

Eldership Authority and Issue Collaboration Framework

- How does this church ensure it is shepherded with humility and accountability?
- Are there unresolved fractures in our history or relationships that need healing?
- What safeguards are in place to protect our fellowship from personality-driven division?

Non-Trivial Situation Analysis and Resolution

Situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the situation.
Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the specific problems?
Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Per problem, what implications infer? What risks may occur?
Needs Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a checklist of action items to resolve the situation. Identify RACI assignments, prioritization, scheduling, and resources.
Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New, Open, Assigned, Closed, Ignored, Monitor
Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High, Medium, Low
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start, End, or Timeframe
Confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Private, Need-2-Know, Congregational, Public
Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elders Only
Accountable	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assigned Deacons, Ministers, Staff, Members, Groups
Consulted	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assigned Subject Matter Experts, Members, Groups
Informed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assigned Members, Groups, Public

Foundational Pillars of Fellowship (from Acts 2)

- **Devotion** – Persistent commitment to spiritual practices (v. 42)
- **Presence** – Sharing meals, time, and space (v. 46)
- **Generosity** – Meeting needs with glad and sincere hearts (v. 45)
- **Unity** – Having “all things in common” (v. 44)
- **Worship and Praise** – A rhythm of collective joy and awe (v. 47)

Covenant vs. Convenience

Faithful Fellowship	Broken Fellowship
Devotion to teaching & prayer	Disregard for spiritual leadership
Mutual generosity & care	Greed, deception, or jealousy
Humility & submission	Pride, control, or self-centeredness
Christ-centered unity	Factionalism and party spirit
Joyful praise and awe	Complaint, rebellion, idolatry

Covenant Fellowship

Challenge	Restorative Practice
Doctrinal Division	Focus on core gospel truths and apostolic simplicity
Sectarian Identity	Declare themselves “Christians only, not the <i>only</i> Christians”
Leadership Conflicts	Emphasize shared authority through elders
Tradition vs. Scripture	Hold the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice
Disconnected Congregations	Create networks of mutual fellowship based on shared mission

Key Elements of Successful Restoration

Element	Description
Humility	Willingness to admit wrong and seek peace (James 4:6)
Repentance	Turning away from sin and back to God and community (Acts 3:19)
Forgiveness	Freely extended and received (Colossians 3:13)
Christ-Centered Focus	Moving from human agenda to shared identity in Christ (Ephesians 2:14–16)
Truth and Transparency	Open acknowledgment of division, with a pursuit of doctrinal clarity (Ephesians 4:15)
Shared Prayer and Worship	Spiritual intimacy that rebuilds relational trust (Acts 1:14, 2:42)
Missional Purpose	Restored fellowship often leads to renewed gospel engagement (Philippians 1:5)
Biblical Authority	Restoration begins when Scripture—not personality—guides decisions
Plural Leadership	Elder plurality prevents leader-idolatry and checks power
Public Repentance	Honest admission of sin builds trust (e.g., leadership letters, apologies)
Persistent Prayer	Unity cannot be manufactured—it must be Spirit-empowered
Focused Mission	Churches must re-center on Christ and the gospel, not institutional survival
Forgiveness & Patience	Lasting restoration requires ongoing grace, not instant solutions

Readings and References

Matthew 5:21-26	“...First be reconciled to your brother and then come and offer your gift.”
1 John 3:10-21	“...the one who does not love his fellow Christian is not of God.”
Romans 5:6-11	“...For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God... through whom we have now received this reconciliation.”
Others...	1 John 2:9-11, 1 John 4:17 – 5:4, Matthew 22:39, Colossians 3:13, 1 Peter 3:8-12, Mark 11:25-26, Matthew 6:14-15, Matthew 18:21-35, 2 Corinthians 5:20-21, Colossians 1:19-20

