

## WoodsEdge Statement on Spiritual Gifts

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1. We welcome spiritual gifts as manifestations of the Holy Spirit, imparting his power into and through an individual believer, as he wills, for the common good of the church (1 Corinthians 12:7). Such gifts enable more fruitful kingdom living, so that the church of Jesus Christ can work, as a whole, to be all that God intends it to be (1 Corinthians 12-14; Romans 12:4-8; Ephesians 4:4-16).
2. We believe in all of the spiritual gifts, as described in the New Testament, including the revelatory gifts. We are continuationists, not cessationists. That is, we believe that all the gifts continue, for consistent, well-ordered use in the church. We do not believe that any gifts have ceased (1 Corinthians 12:1-11). Our practice is guided by and under the authority of the Word of God, to be exercised in the manner of humility and worthy of our calling as Christ followers.
3. We focus on loving Jesus, not on the gifts (Matthew 22:34-40). We are devoted to him, first, and our identities are not found in our giftedness, but in Christ, alone (1 Corinthians 12:4-11).
4. We desire to be filled with the Word and with the Holy Spirit, just like the New Testament church. We are committed to the authority of Scripture and to the Christ-exalting ministry of each of the spiritual gifts (Ephesians 1:13).
5. We pursue all of the spiritual gifts precisely because they are *gifts from God and we need them*. To ignore the gifts is to insult God who gave them and will prevent the church from reaching its full potential (1 Corinthians 12). To exercise the gifts is an act of love for people. For example, it is an act of love to pray for healing for someone (Acts 28:8-9).
6. We, indeed, pursue the higher gifts, especially the gift of prophecy, in line with Paul's exhortation. All of this is for the purpose of building up and edifying other believers (1 Corinthians 14:1, 3). To not pursue the higher gifts, including prophecy, is to disobey God (1 Corinthians 12:31).
7. We value authenticity in the exercise of spiritual gifts, and we resist any hint of manipulation. We pursue the gifts not out of selfish ambition, nor to control people. We must practice them in humility, gentleness, and love. We do not adhere to any form of "prosperity gospel" or "name and claim" theology (Acts 8:18-22; 1 Corinthians 13:1-2).
8. We believe that every Christian receives the gift of the Holy Spirit when they have accepted him as Savior. There is no second baptism of the Spirit. Thus, we desire to be filled afresh with the Spirit, continually (1 Corinthians 12:13; Acts 2:38).
9. We believe that the gift of tongues is simply one of a number of spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit bestows, according to his will. Not all believers will have the gift of tongues (1

Corinthians 12:27-30). Tongues uttered aloud, in the presence of others should have an interpretation, in order to be edifying to the listeners, while uninterpreted tongues are encouraged to be used privately (1 Corinthians 14:6-20).

10. We believe that God heals in many ways (physically, mentally, emotionally, and relationally, to name a few) and we pray with expectancy for him to heal. But God is the sovereign God over healing (Jeremiah 17:14). When someone is not healed, we do not assume it is because of a lack of faith. Similarly, we do not assume it is due to unconfessed sin in their lives, though that could be an issue to explore, in prayer. So, we remain surrendered to God's plan and God's timing. At times he heals miraculously and instantly. At times he heals gradually. At times he provides healing through the intervention of others. And at times the healing comes in heaven (2 Corinthians 12:8-10). As with all things at WE, our focus is on the Healer (Acts 3:1-16).
11. According to the Scriptures, prophecy is given to edify, encourage, and comfort (1 Corinthians 14:3). While Old Testament prophets spoke directly for God, in the New Testament, prophetic words given do not equal God's words. While the Holy Spirit does provide divine revelation, the interpretation and communication of the revelation rely on human thought and can be in error. For this reason, we must exercise humility when sharing with others, carefully using phrases such as, "I believe I have a word from God. May I share it with you?" rather than, "God told me to tell you..." The Word also instructs us to test, judge, and examine every prophetic word against Scripture (1 Thessalonians 5:19-22).
12. We believe God speaks to all of his followers and that he speaks in a variety of ways. Hearing God's voice has more to do with the attitude of the heart than with skill. All through the Bible, God speaks to his people. We believe that the Bible is a book of examples, not a book of exceptions (Genesis 3:8-11; Exodus 3:4-6; 1 Kings 19:5-13; Acts 9:4-6).
13. We believe that the Holy Spirit apportions gifts to each believer regardless of gender, race, status, position, age, degree of holiness, past experience or education (1 Corinthians 12:11). Only Jesus receives honor for any application of the gifts at WoodsEdge (Acts 3:12-13).