THE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE, CORE BELIEFS AND FOUNDATIONAL VALUES

YOUTH WITH A MISSION

FOUNDERS CIRCLE

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THE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE, CORE BELIEFS AND FOUNDATIONAL VALUES OF YOUTH WITH A MISSION

This document presents YWAM's sincerely held purpose, core beliefs, foundational values and practices which have been compiled in response to specific directives given by God since YWAM's beginning in 1960. They are recorded here in order to pass on to successive generations that which God has emphasized to us. This shared purpose and our YWAM beliefs and values are the guiding principles for both the past and future growth of our Mission. Some are common to all Christians everywhere; others are distinctive to Youth With A Mission. The combination of this purpose, beliefs, values and practices makes up the unique family characteristics of YWAM – our "DNA." They are the framework we hold in high regard for they help us determine who we are, how we live and how we make decisions. A YWAMer is someone who has completed a YWAM Discipleship Training School and who joyfully embraces our Statement of Purpose, Core Beliefs, Foundational Values, Legacy Words and Covenants. **Please copy and share this document in its entirety as presented here.**

YWAM's STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Youth With A Mission (YWAM) is an international movement of Christians from many denominations dedicated to presenting Jesus personally to this and future generations, to mobilizing as many as possible to help in this task, and to the training and equipping of believers for their part in fulfilling the Great Commission. As citizens of God's kingdom, we are called to love, worship, and obey our Lord, to love and serve His body, the Church, to love all peoples everywhere, which includes presenting the whole Gospel for the whole person throughout the whole world.

We of Youth With A Mission believe in God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – and that the Bible is God's inspired and authoritative Word, revealing that Jesus Christ is God's son; fully God and fully human; that people are created in God's image; that He created us to have eternal life through Jesus Christ; that although all people have sinned and come short of God's glory, God has made salvation possible through the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ; that repentance, faith, love and obedience are fitting responses to God's initiative of grace toward us through the active ministry of the Holy Spirit; that God desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth; and that the Holy Spirit's power is demonstrated in and through us for the accomplishment of Christ's last commandments, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone" (Mark 16:15 NLT) and "Go and make disciples of all the nations..." (Matthew 28:19 NLT).

YWAM's CORE BELIEFS AND FOUNDATIONAL VALUES

A. YWAM's CORE BELIEFS

Youth With A Mission (YWAM) affirms the Bible as the inspired and authoritative Word of God and the absolute reference point for every aspect of life and ministry. Based upon God's Word, who He is, and His initiative of salvation, through the atoning work of Jesus (His death, burial and resurrection), the following responses are strongly emphasized in YWAM:

- ***Worship:*** We are called to ***praise and worship God alone*** (Exo 20:2-3; Deu 6:4-5; 2Ki 17:35-39; 1Ch 16:28-30; Neh 8:2-10; Mar 12:29-30; Rom 15:5-13; Jud 24-25; Rev 5:6-14; Rev 19:5-8).

- ***Holiness:*** We are called to ***lead holy and righteous lives*** that exemplify the nature and character of God (Lev 19:1-2; Psa 51:7-11; Jer 18:1-11; Eze 20:10-12; Zec 13:9; Luk 1:68-75; Eph 4:21-32; Tit 2:11-14; 1Pe 2:9,21-25; 1Jo 3:1-3).

- ***Witness:*** We are called to ***share the Gospel of Jesus Christ*** with those who do not know Him (Psa 78:1-7; Isa 40:3-11; Mic 4:1-2; Hab 2:14; Luk 24:44-48; Act 3:12-26; Act 10:39-43; 1Co 9:19-23; 2Co 2:12-17; 1Pe 3:15-18).

- ***Prayer:*** We are called to ***engage in intercessory prayer*** for the people and causes on God's heart, including standing against evil in every form (Gen 18:20-33; Exo 32:1-16; Jdg 3:9,15; 1Ki 8:22-61; Eze 22:30-31; Eze 33:1-11; Mat 6:5-15; Mat 9:36-38; Eph 3:14-21; 2Th 3:1-5).

- ***Fellowship:*** We are called to ***commit to the Church*** in both its local nurturing expression and its mobile multiplying expression (2Ch 29:20-30; Psa 22:25-28; Psa 122:1-4; Joe 2:15-17; Mat 18:19-20; Act 2:44-47; Act 4:32-35; 1Co 14:26-40; Eph 2:11-18; Heb 10:23-25).

- ***Service:*** We are called to ***contribute toward God's Kingdom purposes*** in every sphere of life (Deu 15:7-11; Deu 24:17-22; Psa 112:4-9; Pro 11:10-11; Zec 7:8-10; Mat 5:14-16; 2Th 3:13; Tit 3:4-8; Heb 13:15-16; Jam 2:14-26).

B. YWAM's FOUNDATIONAL VALUES

1. KNOW GOD

YWAM is committed to know God, His nature, His character and His ways as revealed in the Bible, the inspired and authoritative Word of God. We seek to reflect who He is in every aspect of our lives and ministry. The automatic overflow of knowing and enjoying fellowship with God is a desire to share Him with others. (2Ki 19:19; Job 42:5; Psa 46:10; Psa 103:7-13; Jer 9:23-24; Hos 6:3; Joh 17:3; Eph 1:16-17; Php 3:7-11; 1Jo 2:4-6).

2. MAKE GOD KNOWN

YWAM is called to make God known throughout the whole world, and into every arena of society through evangelism, training and mercy ministries. We believe that salvation of souls should result in transformation of societies thus obeying Jesus' command to make disciples of all nations. (1Ch 16:24-27; Psa 68:11; Psa 71:15-16; Psa 145:4-7; Mat 28:18-20; Mar 16:15; Act 1:8; Act 13:1-4a; Rom 10:8-15; Rom 15:18-21).

3. HEAR GOD'S VOICE

YWAM is committed to creating with God through listening to Him, praying His prayers and obeying His commands in matters great and small. We are dependent upon hearing His voice as individuals, together in team contexts and in larger gatherings, as an integral part of our process for decision making. (1Sa 3:7-10; 2Ch 15:2-4; Psa 25:14; Isa 6:8; Amo 3:7; Luk 9:35; Joh 10:1-5; Joh 16:13-15; Heb 3:7-8,15; Rev 2:7,11,17,27; 3:6,13,22).

4. PRACTICE WORSHIP AND INTERCESSORY PRAYER

YWAM is dedicated to worship God and engage in intercessory prayer as integral aspects of daily life. We also recognize the intent of Satan to destroy the work of God and we rely upon God's empowering presence, the Holy Spirit, to overcome his strategies in the lives of individuals and in the affairs of nations. (1Sa 7:5; 2Ch 7:14; Psa 84:1-8; Psa 95:6-7; Psa 100:1-5; Mar 11:24-25; Act 1:14; Eph 6:13-20; 1Th 5:16-19; 1Ti 2:1-4).

5. BE VISIONARY

YWAM is called to be visionary, continually receiving, nurturing and releasing fresh vision from God. We support the pioneering of new ministries and methods, always willing to be radical in order to be relevant to every generation, people group, and sphere of society. We believe that the apostolic call of YWAM requires the integration of spiritual eldership, freedom in the Spirit and relationship, centered on the Word of God. (Num 12:6; 1Sa 12:16; Pro 29:18; Eze 1:1; Hab 2:2-3; Mar 1:35-39; Luk 9:1-6; Act 16:9-10; Act 26:19; 2Pe 3:9-13).

6. CHAMPION YOUNG PEOPLE

YWAM is called to champion youth. We believe God has gifted and called young people to spearhead vision and ministry. We are committed to value, trust, train, support, make space and release them. They are not only the Church of the future; they are the Church of today. We commit to follow where they lead, in the will of God. (1Sa 17:32-50; Ecc 4:13-14; Ecc 12:1-7; Jer 1:5-10; Dan 1:17-20; Joe 2:28; Joh 6:9; Act 16:1-5; 1Ti 4:12-16; 1Jo 2:12-14).

7. BE DECENTRALIZED

YWAM is a Christ-centered, faith-based global volunteer movement, united by shared vision, core beliefs, foundational values and relationships. We do not have a centralized structure. Every YWAM ministry has the privilege and spiritual responsibility to develop and maintain healthy relationships with appropriate authorities and circles of elders. (Exo 18:13-26; Num 1:16-19; Num 11:16-17,24-30; Deu 29:10-13; Jos 23:1-24:28; Act 14:23; Act 15:1-31; 1Co 3:4-11; Tit 1:5-9; Heb 13:7,17).

8. BE INTERNATIONAL AND INTERDENOMINATIONAL

YWAM is international and interdenominational in its global scope as well as its local constituency. We believe that ethnic, linguistic and denominational diversity, along with redeemed aspects of culture, are positive factors that contribute to the health and growth of the Mission. (Gen 12:1-4; Gen 26:2-5; Psa 57:9-10; Jer 32:27; Dan 7:13-14; Act 20:4; 1Co 12:12-31; Eph 4:1-16; Col 3:11; Rev 7:9).

9. HAVE A BIBLICAL CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW

YWAM is called to a Biblical Christian worldview. We believe that the Bible – the textbook for all of life – makes a clear division between good and evil; right and wrong. The practical dimensions of life are no less spiritual than the ministry expressions. Everything done in obedience to God is spiritual. We seek to honor God with all that we do, equipping and mobilizing men and women of God to take roles of service and influence in every arena of society. (Deu 8:1-3; Deu 32:45-47; 2Ki 22:8; Psa 19:7-11; Luk 8:21; Joh 8:31-32; Php 4:8-9; 2Ti 3:16-17; Heb 4:12-13; Jam 4:17).

10. FUNCTION IN TEAMS

YWAM is called to function in teams in all aspects of ministry and leadership. We believe that a combination of complementary gifts, callings, perspectives, ministries and generations working together in unity at all levels of our Mission provides wisdom and safety. Seeking God's will and making decisions in a team context allows accountability and contributes to greater relationship, motivation, responsibility and ownership of the vision. (Deu 32:30-31; 2Ch 17:7-9; Pro 15:22; Ecc 4:9-12; Mar 6:7-13; Rom 12:3-10; 2Co 1:24; Eph 5:21; Php 2:1-2; 1Pe 4:8).

11. EXHIBIT SERVANT LEADERSHIP

YWAM is called to servant leadership as a lifestyle, rather than a leadership hierarchy. A servant leader is one who honors the gifts and callings of those under his/her care and guards their rights and privileges. Just as Jesus served His disciples, we stress the importance of those with leadership responsibilities serving those whom they lead. (Deu 10:12-13; Psa 84:10; Isa 42:1-4; Mic 6:8; Mar 10:42-45; Joh 13:3-17; Rom 16:1-2; Gal 5:13-14; Php 2:3-11; 1Pe 4:10-11).

12. DO FIRST, THEN TEACH

YWAM is committed to doing first, then teaching. We believe that firsthand experience gives authority to our words. Godly character and a call from God are more important than an individual's gifts, abilities and expertise. (Deu 4:5-8; Ezr 7:10; Psa 51:12-13; Psa 119:17-18; Pro 1:1-4; Mat 7:28-29; Act 1:1-2; Col 3:12-17; 2Ti 4:1-5; 2Pe 1:5-10).

13. BE RELATIONSHIP-ORIENTED

YWAM is dedicated to being relationship-oriented in our living and working together. We desire to be united through lives of holiness, mutual support, transparency, humility, and open communication, rather than a dependence on structures or rules. (Lev 19:18; Psa 133:1-3; Pro 17:17; Pro 27:10; Joh 13:34-35; Joh 15:13-17; Joh 17:20-23; Rom 13:8-10; 1Jo 1:7; 1Jo 4:7-12).

14. VALUE THE INDIVIDUAL

YWAM is called to value each individual. We believe in equal opportunity and justice for all. Created in the image of God, people of all nationalities, ages and functions have distinctive contributions and callings. We are committed to honoring God-given leadership and ministry gifts in both men and women. (Gen 1:27; Lev 19:13-16; Deu 16:18-20; Psa 139:13-16; Mar 8:34-37; Act 10:34-35; Gal 3:28; Eph 6:5-9; Heb 2:11-12; Jam 2:1-9).

15. VALUE FAMILIES

YWAM affirms the importance of families serving God together in missions, not just the father and/or mother. We also embrace the inclusion of single-parent families. We encourage the development of strong and healthy family units, with each member sharing the call to missions and contributing their gifts in unique and complementary ways. We uphold and celebrate the Biblical view that God's intent for holy matrimony is between one man and one woman. (Gen 2:21-24; Gen 18:17-19; Deu 6:6-7; Pro 5:15-23; Pro 31:10-31; Mal 2:14-16; Mat 19:3-9; 1Co 7:1-16; 1Ti 3:2-5; Heb 13:4).

16. PRACTICE DEPENDENCE ON GOD

YWAM is a volunteer movement called to practice a life of dependence upon God for financial provision. For individuals and for any YWAM team or community, this comes primarily through His people. As God has been generous toward us, so we desire to be generous, giving ourselves, our time and talents to God with no expectation of

remuneration. (Gen 22:12-14; Exo 36:2-7; Num 18:25-29; Mal 3:8-12; Mat 6:25-33; Luk 19:8-9; 2Co 8:1-9:15; Php 4:10-20; Tit 3:14; 3Jo 5-8).

17. PRACTICE HOSPITALITY

YWAM affirms the ministry of hospitality as an expression of God's character and the value of people. We believe it is important to open our hearts, homes, YWAM locations and campuses to serve and honor one another, our guests and the poor and needy, not as acts of social protocol, but as expressions of generosity. (Gen 18:1-8; 2Sa 9:1-11; Psa 68:5-6; Pro 22:9; Isa 58:7; Mat 25:31-46; Act 28:7-8; Rom 12:13; Heb 13:1-3; 1Pe 4:9).

18. COMMUNICATE WITH INTEGRITY

YWAM affirms that everything exists because God communicates. Therefore, YWAM is committed to truthful, accurate, timely and relevant communication. We believe good communication is essential for strong relationships, healthy families and communities, and effective ministry. (Gen 1:3-5; Num 23:19; Pro 10:19; Pro 25:9-14; Zec 8:16-17; Mat 5:33-37; Luk 4:16-22; Joh 1:1-5; Col 4:6; Jam 3:1-18).

HISTORICAL NOTE:

This document includes the YWAM Statement of Purpose and the Core Beliefs and Foundational Values of Youth With A Mission.

The YWAM Statement of Purpose was written in the early 1960s. We purposefully never wrote a "Statement of Faith" because we are "an international movement of Christians from many denominations" and wanted simply to clarify why God had called this movement into being.

YWAM's Core Beliefs and Foundational Values were birthed through a multi-decade process of hearing God and listening to one another. The process of identifying our values was initiated by Darlene Cunningham in 1985 at the time of YWAM's 25th anniversary, in order to pass them on to successive generations. The document was then approved six years later by the International Council in 1991.

At that time the International Council (IC) was the recognized global eldership of the mission. Since that time the senior circle of global elders has functioned under several different names. First it was the International Council (IC). It was later called the Global Leadership Team (GLT) and then was known as the Global Leadership Forum (GLF). This body was disbanded in Singapore 2014 in order to put in place a flatter, movement framework at the trans-local level in the place of what was becoming an increasingly hierarchical organizational structure. Now there are many circles of spiritual eldership around the mission – many of them known as Area Circle Teams (ACTs). A senior group of elders has been convened by Loren and Darlene Cunningham and is known as the Founders' Circle (FC).

Throughout these many decades, a primary role of the body of global spiritual elders (whether the IC, GLT, GLF or FC) has been to confirm, steward and safeguard the foundational documents of the mission. Though the FC does not have the governmental oversight of earlier leadership frameworks, it does carry this role of protecting and clarifying our foundational documents.

A history of YWAM's Values, since first presented by Darlene in 1985 and approved by the IC in 1991, include updates by the GLT in 2003 and the GLF in 2011, 2014. The FC confirmed an update in 2017 during the UofN Workshop in Costa Rica regarding the inclusion of "Service" as one of our responses to our Core Beliefs; and an update in 2018 during YWAM Together in Thailand, which clarifies Value 15. At that same time this new format was adopted so that our Purpose, Core Beliefs, Foundational Values, and the supporting Scriptural references would be presented as a singular document. The above document, approved by the Founders' Circle in May 2020, clarifies wording in the Statement of Purpose and Values 4 and 7.

This updated document plus the following six covenantal documents form the foundational documents of Youth With A Mission:

- 1988: The Manila Covenant,
- 1992: The Red Sea Covenant,
- 2002: The Nanning Covenant,
- 2010: The Jubilee Covenant,
- 2014: The Singapore Covenant, and
- 2014: The Covenant to End Bible Poverty.

YWAM's identity and mission is further clarified by what we know as the "Four Legacy Words" given by God to Loren Cunningham through the years regarding the "alls" and the "everys" of our call. These are the major words of the Lord, which over our history have guided us and shaped our inheritance as a mission. They include

1. The Covenantal Vision of the Waves, which Loren received in June of 1956 in the Bahamas shortly before his 21st birthday.
2. The Call to Disciple Nations through the Seven Spheres of Society (1975),
3. The Christian Magna Carta (1981), and
4. The Commitment to End Bible Poverty Now (1967 & 2014).

All of these are rooted in the early days of the mission's story, and we continue to grow in our understanding and application of these Four Legacy Words.