Performance Evaluation Framework — Draft April 2026

MAYFLOWER CHURCH

Performance Evaluation Framework

Streamline System 11 — Draft for Elder Board Review

April 2026

Purpose

This framework establishes how Mayflower Church evaluates the people who serve under its name — paid staff, office bearers, and volunteers — in a way that reflects the church's mission, honors the people involved, and meets the practical needs of a healthy congregational polity.

It is Week 11 of the Operations Plan build (due 2026-05-20) and is intended to be linked from the Chapter 11 Overview page in the Mayflower Church Operations book on BookStack once adopted.

Governing Principle

Shepherd, don't score.

Evaluations at Mayflower are not grading exercises. They are pastoral conversations anchored in the gospel, the mission of the church, and the particular role God has called a person to. They are developmental, not punitive. They assume the best of the person sitting across the table. They are written down because writing sharpens thinking — not because the church is building a file on anyone.

This framework draws on three streams:

- Dennis Bakke's Joy at Work — the conviction that reviews should be developmental, multi-source, decoupled from compensation, and centered on whether a person is using their gifts, growing, being fair, and having joy in their work.
- Lukaszewski's Streamline Healthy Church Systems — the conviction that church operations should be simple, repeatable, and mission-anchored, with a one-page ethos wherever possible.
- Ministry Brands' Guide to Healthy Church Operations — the conviction that paid church staff are employees of a nonprofit with real legal exposure, so staff reviews must be documented, signed, and retained even while the tone remains pastoral.

Where those three streams disagree, this framework favors Bakke's posture (pastoral and developmental) while honoring the documentation and legal hygiene that Ministry Brands and Mayflower's own handbook require.

Four Questions at the Heart of Every Review

Every Mayflower evaluation — regardless of role — turns on the same four questions, adapted from Bakke and re-anchored for a local church:

1. Are you using the gifts God has given you? (Competence, calling, fit.)
2. Are you growing in Christ through this work? (Sanctification, character, walk with God.)
3. Are you bearing fruit where you have been planted? (Faithfulness, effectiveness, impact on others.)
4. Are you sustainable — body, heart, home, and soul? (Margin, Sabbath, family, mental/emotional health.)

A fifth, tier-specific question is added according to the role (see below).

Four Tiers, One Philosophy

The four questions are the same across every tier. The form, depth, cadence, and who leads the conversation all flex to fit the nature of the role.

Tier	Role(s)	Who Leads	Cadence
Senior Pastor	Teaching Elder / Senior Pastor	Elder Board (with designated chair)	Annual (fall) + monthly elder check-in

Tier	Role(s)	Who Leads	Cadence
Staff	Director of Biblical Counseling, Church Secretary, future hires	Direct supervisor (Senior Pastor for both current staff)	Annual formal + quarterly 1:1
Office Bearers	Elders, Deacons, Trustees	Board chair or moderator; peer conversation within the board	Annual self-examination; reaffirmation before term milestones
Volunteers	All ministry team members and team leaders	Team leader / ministry coordinator	Annual informal check-in; ad hoc as seasons change

The Four Evaluations at a Glance

1. Senior Pastor Pastoral Review

Nature: Multi-source pastoral review led by the Elder Board.

The senior pastor is both a staff member and an office bearer — employed by the church and ordained to the teaching office. His review is therefore neither a typical staff performance review nor a typical office-bearer reaffirmation. It is an elder-led pastoral review of a teaching elder.

Sources: self-assessment, elder observations, brief input from staff, an optional sample from the congregation, and — critically — a section written by the pastor to the elders about whether the elders are shepherding him well. Bakke's principle of multi-source input serves the church here: the elders do not see everything on their own.

Lens: preaching and teaching, pastoral care, leadership and character, doctrinal fidelity, vision alignment with the bylaws and mission, and sustainability (family, Sabbath, health).

Outcome: a written summary of gratitude, growth areas, and a development plan agreed to jointly. Held confidentially in the pastor's personnel file. Compensation decisions are handled separately by the Board of Finance at budget time (Bakke principle of decoupling).

2. Staff Joy-at-Work Review

Nature: Developmental conversation with the direct supervisor, documented for the personnel file.

Used for the Director of Biblical Counseling and the Church Secretary, and any future non-pastoral staff. One form, contextualized to each role by appendix.

Sources: self-assessment (completed first) plus supervisor observations. Peer input is optional and invited by the staff member. The staff member owns their own development plan; the supervisor's job is to listen, affirm, and sharpen.

Lens: the four core questions plus fairness and development — am I being treated fairly here, am I learning, is this work helping me become who God is calling me to be?

Outcome: signed written summary with a development plan for the coming year, retained per the Employee Handbook's HR-file retention policy. Separated from compensation decisions in both timing and ownership.

3. Office Bearer Reaffirmation

Nature: Qualitative self-examination and peer conversation, led within the board, anchored in biblical qualifications and fiduciary duties.

Used for Elders, Deacons, and Trustees. Not a performance rating — ordination to an office is not a job to be scored. It is the annual practice of each officer asking, before God and their peers, whether they still walk worthy of the office they hold.

Sources: self-examination against 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 (elders and deacons) or fiduciary standards and the bylaws (trustees), followed by a peer conversation within the board. The board's moderator or chair frames the conversation and keeps it pastoral.

Lens: qualifications, faithfulness to the office description, contribution to the board's shared work, and life circumstances (health, family, season).

Outcome: informal minute-record that the reaffirmation happened; any pastoral concerns are handled as shepherding, not paperwork. Used as one input to nomination and term-renewal decisions, not as the sole basis.

4. Volunteer Ministry Check-In

Nature: Relational, appreciation-first conversation with the team leader. Informal, not paperwork.

Used for all volunteer ministry team members and leaders — Bible Fellowship Group leaders, Worship Team, A/V, Missions, Prayer, Hospitality, First Impressions, Discipletown, Nursery, Scripture Readers, EQUIP, Evangelism, Baptism, Shoebox, Senior Luncheon, and Women's Ministry.

Sources: a one-on-one conversation, usually over coffee, once a year — plus whatever informal touches a healthy team culture already includes.

Lens: joy, sustainability, growth in Christ, and a clean off-ramp if this is not the season for this role.

Outcome: no file, no form. The team leader tracks their roster and flags anyone moving, resting, or stepping down. The only exception is when the conversation surfaces a shepherding concern that should be shared with an elder.

Common DNA Across the Four

- Mission as north star. Every review anchors to Mayflower's mission and the specific position description for the role.
- Developmental, not punitive. The goal is the flourishing of the person and the faithfulness of the ministry, not a rating.
- Multi-source where appropriate. Self-assessment always comes first. Others' voices are added to sharpen, not to surveil.
- Decoupled from compensation. Pay decisions are the Board of Finance's job at budget time and do not ride on the content of a review conversation.
- Written where necessary, relational where possible. Staff and Senior Pastor reviews are documented because employment law and pastoral care of a lead minister both require it. Office bearer reaffirmations generate a minute-level record only. Volunteer check-ins generate nothing except a better relationship.
- Clean off-ramps. Every tier includes a shame-free path to step down, rotate, or rest. Burning people out is not a Mayflower value.
- Pastoral care of the reviewer. At every tier, the person leading the review is also accountable: the elders to the congregation (for how they care for the pastor), the supervisor to the elders (for how they care for staff), the board chair to peers, the team leader to the coach.

What This Framework Does Not Do

- It does not score people. There are no 1–5 ratings, no stack-rankings, no performance improvement plans as default tools. If a performance issue rises to the level of discipline, it leaves the review process and enters the discipline process defined in the Employee Handbook or the bylaws.
- It does not decide compensation. That is the Board of Finance's domain in the July/August budget cycle, informed by market, tenure, and the approved budget envelope — not by the content of a review.
- It does not replace discipleship. The four questions are pastoral prompts, not a substitute for ongoing shepherding. The review is the annual punctuation mark on a year of relationship.

Integration with the Employee Handbook

The Mayflower Employee Handbook (approved May 30, 2026) does not currently contain a performance evaluation section. This framework is designed to sit alongside the handbook, not inside it, and to slot naturally between Section 6 (Standards of Christian Conduct) and Section 8 (Separation of Employment). A short new handbook section titled “Performance Evaluation” would simply reference this framework and its forms, rather than duplicating them.

Three handbook provisions are directly relevant and should be honored by the framework rather than restated:

- Appendix A (Biblical Standards for Staff) sets the character standard — anchored in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 — that every Mayflower staff member is growing into. The staff review's character lens references Appendix A rather than creating a second list.
- Appendix A.12 (Annual Affirmation) already requires staff to sign an affirmation of biblical standards on their work anniversary. The Joy-at-Work Review is distinct from this affirmation and should be held separately: the affirmation is about continued commitment to the standards; the review is about development, joy, and fruitfulness.
- Section 8.3 (Termination) governs discipline. Reviews are not discipline. If a review surfaces conduct warranting discipline, the matter leaves the review process and enters the handbook's discipline path.

Language note: the church's current mission statement (“building a discipleship community rooted in the knowledge of Christ, driven by faith, empowered to share the Gospel, and committed to welcoming and equipping others in Love and Truth”) should be printed on the cover of each review form once the framework is adopted, to visibly anchor every review in the mission it serves.

Adoption Path

5. Elder Board review and input (May 2026) — especially on the Senior Pastor review, since the elders administer it.
6. Deacon and Trustee board review (May 2026) — on the Office Bearer Reaffirmation section relevant to each board.
7. Handbook reconciliation — ensure language and cadence align with the Mayflower Church Employee Handbook (approved May 30, 2026).
8. BookStack publication — Chapter 11 Overview page updated with the adopted framework and links to each form.
9. First-cycle dry run — fall 2026 reviews using the adopted forms, with a lessons-learned debrief at the 2026 Leadership Summit.
10. Annual reaffirmation of the framework itself — the Elder Board reviews the framework each April to adjust before the fall review season.

Open Questions for the Elder Board

- Should the Senior Pastor review be led by the full Elder Board or by a designated subcommittee (e.g., chair + one other elder) reporting back to the full board?
- For the Senior Pastor review, how is congregational input solicited — by open invitation, by a rotating sample, or not at all? (Each has trade-offs.)
- Should the Director of Biblical Counseling's review include any input from counselees, given the confidentiality of counseling? (Recommended: no formal input; the supervisor relies on outcomes, case notes, and the counselor's self-report, not client feedback.)
- What is the retention period for written staff reviews under Massachusetts employment law and the church's handbook? (Verify with the handbook and, if needed, counsel.)
- Should office-bearer reaffirmations be timed to the term calendar (just before term renewal) or to the budget/summit calendar (annually every spring)?

Source Notes and Limitations

This framework draws on well-established patterns from Lukaszewski's *Streamline*, *The Guide to Healthy Church Operations*, and Bakke's *Joy at Work*. Before adoption, the Senior Pastor should cross-check the specifics against:

- Streamline Chapter 11 (Performance Evaluations) — to confirm the four-tier structure proposed here is consistent with Lukaszewski's specific recommendations on cadence, ownership, and form.
- The Guide to Healthy Church Operations (HR section) — to confirm documentation, retention, and legal-hygiene requirements are adequately reflected.

Where this framework and the adopted handbook disagree, the handbook governs and this framework should be revised to match. The framework and the handbook have been drafted as complements to one another; no known conflicts exist as of this draft, but a careful cross-read before adoption is wise.

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