
That you would experience everything that God designed you for.
That you would introduce others to that same life of love.

To be and to become, fully alive. Loving God. Loving others as he loves us.

We aim to be the visible, gathered expression of this love for God and others. Our structure is simple and personal because God's dwells in *us* not our *structures*. Our focus is teaching each other to lovingly obey Jesus since it's within this that he guarantees his presence and our joy.

As more people seek Jesus in this way, we need more locations for them to find and follow him personally. **To see this vision come to life requires leaders!** Leaders who are **trained for life, not church**; for **following, not volunteering**. People who are willing to *Learn* about Jesus, *Lead* others to him and to continue to *Teach* his lifegiving truth for generations to come. This document is your *invitation* and *roadmap* to become one of those people.

Our Why, What and How

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20).

Why are we here?

John 10:10 “I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

Our vision for each of us is to be fully alive in Jesus - missing out on nothing of the thriving spiritual life we're made for.

What are we doing?

Matthew 4:19 “Jesus replied, “Come, follow me...”

We see this vision coming to life as we **help people find + follow Jesus**.

How are we doing it?

1 Corinthians 11:1 “Imitate me as I imitate Christ...”

We **intentionally** learn, teach + champion three simple rhythms: getting to **know** Jesus, **inviting** people into our lives + **gathering** to encourage each other.

Wherever possible, we adopt **a life-on-life approach** that closely mirrors **Jesus' apprenticeship model** for transformative faith + leadership. Jesus said he would only give us **light burdens** and **easy yokes**. We intentionally foster this *light* + *easy* culture in the hope that **we ask nothing more of members and leaders than Jesus asks of them**. Despite Jesus' approach, the need for leaders is urgent as without them, his Matthew 28 Great Commission cannot be completed.

Why Leaders? Jesus, discipleship, elders + deacons

“Therefore, whoever...does them [these commandments] and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” Mat 5:19

Jesus is clear in Matthew 5:19 that Christian leaders must (a) **personally follow him** and (b) **teach others to do the same**. The Apostle Paul put this into practice when he taught the first Christians to, “*Imitate me as I imitate Christ.*” (1 Cor 11:1) **Christian leadership** thus begins with **personal spiritual responsibility** for our own Christ-likeness and continues with **responsibility to help others** do the same (Rom 15:1-7). This is the work of leading the *Learners*!

The Bible identifies **Jesus-followers who take responsibility to serve other followers as “deacons”** (“Servants”. Acts 6:1-15, 1 Tim 3:8-13). Deacons are accountable to the elders and *do the work* of the church. In our context and strategy, the *work* of deacons is bearing **operational responsibility for facilitating our three rhythms** in the life of our church.

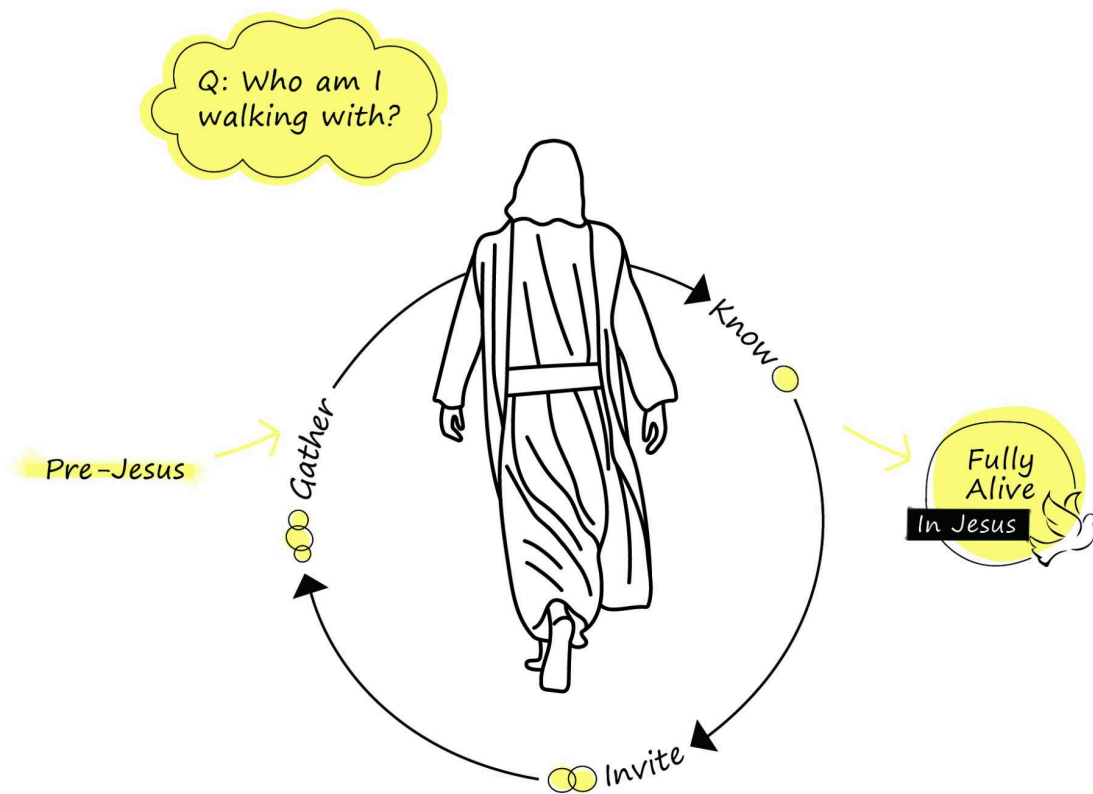
However, Deacons are qualified through their identity as Spirit-filled (Acts 6) *Christ-followers*, not simply their capacity to *lead others* or “*get the job done*”. To foster Christ in others, leaders must possess a Christ-likeness within themselves.

Our deacons meet at least quarterly to personally **encourage each other in our rhythms, ensure we are walking with those who need us** and **do the work** necessary for our church to engage in each rhythm. They continue to **communicate and meet as needed** to fulfil their responsibilities and ensure they are leading by example.

If you are committed to pursuing and championing a *fully alive* faith at Open Road, consider joining our team of Deacons.

Below we provide more detail for each rhythm as well as a matrix of resources and skills we hope to foster in each phase of faith.

Rhythms that help people "Find + follow Jesus"



Three Simple Rhythms for a Thriving Spiritual Life

If each rhythm is healthy, **our spiritual lives will be thriving!** However, through the twists-and-turns of life, if we can maintain at least two out of three rhythms, we will preserve our spiritual wellbeing.

While we believe participating in a church community is God's design for us all, each rhythm are intentionally designed for you, personally. Our goal is not to incorporate you into our church organisation, but to help you become a thriving human being and member of God's spiritual family.

We keep the list of *skills* and *disciplines* intentionally short and focused on foundational spiritual practices. The *skills* of following Jesus through **suffering**, cultivating **deep relationships** and learning **contemplative prayer** all foster maturing faith. The key *disciplines* of **fasting**, **giving** and **prayer** come from Jesus', "Sermon on the Mount", and are for each of us.

Finally, the personal assessment questions help ensure each of us are truly growing spiritually and becoming like Jesus, not simply practicing religion.

Rhythm #1: Getting to know Jesus.

Matthew 4:19; John 14:15-25; Galatians 5:16; Philippians 3:10

Goal

"Open Hearts", a thriving spiritual life that fosters intimacy with Jesus.

Long-Term Spiritual Skill

Living with, and like, Christ in every season, especially through **suffering**.

Key Spiritual Discipline

Fasting, a spiritual practice that helps us focus on prayer. Matthew 6:16-18

Personal Assessment

How am I becoming like Jesus?

Rhythm #2: Inviting people into our life.

Matthew 22:37-39; Psalm 68:6; 1 Timothy 6:18-19

Goal

“Open Lives”, hospitality that transforms strangers into friends.

Key Spiritual Discipline

Giving to those in need. Matthew 6:1-4

Long-Term Spiritual Outcome

Cultivating **deep relationships** that spiritually nourish all involved.

Personal assessment

How well am I loving those God has already put in my life?

#3: Gathering to encourage each other.

John 15:10-12; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 Corinthians 14:26-33;

Goal

“Open Worship”, gatherings that cherish God’s People, Word and Spirit.

Long-Term Spiritual Skill

Practicing **contemplative** and **communal prayer** (“Come, Holy Spirit”).

Key Spiritual Discipline

Prayer. Matthew 6:5-15

Personal assessment

How am I spiritually encouraging God’s family when we gather?

Learning, Leading + Teaching the Rhythms

“Leadership development is simply nuanced discipleship” Ric Thorpe

People learn the rhythms slowly as they progress through three phases of apprenticeship to Jesus: *Learner, Leader + Teacher*.

Learners focus on knowing Jesus

It's essential for those who are new to faith to get to know Jesus personally, learning what it means to walk with him each day. This includes learning to invite others into their life and home, and gathering with other Christians for the encouragement that is absolutely **essential** in the early stages of faith.

Leaders focus on inviting others into their life

Rhythms are best learnt face-to-face. *Leaders* invite *Learners* into their life, introduce them to Jesus and model spiritual encouragement at gatherings. Rhythms continue to be key for *Leaders* in developing their private devotional life that's required to move them from *new* to *mature* faith (*Move*, 2016). In these two ways, the *Know*, *Invite* and *Gather* rhythms are **not just our discipleship strategy but also our leadership strategy**.

Teachers focus on gatherings that encourage others

Teachers **prioritise the rhythms** for the same reasons as *Leaders*, but also to become **a living, public example for the whole community to imitate**. They lead gatherings that champion these rhythms and provide **hyper-focused-on-Jesus** teaching that ensure the church is encouraged!

To make progress, ask: “Who am I walking with?”

We grow as disciples of Jesus by learning from those who know him better than us! By asking, “**Who am I walking with?**”, *Learners* find a more mature follower to walk with. To make this happen, *Leaders/Teachers* must be ready to take **spiritual responsibility** for walking alongside others. The goal is that each of us are formed by Christ, not the world around us.

Our Fully Alive Framework

We aim to **train leaders for life, not church; following, not volunteering.**

Learner: Willingly learn from others how to be an apprentice of Jesus.

Leader: Lead learners into the rhythms that they too might find + follow.

Teacher: Imitate Jesus in all areas of life; lead leaders; teach Jesus' commands;

* See the Appendix for more details and a full list of titles + resources

| Phase <i>Focus Area</i> | Learner [72] <i>Focus: Character</i> | Leader [12] <i>Focus: Ministry Skills</i> | Teacher [3] <i>Focus: Doctrine</i> |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|
| <i>Think Resources</i> | Four Gospels; Discovery Bible Study; <i>Mastering the Bible</i> | <i>What Does God Want?;</i> <i>Mastering Bible Study</i> | On Christian Doctrine; <i>Shred; Mastering Bible Doctrine;</i> |
| <i>Live Resources</i> | <i>Practicing the Way;</i> Proverbs; <i>52 Follow;</i> | EHS / EHR, P11; 1 st + 2 nd Timothy; <i>One-to-One;</i> | Commands of Christ; Acts; <i>The Didache;</i> |
| <i>Breath Resources</i> | Psalms; <i>Beholding;</i> <i>Alpha Prayer;</i> | <i>Forgotten God;</i> Lectio365; | <i>The Pursuit of God;</i> <i>The Practice of the Presence of God;</i> |
| Rhythm Focus | Knowing | Inviting | Gathering |
| Key Skill | Fasting | Giving | Praying |
| Outcomes | Daily time with God Learn Rhythms Baptised 15-sec Gospel | Invite Teach rhythms Celebrate Learners 15-sec Story | Lead wk/mth gathering Model Rhythms Celebrate leaders 15-Sec [Unique] Vision |
| Leading | Self | Learners | Leaders |
| Produces | New life | New leaders | New Churches |
| Next Phase if | <i>...Potential call to ministry?</i> | <i>...Called + willing to plant?</i> | |

Recommended Resources

The following resources broadly relate to our vision, mission, and strategy. However, to aid in the priority of Knowing Jesus, they are grouped within our three categories of knowing Jesus - *Think*, *Live* and *Breathe*. They include books of the Bible, early church teachings and Christian classics.

THINK

The Bible: Genesis, Psalms, Matthew, John, Acts, Revelation

The Alpha Course

Shred by Nathan Finnochio

I and Though by Martin Buber

What Does God Want? By Michael Heiser

Brief Insights on Mastering the Bible by Michael Heiser

Biblical Critical Theory by Christopher Watkin

On Christian Doctrine by Augustine of Hippo

Orthodoxy by G.K. Chesterton

Rediscovering Israel by Kristi McLelland

Jesus and Women by Kristi McLelland

Unseen Realm, or Supernatural (abridged version) by Michael Heiser

When Faith Fails by Dominic Done

Questioning Christianity by Dan Paterson + Rian Roux

Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis

Love Thy Body by Nancy Pearcey

One Blood by John Harris

The Reformed Pastor (Abridged version) by Richard Baxter

Digital: [ReadScripture](#) App, [BibleDojo](#) App, [Naked Bible Podcast](#): Eps 1-16

LIVE

52 Follow by Dan Harding [the main content for Sunday gatherings]

The Didache: The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles - early church practice

Life Together by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

The Gospel on the Ground by Kristi McLelland

Life Essentials! by Alpha

One-to-One by David Helm

Multiply: Disciples Making Disciples by Francis Chan

Deliverance by Jon Thomson

BLESS: 5 Everyday Ways to Love Your Neighbor... by Dave Ferguson

The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry by John Mark Comer

Surprise the World by Michael Frost

Presence in the Modern World by Jacques Ellul

Simple + Significant by Dan Harding

Ragamuffin Gospel by Brennan Manning

Domestic Monastery: Creating Spiritual Life at Home by Ronald Rolheiser

Keeping the Sabbath Wholly by Marva J. Dawn

The Great Omission by Dallas Willard

BREATHE

Beholding (Podcast: [Beholding Prayer](#)) by Strahan Coleman

Practice of the Presence of God by Brother Lawrence

Fasting by Scot McKnight

The Pursuit of God by A.W. Tozer

[The Prayer Course](#) by 24x7 Prayer

Forgotten God by Francis Chan

Be Thou My Vision by Jonathon Gibson

Prayer: Our Deepest Longing by Ronald Rolheiser

The Divine Conspiracy by Dallas Willard

100 Days in the Secret Place by Gene Edwards

The Connected Life by Todd Hall

Surprised by the Power of the Spirit by Jack Deere

[The Asbury Revival](#) (Pt 1-4) by The Awakening Library

Renovation of the Heart by Dallas Willard

Praying Like Monks, Living Like Fools by Tyler Staton

Leading Self, Family, Teams + Church

1st + 2nd Timothy

[Why You Should Plant a Church](#) by Bob Hyatt

Family Discipleship by Matt Chandler

Exponential by Dave Ferguson

[Why Plant Churches?](#) By Tim Keller

Reveal: Where are you? By Willow Creek, 2007

[MOVE for Church Planters](#) by Greg Hawkins + Cally Parkinson

[Center for Bible Engagement](#)

12 Week Year by Brian P. Moran and Michael Lennington

The Coaching Habit by Michael Bungay Stanier

Carey Nieuwhof Leadership Podcast by Carey Nieuwhof

Good to Great by Jim Collins

Turning the Flywheel by Jim Collins

Essentialism by Greg McKeown

Clear Thinking by Shane Parrish

Got questions? Reach Out

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APPENDIX

Pathway from newcomer to church planter

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*Attend > **Learn Rhythms** > **Teach Rhythms** > Lead a Gathering > Lead Leaders > Plant*

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|---|---|---------------------|-------------------|---|---|---------|---|
| [| <i>Learner</i> |] | [| | Leader |] | [| Teacher |] |
| [| | | | <i>Discipleship</i> | | | | |] |
| | | | [| | <i>Leadership</i> | | | |] |

Making the Rhythms Accessible to All

Rhythm #1: Getting to know Jesus.

Focus Areas for Deacons

A church full of people learning to *think*, *live* and *breathe* like Jesus.

Think: Pursuing God's truth via scripture, catechism, books, podcasts etc.

Live: Loving obedience to Jesus, including spiritual disciplines (eg fasting).

Breathe: Filled, led and empowered by God's Holy Spirit, just like Jesus.

Pathways for people at critical seasons of faith (e.g. faith, baptism).

Potential Barriers to Overcome

Biblical illiteracy limits peoples' awareness of God and his truth.

Consumerism makes us unwilling to sacrifice or submit to Christ.

Unhealthy emotional patterns that limit our freedom in Christ.

Misunderstanding or misuse of gifts and teaching on the Holy Spirit.

Rhythm #2: Inviting people into our life.

Focus Areas for Deacons

Informally modelling our rhythms via open homes and open lives.

Formally teaching how to live out our rhythms via groups or courses.

Generosity that meets the needs of our "neighbours" + church family.

Equipping people to Jesus' story and the story of his impact on their life.

Potential Barriers to Overcome

Culture that is increasingly individualised and anxious.

Schedules that are conformed to culture, not Christ.

Dysfunction in our families of origin that do not mirror Christian hospitality.

#3: Gathering to encourage each other.

Focus Areas for Deacons

Overseeing the elements of our weekly gathering.

Overseeing the elements of our monthly gathering.

Overseeing a team who love to facilitate congregational worship!

Scheduling of our hosts, preachers, bible readers, worship teams etc

Communicating our vision for Fully Alive gatherings and people.

Potential Barriers to Overcome

Unwillingness of people to commit to a local body of believers.

Personal preferences for church and worship that our model excludes.

Limitations that come with our unique environment and limited resources.

Fear of publicly sharing, “a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation”.