



*FORWARD*

## **THE FUTURE OF NEW LIFE'S LEADERSHIP:**

Twenty years ago, leadership at New Life was simple. We had two staff members, four adult classes, and ministries for students and children. With less than 100 people, communication was the church bulletin and a few phone calls. It is different today.

With 18 staff members, 900 people attending weekly, 2500 who call New Life home, 45 in Student Ministry, 50 adult groups, there are more children (180) and children's workers (107) than we had people 20 years ago, New Life requires more strategic framework today.

To move **FORWARD** we need even more. Our leadership needs to grow, in order to plant churches, launch campuses, and multiply our impact for the Kingdom of God in Tucson, a way we see that happening is through Co-Leadership.

## **WHAT IS CO-LEADERSHIP:**

Why have one set of gifts, when you can have two? We propose that instead of one Lead Pastor (Pastor Greg), we would shift to have two Lead Pastors (Pastor Greg and Pastor John).

Co-Leadership involves having Greg and John set aside ego as well as mutually submitting to each other in order to lead New Life together. Consequently, we gain the gifts of both and allow them to flourish in their strengths.

What it is not is Pastor Greg's retirement or succession plan. Greg has a lot more to give and looks forward to what God has in store to the future.

Yet, it is teamwork and collaboration infused into the leadership for the church. We have moved towards this for years. When we adopted Elders for our leadership structure, it was because we recognize the value of a plurality of leaders, teamwork, and collaboration. Greg has shared teaching and preaching at New Life for years, because we believe it is better for the church (1 Corinthians 12:7).

Co-Leadership is setting aside ego and mutually submitting to each other, to have two people lead an organization together. In this way, we gain the gifts of both and allow them to flourish in their strengths.

**I'M EXCITED ABOUT CO-LEADERSHIP  
BECAUSE I BELIEVE IT IS THE BEST FOR  
NEW LIFE MOVING FORWARD.**



## WHY IS CO-LEADERSHIP GOOD FOR NEW LIFE?

- 1. It is Biblical.** Church leadership in scripture is always a plurality (see Acts 20:17; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:5; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1-4). That is why our Elders have always been led by consensus. Co-Lead Pastors model this.
- 2. It makes the church less about human leaders.** It is natural for churches to take on the personality of a Senior Pastor. A reason succession plans are so difficult, is a church has to shift from the charisma of one personality to another. Co-Leadership diminishes this and makes it easier for a church to be more founded on Christ than the personality of a pastor.
- 3. It multiplies gifting.** In the same way that a husband and wife can complement each other by bringing different strengths to a family, Co-Leaders bring diversity in gifting. This is foundationally why we recommend New Life incorporate Co-Leadership. For us to move forward we benefit from the giftings of both Greg and John.
- 4. It diffuses ego and exalts humility and community over the church.** Co-Leadership is not easier. It is harder. It requires people to die to their own ego, set aside power and control, and submit to each other. Co-Leaders model this in leadership to the church and the community.
- 5. It makes a Succession Plan Obsolete.** While this is not succession plan, if we do Co-Leadership right it sets the church up so that it never needs a succession plan. It's not that John would take Greg's place. It is that Greg and John would both function in their gifts as Co-Lead Pastors and when one is called by God elsewhere the other would keep on in their role as a Lead Pastor.

## TWO KEY QUESTIONS ABOUT CO LEADERSHIP

1. Is this Pastor Greg's succession plan?  
No! Greg is not going anywhere. He simply sees that New Life will benefit by adding more leadership gifts to the lead pastor role. In this case, two is better than one.
2. Will Pastor Greg or Pastor John preach less?  
No. Right now Pastor Greg preaches roughly 60% of the time and Pastor John preaches 40%. The plan is for this to continue unchanged.

*As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. 1 Peter 4:10-11*

## WHY CO-LEADERSHIP FROM THE ELDERS?

As Elders and Pastors have studied the organizational framework and process which God uses to uniquely equip His body, we have discovered the strengths that He has gifted us. As a direct result of this study, it is evident that God has uniquely fitted and joined together the ministry strengths of both Pastor Greg and Pastor John.

Furthermore, based upon Ephesians 4:16, I am convinced that God has placed before NLBF an opportunity to build itself up in love through our submission to His gifts of Pastor Greg and Pastor John. I affirm God's gifts of Pastor Greg and Pastor John being uniquely equipped for co-pastoral leadership, and I strongly endorse our resolve to implement co-pastoral leadership.



*David Ross*

I am very excited for this next chapter for New Life. The transition to co-leadership was carefully thought out and will create a more solid foundation for the future of our church. Greg and John are two of the best leaders I have ever known. Their skills and strengths complement each other very well.



*Cesar Alaestante*

The application of co-pastors excites me for Pastor Greg and Pastor John. With this structure it will allow each to work within their own strengths as their primary duties. Having grown up in a church where my father was a senior pastor, he was often stressed by the tasks that were not in an area of his strengths. At New Life, we are so blessed to have pastors that have strengths that compliment each other, that includes Zach's strengths too. I see that this will allow New Life to be even more successful in all their ministries.



*Michael Schaeffer*

## CURRENT ELDERS

- Dan Schotter, serving as an elder for 3 years
- John Clelland, serving as an elder for 3 years
- David Ross, serving as an elder for 2 years (served previous for 6 years)
- Michael Schaeffer, serving as an elder for 3 months
- Cesar Alaestante, serving as an elder for 3 months
- Jason Carlton, serving as an elder for 1 year
- Pastor Greg, serving as an elder for 20 years

As an Elder, I am excited about the proposition of transitioning to Co-Leadership here at New Life. It takes a multitude of talents and giftings to properly lead a body of believers. Often, Pastors are required to work outside of their giftings. This can work in a small church but as a church grows it becomes increasingly difficult for the Pastor to maintain the same level of energy. Burnout can occur.

Co-Leadership provides a viable option where the talents and giftings of two Pastors are allowed to work together on an equal basis. The Co-Lead Pastors are free to truly focus on their individual strengths in a way that compliments the other's strengths.

Pastor Greg and Pastor John are ideally gifted to make Co-Leadership successful. Both are able to set ego aside and work as one to grow God's kingdom here at New Life. They have a good mix of shared and unique talents that both support and complement each other. I believe that as a church, New Life will be better prepared for a strong future with two great Co-Lead Pastors like Greg and John.



**Dan Schotter**

## **WHY GREG AND JOHN? WHAT ARE THEIR STRENGTHS?**

Months ago, Greg was praying about the leadership gifts New Life needs to move forward. In that prayerful season, God directed his eyes towards Pastor John. Working together for the past 3½ years has revealed gifts God has given in Greg and John's relationship:

1. **Unity:** Regarding doctrine and worldview we are uniquely unified. That is a rare gift. We look at Scripture, the sovereignty of God, the glory of Christ, and contemporary news in similar ways.
2. **Trust:** Integrity, respect, and transparency has brought about a high level of trust between us.
3. **Gifting:** Both John and I are pastors. We love the Lord, His Word, and people. But we are also wired in such a way that we complement each other. Take a look at our top five Strengths Finders gifts.

Strengths Finders is a helpful assessment to identify people's unique strengths.

### **Greg Lavine Primary Responsibilities**

- Preaching
- Care
- Global Outreach
- Facilities
- Congregation  
Shepherding
- Teaching/Curriculum

### **John Beeson Primary Responsibilities**

- Lead Elders
- Lead Staff
- Human Resources
- Multiplication
- Administrative
- Policy Executive

## **HOW THIS AFFECTS PASTOR GREG:**

My leadership style has always been to release control and power to others. That is why at one time we had an Executive Pastor (we may hire that position again in the future). That is why the Executive Leadership Team was created: to be more collaborative in leading the staff and implementing ministry. That is why our Elders have always functioned by consensus.

In this case, I would enjoy focusing more of my energy to preaching, teaching, and pastoral care, and allow John's strategic planning gifts to lead organizationally. I will remain an elder and still be a part of leading the church. But this would be a partnership, with two Co-Lead Pastors.



## **WHY THIS WORKS WITH JOHN FROM PASTOR GREG:**

Trust and respect are beautiful, powerful, and foundational. They can't be faked or fabricated. So, I am saying a lot to say I trust and respect John. I am grateful to sit under him as a pastor, I enjoy him as a friend, and I learn from his teaching. He is smart, a living resource of contemporary thought. He loves the Lord and is strong enough to push back and correct me when I need it. I love him and know that he loves me.

This goes past just the two of us. Debra and I consider John and Angel friends. There is a mutual goodness in our relationship. Beyond all this, John is different than I am. He is more calculated and strategic in his thoughts. He is better at organizational thinking than me and I consider it a blessing to partner with him in ministry.

## **PERSPECTIVE ABOUT PASTOR GREG FROM THE ELDERS**



We are blessed at New Life to hear God's word through Pastor Greg. He is a thoughtful and dynamic teacher with a big heart for our congregation. I am thankful for his loyalty and dedication to our body. With the upcoming change in structure he will continue to impact the lives of many through this partnership.

*Jason Carlton*

# GREG'S STRENGTHS FINDER

Yellow themes are influencers. They inspire forward and are helpful when you need to reach a broader audience with a bigger goal.

## **STRATEGIC THINKER :: A PERSON WHO DREAMS ABOUT NEW POSSIBILITIES**

### **1. STRATEGIC**

- > I am always looking at different routes and paths to a destination
- > Once I've imagined all of the possibilities, I will determine which route is best
- > I will use creativity and persistence to reach the goal
- > I really enjoy finding creative solutions to "impossible" situations
- > I am frustrated when we choose to not explore better options
- > I have a way of seeing multiple routes when others only see a few

## **EXECUTOR :: A PERSON WHO GET THINGS DONE**

### **2. ACHIEVER**

- > People say I tend to work hard
- > I usually get things done faster than others
- > I need others to allow me to work hard and fast
- > I have a hard time with others who drag their feet or give up
- > I see the finish line

## **INFLUENCING :: A PERSON WHO REACHES MANY**

### **3. WOO**

- > I can make quick social connections in any environment
- > I am usually the one who starts the conversation
- > I bring life to the party
- > I really enjoy meeting someone new
- > I am frustrated when connections slip through the cracks

## **INFLUENCING :: A PERSON WHO REACHES MANY**

### **4. ACTIVATOR**

- > I prefer to be on the go
- > If momentum is lacking, I will create movement
- > I am the team member that asks, "how soon can we start"
- > I would rather do it than talk about it
- > I do not like to kill time or wait for no good reason
- > I am like a runner at the beginning of a race, strong fast start

## **INFLUENCING :: A PERSON WHO REACHES MANY**

### **5. MAXIMIZER**

- > I like to focus on potential strength and manage around short-comings
- > To me, the final number doesn't matter as much as the final product
- > I really enjoy getting a big return on my investments
- > Good isn't good enough for me, I want it to be great

## HOW THIS AFFECTS PASTOR JOHN:

One of my great joys in my ministry at New Life is using my strengths in the areas of strategic planning for the benefit of the church. I love dreaming and strategizing how we can become who God is calling us to be. I have been so grateful that Pastor Greg has allowed me to utilize those gifts over the past three and a half years at New Life as I've served in a second chair position. I look forward to being able to pour out my gifting from the first chair alongside Pastor Greg for the good of New Life, the impact of Tucson, and the glory of God.



## WHY THIS WORKS WITH GREG FROM PASTOR JOHN

Long before I attended New Life, when I was pastoring in New Jersey and my family attended New Life, Angel and I went through a very difficult season. In the midst of that season I received a hand-written note from my Tucson family's pastor: Pastor Greg. He expressed his sorrow for what we were walking through and his concern and care for us and then let us know that he was praying for us in the midst of the trying season we were in. What pastor writes that kind of note to someone he doesn't really know who isn't in his congregation? Pastor Greg does.

Pastor Greg has a shepherd's heart: he seeks God not merely publically, but privately; he deeply and genuinely cares for people; and he is a man of integrity and character. In addition, Pastor Greg is a great preacher and has the ability to rally God's people for God's mission uniquely. I am humbled to be asked to serve alongside Pastor Greg and am looking forward to the partnership journey ahead.

## PERSPECTIVE ABOUT PASTOR JOHN FROM THE ELDERS

Pastor John has excelled in his role as associate pastor in recent years. He has demonstrated excellent leadership skills and I am excited to see how he will be used by God in his new role. I believe that the change to co-lead will allow him to thrive and have a positive influence on New Life as we grow and move into the future.

Jason Carlton

# JOHN'S STRENGTHS FINDER

When a plan needs to be made, or a new idea created to solve a problem, RED themes can help accomplish that.

## **STRATEGIC THINKER :: A PERSON WHO DREAMS ABOUT NEW POSSIBILITIES**

### **1. LEARNER**

- > I really enjoy the experience of learning new things
- > I inspire a desire to learn in other people
- > I always need to have the opportunity to discover and learn new things
- > I really enjoy charting new territory
- > I believe there is always more to learn

## **STRATEGIC THINKER :: A PERSON WHO DREAMS ABOUT NEW POSSIBILITIES**

### **2. INPUT**

- > People often come to me if they need something specific
- > The things I collect make a difference in the lives of others
- > I enjoy having extra space for the resources and people in my life
- > I appreciate the opportunity to help others with my resources
- > I collect resources for a purpose, to share them with others

## **EXECUTOR :: A PERSON WHO GET THINGS DONE**

### **3. ACHIEVER**

- > I usually get things done faster than others
- > I drive the team I'm working with towards the goal
- > I really enjoy having and completing a to-do list
- > I see the finish line

## **STRATEGIC THINKER :: A PERSON WHO DREAMS ABOUT NEW POSSIBILITIES**

### **4. IDEATION**

- > I am not intimidated by the challenge that comes with new ideas
- > I will pursue ideas that are fresh and new
- > I have a perspective that is quite different than most others
- > I appreciate the freedom to implement new ideas without resistance
- > I love doing things we have never done before

## **STRATEGIC THINKER :: A PERSON WHO DREAMS ABOUT NEW POSSIBILITIES**

### **5. STRATEGIC**

- > I am always looking at different routes and paths to a destination
- > Once I've imagined all of the possibilities, I will determine which route is best
- > I will use creativity and persistence to reach the goal
- > If we are going the wrong way, I will not hesitate to try a new direction
- > I really enjoy finding creative solutions to "impossible" situations
- > I have a way of seeing multiple routes when others only see a few

# **NEW LIFE BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CO-LEAD PASTOR COVENANT**

Desiring to be a community that enjoys God and transforms the world through the gospel, and believing that God has blessed New Life with the opportunity to exemplify His humble, Christ-shaped community through our pastoral leadership, we covenant to live out our commitment to God, New Life, the Elders, and one another in a way that honors Christ.

In the New Testament, elders of local churches are always spoken of in plurality, meaning there was always more than one pastor-elder. We seek to model this plurality with our elders, and now also in co-pastoring.

To that end, we commit to:

1. Submit ourselves to Christ.
2. Submit ourselves to the Elders of New Life.
3. Submit ourselves to one another.
4. Commit ourselves to the Peacemaker's Pledge.
5. Walk through at minimum a bi-annual review with one another that will be submitted to the Elders.
6. Walk through at minimum a bi-annual coaching session with an external coach/counselor that will be submitted to the Elders.
7. Commit to co-leadership for a minimum of five years (May 2024).
8. Prior to being terminated or resigning, walk through a (minimum) three month, five session conciliation process.

If one of us were to plant a church or move to another pastoral calling in Tucson (whether during or following this five-year covenant) we commit to:

1. We will receive the genuine blessing of the Elders first (not merely a public act of graciousness).
2. We will not accept a teaching/preaching call within a 20 mile radius of New Life within two years of leaving New life (a position other than teaching/preaching would be acceptable).
3. Without the Elders' blessing, we will not solicit, recruit, or encourage New Life members to attend any other church within 20 miles.

We recognize we need God's grace to commit to these things, but believe that in committing to these things, Christ is honored through our unity and through the use of our gifting.

Trusting in Christ and His Spirit,

Greg Lavine & John Beeson

We the Elders of New Life Bible Fellowship are grateful for the provision of God for the people of New Life in the creation of this co-lead pastoral partnership. We believe that this co-lead pastoral partnership has the opportunity to exalt the name of Christ in the unity of Greg and John and to maximize the gifting of Greg and John for the benefit of the church. We likewise commit ourselves to the Peacemaker's Pledge. We commit to support Greg and John in prayer, in encouragement and exhortation, and in utilizing our collective giftings for the sake of New Life and for the glory of God.

New Life Elders

## **THE ASK**

All this talk of Co-Leadership is ultimately a proposal. With much prayer and thought we believe this is best for New Life. But implementing this requires two congregational votes.

1. A constitution change that allows for Co-Leadership. It would still allow for a Senior Pastor, but in addition to a Senior Pastor model it would also call for Co-Lead Pastors.
2. We will vote to install Pastor John Beeson to become a Co-Lead Pastor.

## **NOW WHAT**

We want to allow time for you to breathe and process in this idea. Before we vote, we are hosting three question and answer forums over three months. That way there is plenty of time to pray and talk about this to make sure we are following God. We will be hosting three different forums over the next few months to share, listen, and pray together.

## **UPCOMING FORUM DATES:**

- Sunday, February 17 at 12:30 pm in the Worship Center
- Sunday, March 24 at 12:40 pm in the Youth Room
- Sunday, April 28 at 12:40 pm in the Youth Room

## **CONGREGATIONAL VOTE**

The vote will take place on Sunday, May 3 during both services.

## THREE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

1)

### HOW CAN I BE PART OF WHAT GOD IS DOING?

Let's all pray. Pray that Greg and John and their families feel God's protection and guidance. Pray that New Life would be unified and energized as we step into this season together. Let's pray and expect that God will continue to be faithful in leading our church forward this fall in all that this next season holds.

This next season promises to be one that will make an impact on our church and community. From our Student Ministry Winter Camp, Foster Care Service Days, Easter Extravaganza, Easter, and much more, God is at work. Let's all be ready to serve together in anticipation of what's to come!

2)

### WHO DO I TALK TO IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

For any other questions not addressed here, please feel free to reach out to Pastor Greg, Pastor John or any Elder.

3)

### WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS?

As of Wednesday, February 20 you can visit [NewLifeTucson.com/Forward](http://NewLifeTucson.com/Forward) to learn about Co-Leadership.



FORWARD