

# Women in Ministry at Love Church

At **Love Church**, we believe God empowers **both women and men** to lead, serve, teach, and pastor in His Church. We affirm a soft **egalitarian** view — meaning we believe women can preach, pastor, and lead, but always in step with biblical integrity, spiritual maturity, and God-honoring order.

We know this can be a loaded topic for many. Some have been hurt or silenced. Others have never seen women in visible leadership roles. Our heart is to approach this conversation with humility, empathy, and deep trust in God's Word. We don't take this position lightly or culturally — we've arrived here through prayer, study, and conviction.

## God's Original Design

From the very beginning, God created men and women in His image (Genesis 1:27). Both were tasked with stewarding creation (Genesis 1:28), and both were essential in carrying out God's purpose. Equal in value. Distinct in personality. Unified in mission.

We believe God's design for men and women is not one of hierarchy but of **mutual partnership**. In marriage, we believe husbands and wives are called to serve one another in love and respect (Ephesians 5), with the husband bearing spiritual responsibility — not as a superior, but as a servant leader. In the church, we believe women and men serve side by side — co-laborers in the Gospel.

As Nijay K. Gupta writes in Tell Her Story:

**“Women in the early church were not just background characters; they were co-workers, apostles, prophets, patrons, and leaders. To ignore their roles is to miss part of the Gospel's power.”**

## But What About 1 Timothy 2 and 1 Corinthians 14?

Some Christians believe passages like 1 Timothy 2:12 and 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 prohibit women from teaching or leading. These verses deserve thoughtful, contextual interpretation.

In 1 Timothy 2, Paul was writing to a church in Ephesus dealing with false teaching — some of which was likely being spread by untrained women influenced by pagan beliefs. Paul's words (“I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority”) were **not a universal command**, but a pastoral instruction addressing specific disruption in that church at that time. Paul uses the Greek word *authentein* for authority here, which carries a rare and negative connotation of domination, not godly leadership. This suggests Paul was confronting a specific misuse of authority, not establishing a permanent rule for all churches.

Similarly, in 1 Corinthians 14, Paul addresses **order in worship gatherings**, not a blanket ban on women speaking. In fact, earlier in that same letter (1 Corinthians 11:5), Paul affirms women praying and prophesying publicly — so clearly, he wasn't silencing all women in every setting.

As Gupta explains:

**“Paul’s vision was not to exclude women but to encourage participation that builds up the body. The goal was clarity, not censorship.”**

We interpret Scripture in context. We see that:

- **Phoebe was entrusted to carry and present Paul’s letter to the Romans (Romans 16:1).**
- **Priscilla taught Apollos, a respected preacher (Acts 18:26).**
- **Junia was “outstanding among the apostles” (Romans 16:7).**
- **The first preachers of the resurrection were women at the empty tomb.**

Paul wasn’t forbidding women from ministry — he was calling for maturity, order, and clarity in environments where chaos or confusion reigned.

In Scripture we see women leading with courage, wisdom, and influence:

- **Deborah, judge and leader in Israel (Judges 4–5)**
- **Esther, who saved her people through brave advocacy**

We know some churches hold a complementarian view, where men and women have distinct roles in church leadership. We deeply respect their commitment to Scripture, even if we interpret these passages differently. At **Love Church**, we see biblical evidence for women teaching and leading — and we trust the Holy Spirit to guide those who are called.

# The Holy Spirit Empowers All Believers

The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to all believers, regardless of gender (1 Corinthians 12:11). At Pentecost, Peter quotes Joel, saying:

**“Your sons and daughters will prophesy... Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit” (Acts 2:17–18).**

God calls women. God gifts women. God uses women.

At **Love Church**, we have seen God powerfully use women to lead, preach, pastor, and disciple. We celebrate women’s voices because we see the Spirit moving through them.

We’ve seen women lead prayer movements, walk with people through grief and healing, teach Scripture faithfully, and pastor entire communities. Their leadership doesn’t detract from God’s order — it reflects God’s heart.

## A Culture of Honor and Partnership

We aim to build a church culture where:

- **Women and men lead side by side.**
- **Marriage reflects mutual honor and trust.**
- **The Church reflects the fullness of God’s family.**
- **No one is elevated because of gender — and no one is limited by it either.**

The question we ask is not, “Is this a man or woman?” but, “Is this person called, faithful, humble, and walking with God?”

As Scot McKnight writes in *The Blue Parakeet*:

**“When we silence the voices God has gifted, we risk muting what the Spirit is trying to say to the church.”**

# What Does This Mean at Love Church?

- Women can preach and teach on Sundays.
- Women can serve in pastoral leadership roles.
- Women lead teams, disciple others, and help shape the culture and future of Love Church.

We do not lead in isolation but **in collaboration** — women and men working together under the Lordship of Christ, honoring His Word and one another.

We know not every believer sees this exactly the same way. That's okay. We pursue **unity, not uniformity**. We ask that everyone come with open hands and a humble heart.

You don't have to agree with every position to be loved, to belong, or to be part of what God is doing here.

## Further Reading

- “Tell Her Story” by Nijay K. Gupta
- “The Blue Parakeet” by Scot McKnight
- “How I Changed My Mind About Women in Leadership” – ed. Alan F. Johnson
- “Rediscovering Scripture's Vision for Women” – Lucy Peppiatt