

June 27, 2012

REFUGE CHURCH GAINESVILLE (RCG) CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I: DEFINITION AND PURPOSE OF THIS CONSTITUTION

This written document is an apostolic declaration of our faith, our doctrinal beliefs, understanding of the Holy Scripture, form of church government, organizational structure, and purposes as a body.

It is vitally important for a church, if it is to glorify God and accomplish His purposes, that its people be in agreement with regard to doctrine, organizational structure and goals (1 Corinthians 1:10; Ephesians 4:3,13).

This is thus designed to be a guide and statement of these things, that it might promote a oneness of mind within our own ranks, and that those interested in becoming a part of this ministry might have a clear concept of our beliefs, goals and objectives.

This document does not replace, parallel and is not a higher authority than the Bible, the inerrant “Word of God”, or the “Discipline Book”, the official handbook of the Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, our parent body.

Neither is it a higher authority than the authority that God Himself or His Spirit that is invested in those believers, He has appointed to lead in this local church by His spirit (Hebrews 13:17).

It must be remembered that the local church itself is a living, growing, and flexible body subject ultimately to the authority of Jesus Christ alone as it is declared in the Word of God (Ephesians 1:22; 4:12-16).

As we grow in the Word, this document is therefore subject to amendment according to the provisions of this constitution. This document is, however, to be followed in all its parts as a protection to all until part of all is amended according to its provisions.

ARTICLE II: NAME AND LOCATION

The name of this local church shall be the **Refuge Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Incorporated, Gainesville also known as Refuge Church Gainesville (RCG); located at: 601 NW 2nd Street, Gainesville, FL**; a federally recognized non-profit ministry, and a tax-exempt corporation under the laws of the state of Florida.

ARTICLE III: MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. Our Mission

“To evangelize the world for Jesus Christ; to equip every believer to become true Disciples of Christ; and to engage those social problems that challenge the communities we have been called to serve.”

B. Our Goals

Our goals are to serve God and bring glory to Him. Certain God ordained goals are established in Scripture for the local church. These are basically set forth in the Great Commissions (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-49).

Matthew 28:19-20

19 *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:*

20 *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

Mark 16:15-16

15 *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

16 *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

Luke 24:46-49

46 *And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:*

47 *And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*

48 *And ye are witnesses of these things.*

49 *And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.*

1). Evangelization of the Lost (Preach to Reach)

Reaching the lost with the gospel of Jesus Christ, both at home and abroad, is to be one of the goals of this church (Romans 1:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; Acts 1:8).

Romans 1:14-16

14 *I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.*

15 *So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.*

16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

1Thessalonians 1:8

8 *For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak anything.*

Acts 1:8

8 *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

2). Equipping Believers (Teach to Keep)

Equipping the saints unto the work of the ministry in all its aspects along with their spiritual maturity in the Lord is the second great goal of this church (Ephesians 4:12-13; Colossians 1:28-29).

Ephesians 4:12-13

12 *For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:*

13 *Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:*

Colossians 1:28-29

28 *Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:*

29 *Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.*

3). Engaging Social Concerns (Engage to Involve)

Engaging the social problems that challenge the communities we have been called to serve is the third great goal of this church (Matthew 20:26-28; Romans 15:1-3; 1 Corinthians 9:18-23).

Matthew 20:26-28

26 *But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;*

27 *And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:*

28 *Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

Romans 15:1-3

1 *We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.*

2 *Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.*

3 *For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.*

1 Corinthians 9:18-23

18 *What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.*

19 *For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.*

20 *And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;*

21 *To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.*

22 *To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.*

23 *And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.*

July 11, 2012

C. Our Objectives

1). Internal Objectives and Functions (Acts 2:42)

Acts 2:42

42 *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

a). Doctrine:

To stand for the historic, fundamental apostolic truths of Scripture, and through Scripture, to equip the saints for service, and for the building up of the body of Christ for unity, knowledge of the Son of God, and maturity, measured by the stature of the fullness of Christ, and for protection against the deceitful scheming of Satan (Ephesians 4:14-16).

Ephesians 4:14-16

14 *That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;*

15 *But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:*

16 *From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

b). Fellowship:

To encourage and provide for means of developing meaningful relationships among believers (expressions of sharing and caring for, and loving one another, warning, stimulating, and encouraging one another to love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24-25; 13:1-2; Acts 2:42-47).

Hebrews 10:24-25

24 *And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:*

25 *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

Hebrews 13:1-2

1 *Let brotherly love continue.*

2 *Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.*

Acts 2:42-47

42 *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

43 *And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.*

44 *And all that believed were together, and had all things common;*

45 *And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.*

46 *And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,*

47 *Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*

c). Worship:

To provide the means for developing and expressing meaningful worship in prayer, songs of praise, adoration, admonishment,

singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord, and to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper (Hebrews 13:15; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 11:23-34; Matthew 28:19).

Hebrews 13:15

15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

Ephesians 5:19

19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

Colossians 3:16

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

1 Corinthians 11:22-34

22 What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.

23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

33 *Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.*

34 *And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.*

Matthew 28:19

19 *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:*

d). Ministry:

To provide the means for developing and exercising spiritual gifts for the edification of the body and the evangelization of the lost (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

Romans 12:3-8

3 *For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*

4 *For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:*

5 *So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.*

6 *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;*

7 *Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;*

8 *Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.*

1 Peter 4:10-11

10 *As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

11 *If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

July 18, 2012

2). External Objectives and Functions

a). Evangelism:

To present the gospel of Jesus Christ to those who have never trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior, and to encourage them to trust in Him (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-10).

Matthew 28:19-20

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Acts 1:8

8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

1Thessalonians 1:2-10

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:

7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak anything.

9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

b). Holy Behavior:

To live holy lives in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation acting as salt and as lights in the world (Philippians 2:15; Matthew 5:13-14; 1 Peter 2:11-15; Colossians 4:5).

Philippians 2:15

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

Matthew 5:13-14

13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

1 Peter 2:11-15

11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;

14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.

15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

Col 4:5

5 Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.

c). Showing Mercy:

To do good to all men whenever there is the opportunity and the means to do so within biblical principles and precepts (Galatians 6:10; Luke 10:29-37).

Galatians 6:10

10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Luke 10:29-37

29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

30 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

34 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

Our mission, goals and objectives set forth our apostolic philosophy of the local church and its ministry. This, in turn, must form the foundation for our thinking and activities as a body of people. It directs us in what we ought to be doing. Anything which does not contribute to this philosophy of our mission, goals and objectives should then be either corrected, rejected or alleviated from the activities of this church.

July 25, 2012

**ARTICLE IV:
DOCTRINE**

The basis of our Creed, Discipline, Rules of Order and Doctrine is the Word of God as taught in scripture and revealed by the Holy Ghost. Since the Word of God is foundational and absolutely essential to true spirituality, fellowship, spiritual sustenance, effectiveness in service and ministry, faith and doctrinal accuracy, we believe that the most important function of this local church, and its central thrust, is consistent teaching and study of the Word of God (1 Timothy 4:6-7).

1 Timothy 4:6-7

6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.

The study of the Word of God is not an end in itself, but it is a high priority and a necessary channel for fellowship with God and thereby also of effective ministry to one another and to the world. It will not therefore, be bypassed or made secondary in the interest of social concerns, actions, or activities, but must be so promoted that the Word, and the teaching of the Word, become the pulse and heartbeat behind all church and non-church related activities or concerns (Psalms 119:1; 138:2; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Timothy 1:5; 4:1-16; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 4:1-3).

Psalms 119:1

1 Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD.

Psalms 138:2

2 I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

Romans 15:4

4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Romans 16:25-26

25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

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1 Thessalonians 2:13

13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

1 Timothy 1:5

5 Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

1 Timothy 4:1-16

1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.

8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.

10 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

11 These things command and teach.

12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

2 Timothy 3:15-17

15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

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2 Timothy 4:1-3

1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

This local church shall thus function as an autonomous, apostolic, Bible believing church, committed to the fundamental truths recorded in God's inerrant revelation, the Holy Scriptures.

To hold positions of leadership and authority within the **Refuge Church Gainesville (RCG)**, all elders, ministerial staff, deacons, auxiliary heads, teachers and members must be:

1. Baptized (immersed) in water in the name, Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38).

Acts 2:38

38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

2. Baptized (filled) with the Holy Ghost, evidenced by speaking in tongues as the Spirit of God gives utterance (Acts 2:4).

Acts 2:4

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

3. Wholeheartedly agree with the Doctrinal Statement, Article V, and further agree to be subject to the leadership and governed by the rules and regulations, of the **Refuge Church Gainesville (RCG)**.

August 1, 2012

ARTICLE V: STATEMENT OF FAITH

A. The Scriptures

We believe that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," by which we understand the whole Bible is inspired in the sense that holy men of God "were moved by the Holy Spirit" to write the very words of Scripture.

We believe that while there was progress in revelation from God, this divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the writings; historical, poetical, doctrinal, prophetic and to the smallest word and inflection of a word as appeared in the original manuscripts.

We believe that the whole Bible in the originals is therefore without error. We believe that all Scriptures center about the Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work in His first and second coming, and hence that no portion, even of the Old Testament, is properly read or understood until it leads to Him.

We believe the Holy Scriptures unequivocally prove that Jehovah (Yahweh) God of the Old Testament is the Lord Jesus Christ of the New Testament. The scriptural evidence of the unity of Jehovah God and the Lord Jesus Christ simply proves and identifies "oneness."

We also believe that all the Scriptures were designed for our practical instruction (Matthew 5:18; Mark 12:26, 36; 13:11; Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 1:16; 17:2-3; 18:28; 26:22-23; 28:23; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 10:11; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

Matthew 5:18

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. (KJV)

Mark 12:26

26 And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? (KJV)

Mark 12:36

36 For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. (KJV)

Mark 13:11

11 But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. (KJV)

Luke 24:27

27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. (KJV)

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Luke 24:44

44 And he said unto them, *These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. (KJV)*

John 5:39

39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. (KJV)

Acts 1:16

16 Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. (KJV)

Acts 17:2-3

2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,

3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. (KJV)

Acts 18:28

28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ. (KJV)

Acts 26:22-23

22 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come:

23 That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles. (KJV)

Acts 28:23

23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. (KJV)

Romans 15:4

4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. (KJV)

1 Corinthians 2:13

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. (KJV)

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1 Corinthians 10:11

11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. (KJV)

2 Timothy 3:16

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: (KJV)

2 Peter 1:20-21

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. (KJV)

August 8, 2012

B. The Godhead

We believe that God is a spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).

John 4:24

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. (KJV)

We believe in the one omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, indivisible, inseparable, eternal God, who is one in nature, essence, person and being, who has revealed and manifested himself as the God the Father in Creation, the Son of God in Redemption and the Holy Spirit of God in regeneration the church.

We believe the eternal godhead eternally exists fully and only in the person of Jesus Christ bodily. Therefore, Jesus, the Son of God in His humanity was fully man; and Jesus, the Son of God in His divinity was, and is, fully God.

The Son of God (humanity) was the lamb, or sacrifice of God and He is the only mediator between God and man. However, His manifestation in human form was purposely and solely for the redemption of fallen man. Once the last man has been redeemed and the last enemy “death” is destroyed, “then shall the Son (divinity) also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.” (Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 12:29; John 1:1, 11, 14; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 13:12, 15:24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Colossians 1:19; 2:9; 1 Timothy 2:5; 3:16; Hebrew 1:1-3; Revelation 1:4-8).

Matthew 28:18-19

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (KJV)

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Mark 12:29

29 *And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: (KJV)*

John 1:1

1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (KJV)*

John 1:11

11 *He came unto his own, and his own received him not. (KJV)*

John 1:14

14 *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (KJV)*

Acts 5:3-4

3 *But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?*

4 *Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. (KJV)*

1 Corinthians 13:12

12 *For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. (KJV)*

1 Corinthians 15:24-28

24 *Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.*

25 *For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.*

26 *The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*

27 *For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.*

28 *And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. (KJV)*

2 Corinthians 5:19

19 *To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (KJV)*

Colossians 1:19

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19 *For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; (KJV)*

Colossians 2:9

9 *For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. (KJV)*

1 Timothy 2:5

5 *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; (KJV)*

1 Timothy 3:16

16 *And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. (KJV)*

Hebrews 1:1-3

1 *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,*
2 *Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;*
3 *Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; (KJV)*

Revelation 1:4-8

4 *John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;*
5 *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,*
6 *And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*
7 *Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.*
8 *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. (KJV)*

August 15, 2012

C. Angels, Fallen and Un-fallen

We believe that God created an innumerable company of sinless, spiritual beings known as angels; that one, "Lucifer, son of the morning," the highest in rank, sinned through pride thereby becoming Satan; that a great company of the angels followed him in his moral fall, some of whom became demons and are active as his agents and associates in the prosecution of his unholy purposes, while others who fell are "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; 1 Timothy 3:6; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6; Revelation 12:3-4).

Isaiah 14:12-17

12 *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!*

13 *For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:*

14 *I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.*

15 *Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.*

16 *They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms;*

17 *That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners? (KJV)*

Ezekiel 28:11-19

11 *Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,*

12 *Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.*

13 *Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.*

14 *Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.*

15 *Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.*

16 *By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.*

17 *Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.*

18 *Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall*

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devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.

19 *All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more. (KJV)*

1 Timothy 3:6

6 *Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. (KJV)*

2 Peter 2:4

4 *For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; (KJV)*

Jude 1:6

6 *And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. (KJV)*

Revelation 12:3-4

3 *And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.*

4 *And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. (KJV)*

We believe that Satan is the originator of sin, and that under the permission of God and as the adversary of God and His character, he through subtlety led our first parents into transgression, thereby accomplishing their moral fall and subjecting them and their posterity to his own power.

We believe that Satan is the enemy of God and the people of God, opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped; and that he, in his warfare appears as an angel of light even counterfeiting the works of God by fostering political and religious movements and systems of doctrine, which systems are characterized by such as the denial of the oneness and unity of God, the presentation of God as three gods, persons or beings, the person and work of Christ as the God-man substitute or salvation by grace alone (Genesis 3:1-19; Romans 5:12-14; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; 11:3-4, 13-15; Ephesians 6:10-12; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 1 John 4:1-3).

Genesis 3:1-19

1 *Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*

2 *And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:*

3 *But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.*

4 *And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:*

5 *For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*

6 *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*

7 *And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*

8 *And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.*

9 *And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?*

10 *And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.*

11 *And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?*

12 *And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.*

13 *And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.*

14 *And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:*

15 *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

16 *Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.*

17 *And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;*

18 *Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;*

19 *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. (KJV)*

Romans 5:12-14

12 *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:*

13 *(For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.*

14 *Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. (KJV)*

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2 Corinthians 4:3-4

3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. (KJV)

2 Corinthians 11:3-4

3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him. (KJV)

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works. (KJV)

Ephesians 6:10-12

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. (KJV)

II Thessalonians 2:4

4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. (KJV)

I Timothy 4:1-3

1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. (KJV)

I John 4:1-3

1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

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3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. (KJV)

We believe that Satan was judged at the cross, though not then executed, and that he, a usurper, now rules as the "god of this world;" that at the second coming of Christ, Satan will be bound and cast into the abyss for a thousand years and after the thousand years he will be loosed for a little season and then "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone" where he "shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." (Colossians 2:15; Revelation 20:1-3, 10).

Colossians 2:15

15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. (KJV)

Revelation 20:1-3

1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. (KJV)

Revelation 20:10

10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. (KJV)

We believe that a great company of angels kept their holy estate and are before the throne of God from whence they are sent forth as ministering spirits to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation (Luke 15:10; Ephesians 1:21; Hebrews 1:14; Revelation 7:11-12).

Luke 15:10

10 Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. (KJV)

Ephesians 1:21

21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: (KJV)

Hebrews 1:14

14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? (KJV)

Revelation 7:11-12

11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. (KJV)

We believe that man was made lower than the angels and, that in His incarnation, Christ took for a little time this lower place that He might lift the believer to His own sphere above the angels (Hebrews 2:6-10).

Hebrews 2:6-10

6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?

7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. (KJV)

August 22, 2012

D. Man Created and Fallen

We believe that man was created by God as a human being, and did not evolve from a lower order of life. We believe that man was originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, and that he fell through sin and, as a consequence of his sin, lost his spiritual life becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and that he became subject to the power of the devil.

We also believe that his spiritual death, or totally depraved human nature, has been transmitted to the entire human race of man, the Man Christ Jesus alone being excepted; and hence that every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of divine life, but is essentially and unchangeable bad apart from divine grace (Genesis 1:26; 2:17; 6:5; Psalms 14:1-3; 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; John 3:6; 5:40; 6:53; Romans 3:10-19; 8:6-7; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 5:6; 1 John 3:8).

Genesis 1:26

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. (KJV)

Genesis 2:17

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. (KJV)

Genesis 6:5

And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (KJV)

Psalms 14:1-3

- 1 The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.*
- 2 The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.*
- 3 They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one. (KJV)*

Psalms 51:5

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. (KJV)

Jeremiah 17:9

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? (KJV)

John 3:6

That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (KJV)

John 5:40

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And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

John 6:53

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

Romans 3:10-19

- 10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*
- 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.*
- 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*
- 13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:*
- 14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:*
- 15 Their feet are swift to shed blood:*
- 16 Destruction and misery are in their ways:*
- 17 And the way of peace have they not known:*
- 18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.*
- 19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*

Romans 8:6-7

- 6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*
- 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*

Ephesians 2:1-3

- 1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;*
- 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:*
- 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

1 Timothy 5:6

But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.

1 John 3:8

He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

E. Repentance

We believe that the only means of a sinner to be accepted by God is by genuine repentance, confessing and forsaking of sins. John the Baptist preached repentance. Jesus proclaimed it, and before His ascension commanded that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name (Luke 13:3; 24:47; Acts 2:14-39).

Luke 13:3

3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. (KJV)

Luke 24:47

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. (KJV)

F. Water Baptism

We believe that all who, through repentance and faith, believe in the death burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, are commanded to be baptized (immersed) in water in the name, Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:21; 28:19; Luke 24:44-49; John 5:43; 14:26; Acts 2:38, 4:12, 8:16, 10:48, 19:5; 1 Corinthians 1:13; Colossians 2:9-10).

Matthew 1:21

21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. (KJV)

Matthew 28:19

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (KJV)

Luke 24:44-49

44 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48 And ye are witnesses of these things.

49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. (KJV)

John 5:43

43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. (KJV)

John 14:26

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26 *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. (KJV)*

Acts 2:38

38 *Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (KJV)*

Acts 4:12

12 *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. (KJV)*

Acts 8:16

16 *(For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) (KJV)*

Acts 10:48

48 *And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days. (KJV)*

Acts 19:5

5 *When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. (KJV)*

1 Corinthians 1:13

13 *Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? (KJV)*

Colossians 2:9-10

9 *For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*

10 *And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: (KJV)*

September 5, 2012

G. Spirit Baptism

We believe that salvation or regeneration includes water and spirit baptism, and is both an instantaneous event and a progressive experience. All who receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit are identified by the initial sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives utterance. One has neither the nature nor power to live for Christ free from sin, without this experience (Isaiah 28:9-11; Joel 2:28; Matthew 3:11, John 3:3-8, 7:37-38, 14:16-17; Acts 1:4-8; 2:4, 33, 10:46, 15:7-9, 19:6, Titus 3:5-7; 1 John 3:24).

Isaiah 28:9-11

9 *Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.*

10 *For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:*

11 *For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. (KJV)*

Joel 2:28

28 *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: (KJV)*

Matthew 3:11

11 *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: (KJV)*

John 3:3-8

3 *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

4 *Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?*

5 *Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

6 *That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*

7 *Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*

8 *The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. (KJV)*

John 7:37-38

37 *In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.*

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38 *He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (KJV)*

John 14:16-17

16 *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;*

17 *Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. (KJV)*

Acts 1:4-8

4 *And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.*

5 *For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.*

6 *When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*

7 *And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.*

8 *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. (KJV)*

Acts 2:4

4 *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (KJV)*

Acts 2:33

33 *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. (KJV)*

Acts 10:46

46 *For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, (KJV)*

Acts 15:7-9

7 *And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.*

8 *And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;*

9 *And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. (KJV)*

Acts 19:6

6 *And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. (KJV)*

I John 3:24

24 *And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. (KJV)*

Titus 3:5-7

5 *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;*

6 *Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;*

7 *That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (KJV)*

H. Church

1). The Universal Church

We believe that the church is composed of all who are baptized with the Holy Spirit and to the risen and ascended Son of God, that by the same Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, and thus being members one of another, we are responsible to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all sectarian prejudices and denominational bigotry, and loving one another with a pure heart fervently (Matthew 16:16-18; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:20-23; 4:3-10; Colossians 3:14-15).

Matthew 16:16-18

16 *And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*

17 *And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.*

18 *And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (KJV)*

Acts 2:42-47

42 *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

43 *And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.*

44 *And all that believed were together, and had all things common;*

45 *And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.*

46 *And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,*

47 *Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. (KJV)*

Romans 12:5

5 *So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. (KJV)*

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

12 *For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.*

13 *For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*

14 *For the body is not one member, but many.*

15 *If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?*

16 *And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?*

17 *If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?*

18 *But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.*

19 *And if they were all one member, where were the body?*

20 *But now are they many members, yet but one body.*

21 *And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.*

22 *Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:*

23 *And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.*

24 *For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:*

25 *That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.*

26 *And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.*

27 *Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. (KJV)*

Ephesians 1:20-23

20 *Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,*

21 *Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:*

22 *And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,*

23 *Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. (KJV)*

Colossians 3:14-15

14 *And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.*

15 *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. (KJV)*

Ephesians 4:3-10

3 *Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

4 *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;*

5 *One Lord, one faith, one baptism,*

6 *One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

7 *But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.*

8 *Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*

9 *(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?*

10 *He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) (KJV)*

2). The Local Church

We believe that God's primary (intended) organization of believers, after the family unit, in the present age is local assemblies of believers, committed to the Lord and to each other for the purpose of carrying out the universal church's visible activities; that is, the communication of God's truth to the people of God, the worship of and prayer to God by God's people, the loving care of God's people for one another, and the spread of the gospel to the ends of the earth; that these assemblies (or churches), though they should endeavor to cooperate with other Christian assemblies, are to function under the lordship of Christ, and that it is God's intention that all believers publicly identify with a visible, local assembly (Acts 2:41-47; 4:19; 5:29; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; Hebrews 10:24-25).

Acts 2:41-47

41 *Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*

42 *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

43 *And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.*

44 *And all that believed were together, and had all things common;*

45 *And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.*

46 *And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,*

47 *Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. (KJV)*

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Acts 4:19

19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. (KJV)

Acts 5:29

29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. (KJV)

1 Corinthians 1:1-2

1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: (KJV)

1 Thessalonians 1:1

1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. (KJV)

Hebrews 10:24-25

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. (KJV)

September 12, 2012

I. The Ordinances of the Church

1. Water Baptism

We believe that Christ, the head over all things to the church (Ephesians 1:22), has commanded us to baptize in the name, Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 10:44-46; Romans 6:3-6; Colossians 3:17).

Ephesians 1:22

22 *And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,*

Acts 10:44-46

44 *While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.*

45 *And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

46 *For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,*

Romans 6:3-6

3 *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*

4 *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

5 *For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:*

6 *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

Colossians 3:17

17 *And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*

2. The Lord's Supper (Communion)

We believe that Christ also commanded us to partake at His table with unleavened bread and wine. When He had given thanks, he broke the bread and said, "this is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "this cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this as often as you drink it, in

remembrance of Me. For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.”

We do not hold feet washing to be a compulsory ordinance given to the church to be observed. However, we observe it in conjunction with communion as an example of humility (Genesis 14:18; Matthew 26:17, 26-29; Luke 22:19-20; John 13:5-16; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8, 11:20-32).

Genesis 14:18

18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.

Matthew 26:17

17 Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?

Matthew 26:26-29

26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

Luke 22:19-20

19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

John 13:5-16

5 After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

10 *Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.*

11 *For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.*

12 *So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?*

13 *Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.*

14 *If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.*

15 *For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.*

16 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.*

1 Corinthians 5:6-8

6 *Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?*

7 *Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:*

8 *Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

1 Corinthians 11:20-32

20 *When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper.*

21 *For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken.*

22 *What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.*

23 *For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:*

24 *And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.*

25 *After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.*

26 *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.*

27 *Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.*

28 *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*

29 *For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.*

30 *For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.*

31 *For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.*

32 *But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.*

J. Sanctification and Holiness

We believe that we are called with a holy calling to be sanctified and walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, and so to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit that we will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. But the flesh with its fallen, Adamic nature, which in this life is never eradicated, being with us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage, needs to be kept by the Spirit constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence in our lives to the dishonor of our Lord (John 17:17; Romans 6:11-13, 8:2, 4, 12-13, 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 6:11-20; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Galatians 5:16-23; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 1:6; Col. 3:1-10; 1 Thessalonians 4: 1-4, 5:23; Titus 2:11-12; Hebrews 12:14; 1 Peter 1:14-16, 2:21-23, 3:11; 1 John 1:4-7; 3:2-9).

John 17:17

17 *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*

Romans 6:11-13

11 *Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

12 *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.*

13 *Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.*

Romans 8:2

2 *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*

Romans 8:4

4 *That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

Romans 8:12-13

12 *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.*

13 *For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.*

Romans 12:1-2

1 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

2 *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

1 Corinthians 6:11-20

11 *And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

12 *All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.*

13 *Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.*

14 *And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.*

15 *Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.*

16 *What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.*

17 *But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.*

18 *Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.*

19 *What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*

20 *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

2 Corinthians 7:1

1 *Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

Galatians 5:16-23

16 *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*

17 *For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*

18 *But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.*

19 *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,*

20 *Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,*

21 *Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*

22 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,*

23 *Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

Ephesians 4:22-24

22 *That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;*

23 *And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;*

24 *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

Philippians 1:6

6 *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*

Colossians 3:1-10

1 *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.*

2 *Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*

3 *For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*

4 *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*

5 *Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:*

6 *For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:*

7 *In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.*

8 *But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.*

9 *Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;*

10 *And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:*

1 Corinthians 4:1-4

1 *Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.*

2 *Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.*

3 *But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.*

4 *For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.*

1Thessalonians 5:23

23 *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Titus 2:11-12

11 *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,*

12 *Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;*

Hebrews 12:14

14 *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:*

1 Peter 1:14-16

14 *As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:*

15 *But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;*

16 *Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*

1 Peter 2:21-23

21 *For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:*

22 *Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:*

23 *Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:*

1 Peter 3:11

11 *Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.*

1 John 1:4-7

4 *And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.*

5 *This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.*

6 *If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:*

7 *But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

1 John 3:2-9

2 *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*

3 *And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*

4 *Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.*

5 *And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.*

6 *Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.*

7 *Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.*

8 *He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*

9 *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*

K. The Ministry

We believe that divine, enabling gifts for service are bestowed by the Spirit upon all who are saved. While there is a diversity of gifts, each believer is energized by the same Spirit and each is called to his own divinely appointed service as the Spirit may will. In the apostolic church, there are certain gifted men, i.e., apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor-teachers who are appointed by God for the perfecting of the saints unto their work of the ministry (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 20:28; Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 3:4-9, 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 2:12, 3:1-7; Titus 1:4-9; Hebrews 13:7, 17; 1 Peter 4:10-11; 5:1-4).

Mark 16:15-20

15 *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

16 *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

17 *And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;*

18 *They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*

19 *So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.*

20 *And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.*

Acts 20:28

28 *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*

Romans 12:6

6 *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;*

1 Corinthians 3:4-9

4 *For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?*

5 *Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?*

6 *I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.*

7 *So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.*

8 *Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.*

9 *For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.*

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

4 *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.*

5 *And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.*

6 *And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.*

7 *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.*

8 *For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;*

9 *To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;*

10 *To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:*

11 *But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.*

Ephesians 4:11

11 *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;*

1 Timothy 2:12

12 *But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*

1 Timothy 3:1-7

1 *This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.*

2 *A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;*

3 *Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;*

4 *One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;*

5 *(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)*

6 *Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.*

7 *Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*

Titus 1:4-9

4 *To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.*

5 *For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:*

6 *If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.*

7 *For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;*

8 *But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;*

9 *Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.*

Hebrews 13:7

7 *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.*

Hebrews 13:17

17 *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*

1 Peter 4:10-11

10 *As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

11 *If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

1 Peter 5:1-4

1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

We believe that, wholly apart from salvation benefits which are bestowed equally upon all who believe, rewards are promised according to the faithfulness of each believer in his service for his Lord, and that these rewards will be bestowed at the judgment seat of Christ after He comes to receive His own to Himself (1 Corinthians 3:9-15; 9:18-27; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

1 Corinthians 3:9-15

9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

1 Corinthians 9:18-27

18 What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;

21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.

22 *To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.*

23 *And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.*

24 *Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.*

25 *And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.*

26 *I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:*

27 *But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*

2 Corinthians 5:10

10 *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

September 19, 2012

L. The Great Commission

We believe that it is the explicit message of our Lord Jesus Christ to those whom He has saved that they are sent forth by Him into the world even as He was sent forth of His Father into the world. We believe that after they are saved they are divinely reckoned to be related to this world as strangers and pilgrims, ambassadors and witnesses, and that their primary purpose in life should be to make Christ known to the world (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:49-53; John 4:21-26, 17:18; Acts 1:8; 2:32-47, 6:1-7, 12:24, 13:2; 1 Corinthians 13:1-7; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Hebrews 10:25; 1 Peter 1:17; 2:9-11; 1 John 3:16-18, 4:7-8, Revelation 2:2-19, 3:2-8).

Matthew 28:18-20

18 *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*

19 *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:*

20 *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

Mark 16:15

15 *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

Luke 24:49-53

49 *And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.*

50 *And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.*

51 *And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.*

52 *And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:*

53 *And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.*

John 4:21-26

21 *Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.*

22 *Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.*

23 *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.*

24 *God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

25 *The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.*

26 *Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.*

John 17:18

18 *As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.*

Acts 1:8

8 *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

Acts 2:32-47

32 *This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.*

33 *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.*

34 *For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,*

35 *Until I make thy foes thy footstool.*

36 *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.*

37 *Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?*

38 *Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

39 *For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*

40 *And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.*

41 *Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*

42 *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

43 *And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.*

44 *And all that believed were together, and had all things common;*

45 *And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.*

46 *And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,*

47 *Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*

Acts 6:1-7

1 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.

2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

Acts 12:24

24 But the word of God grew and multiplied.

Acts 13:2

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

1 Corinthians 13:1-7

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

2 Corinthians 5:18-20

18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

19 *To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*

20 *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

Hebrews 10:25

25 *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

1 Peter 1:17

17 *And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:*

1 Peter 2:9-11

9 *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:*

10 *Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*

11 *Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;*

1 John 3:16-18

16 *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

17 *But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?*

18 *My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.*

1 John 4:7-8

7 *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.*

8 *He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*

Revelation 2:2-19

2 *I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:*

3 *And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.*

4 *Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.*

5 *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.*

6 *But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.*

7 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*

8 *And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;*

9 *I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.*

10 *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

11 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.*

12 *And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;*

13 *I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.*

14 *But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.*

15 *So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.*

16 *Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.*

17 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.*

18 *And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;*

19 *I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.*

Revelation 3:2-8

2 *Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.*

3 *Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.*

4 *Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.*

5 *He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.*

6 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

7 *And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;*

8 *I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.*

September 26, 2012

M. The Blessed Hope

We believe that according to the Word of God the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the coming of the Lord in the air to receive to Himself into heaven both His own who are alive and remain unto His coming, and also all who have fallen asleep in Jesus, and that this event is the blessed hope set before us in Scripture, and for this we should be constantly looking (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; Philippians 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14).

John 14:1-3

1 *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.*

2 *In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*

3 *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

1 Corinthians 15:51-52

51 *Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,*

52 *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

Philippians 3:20

20 *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:*

1Thessalonians 4:13-18

13 *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.*

14 *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.*

15 *For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.*

16 *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:*

17 *Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

18 *Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

Titus 2:11-14

11 *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,*

12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

N. The Tribulation

We believe that the translation of the church will be followed by the fulfillment of Israel's seventieth week (Daniel 9:27) during which the church, the body of Christ, will be in heaven. The whole period of Israel's seventieth week will be a time of judgment on the whole earth, at the end of which the times of the Gentiles will be brought to a close. The latter half of this period will be the time of Jacob's trouble (Jeremiah 30:7), which our Lord called the great tribulation (Matthew 24:15-21).

Daniel 9:27

27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

Jeremiah 30:7

7 Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.

Matthew 24:15-21

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

We believe that universal righteousness will not be realized previous to the second coming of Christ, but that the world is day by day ripening for judgment and that the age will end with a fearful apostasy.

O. The Second Coming of Christ

We believe that the period of great tribulation in the earth will be climaxed by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth as He went, in person on the clouds of heaven, and with power and great glory to introduce the millennial age, to bind Satan and place him in the abyss, to lift the curse which now rests upon the whole creation, to restore Israel to her own land and to give her the realization of God's covenant promises, and to bring the whole world to the knowledge of God (Deuteronomy 30:1-10; Isaiah 11:9; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Matthew 24:15-25:46; Acts 15:16-17; Romans 8:19-23; 11:25-27; Revelation 20:1-3).

Deuteronomy 30:1-10

1 *And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee,*

2 *And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;*

3 *That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.*

4 *If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee:*

5 *And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.*

6 *And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.*

7 *And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee.*

8 *And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day.*

9 *And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers:*

10 *If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.*

Isaiah 11:9

9 *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.*

Ezekiel 37:21-28

21 *And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land:*

22 *And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all:*

23 *Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.*

24 *And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.*

25 *And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever.*

26 *Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.*

27 *My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

28 *And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.*

Matthew 24:15-25:46

15 *When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)*

16 *Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:*

17 *Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:*

18 *Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.*

19 *And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!*

20 *But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:*

21 *For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

22 *And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.*

23 *Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.*

24 *For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*

25 *Behold, I have told you before.*

- 26 *Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.*
- 27 *For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*
- 28 *For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.*
- 29 *Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:*
- 30 *And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*
- 31 *And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*
- 32 *Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:*
- 33 *So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.*
- 34 *Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.*
- 35 *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*
- 36 *But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.*
- 37 *But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*
- 38 *For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,*
- 39 *And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*
- 40 *Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.*
- 41 *Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.*
- 42 *Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.*
- 43 *But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.*
- 44 *Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.*
- 45 *Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?*
- 46 *Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.*
- 47 *Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.*
- 48 *But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;*

49 *And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;*

50 *The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of,*

51 *And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

CHAPTER 25

1 *Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.*

2 *And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.*

3 *They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:*

4 *But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.*

5 *While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.*

6 *And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.*

7 *Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.*

8 *And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.*

9 *But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.*

10 *And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.*

11 *Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.*

12 *But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.*

13 *Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.*

14 *For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.*

15 *And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.*

16 *Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents.*

17 *And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two.*

18 *But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.*

19 *After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.*

20 *And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.*

21 *His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.*

22 *He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.*

23 *His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.*

24 *Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:*

25 *And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.*

26 *His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:*

27 *Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.*

28 *Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.*

29 *For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.*

30 *And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

31 *When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:*

32 *And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:*

33 *And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.*

34 *Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:*

35 *For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:*

36 *Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.*

37 *Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?*

38 *When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?*

39 *Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?*

40 *And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

41 *Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:*

42 *For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:*

43 *I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.*

44 *Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?*

45 *Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.*

46 *And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.*

Acts 15:16-17

16 *After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:*

17 *That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.*

Romans 8:19-23

19 *For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.*

20 *For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,*

21 *Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*

22 *For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.*

23 *And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.*

Romans 11:25-27

25 *For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.*

26 *And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:*

27 *For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.*

Revelation 20:1-3

1 *And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.*

2 *And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,*

3 *And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.*

October 3, 2012

P. The Eternal State

We believe that at death the spirits and souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body when Christ comes for His own, whereupon soul and body reunited shall be associated with Him forever in glory; but the spirits and souls of the unbelieving remain after death conscious of condemnation and in misery until the final judgment of the great white throne at the close of the millennium, when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated but, to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power (Luke 16:19-26; 23:42; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:11-15).

Luke 16:19-26

19 *There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:*

20 *And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,*

21 *And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.*

22 *And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;*

23 *And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

24 *And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.*

25 *But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*

26 *And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. (KJV)*

Luke 16:19-26

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26 *And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. (KJV)*

Luke 23:42

42 *And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. (KJV)*

2 Corinthians 5:8

8 *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. (KJV)*

Philippians 1:23

23 *For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: (KJV)*

II Thessalonians 1:7-9

7 *And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,*

8 *In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:*

9 *Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; (KJV)*

Jude 1:6-7

6 *And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.*

7 *Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. (KJV)*

Revelation 20:11-15

11 *And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.*

12 *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the*

dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. (KJV)

ENDTIME PROPHECY TIMELINE

ISRAEL RESTABLISHED

- State of Israel established in 1948
- Jerusalem returns to Jewish control in 1967. Luke 21:24

SIGNS OF THE END

- According to Christ the following are the beginning of sorrows.
- Godlessness in the last days - 2 Timothy 3:1-5,7
- False Messiahs. Prelude to the First Seal - Matthew 24:5,11
- Wars and Rumors of Wars. Prelude to the Second Seal - Matthew 24:6
- Famines. Prelude to the Third Seal - Matthew 24:7
- Pestilences and Earthquakes - Matthew 24:7

RAPTURE

- The instantaneous removal of God's people from the earth.
Matthew 24:31,40-41, 1 Corinthians 15:50-53, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, John 14:1-3, 2 Thessalonians 2:3,6-7, 2 Thessalonians 2:5,9-10, Luke 21:34-36, Isaiah 26:19-21, Revelation 4:1-2

SEVEN-YEAR PERIOD OF DANIEL BEGINS

- Seven-year covenant or peace treaty with Israel is confirmed by the Antichrist. Daniel 9:27
- Antichrist is revealed.
- 1st Seal - White Horseman, 2 Thessalonians 2:3,6-7, Daniel 11:36, Revelation 6:1-2
- Rebuilding of the Third Temple in Jerusalem -Daniel 9:27
- False Prophet is revealed. Revelation 13:11, Matthew 24:11
- Miracles of the False Prophet cause deception amongst the people of the world. Revelation 11:13-14, Matthew 24:24
- War - 2nd Seal - Revelation 6:3-4, Matthew 24:6
- Mark of the Beast is required on all people to buy or sell. This signifies worship of the Beast. Revelation 11:16-18
- Famine - 3rd Seal - Revelation 6:5-6, Matthew 24:7
- Resurrection of the Beast/Antichrist after a fatal wound. Revelation 11:12
- Two witnesses of God prophesy against the Antichrist causing drought and plagues to come upon the earth. Revelation 11:3-6

TRIBULATION MIDPOINT (3 1/2 years after the peace treaty with Israel)

- Breaking of the covenant with Israel by the Antichrist. Daniel 9:27
- Abomination of Desolation - The image of the Antichrist is placed in the temple at Jerusalem and given breath by the False Prophet. Daniel 9:27,11:31, 2 Thessalonians 2:4, Matthew 24:15

GREAT TRIBULATION

- Persecutions of Christians Begins - Matthew 24:21-22, Revelation 13:5-7
- Death - 4th Seal - One-fourth of the world's population (new Christians and Jews) are killed by the Antichrist/Beast with the sword and with starvation. None can buy without taking the mark of the Beast. - Revelation 6:7-8
- Martyrs of the Tribulation period cry out to the Lord.
- 5th Seal - Revelation 6:9-11, 2 Timothy 3:12, Daniel 7:25
- Signs in the Sky - 6th Seal - (Great Earthquake, Bloody Moon, Blackout of the Sun #1, Meteors falling, Mountains and Islands moving, Sky splits apart) Revelation 6:12-14, Matthew 24:29, Joel 2:30-31, 3:14-16
- 144,000 of the tribe of Israel are sealed - Revelation 7:2-4
Martyrs that came out of the Great Tribulation stand before God - Revelation 7:9-17

DAY OF THE LORD

- 7th Seal - Trumpet Judgments of the Wrath of God - Revelation 8:1,6
- 1st Trumpet - Hail and Fire Destruction of all the grass and 1/3 of trees. Revelation 8:7
- 2nd Trumpet - Meteor falls into the Ocean destroying 1/3 of ships and sea life. Revelation 8:8-9
- 3rd Trumpet - Wormwood falls from the Heavens causing fresh water to become bitter. Revelation 8:10-11
- 4th Trumpet - Darkening of a third of the sun, moon, and stars. Revelation 8:12, Joel 3:13
- 5th Trumpet - Locusts from the Bottomless Pit and Blackout of the Sun #2. Revelation 9:1-10
- 6th Trumpet - Eastern army of 200,000,000 men kill 1/3 of mankind. Revelation 9:13-19
- Death of the Two Witnesses. Revelation 11:7-10
- Resurrection of the Two Witnesses on the Third day occurring in view of the World. Revelation 11:11-12
- Earthquake strikes Jerusalem destroying 1/10 of the city - Revelation 11:13
- 7th Trumpet - Consists of seven Bowl Judgements of the Wrath of God.
- 1st Bowl - Sores on men with the Mark of the Beast. Revelation 16:2
- 2nd Bowl - All creatures in the sea die. Revelation 16:3
- 3rd Bowl - Rivers and Springs become blood. Revelation 16:4
- 4th Bowl - Sun scorches the earth. Revelation 16:8-9
- 5th Bowl - Kingdom of the Antichrist/Beast becomes full of darkness. Revelation 16:10-11

- 6th Bowl - Euphrates river dries up allowing the Chinese army to move to Armageddon. Revelation 16:12
- 7th Bowl - Greatest earthquake ever, Spiritual Babylon and/or Rome is destroyed. Revelation 16:17-19, Jeremiah 51:24,26

ARMAGEDDON

- Gathering of the Antichrist, kings and, armies of the world. Zechariah 14:2-5, Revelation 16:13-14,16, Revelation 19:19, Daniel 11:40-45
- Final Conquest and Plundering of Jerusalem. Joel 3:2,12, Zechariah 14:2,3

SECOND COMING OF THE MESSIAH

- Second Coming - Revelation 19:11, Zechariah 14:3-5
- Beast and False Prophet thrown into the Lake of Fire. Revelation 19:20-21
- Destruction of the armies by the word of God. Revelation 20:15,21, Zechariah 12:8-9, 14:2-5,12

MILLENNIUM

- Christ rules on Earth.
- Satan bound in the abyss for 1000 years. Revelation 20:2-3

GOG AND MAGOG

- Satan released to make war for the last time. Ezekiel 38 – 39; Revelation 20:7-9
- Satan thrown into the Lake of Fire forever. Revelation 20:10

GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

- Judgment of Nations Revelation 20:11-15

NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH

- Revelation 21:1-2,12-14

October 10, 2012

Q. Divine Healing

We believe that divine healing is a benefit for all through Calvary which is subject to the sovereignty of God and the faith of man. The first covenant that Jehovah made with the children of Israel after they were brought out of Egypt was a covenant of healing.

We believe the vicarious suffering of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ paid for the healing of our bodies.

We believe Jesus demonstrates His life in our dying flesh. Life comes to us through faith in God. We who live are constantly given over to death with the healing of our bodies.

We believe the gifts of healing are in God's hand and he gives to male and female as he wishes. Only Clergy should anoint with oil and or lay hands in the church. Yet all saints are permitted and encouraged to pray and lay hands in the home and elsewhere. In case of sickness, call for the Elders of the church. If no Elder is available, ask a minister, deacon, missionary, or saint to pray with you. If no one is available, pray for yourself. (Exodus 15:26, Malachi 4:2; Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 4:22-24, 8:14-17; Mark 16:17-18; Luke 5:17; 1 Corinthians 12:9; 1 Peter 2:24; Hebrews 13:8; James 5:14-16; 3 John 1:2).

Exodus 15:26

And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee. (KJV)

Malachi 4:2

But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. (KJV)

Isaiah 53:4-5

4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. (KJV)

Matthew 4:22-24

22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which

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were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. (KJV)

Matthew 8:14-17

14 And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.

15 And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.

16 When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses. (KJV)

Mark 16:17-18

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. (KJV)

Luke 5:17

And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them. (KJV)

1 Corinthians 12:9

To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; (KJV)

1 Peter 2:24

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. (KJV)

Hebrews 13:8

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. (KJV)

James 5:14-16

14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. (KJV)

3 John 1:2

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. (KJV)

October 17, 2012

R. Tithes and Offerings

We believe that tithes and offerings are God's financial plan for His church. Tithes is ten percent of one's gross income and belongs to the Lord. Tithes should be used to support one's own pastor and church and not for other purposes. Offerings are should be given freely and cheerfully (Genesis 14:14-20; 28:22; Leviticus 27:30; Malachi 3:10; Proverbs 3:9; Matthew 23:23; Romans 12:8; 1 Corinthians 9:11-14; 16:2; 2 Corinthians 8:1-3; 9:6-8; Philippians 4:10; 1 Timothy 6:17-19).

Genesis 14:14-20

14 And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan.

15 And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus.

16 And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.

17 And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's dale.

18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.

19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth:

20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all. (KJV)

Genesis 28:22

22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee. (KJV)

Leviticus 27:30

30 And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD's: it is holy unto the LORD. (KJV)

Malachi 3:10

10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. (KJV)

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Proverbs 3:9

9 Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: (KJV)

Matthew 23:23

23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. (KJV)

Romans 12:8

8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. (KJV)

1 Corinthians 9:11-14

11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

12 If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.

13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?

14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. (KJV)

1 Corinthians 16:2

2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. (KJV)

2 Corinthians 8:1-3

1 Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;

2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

3 For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; (KJV)

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: (KJV)

Philippians 4:10-19

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

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- 11 *Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*
- 12 *I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.*
- 13 *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*
- 14 *Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.*
- 15 *Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.*
- 16 *For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.*
- 17 *Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.*
- 18 *But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.*
- 19 *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (KJV)*

1 Timothy 6:17-19

- 17 *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;*
- 18 *That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;*
- 19 *Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. (KJV)*

October 24, 2012

S. Marriage and Divorce

We believe that the marriage oath was designed and is only for Christians and is binding for all (Christian or not) until the death of one the partners. Upon the demise of a marriage partner, Christians are free to marry in the Lord. All single or separated Christians are to live in purity and peace (Genesis 2:21-25; Jeremiah 3:1-15; Matthew 5:31-32, 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18; Acts 15:20; Romans 7:2-3; 1 Corinthians 6:13, 7:1-40; Ephesians 5:3, 21-25; 1 Thessalonians 4:2-4; 1 Timothy 5:8; 1 Peter 3:1-7).

Genesis 2:21-25

21 *And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;*

22 *And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.*

23 *And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.*

24 *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*

25 *And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (KJV)*

Jeremiah 3:1-15

1 *They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the LORD.*

2 *Lift up thine eyes unto the high places, and see where thou hast not been lien with. In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness.*

3 *Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed.*

4 *Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou art the guide of my youth?*

5 *Will he reserve his anger for ever? will he keep it to the end? Behold, thou hast spoken and done evil things as thou couldest.*

6 *The LORD said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? she is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot.*

7 *And I said after she had done all these things, Turn thou unto me. But she returned not. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it.*

8 *And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also.*

9 *And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks.*

10 *And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the LORD.*

11 *And the LORD said unto me, The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah.*

12 *Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger for ever.*

13 *Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD.*

14 *Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion:*

15 *And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. (KJV)*

Matthew 5:31-32

31 *It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:*

32 *But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery. (KJV)*

Matthew 19:3-9

3 *The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?*

4 *And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,*

5 *And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?*

6 *Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*

7 *They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?*

8 *He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.*

9 *And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery. (KJV)*

Mark 10:2-12

- 2 *And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him.*
- 3 *And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?*
- 4 *And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.*
- 5 *And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.*
- 6 *But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.*
- 7 *For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;*
- 8 *And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.*
- 9 *What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*
- 10 *And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter.*
- 11 *And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.*
- 12 *And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery. (KJV)*

Luke 16:18

- 18 *Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery. (KJV)*

Acts 15:20

- 20 *But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. (KJV)*

Romans 7:4

- 4 *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. (KJV)*

1 Corinthians 6:13

- 13 *Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. (KJV)*

1 Corinthians 7:1-40

- 1 *Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.*
- 2 *Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.*
- 3 *Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband.*

4 *The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.*

5 *Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.*

6 *But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.*

7 *For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.*

8 *I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I.*

9 *But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.*

10 *And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband:*

11 *But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.*

12 *But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.*

13 *And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.*

14 *For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.*

15 *But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.*

16 *For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?*

17 *But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches.*

18 *Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised.*

19 *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.*

20 *Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.*

21 *Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather.*

22 *For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant.*

23 *Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.*

24 *Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.*

25 *Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.*

26 *I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be.*

27 *Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.*

- 28 *But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you.*
- 29 *But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none;*
- 30 *And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not;*
- 31 *And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.*
- 32 *But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord:*
- 33 *But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.*
- 34 *There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.*
- 35 *And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.*
- 36 *But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry.*
- 37 *Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well.*
- 38 *So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better.*
- 39 *The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.*
- 40 *But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also that I have the Spirit of God. (KJV)*

Ephesians 5:3

- 3 *But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; (KJV)*

Ephesians 5:21-25

- 21 *Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.*
- 22 *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.*
- 23 *For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.*
- 24 *Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.*
- 25 *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; (KJV)*

1 Thessalonians 4:2-4

2 For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

3 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; (KJV)

1 Timothy 5:8

8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. (KJV)

1 Peter 3:1-7

1 Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

2 While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.

3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

6 Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered. (KJV)

October 31, 2012

T. Secret Societies

We believe that Christians should not belong to secret societies, clubs, cults, groups, unions, etc., where there is fellowship with non believers, bound by an oath. Membership in a “private” society is not compatible with “public” confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. First, the very nature of such membership (i.e. the secrecy of the pledge and allegiance) conflicts with the practice of the Lord Himself, who did all things openly and in the full view of others. Second, our entire devotion must be to Christ Jesus and to Him alone, so much so that we are called “slaves” of Christ. Third, such societies invariably require loyalties to earthly entities that rival our loyalty to the Lord above. (Exodus 34:10-16; Deuteronomy 7:1-9; Nehemiah 13:3; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 1 Corinthians 15:33; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 5:5-17; Hebrews 6:13-18; James 4:4; James 5:12).

Exodus 34:10-16

10 *And he said, Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of the LORD: for it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee.*

11 *Observe thou that which I command thee this day: behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite.*

12 *Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee:*

13 *But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves:*

14 *For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:*

15 *Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice;*

16 *And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods. (KJV)*

Deuteronomy 7:1-9

1 *When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou;*

2 *And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:*

3 *Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.*

4 *For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.*

5 *But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire.*

6 *For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.*

7 *The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people:*

8 *But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*

9 *Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; (KJV)*

Nehemiah 13:3

3 *Now it came to pass, when they had heard the law, that they separated from Israel all the mixed multitude.(KJV)*

1 Corinthians 5:9-13

9 *I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:*

10 *Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.*

11 *But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.*

12 *For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?*

13 *But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.(KJV)*

1 Corinthians 15:33

33 *Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. (KJV)*

2 Corinthians 6:14-18

14 *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?*

15 *And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?*

16 *And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

17 *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,*

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18 *And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. (KJV)*

Ephesians 5:5-17

5 *For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*

6 *Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.*

7 *Be not ye therefore partakers with them.*

8 *For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:*

9 *(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)*

10 *Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.*

11 *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*

12 *For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.*

13 *But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.*

14 *Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*

15 *See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,*

16 *Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

17 *Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. (KJV)*

Hebrews 6:13-18

13 *For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,*

14 *Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.*

15 *And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.*

16 *For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.*

17 *Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:*

18 *That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: (KJV)*

James 4:4

4 *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. (KJV)*

James 5:12

12 *But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation. (KJV)*

November 7, 2012

**ARTICLE VI:
GENERAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

The local church body is composed of one body with many members all of whom are in vital relationship with Jesus Christ, but the body also has "joints of supply," units of control, and unity, i.e., church leaders (Ephesians 4:16). This together suggests body participation under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ with leadership direction, submission and authority in a two directional manner.

First, the local government is invested in the body of believers who compose the local body under the headship of Jesus Christ according to the Word of God and the ministry of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 18:20; Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:16; 5:21; Colossians 1:18; 2:19).

Matthew 18:20

20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. (KJV)

Ephesians 1:22-23

22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. (KJV)

Ephesians 4:16

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. (KJV)

Ephesians 5:21

21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. (KJV)

Colossians 1:18

18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.(KJV)

Colossians 2:19

19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. (KJV)

Second, executive authority or leadership, however, is invested by the congregation, as authorized by Scripture, in an elder who serving as pastor leads the church and to whom the congregation is to submit under the headship of Christ. This shepherd has the authority and responsibility to delegate to individuals, committees or other boards (as a Board of Presbyters, Board of Deacons, Board of Trustees, etc.) authority and responsibility to carry out the business or ministry of the church in spiritual and physical (material) matters (Acts 20:28; 15:6; Ephesians 4:11-12; Philipians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:7, 17).

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Acts 20:28

28 *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. (KJV)*

Acts 15:6

6 *And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. (KJV)*

Ephesians 4:11-12

11 *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;*

12 *For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:(KJV)*

Philippians 1:1

1 *Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:(KJV)*

1Thessalonians 5:12-13

12 *And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;*

13 *And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves. (KJV)*

Hebrews 13:7

7 *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. (KJV)*

Hebrews 13:17

17 *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you. (KJV)*

In using its delegated authority, and in making his decisions, the Pastor must seek to be guided by the Scripture, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and by input from the congregation (Acts 20:32; 6:2-5a; 11:22; 15:22; 2 Corinthians 8:19). In the event of the misuse of the delegated authority, the church has recourse to the principles as set forth in this constitution

Acts 20:32

32 *And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. (KJV)*

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Acts 6:2-5

2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: (KJV)

Acts 11:22

22 Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. (KJV)

Acts 15:22

22 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren: (KJV)

2 Corinthians 8:19

19 And not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind: (KJV)

ARTICLE VII: PASTOR

A. Qualifications

The pastor shall be an elder whose life is characterized by the qualities set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. These qualities can be categorized as:

- (1) He must desire the office of pastor and demonstrate spiritual leadership abilities among the flock.
- (2) He must be able to teach and use the Word of God with wisdom and patience.
- (3) He must be a lover of God. One who takes God and His Word seriously.
- (4) He must be able to manage his household in an apostolic biblical manner. Thus if married, only one living companion and with her, if possible. If unmarried, celibate and Holy. If separated, seeking reconciliation. ***Note: No divorced, remarried elder can pastor the Refuge Church.***
- (5) He must be able to spiritually manage interpersonal relationships.
- (6) He must be controlled by Christ and His Word rather than by worldly and fleshly desires.
- (7) He must hold to the doctrinal statement of this Constitution in accord with the statements of Article V, and be supportive of the entire Constitution.

B. Authority

The ministry of Refuge Church shall be under the direction of the Lord Jesus Christ working in and through His under-shepherd, the Pastor.

The Pastor will be the primary decision-maker within the church. However, it is critical that the Pastor make decisions based on the individual and corporate leading by the Holy Spirit, scriptural insight, carefully assembled facts, and input from the body (Acts 6:5; 15:6, 22; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13).

The church is not a democracy or a government where the majority rules. It is a theocracy, where Jesus Christ Himself is the Head and Ruler of the church. However, the Lord Jesus leads and directs through both the pastor and the body.

Since the Lord Jesus dwells in each member of the body of Christ, as so leads and directs through the body as to needs, desires, and responsibilities for each local body, it is important and necessary for the pastor to seek input, information and guidance from the body, especially on practical matters of church life.

As a result of these biblical facts, in major decisions of church life, the pastor may allow the congregation to vote to show a unified movement toward the direction in question and to show a sense of God's leading. However, since the pastor must give account to God, he is the final human authority on all local church matters.

C. Duties

Because of external and internal Christian testimony to be promoted with the local body, the pastor must first and foremost exercise a personal spiritual walk which promotes self examination, maintain a servant-like quality in life, and serve with gentleness and humility in all that he does. Out of his biblical perspective, the pastor is to joyfully undertake the following duties:

- (1) Give himself to prayer and the ministry of the Word.
- (2) Guard and protect the flock.
- (3) Oversee and provide spiritual direction for the growth of the flock.
- (4) Aid in finding and developing gifted teachers of the Word (2 Timothy 2:2).
- (5) Warn and discipline as outlined in this constitution.
- (6) Support, encourage, counsel and lead in humility.
- (7) See to the appointment of deacons as this constitution.
- (8) Provide guidance to the deacons as needed.
- (9) See to the oversight and management of the finances of the flock.
- (10) Pray for and encourage the sick.
- (11) Seek the Lord's will to interpret the Articles and provisions of this Constitution in the light of Scripture.
- (12) Make decisions and perform any other duties as situations within the church dictate, either directly or through proper and orderly delegation of committees or persons as necessary.

The pastor shall strive to maintain open communication with the flock, both to discern needs, concerns and viewpoints, and to communicate information and decisions. This may be done through the Sunday bulletin, pulpit announcements, group or congregational meetings and discussions (at least one such meeting held annually), votes, and one-on-one personal contact (Acts 6:1-5; 11:22; 15:1, 6, 22; 16:2).

November 14, 2012

ARTICLE VIII: PRESBYTERS (MINISTERS)

A. Presbyters: Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastor-Teachers

Presbyters shall be men who are anointed to “preach the Gospel” and have been gifted by the Holy Spirit and chosen by God to be servants of the local church body. Additionally, able to serve, meet all the qualifications of Scripture set forth in Ephesians 4:8-13, 1 Timothy 3:8-12, and Titus 2:6-8, and are demonstrably, conscientiously and wholeheartedly in agreement with the Constitution of this church.

Ephesians 4:8-13

8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: (KJV)

1 Timothy 3:8-12

8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.

11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. (KJV)

Titus 2:6-8

6 Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.

7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

8 Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. (KJV)

The presbyter plays a critical role in the growth, maturity, spirituality and effectiveness of the church. He, in assistance to the pastor, is responsible for the quality and content of the teaching and counseling within the flock (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Timothy 4:6-16).

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Ephesians 4:14-16

14 *That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;*

15 *But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:*

16 *From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. (KJV)*

1 Timothy 4:6-16

6 *If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.*

7 *But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.*

8 *For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*

9 *This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.*

10 *For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.*

11 *These things command and teach.*

12 *Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*

13 *Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.*

14 *Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.*

15 *Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.*

16 *Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee. (KJV)*

Refuge Church recognizes that the Lord has given spiritual gifts to all believers (men, women and children) and therefore does not expect the presbyters to provide all the teaching, evangelism, witnessing, and counseling, etc., within the body (Romans 12:3-8; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

Romans 12:3-8

3 *For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*

4 *For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:*

5 *So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.*

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6 *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;*
7 *Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;*
8 *Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. (KJV)*

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

4 *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.*
5 *And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.*
6 *And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.*
7 *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.*
8 *For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;*
9 *To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;*
10 *To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:*
11 *But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. (KJV)*

1 Peter 4:10-11

10 *As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*
11 *If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (KJV)*

Rather they, as leaders, are to equip the saints "for the work of the ministry, to the building up of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-12).

However all, prophecy, teaching, evangelism and counseling must be in accordance with the articles of this constitution and under the direction and authority of the pastor.

B. Presbyters: Duties, Qualifications and Authority

The duties, qualifications and authority of the presbyters shall be:

- 1) As directed by the pastor, provide teaching during worship and church services.
- (2) Provide assistance, as needed, to the pastor concerning church business and spiritual concerns within the body (Altar call, counseling, evangelism, etc.).
- (3) Coordinate the administration of the ordinances (baptism and the Lord's supper).
- (4) Faithful attendance to all church services.
- (5) Traveling with pastor on "preaching" engagements.
- (6) Presiding or assisting with worship services.

ARTICLE IX: DEACONS

A. Qualifications

Deacons shall be men who desire to be servants of the local church body, who are able to serve, who meet all the qualifications of Scripture set forth in Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3:8-12, and who are conscientiously and wholeheartedly in agreement with the Constitution of this church.

B. Duties

In Acts 6:1-4, certain men were appointed to minister to the physical needs of the flock, to relieve the apostles so they would have more time to concentrate on prayer and on the Word. These were undoubtedly the first deacons and functioned as helpers to the leaders of the Jerusalem church.

Deacons shall be helpers of the pastor in ministering to the needs of the body, especially the physical needs (such as caring for the building and property), though they may serve in other capacities as their gifts and training allow. Their specific duties will be designated by the pastor according to the need of the church and a deacon's particular gifts, capacities and talents.

C. Appointment

Deacons shall be appointed to serve as long as they are qualified and willing to serve and as long as a need for their ministry exists. Each appointment will be for three years. Refuge Church shall have two types of qualified Deacons; serving or non-serving.

First Timothy 3:10 teaches that potential deacons are to be tested. The primary means of testing is time; time for the flock to evaluate a man's commitment to the Lord, his qualifications according to 1 Timothy 3:8-13, his doctrinal understanding and his willingness to serve the local body. During this training period (usually one year), the designee shall be referred to as Junior Deacon.

1 Timothy 3:8-13

8 *Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;*

9 *Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.*

10 *And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.*

11 *Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.*

12 *Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.*

13 *For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. (KJV)*

Deacons will be appointed as the need arises. However, only qualified and willing men will be appointed. If no qualified men are available, or if those qualified are unable or unwilling to

serve, no appointment will be made. The church shall pray and wait on the Lord to provide a qualified man or men to meet the need. The following outlines the general procedures Refuge Church will follow in selecting deacons for appointment:

- (1) The Pastor shall decide if the need for a deacon(s) exists.
- (2) When there is a need, then the pastor shall notify the congregation of the need and ask them to pray for God’s direction in this matter.
- (3) The pastor will carefully and prayerfully consider all eligible men and evaluate them according to their qualifications, gifts, the need, commitment to the ministry and the individual's willingness to serve.
- (4) The pastor will then appoint that man (men) whom he believes to be the most qualified to serve according to the specific needs and the qualifications.
- (5) The appointed deacon then will be recommended to the State Bishop for ordination.

D. Removal of Deacons

1. Voluntary

A deacon may voluntarily step down from his position of active service at any time. The deacon should prayerfully reflect on his decision and seek counsel from the pastor before making a final decision.

2. Involuntary Dismissal

Involuntary dismissal of a deacon shall be in accord with the procedures for church discipline outlined in this constitution. If the situation is such that it necessitates dismissal from office, the pastor may suggest voluntary resignation by the person involved. If he refuses, the pastor may remove him from office (Matthew 18:15-20).

Matthew 18:15-20

15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. (KJV)

ARTICLE X: TRUSTEES

A. Members

The Board of Trustees of the Refuge Church shall consist of, a minimum of three and a maximum of five, faithful members who have demonstrated excellent leadership and stewardship qualities.

Their term of office shall be three years. The pastor shall have the authority to appoint and fill vacancies as need arises.

B. Qualifications

Trustees shall be members who desire to be servants of the local church body, who are able to serve, who meet all the qualifications of Scripture set forth for Church leaders in Luke 8:3, Acts 6:3-4, and Romans 16:1-2. Trustees also shall be representative of the demographic makeup of the church, supportive to the Pastor, and are conscientiously and wholeheartedly in agreement with the doctrine and Constitution of this Church.

Luke 8:3

3 And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance. (KJV)

Acts 6:3-4

3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. (KJV)

Romans 16:1-2

1 I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:

2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also. (KJV)

B. Duties

The Board of Trustees shall hold in trust for the benefit of the Refuge Church any and all donations, bequests, gifts, grants, funds, or properties purchased by this church.

Their specific duties will be designated by the pastor and congregation according to the needs of the church and the trustees' particular gifts, capacities and talents.

However, trustees shall take progressive biblical measures to ensure that the Refuge Church remains a fiscally sound (debt free) ministry. They shall also advise the church of all government legislation that might negatively or positively impact the ministry.

November 21, 2012

ARTICLE XI: Ministry Of Women

The Refuge Church un-apologetically adheres to the biblical pattern, that women are, “helpers” to men and servants to God, in ministry. Just as God made woman (Eve) naturally a “help meet” and submissive to man (Adam); likewise spiritually, women are to be helpers and laborers with men in ministry.

This Church recognizes the vital importance of women in Christ’s birth, ministry, death and resurrection (Isaiah 7:14; Luke 7:46-47, 23:55-56; Matthew 28:1,7).

Isaiah 7:14

14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. (KJV)

Luke 7:46-47

46 My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. (KJV)

Luke 23:55-56

55 And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid.

56 And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment. (KJV)

Matthew 28:1

1 In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. (KJV)

Matthew 28:7

7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. (KJV)

We also recognize the importance of women in the early church. The Apostle Paul admonishes the brethren to receive and help honorable women who labored with him in the Gospel, such as Phoebe (Romans 16:1-2, Philippians 4:3, Titus 2:3-5).

Romans 16:1-2

1 I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:

2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also. (KJV)

Philippians 4:3

3 *And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life. (KJV)*

Titus 2:3-5

3 *The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;*

4 *That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,*

5 *To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. (KJV)*

However, the Bible clearly teaches a distinction of the roles of men and women in ministry. The Refuge Church encourages all believers to know and support the practice of distinction in gender ministry roles. We firmly hold that the four fold ministry roles (Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastor-Teachers) mentioned in scripture are gender specific (Ephesians 4:8).

Ephesians 4:8

8 *Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (KJV)*

Therefore, following the New Testament pattern, we use these ministry titles for males only, who in submission to God, their head, fulfill their ministry roles as Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers (Ephesians 4:11).

Ephesians 4:11

11 *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; (KJV)*

Females of this church, fulfill their ministry roles, in submission to God and males, their head, are addressed as mothers, missionaries and sisters. We do not support or encourage women to be ordained to the ministry.

Contrary to what many teach today, there is a consistency in the role of men and women in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. The covenants have changed, but the relationship between men and women are still the same (1 Corinthians 14:34).

1 Corinthians 14:34

34 *Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. (KJV)*

Sometimes people go to examples in the Law to prove that women can pastor or lead men today. The Old Testament Law also taught a distinction in the roles of men and women, so we should not find examples of godly women violating their God-given roles.

Let's look at Miriam, Moses' sister. Some claim that since the Lord spoke through her, this proves that women can preach today (Numbers 12:1-2). Even though God spoke to and through her, there is no indication that Miriam was a leader of men. Notice her ministry, after the deliverance from Egypt, she led the women in praise to God (Exodus 15:20).

Numbers 12:1-2

1 And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.

2 And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it. (KJV)

Exodus 15:20

20 And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. (KJV)

There is consistency in the Covenants. Women are to be teaching and leading women today (Titus 2:3-5). The older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.

Titus 2:3-5

3 The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. (KJV)

Another example often misunderstood is Deborah. During a time of general apostasy (Judges 4:1), God used Deborah to judge Israel. Deborah did not lead Israel but they came to her for judgment. She was a prophetess who was obviously a wise woman. When it was time for a leader to rise, God chose a man (Barak) - Judges 4:6-7. Barak was rebuked for wanting Deborah to go with him and was told that Sisera would be given into the hands of a woman (Jael) - Judges 4:8-9.

Judges 4:1

1 And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, when Ehud was dead. (KJV)

Judges 4:1-9

1 And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, when Ehud was dead.

2 And the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles.

- 3 *And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD: for he had nine hundred chariots of iron; and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel.*
- 4 *And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time.*
- 5 *And she dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in mount Ephraim: and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment.*
- 6 *And she sent and called Barak the son of Abinoam out of Kedesh-naphtali, and said unto him, Hath not the LORD God of Israel commanded, saying, Go and draw toward mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun?*
- 7 *And I will draw unto thee to the river Kishon Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand.*
- 8 *And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go.*
- 9 *And she said, I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the LORD shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh. (KJV)*

This is a time of failure on the part of the men of Israel, but God still used a man to deliver Israel, not a woman, although God was able to use Deborah before their deliverance. One of the characteristics of the "Worthy Woman" which Deborah was “She opens her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness” (Proverbs 31:26).

The Bible never teaches that women are not to develop themselves in wisdom. As she gains wisdom, and can help people with problems in life, she is to remember her roles in not usurping authority over men.

Huldah (II Kings 22) was another woman used by God in a critical time in Israel's history. She was a prophetess during the days of King Josiah. When Josiah began the restoration of the Temple, a copy of the Law was found. They read the warnings found within the Law concerning the penalties for disobedience. Josiah sent messengers to Huldah to inquire of the Law. She prophesied of the judgment that was coming on Jerusalem, although it would not be in the days of Josiah. She was inspired, used of God to deliver His Word, but there is no indication that she ever took a leadership position over the men of Israel.

The covenants are consistent. God worked through Deborah and Huldah in the O.T. and He worked through women in the N.T. However, there is no indication that these women ever were placed in leadership over or had authority over men (Acts 2:16-17; 21:8-9).

Acts 2:16-17

- 16 *But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;*
- 17 *And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: (KJV)*

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Acts 21:8-9

8 *And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him.*

9 *And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. (KJV)*

However, Old Testament does speak of two women who, in disobedience to God, usurped authority over men; Jezebel (1 Kings 18 - 21) and Athaliah (2 Chronicles 22 - 23).

The role of men and women in the New Testament Church is that of a servant. The greatest is he who serves (Luke 22:24-27). Although both men and women are to be servants, they are to be servants in different ways. One way God expects church leadership to serve Him by “being the husband of one wife” and “ruling their own house well” (1 Timothy 3:1-7).

Luke 22:24-27

24 *And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.*

25 *And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.*

26 *But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.*

27 *For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.(KJV)*

1 Timothy 3:1-7

1 *This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.*

2 *A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;*

3 *Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;*

4 *One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;*

5 *(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)*

6 *Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.*

7 *Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. (KJV)*

The way God expects women to serve Him is by “professing godliness with good works.” Part of the "good works" is “learning in silence with all subjection”.. “not teaching or usurping authority over the man”, teaching the women shall be “saved in childbearing” (1 Timothy 2:9-15).

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1 Timothy 2:9-15

- 9 *In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;*
10 *But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.*
11 *Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.*
12 *But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*
13 *For Adam was first formed, then Eve.*
14 *And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.*
15 *Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.(KJV)*

This is more than just having babies, but also fulfilling all the motherly responsibilities that come with raising children. The ministry role of a "Mother" is one a teacher of good thing "Titus 2:3-5." The ministry role of a "Widow Indeed" is one who had led a faithful life (1Timothy 5:9-16).

Titus 2:3-5

- 3 *The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;*
4 *That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,*
5 *To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.(KJV)*

1 Timothy 5:9-16

- 9 *Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man,*
10 *Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.*
11 *But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry;*
12 *Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.*
13 *And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.*
14 *I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.*
15 *For some are already turned aside after Satan.*
16 *If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.(KJV)*

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There will always be work in the ministry that can and will only be done scripturally by women. There will always be physical, and emotional needs, social concerns, sickness and death in families that only be ministered to by a woman’s care. Thank God the Refuge Church family has faithful women, who are dedicated to serving God within their God given role.

Examples of Godly Women Ministers in the New Testament.

Tabitha, “full of good works and alms deeds” (Acts 9:36-39).

Priscilla “Godly wife and teacher” (Acts 18:24-26; Romans 16:3-5; 1 Corinthians 16:19).

Euodia and Syntyche “Laborers in the Gospel” (Philippians 4:2-3).

Women Who Ministered To Jesus (Matthew 27:55-56).

There is always ministry work to be done. But everyone has to fulfill their God appointed role. If Jesus had to do absolutely everything, He would have had much less time to fulfill His role. In the same way, if the apostles had to do everything, they would not have had as much time to fulfill their role (Acts 6:2). The men were chosen for a specific role. Did this mean that their role was not important or inferior? No. Their roles were very important and vital to the success of the ministry. Even though the seven were not apostles, they helped the apostles accomplish their mission.

The same it is with women and their ministry role to the body of Christ. The fulfilling of this role is so important to the success of the church, that if men allow women to neglect their responsibility, the church is destined for “great tribulation and death” (Revelation 2:18-29).

In the Bible, all Priests, High Priests, Kings, Military leaders, Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Bishops, Elders, and writers of the Bible (two books were appropriately named for women but written by men), are all men. A Prophetess is not a Prophet. Its improper to assume that everyone who hammers is a carpenter. The woman has her defined role in God’s ministry, and the man has his.

Does this mean that difference in roles mean difference in importance? In redemption, which manifestation of God is of greater importance, Father, Son or Holy Ghost? Neither, all are equally essential, but they each have different roles. When people speak of which is more important, or which is superior, men or women, they are exposing their ignorance. They are equal before God, but they have different roles to fulfill (Galatians 3:28).

Galatians 3:28

28 *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. (KJV)*

MINISTRY OF WOMEN OUTLINE

- I. Position in the New Creation
 - Galatians 3:28 -- Equality and Unity
- II. Place in Nature and the Local Church
 - A. Headship defined: I Corinthians 11: 2- 3
 - God : Christ : Man : Woman
 - Voluntary submission
 - No inferiority (Christ was voluntarily subject to His Father but not inferior.)
 - B. Headship demonstrated
 - I Corinthians 11:4-16
 - The sign of subjection to God's order: the Head covering
- III. Other privileges and responsibilities
 - A) Acts 1:14 prayer
 - B) Acts 18:26 counseling
 - C) Romans 16:1 service in the assembly
 - D) Romans 16:3- 5 pastoral care
 - E) 1 Cor. 11:10 living subjection lesson to angels
 - F) I Cor. 12: 11 exercising spiritual gifts
 - G) I Cor. 14:26 spiritual worship
 - H) Philippians 4:3 missions / evangelism
 - I) 1 Tim. 2: 13- 15 child-bearing and rearing
 - J) I Tim. 5:10 hospitality
 - K) Titus 2:3-5 teach and guide the younger women
 - L) I Peter 3: 1-6 develop a meek and quiet spirit
- IV. Prohibitions
 - A) I Cor. 14:34 keep silent in the assembly (cf. I Tim. 2:11-12)

NOTE: The statement that women are to remain silent in the church should be understood in its context. Verse 23 begins: "If therefore the whole church be come together into one place. . . " limiting the prohibition to the whole gathered local assembly. No Scripture requires silence of women in groups other than the church assembly.
- V. Purposes of God with regard to headship
 - A) Failure in relating to authority:
 - Isaiah 14 Satan & his angels
 - B) Genesis 3 Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden
- VI. Obedience to authority:
 - A) Matthew 4 Christ tempted in the wilderness
 - B) Eph. 3:10 The Church

December 5, 2012

ARTICLE XII: MOTHER'S BOARD

The Mother's Board Ministry is a very important part of the Apostolic Ministry at Refuge Church. The role of the church mother is indeed one of great importance and a "must" for a growing church.

In the Old Testament we see the ministry of the church mother in Judges 5:7-12. Israel was being held in captivity and appeared to be satisfied with a life of bondage, until Deborah, a judge and prophetess "arose" as a MOTHER in Israel and encouraged Barak, the priest, to lead captivity captive.

Judges 5:7-12

7 *The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel.*

8 *They chose new gods; then was war in the gates: was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel?*

9 *My heart is toward the governors of Israel, that offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless ye the LORD.*

10 *Speak, ye that ride on white asses, ye that sit in judgment, and walk by the way.*

11 *They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water, there shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the LORD, even the righteous acts toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel: then shall the people of the LORD go down to the gates.*

12 *Awake, awake, Deborah: awake, awake, utter a song: arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam. (KJV)*

In the New Testament we see the ministry of the church mother in Titus 2:3-5. The aged women are to teach the young women "....that the word of God be not blasphemed."

Titus 2:3-5

3 *The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;*

4 *That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,*

5 *To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. (KJV)*

The Apostolic Church Ministry is incomplete without Mothers who fulfill their God given ministry in the church. She is to the pastor in the local church what the mother is to the father in the home. Just as God has a distinct purpose for the mother in relation to her family and home, he has a distinct purpose for the church mother in relation to her church family and home (Proverbs 31:1-31; I Timothy 2:15; 5:14).

I Timothy 2:15

15 *Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.(KJV)*

1 Timothy 5:14

14 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. (KJV)

There are also many gender specific issues that women should be taught that would be inappropriate for the pastor or men to teach. Here in lies a very important task for church mothers, to teach women of the church certain "discreet" things they should know (Titus 2:3-5).

The Mother's Board is comprised of pastor appointed, prayerful, seasoned, mature, well informed mothers in spiritual matters, church polity and administration. The board shall consist of a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. They must know and understand their obligations to God, the church and the pastor in order to instruct others. The board shall teach support of the pastor, church and organization. The board shall also teach community respect and appreciation.

The major responsibility is to help support all church auxiliaries, boards and committees. The church mothers should work closely with the president of each group and have finger-tip information as to the functions of each ministry and see to their proper operation.

A strong church is one that is spirit filled, spirit led and well organized. There should be a pleasant pastor - church - church mother relationship at all times and the pastor should be able to request anything within reason to the Mother's Board and look for positive results.

ARTICLE XIII: MISSIONARIES

Missionaries are licensed by the national organization on recommendation of the pastor. Missionary is the only licensed office for females in this church.

Missionaries are to assist the pastor in ministry by teaching the laity, caring for the sick, praying and working around the altar, and caring for the new saints.

There are three classes of missionaries, two licensed (Senior and Social) and one un-licensed (Junior).

Missionary Criteria: Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Only those women who are baptized with the Holy Ghost and with the Bible sign, according to Acts 2:4, 19:6, 2:38 may obtain a license.

Any missionary desiring license as a worker in the Body may obtain same by complying with the following requirements:

1. Must have been proven, approved, and recommended by her Pastor, National Board of Officers, together with a favorable report from the state.
2. Must have some fruit of the spirit working in her own life, and showing the working of God's Spirit in this particular work.

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3. Must be obedient to their church orders, Pastor and Board, with a two year service in the Social Mission Work exemplifying the spirit of Christ.
4. Must be faithful in every obligation to the church and Word of God, paying their tithes and offerings and teaching the same.
5. Must obtain a letter of recommendation from her home church where she has been subject, working in true harmony and showing fitness and ability.
6. All missionaries who do not function and do not take part in all missionary activities and obligations, shall be replaced or removed, and any missionary found disobedient and out of order, shall be called in and her license revoked.
7. All missionary activities must be reported through the local and state, reporting to the General Convocation. Reports should include all that is up-building to the movement, helpful to others and edifying to one another.
8. All missionaries holding meetings out from their own church must first consult the State Executives or Pastor, and be willing to be sent where most needed.
9. She should teach and works in the interest of the church. She will not be permitted to teach or hold meetings if it is found that she talks with weaker ones and those out of order, speaking things detrimental about the church and leadership.
10. If any be found a traitor and seeking to build up a reputation for herself, secretly working against the church, leader and the movement, she shall be silenced for the space of one year, or dismissed from the body.
11. All members are asked, when specially impressed by some blessings of God upon their work, or consecration, to bring a thanksgiving offering in honor of God's supply to you.

December 12, 2012

ARTICLE XIV: CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

A. Universal Body of Christ

At the time of personal faith in Jesus Christ, the believer is called into the fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord and joined into union with the universal body of Christ, the church, by the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit initially evidenced by speaking in tongues as the spirit of God gives utterance (Mark 16:17; Acts 2:4, 10:45-46, 19:6; 1 Corinthians 1:2,9, 12:12-13, 20; Colossians 1:18).

Mark 16:17

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; (KJV)

Acts 2:4

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (KJV)

Acts 10:45

45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 19:6

6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. (KJV)

1 Corinthians 1:2

2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: (KJV)

1 Corinthians 1:9

9 God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. (KJV)

1 Corinthians 12:12-13

12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:20

20 But now are they many members, yet but one body. (KJV)

Colossians 1:18

18 *And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. (KJV)*

B. Union With a Local Assembly of Believers

There is another aspect of this fellowship into which the believer is joined. He is brought into the fellowship of fellow members of that body, other living believers on earth, that he might share and participate in the various blessings and ministries of the body of Christ. For this to occur properly, believers are to seek the fellowship of one another in a local body or assembly of believers to which they are to become responsible, a mini-flock, so to speak, of the greater and universal flock of God (1 Peter 5:2-3; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1).

1 Peter 5:2-3

2 *Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;*

3 *Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.*

1 Thessalonians 1:1

1 *Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. (KJV)*

1 Thessalonians 2:1

1 *For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:*

Believers in isolation, operating independently of other believers of a local assembly, is an idea contrary to Scripture. Scripture teaches that there are to be local assemblies of believers, united together by a common faith, by union in Christ, and the universal indwelling of the Holy Spirit, by common purposes, commitments and responsibilities, and with a common leadership of that specific body, independent in government from other local assemblies (Ephesians 4:4-6; Heb. 13:7, 17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13).

Ephesians 4:4-6

4 *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;*

5 *One Lord, one faith, one baptism,*

6 *One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

Hebrews 13:7

7 *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. (KJV)*

Hebrews 13:17

17 *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you. (KJV)*

1Thessalonians 5:12-13

12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves. (KJV)

The local church is to be a body of people allotted to the charge of the pastor (Hebrews 10:14-15; 1 Peter 4:8-10; 1 Corinthians 12:20-27), and subject to the discipline of that body or assembly (1 Corinthians 5:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:14, 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14; 1 Timothy 5:20).

Hebrews 10:14-15

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

15 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before.

1 Peter 4:8

8 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. (KJV)

1 Peter 4:8-10

8 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. (KJV)

1 Corinthians 12:20-27

20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.

21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.

24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:

25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. (KJV)

1 Corinthians 5:2

2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. (KJV)

1 Thessalonians 5:14

14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. (KJV)

2 Corinthians 3:6

6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. (KJV)

2 Corinthians 3:14

14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. (KJV)

1 Timothy 5:20

20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. (KJV)

This of necessity implies more than a loose relationship of a believer or believers to a particular body or assembly. It involves a tie, an involvement, a commitment, responsibility and submission to both the leadership and to each other.

The Refuge Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc. is a part of the body of Christ where:

1. People are to be gathered unto it (Jeremiah 3:17)

At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart. (KJV)

2. Victory is in it (Psalms 118:10-14)

10 All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them.

11 They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

12 They compassed me about like bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

13 Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the LORD helped me.

14 The LORD is my strength and song, and is become my salvation. (KJV)

3. One is blessed for coming in it (Psalms 118:26)

Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD. (KJV)

4. God want the glory due His name in it (Psalms 29:1-2)

1 Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

2 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. (KJV)

5. His people are hated for it (Matthew 10:22)

Matthew 10:22

22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. (KJV)

God is jealous for His name, therefore, He will protect those who honor and trust in His name (Ezekiel 39:28; Psalms 20:1-5; Micah 4:5; John 5:43, 20:31).

Ezekiel 39:28

28 Then shall they know that I am the LORD their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there. (KJV)

Psalms 20:1-5

1 The LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee;

2 Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion;

3 Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice; Selah.

4 Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.

5 We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions. (KJV)

Micah 4:5

5 For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever. (KJV)

John 5:43

43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. (KJV)

John 20:31

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name. (KJV)

December 19, 2012

C. Membership Record

Jesus Christ keeps a record of all His members. Thus, Refuge Church keeps a written record of all its members. However, the Scriptures contain neither a mandate for nor a command against an official membership roll (Luke 10:20; Psalms 87:5-6).

Luke 10:20

20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. (KJV)

Psalms 87:5-7

5 And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her.

6 The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah.

7 As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there: all my springs are in thee. (KJV)

In Acts, we see that believers were added to the church in Jerusalem, however, this serves primarily to show the growth in the early church (Acts 2:47; 9:31; 16:5).

Acts 2:47

Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. (KJV)

Acts 9:31

Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied. (KJV)

Acts 16:5

And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily. (KJV)

These people were devoting themselves to a local assembly and its leadership for teaching, leadership, fellowship and worship (Acts 2:42). There were also letters of commendation or acceptance written on behalf of both men and women to be welcomed and accepted into the fellowship or various assemblies. These letters commended believers to other assemblies regarding their faithfulness and ministry (Rom. 16:1-2; 1 Cor. 16:10; Col. 4:10; 2 Cor. 3:1; 8:16-24).

Acts 2:42

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. (KJV)

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Romans 16:1-2

1 I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:

2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also. (KJV)

1 Corinthians 16:10

10 Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do. (KJV)

Colossians 4:10

Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;) (KJV)

2 Corinthians 3:1

Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?(KJV)

2 Corinthians 8:16-24

16 But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you.

17 For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you.

18 And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches;

19 And not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind:

20 Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us:

21 Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

22 And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you.

23 Whether any do inquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellowhelper concerning you: or our brethren be inquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ.

24 Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf. (KJV)

The emphasis of these Scriptures is that every believer become identified and committed to a specific local assembly of believers following the leading and direction of God.

This commitment is revealed by their attitude, faith, attendance, involvement, giving and submission to that assembly. Thus a membership roll cannot, in and of itself, serve as the sole means of commitment a believer has to a local body.

Refuge Church does have and maintain a membership roll to aid in conducting business in an orderly manner and to provide legal protection in important, yet potentially controversial church decisions.

An individual's decision to be placed on the membership roll should flow from their commitment to the church. The individual should remember that being on the membership role has no merit or value so far as his spiritual maturity or growth is concerned and does equate to heavenly membership.

D. Membership Status

The Refuge Church SHEPHERD’S MINISTRY GOAL is to bring people to Jesus Christ and **MEMBERSHIP** in His family; developing them to Christ-like **MATURITY**; and equip them for their **MINISTRY** in the church and **MISSION** in the world, in order to **MAGNIFY** God’s name.

Jesus’s ministry included ministering to the **COMMUNITY** (Mark 1:21-28), feeding the **CROWD** (Mark 6:32-44), gathering a **CONGREGATION** (Mark 7:14-16), challenging the **COMMITTED** (Mark 8:10-21) and discipling the **CORE** (Mark 9:2-13).

Mark 1:21-28

21 *And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught.*

22 *And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.*

23 *And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,*

24 *Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.*

25 *And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.*

26 *And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.*

27 *And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.*

28 *And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee. (KJV)*

Mark 6:32-44

32 *And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.*

33 *And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him.*

34 *And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.*

35 *And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed:*

36 *Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.*

37 *He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?*

38 *He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.*

39 *And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.*

40 *And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.*

41 *And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.*

42 *And they did all eat, and were filled.*

43 *And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.*

44 *And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men. (KJV)*

Mark 7:14-16

14 *And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand:*

15 *There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.*

16 *If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. (KJV)*

Mark 8:10-21

10 *And straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.*

11 *And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him.*

12 *And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.*

13 *And he left them, and entering into the ship again departed to the other side.*

14 *Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.*

15 *And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.*

16 *And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no bread.*

17 *And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?*

18 *Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?*

19 *When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve.*

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20 *And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven.*

21 *And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand? (KJV)*

Mark 9:2-13

2 *And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.*

3 *And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.*

4 *And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.*

5 *And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.*

6 *For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid.*

7 *And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.*

8 *And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.*

9 *And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.*

10 *And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.*

11 *And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elias must first come?*

12 *And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.*

13 *But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him. (KJV)*

Jesus recognized and ministered to individuals at different levels of commitment. He met them where they were and led them to where they should be and we follow His example.

Mark 12:28-34

28 *And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?*

29 *And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:*

30 *And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.*

31 *And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.*

32 *And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he:*

33 *And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.*

34 *And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question. (KJV)*

John 1:37-51

37 *And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.*

38 *Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?*

39 *He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.*

40 *One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.*

41 *He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.*

42 *And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.*

43 *The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.*

44 *Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.*

45 *Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.*

46 *And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.*

47 *Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!*

48 *Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.*

49 *Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.*

50 *Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.*

51 *And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man. (KJV)*

Mark 8:34

And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

Matthew 11:28-30

28 *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

29 *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*

30 *For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (KJV)*

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The Refuge Church has five levels of membership based on their ministry commitment and Christian maturity as follows:

1. CORE (Leadership)
 - Ministry Gifted Demonstrated
 - Holy Ghost Filled
 - Baptized
2. COMMITTED (Training for Leadership)
 - Ministry Gifted Developing
 - Holy Ghost Filled
 - Baptized
3. CONGREGATION (Laity)
 - Ministry Gifted Discovery
 - Holy Ghost Filled
 - Baptized
4. CROWD (Regular Attenders)
 - Baptized
5. COMMUNITY (Event Attenders)

Within the first three levels there are two possible categories

- 1). Active Members (Faithful)
 - a. Faithful (Regular attendance)
 - b. Sick & Shut-In (Hospital, Nursing Home, Bed-ridden)
 - c. Away (School, Military, Mission, etc.)
 - d. Watch Care (temporary membership while in area)
- 2) Inactive Members (Unfaithful)
 - a. Unfaithful (two months of successive non attendance without explanation).
 - b. Disciplined (Silenced)

E. Membership Roll

The membership roll will be called at each all saints meeting by the church secretary. Each member is expected to answer the roll call. The pastor will review the membership roll at his discretion. Members may be removed from the roll, or status changed on the roll, by the member's choice, by church discipline, or by non-involvement with the church. If an individual appears to no longer be committed, interested or involved with the church, the pastor will meet with the person, if possible, to verify their desired membership status. No individual will be removed from the roll without being contacted by the pastor.

January 2, 2013

F. Membership Eligibility

Any person, regardless of age, who has been baptized in water in the name, Lord Jesus Christ, and baptized with the Holy Ghost initially evidenced by speaking with other tongues as the spirit of God gives utterance, and is in agreement with this Constitution is qualified and eligible for core, committed and congregation membership in Refuge Church.

G. Membership Stewardship

Each Spirit filled member of Refuge Church should desire and seek the highest standard of Holiness (Lev.11:45; Luke 1:74-75; 2 Cor.7:1; Hebrews 12:14; 2 Peter 3:11).

Leviticus 11:45

45 For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy. (KJV)

Luke 1:74-75

74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,

75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. (KJV)

2 Corinthians 7:1

1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (KJV)

Hebrews 12:14

14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: (KJV)

2 Peter 3:11

11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, (KJV)

Additionally, each Spirit filled member is required and expected to be a faithful steward of the mysteries of God. Any member who is involved with the works of the flesh is a transgressor and shall not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 4:1-2; Galatians 5:19-21).

1 Corinthians 4:1-2

1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. (KJV)

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Galatians 5:19-21

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (KJV)

A practical observance of the following scriptural requirements and a complete separation from all things which do not tend to deepen our own spirituality and promote the glory of God, is hereby required of all members of this church. All Spirit filled members of this church are commanded in God’s Word:

1. Not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers, and to have no communion or fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, such as oath-bound social clubs (2 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 5:11).

2 Corinthians 6:14

14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? (KJV)

Ephesians 5:11

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. (KJV)

2. Not to conform to this world (Romans 12:1-2).

Romans 12:1-2

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (KJV)

3. To come out from among them and be separated (2 Corinthians 6:17).

2 Corinthians 6:17

17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, (KJV)

4. To turn away from those who have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof (2 Timothy 3:5).

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2 Timothy 3:5

5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. (KJV)

5. Cleanse ourselves from the filthiness of flesh and spirit, such as the use, growth, sale or handling of illegal drugs, narcotics, intoxicants, filthiness of speech, foolish talking or jesting, or the use of slang language (2 Corinthians 7:11).

2 Corinthians 7:11

11 For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter. (KJV)

6. We are commanded to abstain from all appearance of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

1Thessalonians 5:22

22 Abstain from all appearance of evil. (KJV)

7. To all we do to the Glory of God, and in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Colossians 3:17; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 1 Timothy 2:9-10).

Colossians 3:17

17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. (KJV)

1 Corinthians 10:31

31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. (KJV)

1 Timothy 2:9-10

9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. (KJV)

H. Membership Duties

The duties of each Spirit filled member of the Refuge Church are outlined as follows:

1. Observe the Lord’s Day (Sunday) for worship, according to the teachings of Jesus Christ, and not to take it as a day of vacation, or relaxation, to attend beaches and go automobile riding and picnicking, etc.
2. Purge away from our lives all evil, immorality and bad influences such as those who will not work, but meddle and tattle; Heretics; Unruly (1 Corinthians 5:7-13; 2 Timothy 3:5; 2

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Thessalonians 3:11; Titus 3:10; Romans 16:17-18; Matthew 28:15-18; Galatians 5:16-21).

1 Corinthians 5:7-13

7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

9 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:

10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.

11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?

13 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person. (KJV)

2 Timothy 3:5

5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. (KJV)

II Thessalonians 3:11

11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. (KJV)

Titus 3:10

10 A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; (KJV)

Romans 16:17-18

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. (KJV)

Matthew 28:15-18

15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. (KJV)

Galatians 5:16-21

16 *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*

17 *For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*

18 *But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.*

19 *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,*

20 *Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,*

21 *Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (KJV)*

3. Obedience must be fulfilled, and everything led captive to Christ (2 Corinthians 10:4-6).

2 Corinthians 10:4-6

4 *(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)*

5 *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;*

6 *And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled. (KJV)*

4. The power of Christ must be present in our lives (John 15:5; 1 Corinthians 5:4). Christ being present and working in the saints, it is really God who does the turning out and taking in. Then the work is done in Heaven and in earth (Matthew 18:18).

John 15:5

5 *I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. (KJV)*

1 Corinthians 5:4

4 *In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, (KJV)*

Matthew 18:18

18 *Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (KJV)*

As the body of Christ, the Church must keep wise, clean and strong. To do this, much depends upon the proper exercise of discipline (Ephesians 5:1-10).

Ephesians 5:1-10

1 *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;*

2 *And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.*

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- 3 *But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;*
4 *Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.*
5 *For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*
6 *Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.*
7 *Be not ye therefore partakers with them.*
8 *For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:*
9 *(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)*
10 *Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. (KJV)*

As His bride the Church must be made and kept ready for His coming, according to all teachings of Ephesians 5. Praise God, He comes quickly. Every member is responsible for the Church's condition.

Thus, we must be cautious not to defile the Temple of God for he cannot dwell in an unclean temple and defilement drives Him out. Let us not turn Him out.

The name of God saves us and we are for His namesake (Proverbs 18:10; Acts 4:12; Psalms 23:3; Isaiah 63:12; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17).

Proverbs 18:10

10 *The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe. (KJV)*

Acts 4:12

12 *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. (KJV)*

Psalms 23:3

3 *He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. (KJV)*

Isaiah 63:12

12 *That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name?(KJV)*

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

16 *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*
17 *If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. (KJV)*

January 9, 2013

I. Membership Attire

At Refuge Church we believe, teach and practice, that our attire is a silent witness about us. We believe it reveals our feelings, attitudes, commitments and frame of mind (1 Samuel 16:7; Romans 6:17-22; Matthew 7:20).

1 Samuel 16:7

7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart. (KJV)

Romans 6:17-23

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (KJV)

Matthew 7:20

20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. (KJV)

There are two basic biblical concepts to remember in regards to Christian attire:

1). MODESTY: Humble; decent; root of moderate (1 Timothy 2:9-10; 1 Peter 3:3-5).

1 Timothy 2:9-10

9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. (KJV)

1 Peter 3:3-5

3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

5 *For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: (KJV)*

The key idea of modesty is that we should not lend ourselves to ostentation of dress and costly array, but rather be distinguished by a proper Christ like spirit (meekness is not weakness). Men and women of the world spend so much finance on exterior aids to beautify...all of which are false. God wants us to focus on our spirit where true attraction takes place (Psalm 149:4).

Psalm 149:4

4 *For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation. (KJV)*

Modesty never goes out of style in God’s eyes. A Christian’s concept of modesty should not change with the weather or the occasion.

When Adam & Eve’s sin severed their fellowship with God, in response to a keen sense of guilt, the first thing they did was try to cover themselves, because they found out they were naked (Genesis 3:7).

Genesis 3:7

7 *And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. (KJV)*

After God pronounced the curses upon them for their disobedience, the first thing God did was change their covering (fig leaves) to His covering (skins) a blood sacrifice. The coats of skins were God’s provision for restoring Adam’s and Eve’s fellowship with Him. God’s intentions since then is for humanity to be clothed (Genesis 3:21).

Genesis 3:21

21 *Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them. (KJV)*

Immodesty is driven by spirits. Look at spirits listed in the Bible: fear, lust, jealousy, etc... Many are human emotions, but Satan comes and snares us and drives our feelings far beyond their intended use (Luke 8:26-36).

Luke 8:26-36

26 *And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.*

27 *And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs.*

28 *When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not.*

29 *(For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.)*

30 *And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.*

31 *And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep.*

32 *And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them.*

33 *Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.*

34 *When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country.*

35 *Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.*

36 *They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed. (KJV)*

Modesty applies equally to both sexes. However, both sexes do not apply modesty equally. The simple fact is, men are naturally more visual than women and women are naturally more sensual than men. Thus one should consider, styles, necklines, tightness, length, splits, texture, etc... in dressing modest and not exposing or revealing your body.

It is true that you cannot keep someone from lusting after you, but you can undertake your responsibility not to provoke it. A saint who purposely dresses, to cause temptation, or because of temptation, becomes a stumbling block to him or herself and others. Thus, when we dress, we should ask ourselves, does what I have on glorify God?

The Apostle Paul knew that your dress is the mirror of your mind. We often dress the way we feel. Outward ostentation (showy display) is not keeping with a Godly attitude. We were told to dress with shamefacedness, sobriety, self restraint, reverence, discretion and temperance.

Modesty is not an option for a true New Testament Apostolic church!

2). **DISTINCTION:** Difference; the fact of being dissimilar; separate; (Deuteronomy 22:5).

Deuteronomy 22:5

5 *The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God. (KJV)*

The bible clearly teaches a distinction between men and women attire. The "unisex" styles of our day are an abomination to God. It is a perverse hostility to God's creation order. It is driven by spirits that wish to put humanity into rebellion.

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Men and women are different: Both physically and emotionally by creation and God has placed certain social methods into place to maintain this difference. It is common today to have women’s clothing that look masculine and men’s that look feminine. This is scripturally wrong.

Some believe that the distinction in dress taught in scripture was under the law, and thus not applicable in the New Testament. This is a trick of the enemy.

Christ’s death on the cross abolished the ceremonial law, but not the moral law. God’s moral law stands forever! The Old Testament was the schoolmaster that brought us to Christ (Colossians 2:14-17; Jude 3).

Colossians 2:14-17

14 *Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;*

15 *And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

16 *Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:*

17 *Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. (KJV)*

Jude 1:3

3 *Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. (KJV)*

Distinction of attire between men and women is a moral law, not a ceremonial law. Israel fulfilled the ceremony physically (offerings and sacrifices). Today, we fulfill the principle spiritually (Romans 12:1-2).

Romans 12:1-2

1 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

2 *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (KJV)*

We obey the distinction of attire of the moral law for 3 reasons:

- a. God designed it to prevent moral problems like blurring the sexes and homosexuality (Romans 1:24-27).

Romans 1:24-27

24 *Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:*

25 *Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.*

26 *For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:*

27 *And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. (KJV)*

b. It manifests the distinction between male and female that is taught in other scriptures, and in nature (Leviticus 10:10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-20).

Leviticus 10:10

10 *And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean; (KJV)*

1 Corinthians 6:9-20

9 *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,*

10 *Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.*

11 *And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

12 *All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.*

13 *Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.*

14 *And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.*

15 *Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.*

16 *What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.*

17 *But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.*

18 *Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.*

19 *What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*

20 *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (KJV)*

Non-distinction is an abomination to God which means “something God detests or hates.” God’s hatred from day to day, as to His feeling about moral sin, doesn’t change (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8; Revelation 21:9).

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Malachi 3:6

6 *For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*
(KJV)

Hebrews 13:8

8 *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* (KJV)

Revelation 21:27

27 *And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.* (KJV)

Among the Hebrews neither sex was permitted by Mosaic Law to wear the same form of clothing as was used by the other. A few articles of feminine clothing carried somewhat the name and basic pattern, yet there was always sufficient difference in embossing, embroidery, and needlework so that in appearance the line of demarcation between man and women should be readily detected.

Note: "Among the Bedouin Arabs of Palestine there is great care taken that either sex shall not imitate the other in matters of dress." Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary pg 227. These differences were significant enough to tell one's gender from afar off (Genesis 24:64).

Genesis 24:64

And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel. (KJV)

Practical application: Part of our daily attire should be for gender distinction. Unmistakable, visual, identification of the sexes. In our culture it is unequivocally understood that men wear pants, and women wear dresses. Even the pictures on public restrooms identify this culturally understood distinction. This could change from culture to culture but the practical application of modesty and holiness is the same at all times.

Pants for women are not necessarily more modest than a skirt. It is interesting that every generation of women before us, learned how to wear a skirt or dress modestly. As a matter of fact, a dress tends to change a woman's actions to be more feminine. Some women are immodest in a dress because they're so used to pants (based on how they sit and move etc.)

God visibly separated Israel: food, dress, farming, worship, Sabbath, etc. You could tell a Jew by his dress and actions. The Jews survived 1,900 years without a home land and it's the only existing ancient culture!

GOD'S LAWS PRESERVED THEIR IDENTITY AND DOCTRINAL DISTINCTION!

God wants to preserve His church in this day in the same manner!

January 23, 2013

ARTICLE XVII: CHURCH DISCIPLINE

We believe in the responsibility and necessity of church discipline as clearly outlined in Scripture. It is a very difficult area and hard to practice. Nevertheless, church discipline has the divine authority of Scripture and is vital to the purity of the church. In church discipline, the following matters must be carefully understood and applied.

A. The Pattern and Basis for Discipline

The discipline of the church is first patterned after the fact that the Lord Himself disciplines His children (Heb. 12:6) and, as a father delegates part of the discipline of the children to the wife, so the Lord has delegated the discipline of the church family to the church itself.

Hebrews 12:6

6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. (KJV)

Discipline is further based on the holy character of God (1 Peter 1:16; Hebrews 12:11). The pattern of God's holiness, his desire for the church to be holy, set apart unto Him, is an important reason for the necessity of church discipline. The church is therefore to clean out the leaven of malice and wickedness from its ranks (1 Corinthians 5:6-8). A failure to discipline in a church today evidences a lack of awareness of the holiness of God.

1 Peter 1:16

16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. (KJV)

Hebrews 12:11

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. (KJV)

1 Corinthians 5:6-8

6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (KJV)

Church discipline must be patterned after and based on the divine commands of Scripture. We have numerous passages which both command and give us biblical directives on the how, when and where of church discipline. Again, a failure to exercise this responsibility demonstrates a lack of obedience and belief in the authority of the Bible (1 Corinthians 5:1-3; Matthew 18:17-18; Titus 3:10; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 5:20; Galatians 6:1).

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1 Corinthians 5:1-3

1 *It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.*

2 *And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.*

3 *For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, (KJV)*

Matthew 18:17-18

17 *And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.*

18 *Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (KJV)*

Titus 3:10

10 *A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; (KJV)*

II Thessalonians 3:6-15

6 *Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.*

7 *For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;*

8 *Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:*

9 *Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.*

10 *For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.*

11 *For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.*

12 *Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.*

13 *But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.*

14 *And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.*

15 *Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. (KJV)*

1 Timothy 5:20

20 *Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. (KJV)*

Galatians 6:1

1 *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. (KJV)*

A final basis for the necessity of church discipline is the testimony of the church in the world. The world observes the behavior and life of the church. When the church acts no differently than the world it loses its credibility and authenticity (1 Peter 2:11-18; 3:8-16; 4:1-4).

1 Peter 2:11-18

11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;

14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.

15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

16 As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

17 Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

18 Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. (KJV)

1 Peter 3:8-16

8 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

9 Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

10 For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:

11 Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

12 For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

13 And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. (KJV)

1 Peter 4:1-4

1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

2 That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

3 *For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:*

4 *Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: (KJV)*

B. The Purposes of Church Discipline

1. Concern for the glory of God and the testimony of the flock.
2. The restoration and building up of the sinning believer.
3. The winning of a soul to Christ (if only a professing Christian).
4. The purity of the local body and its protection from moral and doctrinally impure influences, knowing a little leaven can leaven the entire lump (1 Corinthians 5:6-7).

1 Corinthians 5:6-7

6 *Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?*

7 *Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: (KJV)*

Such goals automatically govern the spirit in which all disciplinary action is to be given. Thus:

1. It must be done in the spirit of humility, gentleness and patience, looking to yourself lest you too be tempted (Galatians 6:1-2; 2 Timothy 2:24-25).

Galatians 6:1-2

1 *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*

2 *Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. (KJV)*

2 Timothy 2:24-25

24 *And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,*

25 *In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; (KJV)*

2. Those who walk disorderly are to be admonished, warned, and appealed to in love (1 Thessalonians 5:14-15; 1 Timothy 5:1-2; Ephesians 4:15; 2 Timothy 4:2). This admonishing, etc., is not restricted to the leaders but may be done by any member.

1 Thessalonians 5:14-15

14 *Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.*

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15 See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. (KJV)

1 Timothy 5:1-2

1 Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren;

2 The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity. (KJV)

Ephesians 4:15

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: (KJV)

2 Timothy 4:2

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. (KJV)

3. If there is no response in repentance and obedience, then members are to withhold intimate fellowship until there is obedience. This is to indicate to the offender that his action has caused a rupture in the harmony of the body. Its goal is restoration and the person is still to be counted as a brother.
4. If the person persists after admonition and withdrawal of intimate fellowship, the final step is rejection or excommunication, accompanied by public rebuke before all.

Examples of church discipline are found in Scripture. The Corinthian believers were to be "gathered together" in order to take action against the offending brother (1 Corinthians 2:6). We also find that it was the whole church in Rome and in Thessalonica who were to take action with regard to the unruly and schismatic and not just a few (Romans 16:17).

1 Corinthians 2:6

6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: (KJV)

Romans 16:17

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. (KJV)

Finally, discipline in the name of our Lord always includes a readiness to forgive. The many or majority who discipline must also be ready and eager to forgive, comfort, and reaffirm their love to the sinning person (2 Corinthians 2:6-8).

2 Corinthians 2:6-8

6 Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many.

7 So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

8 Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him. (KJV)

January 30, 2013

C. The Practice of Church Discipline

1. When it is to be Practiced

Great care must be exercised here. Scripture does not warrant the exercise of church discipline for an individual or a church's pet taboos or peeves. According to Scripture, there are five categories which warrant church discipline. These are:

a. Difficulties between members (Matthew 18:15-17).

Matthew 18:15-17

15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. (KJV)

b. Divisiveness. People causing divisions in the church (Romans 16:17-18; Titus 3:9-11).

Romans 16:17-18

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. (KJV)

Titus 3:9-11

9 But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

10 A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;

11 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself. (KJV)

c. Disorderly conduct. Conduct clearly out of line with the prescribed commands of Scripture (2 Thess. 3:6-15).

II Thessalonians 3:6-15

6 *Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.*

7 *For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;*

8 *Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:*

9 *Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.*

10 *For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.*

11 *For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.*

12 *Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.*

13 *But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.*

14 *And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.*

15 *Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. (KJV)*

- d. Sins of the type mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5: incest, immorality, covetousness, idolatry, abusive speech, drunkenness, and swindling (1 Cor. 5:1, 11).

1 Corinthians 5:1

1 *It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. (KJV)*

1 Corinthians 5:11

11 *But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. (KJV)*

- e. False teaching. Erroneous teaching and views which concern the fundamentals of the faith, not lesser differences of interpretation (1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 2:17-18; also implied in Rev. 2:14-16; Phil. 3:2-3, 15-19).

1 Timothy 1:20

20 *Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme. (KJV)*

2 Timothy 2:17-18

17 *And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;*

18 *Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. (KJV)*

Revelation 2:14-16

14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. (KJV)

Philippians 3:2-3

2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.

3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. (KJV)

Philippians 3:15-19

15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.) (KJV)

The key concerns here are:

- a. the holy character of God,
- b. the testimony of the flock,
- c. the effect upon the unity and purity of the flock, and
- d. the edification and restoration of the individual.

2. How it is to be Practiced

Scriptural procedure here is clear and specific steps are prescribed. They are as follows:

Recognize the offense. Caution one must be sure it is an offense which calls for discipline. Again, the Word is our criterion.

Seek private correction and/or reconciliation with the offender (Matt. 18:15). This is when the problem involves two believers. The one offended or the one who recognizes the offense is to go privately and try to rectify the problem. If this fails, he is to take witnesses, preferably spiritual leaders, so that if it has to be brought before the whole church it can be firmly proven or established (Matt. 18:16-17).

Seek reconciliation through the spiritual leadership if the problem involves an offense that is against the whole body, or is a threat to its unity. Initiatory action following the concept of Galatians 6:1 should be taken by the mature spiritual leaders of the church rather than by just one person. "You who are spiritual" in Galatians 6:1 is plural meaning literally, "you, the spiritual ones"

These initial contacts provide opportunity for loving admonition, correction and forgiveness. On the other hand, if these first steps are not heeded, it constitutes a warning that further action will be taken and gives occasion for serious rebuke (2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:12-14; Titus 2:15; 3:10).

2 Timothy 4:2

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. (KJV)

1Thessalonians 5:12-14

12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

(KJV)

Titus 2:15

15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee. (KJV)

Titus 3:10

10 A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; (KJV)

Seek reconciliation through the whole body. If further action is necessary, it is to be taken before the whole church (Matt. 18:17). This action would consist of a minimum of loss of certain participation privileges, but may result in more severe action.

In essence then, this is the action of the Lord carrying out discipline through the action of the whole body through the leadership of the elders or the spiritually mature (1 Cor. 5:4 "in the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled, "with the power of our Lord Jesus"). Similar heavenly authority is seen in the ratification of this disciplinary action as spelled out in Matthew 18:18-19.

February 6, 2013

ARTICLE XVIII: CHURCH FINANCES

Believers are to give financially from an attitude of commitment to the Lord.

2 Corinthians 8:1-6

1 Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;

2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

3 For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves;

4 Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

5 And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.

6 Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also. (KJV)

It is the policy of Refuge Church to keep the congregation informed of financial needs by means of the weekly bulletin, announcements from the pulpit, or other means as necessary.

The purpose of this information is not to coerce or pressure anyone into giving, but rather to provide avenues for giving as the Lord provides. Each believer is to give according to their ability with a cheerful heart. Additionally, in compliance with federal laws and good business practices, the Refuge Church uses the envelope system for collection of tithes and offerings.

Each giver is afforded the opportunity to place their tax deductible gift in an envelope and place in the offering basket. Members are asked for ministry efficiency to prepare their envelopes in advance of the designated offering time.

2 Corinthians 9:7

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. (KJV)

1 Corinthians 16:2

2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. (KJV)

The Refuge Church believes wholeheartedly that God's financial plan for the church is tithe and offerings.

Because giving is done unto the Lord, it is critical that the local church handle the finances given with care and wisdom both for the glory of the Lord and for the testimony of the church.

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2 Corinthians 8:20-21

20 Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us:

21 Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. (KJV)

With this view in mind, the following outlines the policies of handling financial decisions:

All gifts given as a designated gift will be used as designated so long as those designations are in accord with biblical principles. If any special gifts are given with the directions to use it in whatever area has the greatest need, the Church reserves the right to decide how that gift will be used. All other gifts will go into the general fund.

The local church has the privilege and responsibility to provide financial support for the pastor and his family.

Philippians 4:14-17

14 Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.

15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. (KJV)

All tithes received by Refuge Church are primarily designated to support the pastor. All church offerings are for the church. With the approval of the pastor, special offering may be collected for designated purposes.

All collection of funds must be approved by the pastor. Any time funds are collected in the name of the church a complete financial report must be submitted to the pastor.

All church funds must be kept in approved church accounts. Petty cash may be kept on hand up to \$200.00.

Financial reports of all accounts are required at each All Saint Meetings. In order to keep orderly records, a secretary and treasurer shall be appointed by the pastor. The secretary keep all necessary books, write necessary checks to pay bills, prepare monthly financial statements and any other duties as prescribed by the pastor.

ARTICLE XIX: GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Suggestions and proposals from the flock can be a vital and healthy avenue by which the leadership may minister to the rest of the flock. When handled scripturally, this type of communication edifies the body, ministers to the needs of the flock, helps preserve and promote unity within the church and brings glory to God.

Following the principles outlined above, any member of the flock who harbors a disagreement about any policy or procedure promoted by the church or its leadership, should as a first step, prayerfully and privately approach the leadership. This may be done through informal consultation with the pastor.

It is recognized that these steps should be taken prior to public discussion of any issue so as to help the leadership minister to the body more effectively and to help avoid discord and disunity within the flock (Proverbs 13:3; 16:27-28; 17:4).

Proverbs 13:3

3 He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction. (KJV)

Proverbs 16:27-28

27 An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips there is as a burning fire.

28 A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends. (KJV)

Proverbs 17:4

4 A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue. (KJV)

The church leadership should seek to prayerfully accept and address any complaint thus presented and seek to resolve all problems in a manner which best promotes unity (Prov. 16:21-24). When these policies are not followed, causing factions and strife, it will be necessary to exercise church discipline to deal with the offending member (Titus 2:1-15)

Proverbs 16:21-24

21 The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.

22 Understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools is folly.

23 The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.

24 Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones. (KJV)

Titus 2:1-15

1 But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:

- 2 *That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.*
- 3 *The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;*
- 4 *That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,*
- 5 *To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.*
- 6 *Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.*
- 7 *In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,*
- 8 *Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.*
- 9 *Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;*
- 10 *Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.*
- 11 *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,*
- 12 *Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;*
- 13 *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;*
- 14 *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*
- 15 *These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.*

ARTICLE XX: AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended or replaced when the need for change is recognized by the pastor and members of the church body.

At the time such need is believed to be present, the elders, after consultation with the body, shall make provisional modification in light of Scripture, and all essential information on this matter shall be communicated to the congregation in written form, providing adequate time for study and response.

A date will be proposed for acceptance of the revisions at a congregational meeting. The congregation will then vote to see if there is a unity of acceptance and understanding of the amendments.

ARTICLE XXI: DISSOLUTION OF PROPERTY

In the event this church body is dissolved, disbands or ceases to function as a church for any reason, the title to all property both real and personal shall pass to and be vested in the Florida Ecclesiastical Diocese Church of our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.

In such an event, the Trustees of the Florida Ecclesiastical Diocese Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ are hereby authorized and directed by the congregation of Refuge Church, to take possession of all property, both real and personal, belonging to this Church and shall pay out of such properties and assets all indebtedness of said church as quickly as reasonably possible. After the payment of all debts of the church, the remaining assets may be managed or disposed of to the best interest of the Florida Ecclesiastical Diocese Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

By-Laws

ARTICLE I: DUTIES OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1:

The Pastor shall perform all duties usually pertaining to that office and have general supervision of the work of all church staff, ministries and committees. He is primarily responsible for the spiritual growth and climate of the church.

SECTION 2:

The Assistant Pastor shall perform the duties of the Pastor in his absence.

SECTION 3:

The Treasurer shall be responsible for safe keeping of all monies belonging to the church and paying out the same at the discretion of the Pastor, Board of Deacons and Finance Committee. He shall make a report of the finances at each monthly All Saints Meeting.

SECTION 4:

The Secretary shall maintain a careful record of all members, their current status and addresses, as well as organize and maintain all church files.

The Secretary shall facilitate all church correspondence as needed, produce reports as requested, and keep an up-to- date calendar of events to avoid conflicts and to make sure all church announcements are made with sufficient notice.

The Secretary shall keep a careful record of all church business transactions, meetings, baptisms, weddings, funerals, memorials and programs, ensuring that the church is properly represented when necessary (exp. cards, flowers, telegram, etc.).

The Secretary shall receive, sort and distribute all church mail.

ARTICLE II: BOARD OF PRESBYTERS

SECTION 1:

Pastor--Term of office is indefinite, as long as life is in harmony with the word of God.

SECTION 2:

Term of office of Elders (Assistant Pastors) shall be three years.

ARTICLE III: BOARD OF DEACONS

SECTION 1:

Deacons shall be appointed by the pastor and licensed by the national organization.

SECTION 2:

The term of office shall be three years after which the Deacon must be re-appointed to serve by the pastor.

SECTION 3:

Deacons may serve in the active or inactive status. Active Deacons have specific duties appointed by the church and pastor. Inactive Deacons are relieved of certain responsibilities.

SECTION 4:

The Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of the Board of Deacons.

SECTION 5:

The pastor shall appoint the Chairman, and the Board of Deacons shall elect the following officers from among appointed Deacons; Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, and Secretary.

ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS

SECTION 1:

The business meeting of this Church shall be held quarterly on the first Tuesday of the month (February, May, August, November).

SECTION 2:

Only members in good standing shall have voting and speaking rights with all meeting privileges.

ARTICLE V: AMENDMENTS

These By-laws may be amended in whole or in part at any monthly all saints meeting.