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LEADER HANDBOOK



BLACKHAWK CHURCH

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*We will not hide these truths from our children:  
we will tell the next generation  
about the glorious deeds of the Lord,  
about his power and his mighty wonders.*

*-Psalm 78:4*

# MISSION & VALUES

## Our Mission

HSM exists to build a loving community where we're all taking next steps in our journey toward Christ, in order to reach every student with the love of Christ.

## Our Values

### Everyone Belongs

- ◇ Whoever you are, wherever you come from, whatever you're wrestling with, you're welcome and invited here
- ◇ We celebrate each other

### Passionate to Know Jesus

- ◇ We courageously take our next steps toward growing in our relationship with Jesus
- ◇ We encounter Jesus through exploring the Bible

### Students and Adults Need Each Other

- ◇ We are actively involved in the intergenerational church
- ◇ The relationships formed will help our faith grow and last

### Connected Through Prayer & Worship

- ◇ We sing about and meditate on the love of God
- ◇ We support and encourage each other through conversation with God

### The Gospel Moves Us to Love Others

- ◇ We share our stuff and our stories
- ◇ We serve our neighbors in the Madison area
- ◇ We care about justice issues around the world

### Life is an Adventure

- ◇ We engage in unique experiences to explore faith
- ◇ We challenge each other to live beyond ourselves

# WHAT WE BELIEVE

## BLACKHAWK CHURCH'S MISSION

Build a loving community that follows Christ in order to reach a community that is lost without Him.

## BLACKHAWK'S STATEMENT OF FAITH

We are considered an evangelical church and are linked together with a long line of Christ-followers who have for centuries depended on the Bible as the basis for their beliefs. We believe the Bible is uniquely God-inspired and without error in the original writings. That's why at Blackhawk you will hear messages that focus our attention on what the Bible says and how that message can transform us into becoming the kind of people God wants us to be.

### We believe:

- ◆ There is one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- ◆ Jesus Christ is true God and true man. He lived a perfect life and died on the cross, a sacrifice for our sins. He arose bodily from the dead.
- ◆ All people have sin in their lives and need God's forgiveness. Those who trust in Jesus Christ and Him alone for their salvation become true members of the body of Christ.
- ◆ The ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and to indwell, guide, instruct and empower the believer for godly living and service.
- ◆ At the end, everyone will experience bodily resurrection and the judgment. Those who have faith in Christ will enjoy eternal fellowship with God.

## OTHER TOPICS OF THEOLOGY

We want every student to feel welcome and accepted at Home Group regardless of their beliefs. However, we ask our HSM leaders to agree with Blackhawk on the "non-negotiables" listed above.

When we are talking about certain theological subjects in Home Group, we may ask you to act as Blackhawk's representative and to present to your small group the belief that Blackhawk upholds. In this instance, we will make what we're asking of you abundantly clear. These subjects will be few and far between.

We recognize that there are many areas we can disagree on while still holding the same faith in Christ.

If you are wondering about Blackhawk's stance on a certain subject, first check out the "About Us" portion of our website. People who have thought long and hard about theology have crafted some helpful statements!

If there's a subject you want to discuss further, please reach out to an HSM Staff Team member. We're happy to discuss whatever you might be wondering about!

# QUALIFICATIONS

## An HSM leader...

### LOVES JESUS

Committed Christian who is in agreement with Blackhawk's statement of faith

Has regular involvement in the local church, and experiences personal spiritual growth outside of HSM (i.e., small group, mentor, etc.)

Recognizes the importance in nurturing their own walk with the Lord before they can pour into students

### IS AVAILABLE

Has consistent attendance in their area of service, and gives ample notice if unable to attend

Makes every effort each year to attend required leader events, the Spiritual Retreat, a weekend trip, and considers going on a summer trip every few years

Spends intentional time communicating and being present in the lives of their students outside of HSM programming

### IS WILLING

To use their gifts & passions to help students grow in knowledge and love of Jesus

To step out of their comfort zone and be an "Oh boy!" leader instead of an "Oh no!" leader

To pray regularly for students and their families by name, for HSM staff, and for fellow volunteer leaders

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## New Leader Requirements:

- Complete Blackhawk HSM Volunteer Application (online)
- Complete a Background Check and be cleared to interact with minors
- Meet with an HSM Staff person

# RELATIONAL MINISTRY

**In HSM, we place high value on relationships.** HSM leaders devote their time in ministry to building meaningful and trusting relationships with students. Before anything else, a leader must be willing to spend time and energy pouring into student's lives.

Though our various program areas look different, the *emphasis on relationship* is key in everything we do.

## WHAT IS RELATIONAL MINISTRY?

- ◆ Active listening
- ◆ Winning the right to be heard
- ◆ Understanding and demonstrating Christ's love for students and fellow leaders
- ◆ Meeting students where they are at
- ◆ Building a bridge of friendship and trust

Leaders pay attention to students, seek to understand their perspective, and commit themselves to caring for them *regardless* of the decisions they make concerning faith.

Leaders tend to process traits of intentionality, unconditional love, and concern for the well-being of students.

The ultimate and hopeful result of relational ministry is **a relationship where students trust their leaders** enough to share their lives and open up to the possibility of becoming a follower of Christ.

. . . .

While we would love to see **every** student put their faith in Christ and live a life sold out for Him, we also want to *be intentional about celebrating any step a student takes toward Christ.*

A helpful way to think about this is the **STEPS** metaphor.

Think about the decision to follow Christ as taking 200 "steps" toward Him (of course it may be more or less than that!). That's a lot of steps! We might never know which "step" a student is taking while they're in our ministry. We might be at the first step they ever take toward Christ. We might see the 200th step! Maybe we'll be at step 100, where they're still figuring things out; or at step 250, after their choice to follow Christ.

*Regardless of where a student is at, we can intentionally show them Christ and celebrate their steps toward Him.*

We desire to see HSM leaders trust that God has a bigger plan and purpose for our students' lives than we might see. We do our absolute best to show students the unconditional love of Christ, to equip them with knowledge of the Bible, and to demonstrate what it means to be an adult living in light of the Gospel.

# FAITH & CONDUCT

## WALKING WITH CHRIST

### BE FAITHFUL

Seeking Christ daily requires faithfulness—intentionally setting aside time to deepen our relationship with Christ. This includes:

- ◆ Reading God’s Word
- ◆ Fixing our eyes on Jesus
- ◆ Being obedient to His commands
- ◆ Being involved in a church & having fellowship
- ◆ Honoring God with our speech and actions
- ◆ Talking with God

### BE AVAILABLE

As a Christian, it’s important to be available for God to use us to fulfill His purpose on earth. We’re all “busy”, but as followers of Christ we must be available to give our time, energy and talents to those who need them.

- ◆ Time to meet & fellowship with others
- ◆ Available to go above and beyond through service
- ◆ Going out and serving God, with the help of the Spirit

### BE TEACHABLE

To make an impact, we must be teachable. To be teachable, we must be humble servants; putting others before ourselves, being slow to speak and quick to listen, with a desire to learn & grow.

- ◆ Be patient
- ◆ Be humble
- ◆ Listen to others who are more mature in your faith than you are
- ◆ Pay attention and be a good “student” by looking up to other HSM leaders who have been around a while

## PERSONAL LIFE

### SUBSTANCES & ILLEGAL ACTIVITY

**Leaders must not participate in illegal activity.** Even if you are of legal age to consume alcohol or tobacco, this should be done in extreme moderation and with wisdom. Be mindful that when tobacco, alcohol or drugs are abused, your witness is diminished or even destroyed.

### PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

**We ask leaders to maintain appropriate behavior in their personal relationships,** including abstaining from the intimate sexual contact reserved for marriage. We honor sex as an intimate, special bond God designed to be between a husband and a wife only.

### LIVING SITUATIONS

**A leader should not live with someone of the opposite sex** (apart from family). While such arrangements may be platonic, students, parents and other leaders may draw certain conclusions. We must be careful that our actions do not jeopardize the effectiveness of our outreach.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

When using Social Media, remember **what you post is public.** Be wise and use discernment with everything that you post as what you post will influence students in a negative or a positive way. What you say, what you value, and what you show yourself doing all influences students. Also, remember that what you post is a reflection on Blackhawk Church and HSM. What you post adds or detracts to the reputation of the church and ministry...and ultimately Christ.

# FAITH & CONDUCT

## INTERACTIONS WITH STUDENTS

### CROSS-GENDER RELATIONSHIPS

#### Use caution with cross-gender leader to student relationships.

Male leaders, focus on building relationships with male students.

Female leaders, focus on building relationships with female students.

#### DO!

- ◆ Appropriately interact with students of the opposite gender during large group times and events.

#### DON'T

- ◆ Exchange private communication with students of the opposite gender. *If a student of the opposite gender initiates communication, a response should be a brief, one-time response, with encouragement to connect to a leader of the same of the gender or HSM staff.*
- ◆ Be alone with a student of the opposite gender (in a car, outside of church, or in a room at church). *When with a group of students of the opposite gender, there should be another leader of the opposite gender present or the groups must be co-ed.*

### PHYSICAL CONTACT

**Be mindful about physical contact with students.** Physical contact can be easily misunderstood, even amongst students of your same gender.

Male leaders in particular should be extra careful to not be physically violent while horsing around during any sports or activities.

### DRIVING STUDENTS

#### FIRST, DO THESE THINGS:

- Complete Blackhawk's Driver Check
- Provide proof of current vehicle insurance
- Get approval from Blackhawk to drive

#### DO!

- ◆ Have a seatbelt for every student in your car.
- ◆ Obey all traffic laws.
- ◆ Get parent/guardian approval if you're driving students outside of an approved HSM Trip/Event.

#### DON'T

- ◆ Drive distracted (this includes loud music, students and cell phones).
- ◆ Operate your phone while driving.
- ◆ Drive any student if you don't have a current Driver Check on file (these need to be renewed annually).

**REMEMBER** These guidelines are in place as a double-safe measure to protect students from leaders we cannot and should not trust, and leaders from false accusations from students or families who are mistaken or intend to benefit through victimizing our leaders and our ministry's reputation as a safe ministry to adolescents.

**As a general rule, if you feel uncomfortable or uneasy, it is almost certain a situation we should avoid.**

*If you have any questions, please contact someone on the HSM staff team.*

# PROGRAM AREAS

## HOME GROUP

**Structure:**

Home Groups occur in local homes on Wednesday nights from 7:00-9:00 pm. Our Multi-cultural Home Group focuses on faith through the lens of being a second-generation immigrant and meets Friday nights from 7:30-9:30 at Blackhawk Brader Way. All Home Groups include large group community time and same-gender small groups.

**Purpose:**

Home Groups exist because of our strong belief that when you connect relationally, you're better able to grow spiritually. Home Group is designed to be invitational—we hope to see students intentionally inviting their friends to be a part of the HSM community.

## ALL CITY

**Structure:**

All City brings all Home Groups together. 4 times a year (roughly every other month), it's one-hour on a Sunday evening with worship, teaching, and community time. In December and May, we celebrate with a party!

**Purpose:**

We see great value in getting to know people from other schools and Home Group communities—so we come together. This time is intentional in providing a caliber of teaching in worship that we might not be able to pull off in a weekly Home Group. Teaching and discussion is relevant to student life, so that students feel comfortable inviting friends. All City is meant to launch Home Groups into deeper discussions and to connect our community together.

## MENTORING

**Structure:**

Mentoring is a one-on-one relationship between a student and leader of the same gender. Typically, mentors meet 1-2 times a month with their mentee.

**Purpose:**

The purpose is for an adult to come alongside a high school student wherever the student is at on their journey. Each mentoring relationship will be unique, just as each person is unique. A healthy relationship consists of consistent, deliberate and intentional meetings.

## SERVANT TEAM

**Structure:**

Servant Team will meet once a month in a home where they will focus on building a foundation and biblical basis for Godly leadership. For the other meeting time each month, students will have the opportunity to serve in the community as they work with a local organization.

**Purpose:**

Servant Team exists to equip, encourage, and empower students to serve Christ through Godly leadership.

# TRIPS & EVENTS

Trips and events are an integral part of HSM. We value the way trips break us from our normal routine. In a different environment and away from the distractions of normal life, students often let down their guard and share more than they normally would. Trips and events also provide an opportunity for students to easily invite their friends into the HSM community—this may be a student’s first connection to HSM or the church.

## FALL

### ♦ Badger Games

**Purpose:** To raise scholarships for our various trips & events. Each trip, we get requests for hundreds of dollars in scholarships. Serving at Badger Games is how we build up our scholarship fund.

**When:** August–November (When UW Home Football Games occur)

### ♦ Fall Weekend

**Purpose:** This trip is designed so that Home Groups and Small Groups can kickstart the year by going deeper with one another through games, worship, storytelling, and times to connect.

**When:** Mid-fall, typically in October

## WINTER

### ♦ Spiritual Retreat

**Purpose:** This retreat invites students and leaders to break away from the hustle of the everyday, and spend intentional and meaningful time in silence and solitude to meditate on the Word of God.

**When:** Early winter, typically the first or second weekend in December

### ♦ Study Day

**Purpose:** To provide a place for High School students to study and to intentionally care for students during winter finals week. This event brings in more new students than any other.

**When:** Winter finals week, typically MLK Day weekend

### ♦ Snow Camp

**Purpose:** This weekend focuses on creating a fun, memorable experience for students and their friends. We hope to see new students at Snow Camp and present the Gospel clearly.

**When:** Typically mid-February

## SUMMER

### ♦ Backpacking Trip

**Purpose:** To enjoy God’s creation, build friendships, physically challenge yourself. This memorable trip is incredibly invitational and life-changing for students and leaders alike.

**When:** Typically mid-June

### ♦ National GO Team

**Purpose:** To encourage students step out of their comfort zone to serve & learn alongside a community in the United States. Students and leaders apply to be part of this trip.

**When:** Typically July

### ♦ Romania GO Team

**Purpose:** To encourage students step out of their comfort zone to serve & learn alongside an international community. This trip typically has more upper-classmen, but anyone is welcome to apply.

**When:** Typically late July–Mid August