



# Membership

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# Dear Prospective Member,

## Welcome to Membership Class

Isolation. We were never made to live this way. God designed us from the very beginning to be with people, to have relationships with others, to be committed to others in some way. But what happens too often is that we live lives alone, disconnected, and separate from others. We, as a church family, are encouraged that you are desiring to take the next step in learning what it means to be connected to our church family.

A few things that we need to establish from the beginning:

1. There is no perfect pastor or church leaders in our family.
2. There are no perfect church members.
3. There is a perfect Savior that we serve.
4. We desire to work together as the church to serve our Savior!

We hope we didn't lose you above on #1 or #2. We look forward to serving with you to make much of #3 and #4. We are thankful for the opportunity to get to know you, your salvation story, your gifts, and your desires to serve God here at Edgewood Bible Church.

Your Imperfect Pastor,

Jeff Coulter

# Membership Class Process

## Objectives:

We want to help you understand:  
Biblical Church Membership  
Blessing of Membership

## Potential Responses:

1. Take steps to become a member at Edgewood Bible Church.
2. Decide that Edgewood Bible Church is not the church family for you.
3. Address unanswered questions with our leadership team.

Too often, people evaluate a church in much the same way they choose a cruise ship.

## CRUISE SHIP:

Do I like the music they play in the ballroom?  
Do I like the captain and staff?  
Do I get good service and are my needs met?  
Is it pleasant and comfortable?  
Do I like the experience enough to sail with them again?

## BATTLESHIP:

We believe a more appropriate metaphor for a church is a BATTLESHIP, and the right questions to ask are:

Is the ship flying the right flag and fighting for a clear mission?  
Does the captain understand that he and his staff serve a higher authority? Do they gladly take their orders from Him?  
Do the officers create opportunities for all crew members to be prepared and successful on their tour of duty?  
Is each individual given an opportunity to contribute in a significant way to the mission?  
Is every individual cared for, developed, and honored in their efforts?

In short, as a part of the body of Christ, God calls us to be contributors not consumers.

# Purpose of Edgewood Bible Church

## **Who we are and why we gather every week at EBC:**

As a part of our disciple-making process, we gather each week at EBC for a corporate time of worship. The worship service occurs at 10:30am. We believe that we cannot be sanctified as believers in Christ without meeting together. We desire all members to be regular attenders to Sunday morning worship. When we gather in our weekly worship services we hear God's Word, we sing God's Word, we pray God's Word, we read God's Word, and we give according to God's Word.

At EBC we seek to be an obedient church by fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt 28:19- 20). We take our call to make disciples seriously. In doing so we believe it is important for us to "teach the things Christ has commanded us."

Please read what we believe are the doctrinal essentials to live by as described later in this packet.

## Membership Defined

### **Biblical Church Membership:**

Membership is much more than attending a worship service on Sunday morning. Members of EBC are called to serve the church family, to sacrifice for the cause of Christ, and are responsible to pray and minister to one another. When joining as a member of EBC you are committing to be a part of a spiritual family that will provide support and encouragement in your walk with Christ. Becoming a member of EBC is a five-step process with two additional steps that are encouraged: (1) Read through the Membership packet. (2) In order to be a teacher at EBC you need to teach according to our "Doctrinal Instruction" statement, but to be a member you must be in full agreement with our "Doctrinal Essentials" statement. (3) Agree with our church covenant and the statement on church discipline which is confirmed with your signature. (4) Meet with a team of two elders to share your personal testimony and to ask any questions that you may have. (5) Be introduced to the congregation as a potential member of EBC. The following steps are not required but highly encouraged. (1) Select a care group to join. (2) Choose and commit to an area of service at EBC.

Following this process, we encourage the congregation to pray about your appointment of membership for two weeks, and if they have any issues about your membership, they are to come to you directly to discuss these issues. If there are any issues that cannot be settled, we would ask that both parties would come speak to the elders. If there are no concerns, you will be welcomed into membership with other new members during a Sunday morning service to be scheduled at a later date.

## Blessings of Membership

Membership is a commitment to a local church, but with that commitment comes incredible blessings. Here are at least four: (1) It will connect you with a spiritual family who can support you in your walk with Jesus, (2) It is a place where you can exercise your spiritual gifts of ministry to serve the body and the community, (3) It allows you to voluntarily place yourself under the spiritual care of the pastors and elders, and (4) It provides you the accountability needed in the process of growing as a disciple of Jesus Christ. There are more blessings not listed and we look forward to experiencing those with you as you join with us!

# Church Leadership

## Pastors, Elders, Deacons, Ministry and Church Staff

### Pastoral Staff

Jeff Coulter - Senior Pastor - [Jeff.Coulter@EdgewoodBibleChurch.org](mailto:Jeff.Coulter@EdgewoodBibleChurch.org)

Ryan Peterson - Associate Pastor - [Ryan.Peterson@EdgewoodBibleChurch.org](mailto:Ryan.Peterson@EdgewoodBibleChurch.org)

### Elders

Jeff Coulter

Ron Ferguson

Paul Hunter

Eric Peterson

Ryan Peterson

Jeff Rogers

Pat Thatcher

### Deacons

Jim Dorrough

Kris Hakanson

Gary Rice

### Church Staff

Kristin Peterson - Office Manager

Michelle De Monnin - Graphics & Media

### Preschool Staff

Marcie Coe - Preschool Director

Debbie Welch - Preschool Teacher

Elizabeth Ferrier – Preschool Teacher

# Places to Grow and Serve at Edgewood Bible Church

## Children's Ministries

*Serving children from birth – 6th grade*

### Nursery

Amanda Rice, 253-732-5212

Volunteers care for ages birth-to-3 during Sunday School/church/events.

More helpers needed.

### Sunday School

Contact Greg Coe, 253-426-5882

Volunteers teach 3-5 yr./gr 1-2/3-4/5-6

Subs and helpers needed.

### Children's Church

Pat Peterson, 253-927-6773

Preschool/K, 8-18 kids

Carlee Peterson, 253-353-6459

Grades 1-3, 15-25 kids

Volunteers lead Bible stories & activities

Helpers, subs welcome in both age groups.

### Awana

Donna Ragazzo, 253-222-0082

Volunteers lead & disciple kids.

Need: More adult & teen helpers.

## Student Ministries

*Serving children from 7th grade – 12th grade*

### Youth/Teens

Pastor Ryan Peterson, 253-353-6605

Pastor Ryan & volunteers lead Bible studies and Sunday School classes.

Volunteers needed to provide snacks.

## College Career

### Sunday School Class & Activities

Jeff Rogers, 253-508-9174

Zach Kispert, Aaron & Kristin Peterson, and Rebecca & Jeff Rogers lead class.

## Adult Ministries

### Audio/Visual team

Neil Bernotski, 206-498-1671

Volunteers are trained for sound/video for Sunday services, VBS, events.

Volunteers needed.

### Building Maintenance

Kris Hakanson, 253-863-3909

Volunteers help maintain and repair buildings.

Helpers welcome.

### Greeters

Rick Thomas, 253-376-5613

Teams greet worship service attendees.

Subs welcome.

## Grounds/Entrance Flowers/Plants

Contact Gary Rice, 253-891-2901

Volunteers maintain grounds & help yearly "spruce-up."

More help needed.

## IT (Information Technology)

Gary Lent, 253-848-1116

Volunteers plan hardware/software changes to computers/printers/phones/Wi-Fi.

Helpers welcome, when needed.

## Men's Ministry

Todd Wernet, 805-434-7457

Men meet every other month for a Saturday breakfast, discussion and/or activity.

We invite you to join us!

## Men's Bible Study

Ron Ferguson, 253-927-8018

See website for current studies

Come study with us!

## Mercy Ministry

Valorie Rice, 253-927-8018

Volunteers make meals for births, illness/recovery, funerals, about once monthly.

Sign up to help as needs arise.

## Missions

Pat Thatcher, 253-732-3875

Answer questions/provide lists of financially-supported & prayer-supported missionaries.

More 'Card Team' helpers welcome each month.

## Music

Please email the office if you are interested in serving in the music ministry.

## Ushers

Kris Hakanson, 253-863-3909

Volunteers assist attendees to available seats.

More volunteers welcome.

## Visitation

Coordinator Needed

Volunteers visit EBC members in hospital/home/recovery sites.

## Women's Ministry

Marcie Coe, 253-426-5882

Volunteers host 6-12 events each year.

Watch for requests for help as events approach.

## Women's Bible Studies

Shirley Benson, 253-841-3821

See website for current studies offered.

Come study with us!

# Growth at Edgewood Bible Church

## **How we equip the saints:**

Another part of our disciple-making process is growing in your walk with Christ by joining a care group. We strongly encourage people to join a care group if they are not presently a part of one. These groups are important because it gives opportunity for people to grow together in their walk with the Lord. In our care groups we seek to accomplish three things:

- 1) Bible Study – helping people understand more about the Word of God and how it applies to their daily lives.
- 2) Fellowship - helping people experience community as the body of Christ and to understand their life as a Christian is not just for themselves.
- 3) Accountability – helping people strive to live a life worthy of the calling we have received. Allowing other people to encourage spiritual growth in each other's lives.

**For a current offering of Care Groups, Bible Studies, Core Seminars, and other ministries, visit [www.EdgewoodBibleChurch.org](http://www.EdgewoodBibleChurch.org).**



# Our Church Covenant

## Introduction

Christians have always understood that their belief in Jesus produced a certain kind of life. Faith without works is dead (James 2:17). However, the New Testament reveals that one of the best places where we see faith worked out is in the local church. Jesus himself taught his disciples, “By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:35). The apostles gave expression to this in their letters to the early churches in all their “one another” commands. As a result of being united in the gospel, Christians are to love one another (1 John 4:11), serve one another (Gal. 5:13), accept one another (Rom. 15:7), be devoted to one another (Rom. 12:10), bear with one another (Eph. 4:2), teach and admonish one another (Col. 3:16), offer hospitality to one another (1 Peter 4:9), and carry out many other such commands to one another. In other words, in the unity of the church, the truth and beauty of the gospel is to be displayed.

As a result, Christians have long understood that committing to a church meant not only committing to Scriptural truths but committing to a way of life. So Christians would give expression to the latter commitment through a Church Covenant. Rather than being a summary of the doctrinal teaching of Scripture (Doctrinal Statement), the Church Covenant is a summary of the ethical teaching of Scripture, outlining the kind of life that these Christians were committing to living out and wanted to be held accountable to in joining that church. Below is our church covenant with a brief commentary on each commitment.

## Opening

*Having, as we trust, been brought by Divine Grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to give up ourselves to Him, and having been baptized upon our profession of faith, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, relying on His gracious aid, solemnly and joyfully renew our covenant with each other.*

Our Church covenant opens with a reminder of our gracious salvation that was bought by our Lord Jesus Christ and through salvation he brings His gracious aid as we are united with Him. This is the foundation of every commitment we are making in the Christian life. We are not pursuing these things in order to be saved, but doing these things as a result of our salvation in Jesus Christ.

## Engaging in Community

*We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

Our first commitment is to work and pray for the unity of the church family. We believe and teach that this is only possible through the gift of the Holy Spirit that God has placed in every Christian through the gospel. We seek to give expression of that unity as we seek to live in the bond of peace with one another. Whether life is going well or not, we will seek to live in unity as committed Christians, cherishing each other.

*We will walk together in brotherly love, as become the members of a Christian Church, exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require.*

We cannot fight sin and walk in holiness alone. The Christian life is not meant to be lived alone. God, in his sovereignty and grace, gave us a local body of believers to help one another in love, as we walk with Christ. In joining this local church family, you are committed to being a part of what God is doing, both in growing in your own spiritual walk and helping others grow. We will gently and carefully admonish each other, so as to keep us holy as we pursue Christ in our lives.

*We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect to pray for ourselves and others.*

We are not to give up meeting together because we know that it is in that context that we get to live out the truth of the gospel in community. We will make attendance to the Sunday morning gathered worship a priority for our lives and we will commit to be in regular prayer for the members of Edgewood Bible Church. We commit to pray through the membership directory of EBC, and other needs as made known through the church family.

### **Pursuing Christ Together**

*We will endeavor to bring up such as may at any time be under our care, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a pure and loving example to seek the salvation of our family and friends.*

An example of our pursuit of Christ is in the home. In whatever living situation you find yourself in, we understand that we are to use our lives to point people to Jesus, especially those who are nearest to us. However, often these close relationships can be some of the hardest ones to share the gospel. But in the church, we pray for one another and encourage one another to persevere.

*We will rejoice at each other's happiness and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows.*

Our relationships should be characterized by a concern for others, whether in rejoicing with them in their joys or bearing patiently with one another and pointing each other to our hope in the gospel.

### **Proclaiming the Gospel**

*We will seek, by Divine aid, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and remembering that, as we have been voluntarily buried by baptism and raised again from the symbolic grave, so there is on us a special obligation now to lead a new and holy life.*

As our church, we bear witness to the truth of the gospel corporately. Therefore, our corporate witness begins not with our proclamation, but in the way we help one another walk in faithfulness and holiness. Sin is deceitful and we need other believers to humbly and lovingly

point us towards the truth. In guarding one another from sin, we preserve the witness of the church.

*We will work together for the continuance of a faithful evangelical ministry in this church, as we sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines. We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.*

And so, we commit ourselves to working together to promote the proclamation of the gospel here at EBC. This happens primarily on Sunday mornings, as we gather to hear the preaching of the Word, and to observe baptism and the Lord's Supper. But this also takes place as the members of this church scatter throughout the city of Edgewood and beyond to take the gospel into their workplaces, schools, neighborhoods, and even as we send workers who take the gospel to the ends of the earth.

*We will, when we move from this place, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.*

For as long as we live and follow Christ here on earth, we commit ourselves to doing this not as lone rangers, but in the context of the local church family. We long for that day when we will all be gathered together in one congregation. But until that day, we give expression to that hope as we commit ourselves to local churches wherever God places us.

### **Benediction**

*May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.*

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Why is it a good idea for a church not only to have a Statement of Faith, but also a Church Covenant?
2. Does this covenant's picture of church community line up with what you've experienced? What about it would you enjoy? What about it would be difficult?
3. What is the relationship between our personal pursuit of Christ and our corporate pursuit of Christ?  
How does our corporate life together relate to our mission to proclaim the gospel?

# Doctrinal Essentials

An additional document, Doctrinal Instruction, which follows Doctrinal Essentials, is set forth as a further explanation of our doctrinal teaching. This document presents a more detailed explanation of our understanding of orthodox Christian teaching and also gives the scriptural basis for our teaching in Christian theology. You must agree to these Doctrinal Essentials to be a member of Edgewood Bible Church.

## **The Holy Scriptures**

We believe the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, to be the inspired Word of God, without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men and the Divine and final authority for Christian faith and life.

(Psalm 19:7-11; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

## **God**

We believe in one God, Creator of and Sovereign over all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

(Deuteronomy 6:4; Genesis 1:1; Psalm 115:3; 1 Timothy 1:17; Matthew 28:19)

We believe that the Father, through creation, is father to all men. He becomes, by the grace of adoption, the intimate father of all whom He has sovereignly redeemed through Jesus Christ. (Galatians 4:4-6; Ephesians 1:5)

We believe that Jesus Christ is fully God and truly man, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. Through His perfect obedience and atoning death, He has fully satisfied the justice of God, propitiating God's wrath and securing eternal righteousness for all who receive Him through faith. He arose bodily from the dead and has ascended into heaven, where, at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He is now High Priest and Advocate for all who believe.

(John 1:1-2, 14; Luke 1:35; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 3:24-25; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Hebrews 4:14-16)

We believe that the Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment; and, that He is the supernatural agent in regeneration, baptizing all who believe into the body of Christ, indwelling, guiding, empowering, and sealing them unto the day of redemption.

(John 16:8-11; 2 Corinthians 3:6; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 1:13-14)

## **Man**

We believe that man was created in the image of God, but, in Adam's sin, fell, inheriting a sinful nature, becoming alienated from God, and, of himself, is utterly unable to remedy his lost condition.

(Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:22-23; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3, 12)

## **Salvation**

We believe that salvation is wholly of God, ordained by the Father, purchased by the Son, and applied by the Spirit.

(Romans 8:28-29; Ephesians 1:4-6; John 3:5-7)

We believe that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ provides the only ground for justification and redemption for all who believe, and that this salvation is, by the grace of God alone, obtained through faith alone in the work of Christ alone.  
(Romans 4:25; Ephesians 1:7; Ephesians 2:8-9)

### **The Church**

We believe that the true church is composed of all such persons who have exercised saving faith in Jesus Christ, been born of the Spirit, and, by the Spirit, are united together in the body of Christ of which the Lord Jesus is the head.  
(1 Corinthians 1:2; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Colossians 1:18)

We believe that believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances to be observed by the church. They are, however, not to be regarded as means of salvation.  
(Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Lord of the church and that every local church has the right, under Christ, to decide and govern its own affairs.  
(1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 13:1-4; Acts 20:28)

### **Last Things**

We believe in the personal, visible, bodily, and imminent return of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that this "Blessed Hope" has a vital bearing on the personal life and service of the believer.  
(Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; Titus 2:12-13)

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead; of the believer to everlasting blessedness and joy with the Lord; of the unbeliever to judgment and everlasting conscious punishment.  
(Matthew 25:46; John 5:28-29)

# Doctrinal Instruction

This church teaches according to the following doctrinal statement. In order to teach at EBC, you must agree to teach in accordance with the Doctrinal Instruction as follows.

## PREFACE

Recognizing that the Bible is the very word of the Living God to man, and understanding the priority of knowing and obeying its truths, the elders at Edgewood Bible Church are deeply committed to studying and teaching Scripture with diligence and authority. Thus, the central ministry of Edgewood Bible Church is the continuous imparting of biblical truth to the people of God that they may know God and serve Him in worship and ministry. These are the primary doctrines of the Christian faith, and they reflect the heart of the teaching here at Edgewood Bible Church.

## THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

We teach that the Bible is God's written revelation to man, and thus the sixty-six books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God (1 Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:20-21). We teach that the Word of God is an objective, propositional revelation (1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 2:13), verbally inspired in every word (2 Timothy 3:16), absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God breathed.

We teach the literal, grammatical historical interpretation of Scripture which affirms the belief that the opening chapters of Genesis present creation in six literal days (Genesis 1:31; Exodus 31:17).

We teach that the Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice (Matthew 5:18; Matthew 24:35; John 10:35; John 16:12-13; John 17:17; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

We teach that God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man (2 Peter 1:20-21) without error in the whole or in the part (Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16).

We teach that, whereas there may be several applications of any given passage of Scripture, there is but one true interpretation. The meaning of Scripture is to be found as one diligently applies the literal grammatical historical method of interpretation under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit (John 7:17; John 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 2:7-15; 1 John 2:20). It is the responsibility of believers to ascertain carefully the true intent and meaning of Scripture, recognizing that proper application is binding on all generations. Yet the truth of Scripture stands in judgment of men; never do men stand in judgment of it.

## GOD

We teach that there is but one living and true God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; 1 Corinthians 8:4), an infinite, all knowing Spirit (John 4:24), perfect in all His attributes, one in

essence, eternally existing in three Persons; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14) each equally deserving worship and obedience.

## **GOD, THE FATHER**

We teach that God the Father, the first Person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Psalm 145:8-9; 1 Corinthians 8:6). He is the Creator of all things (Genesis 1:1-31; Ephesians 3:9). As the only absolute and omnipotent Ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:36). His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator He is Father to all men (Ephesians 4:6), but He is spiritual Father only to believers (Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Ephesians 1:11). He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (1 Chronicles 29:11). In His sovereignty He is neither author nor approver of sin (Habakkuk 1:13; John 8:38-47), nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (1 Peter 1:17). He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own (Ephesians 1:4-6); He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ; He adopts as his own all those who come to Him; and He becomes, upon adoption, Father to His own (John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5-9).

## **GOD, THE SON**

We teach that Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, possesses all the divine Excellencies, and in these He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father (John 10:30; John 14:9).

We teach that God the Father created according to His own will, through His Son, Jesus Christ, by whom all things continue in existence and in operation (John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2).

We teach that in the incarnation (God becoming man) Christ surrendered only the prerogatives of deity but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind. In His incarnation, the eternally existing second Person of the Trinity accepted all the essential characteristics of humanity and so became the God Man (Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 2:9).

We teach that Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity in indivisible oneness (Micah 5:2; John 5:23; John 14:9-10; Colossians 2:9).

We teach that our Lord Jesus Christ was virgin born (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23, 25; Luke 1:26-35); that He was God incarnate (John 1:1, 14); and that the purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God, redeem men, and rule over God's kingdom (Psalm 2:7-9; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:29; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 7:25-26; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

We teach that our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross and that His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive (John 10:15; Romans 3:24-25; Romans 5:8; 1 Peter 2:24).

We teach that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead and that He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He now mediates as our

Advocate and High Priest (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:38-39; Acts 2:30-31; Romans 4:25; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; Hebrews 9:24; 1 John 2:1).

We teach that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son and gave proof that God has accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross. Jesus' bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers (John 5:26-29; John 14:19; Romans 1:4; Romans 4:25; Romans 6:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23).

We teach that Jesus Christ will return to receive the church, which is His Body, unto Himself at the rapture, and returning with His church in glory, will establish His millennial kingdom on earth (Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20).

We teach that the Lord Jesus Christ is the One through whom God will judge all mankind (John 5:22-23): a. Believers (1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10) b. Living inhabitants of the earth at His glorious return (Matthew 25:31-46). c. Unbelieving dead at the Great White Throne (Revelation 20:11-15). As the Mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5), the Head of His Body the church (Ephesians 1:22; Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18), and the coming universal King, who will reign on the throne of David (Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:31-33), He is the final Judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as Lord and Savior (Matthew 25:14-46; Acts 17:30-31).

We teach that on the basis of the efficacy of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, the penalty, the power, and one day the very presence of sin; and that he is declared righteous, given eternal life, and adopted into the family of God (Romans 3:25; Romans 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Peter 3:18).

## **GOD, THE HOLY SPIRIT**

We teach that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, eternal, underived, possessing all the attributes of personality and deity including intellect (1 Corinthians 2:10-13), emotions (Ephesians 4:30), will (1 Corinthians 12:11), eternity (Hebrews 9:14), omnipresence (Psalm 139:7-10), omniscience (Isaiah 40:13-14), omnipotence (Romans 15:13), and truthfulness (John 16:13). In all the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; Acts 28:25-26; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; and Jeremiah 31:31-34 with Hebrews 10:15-17).

We teach that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind. We recognize His sovereign activity in creation (Genesis 1:2), the incarnation (Matthew 1:18), the written revelation (2 Peter 1:20-21), and the work of salvation (John 3:5-7).

We teach that the work of the Holy Spirit in this age began at Pentecost when He came from the Father as promised by Christ (John 14:16-17; John 15:26) to initiate and complete the building of the Body of Christ, which is His church (1 Corinthians 12:13). The broad scope of His divine activity includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ and transforming believers into the image of Christ (John 16:7-9; Acts 1:5; Acts 2:4; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 2:22).

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign Agent in regeneration,



baptizing all believers into the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). The Holy Spirit also indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers them for service, and seals them unto the day of redemption (Romans 8:9; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13).

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the divine Teacher, who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they committed to writing God's revelation, the Bible. Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation, and it is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with (controlled by) the Spirit (John 16:13; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 5:18; 2 Peter 1:19-21; 1 John 2:20, 27).

We teach that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church. The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by ostentatious displays, but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith (John 16:13-14; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

We teach, in this respect, that God the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all His gifts for the perfecting of the saints today and that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth, and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers (1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 1 Corinthians 13:8-10; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12; Hebrews 2:4).

## **MAN**

We teach that man was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness. Man was created free of sin with a rational nature, intelligence, volition, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God (Genesis 2:7, 15-25; James 3:9).

We teach that God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God, enjoy God's fellowship, live his life in the will of God, and by this accomplish God's purpose for man in the world (Isaiah 43:7; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11).

We teach that in Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God, man lost his innocence; incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death; became subject to the wrath of God; and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. With no recuperative powers to enable him to recover himself, man is hopelessly lost. Man's salvation is thereby wholly of God's grace through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ (Genesis 2:16-17; Genesis 3:1-19; John 3:36; Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14; 1 John 1:8).

We teach that because all men were in Adam, a nature corrupted by Adam's sin has been transmitted to all men of all ages, Jesus Christ being the only exception. All men are thus sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration (Psalm 14:1-3; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:9-18, 23; Romans 5:10-12).

## **SALVATION**

We teach that salvation is wholly of God by grace on the basis of the redemption of Jesus Christ, the merit of His shed blood, and not on the basis of human merit or works (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; Ephesians 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

## **REGENERATION**

We teach that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5). It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God (John 5:24), when the repentant sinner, as enabled by the Holy Spirit, responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation. Genuine regeneration is manifested by fruits worthy of repentance as demonstrated in righteous attitudes and conduct. Good works will be its proper evidence and fruit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 2:10), and will be experienced to the extent that the believer submits to the control of the Holy Spirit in his life through faithful obedience to the Word of God (Ephesians 5:17-21; Philippians 2:12b; Colossians 3:16; 2 Peter 1:4-10). This obedience causes the believer to be increasingly conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). Such conformity is climaxed in the believer's glorification at Christ's coming (Romans 8:17; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 3:2-3).

## **ELECTION**

We teach that election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies (Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 1:1-2).

We teach that sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord (Ezekiel 18:23, 32; Ezekiel 33:11; John 3:18-19, 36; John 5:40; Romans 9:22-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Revelation 22:17). Nevertheless, since sovereign grace includes the means of receiving the gift of salvation as well as the gift itself, sovereign election will result in what God determines. All whom the Father calls to Himself will come in faith and all who come in faith the Father will receive (John 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48; James 4:8).

We teach that the unmerited favor that God grants to totally depraved sinners is not related to any initiative of their own part nor to God's anticipation of what they might do by their own will, but is solely of His sovereign grace and mercy (Ephesians 1:4-7; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Peter 1:2).

We teach that election should not be looked upon as based merely on abstract sovereignty. God is truly sovereign but He exercises this sovereignty in harmony with His other attributes, especially His omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, grace, and love (Romans 9:11-16). This sovereignty will always exalt the will of God in a manner totally consistent with His character as revealed in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 11:25-28; 2 Timothy 1:9).

## **JUSTIFICATION**

We teach that justification before God is an act of God (Romans 8:33) by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 3:19; Acts 11:18; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Isaiah 55:6-7) and confess Him as sovereign Lord (Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Philippians 2:11). This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man (Romans 3:20; 4:6) and involves the

imputation of our sins to Christ (Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24) and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us (1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21). By this means God is enabled to "be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:26).

## **SANCTIFICATION**

We teach that every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God by justification and is therefore declared to be holy and is therefore identified as a saint. This sanctification is positional and instantaneous and should not be confused with progressive sanctification. This sanctification has to do with the believer's standing, not his present walk or condition (Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11; Hebrews 3:1; Hebrews 10:10, 14; Hebrews 13:12; 1 Peter 1:2).

We teach that there is also by the work of the Holy Spirit a progressive sanctification by which the state of the believer is brought closer to the standing the believer positionally enjoys through justification. Through obedience to the Word of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:17,19; Romans 6:1-22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 1 Thessalonians 5:23). In this respect, we teach that every saved person is involved in a daily conflict- the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh- but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The struggle nevertheless stays with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended. All claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. Eradication of sin is not possible, but the Holy Spirit does provide for victory over sin (Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 3:12; Colossians 3:9-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).

## **SECURITY**

We teach that all the redeemed once saved are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 5:24; John 6:37-40; John 10:27-30; Romans 5:9-10; Romans 8:1, 31-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 7:25; Hebrews 13:5; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24).

We teach that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion for sinful living and carnality (Romans 6:15-22; Romans 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13, 25-26; Titus 2:11-14).

## **SEPARATION**

We teach that separation from sin is clearly called for throughout the Old and New Testaments, and that the Scriptures clearly indicate that in the last days apostasy and worldliness shall increase (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5).

We teach that out of deep gratitude for the undeserved grace of God granted to us and because our glorious God is so worthy of our total consecration, all the saved should live in such a manner as to demonstrate our adoring love to God and so as not to bring reproach upon our Lord and Savior.

We also teach that separation from all religious apostasy and worldly and sinful practices is commanded of us by God (Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 1

John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11).

We teach that believers should be separated unto our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; Hebrews 12:1-2) and affirm that the Christian life is a life of obedient righteousness that reflects the teaching of the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:2-12) and a continual pursuit of holiness (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Hebrews 12:14; Titus 2:11-14; 1 John 3:1-10).

We teach that sexual intimacy is a wonderful gift of God that is only to be expressed between one man and one woman within the love and bonds of marriage (Genesis 2:24-25; Proverbs 5:18; 1 Corinthians 7:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5; Hebrews 13:4). Therefore, we believe that any other form of sexual intimacy is both immoral and a perversion of God's gift (Leviticus 18:1-30; Proverbs 6:32; 1 Corinthians 6:18; Romans 1:26-27).

## **THE CHURCH**

We teach that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual Body, the church (1 Corinthians 12:12-13), the bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8), of which Christ is the Head (Ephesians 1:22; Ephesians 4:15; Colossians 1:18).

We teach that the formation of the church, the Body of Christ, began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 38-47) and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the rapture (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

We teach that the church is thus a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all born again believers in this present age (Ephesians 2:11-3:6). The church is distinct from Israel (1 Corinthians 10:32), a mystery not revealed until this age (Ephesians 3:1-6; Ephesians 5:32).

We teach that the establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:23, 27; Acts 20:17, 28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1) and that the members of the one spiritual Body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies (1 Corinthians 11:18-20; Hebrews 10:25).

We teach that the one supreme authority for the church is Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18) and that church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders (also called bishops, pastors, and pastor teachers; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11) and deacons, both of whom must be biblically qualified men (1 Timothy 2:12; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-5).

We teach that these leaders lead or rule as servants of Christ (1 Timothy 5:17-22) and have His authority in directing the church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

We teach the importance of discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2), mutual

accountability of all believers to each other (Matthew 18:5-14), as well as the need for discipline of sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of Scripture (Matthew 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16).

We teach the autonomy of the local church, free from any external authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations (Titus 1:5). We teach that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith. Each local church, however, through its elders and their interpretation and application of Scripture, should be the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. The elders should determine all other matters of membership, policy, discipline, benevolence, and government as well (Acts 15:19-31; Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 5:4-7, 13; 1 Peter 5:1-4).

We teach that the purpose of the church is to glorify God (Ephesians 3:21) by building itself up in the faith (Ephesians 4:13-16), by instruction of the Word (2 Timothy 2:2, 15; 3:16-17), by fellowship (Acts 2:47; 1 John 1:3), by keeping the ordinances (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42) and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:42).

We teach the calling of all saints to the work of service (1 Corinthians 15:58; Ephesians 4:12; Revelation 22:12).

We teach the need of the church to cooperate with God as He accomplishes His purpose in the world. To that end, He gives the church spiritual gifts. First, He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:7-12), and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the Body of Christ (Romans 12:5-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

We teach that there were two kinds of gifts given the early church: miraculous gifts of divine revelation and healing, given temporarily in the apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the apostles' message (Hebrews 2:3-4; 2 Corinthians 12:12); and ministering gifts, given to equip believers for edifying one another. With the New Testament revelation now complete, Scripture becomes the sole test of the authenticity of a man's message, and confirming gifts of a miraculous nature are no longer necessary to validate a man or his message (1 Corinthians 13:8-12). Miraculous gifts can even be counterfeited by Satan so as to deceive even believers (1 Corinthians 13:13-14:12; Revelation 13:13-14). The only gifts in operation today are those non-revelatory equipping gifts given for edification (Romans 12:6-8).

We teach that no one possesses the gift of healing today but that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith and will answer in accordance with His own perfect will for the sick, suffering, and afflicted (Luke 18:1-6; John 5:7-9; 2 Corinthians 12:6-10; James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:14-15).

We teach that two ordinances have been committed to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:38-42). Christian baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36-39) is the solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer showing forth his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen

Savior, and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Romans 6:1-11). It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible Body of Christ (Acts 2:41-42).

We teach that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes, and should be always preceded by solemn self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:28-32).

We also teach that whereas the elements of Communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ, the Lord's Supper is nevertheless an actual communion with the risen Christ who is present in a unique way, fellowshiping with His people (1 Corinthians 10:16).

## **ANGELS**

### **HOLY ANGELS**

We teach that angels are created beings and are therefore not to be worshiped. Although they are a higher order of creation than man, they are created to serve God and to worship Him (Luke 2:9-14; Hebrews 1:6-7, 14; Hebrews 2:6-7; Revelation 5:11-14; Revelation 19:10; Revelation 22:9).

### **FALLEN ANGELS**

We teach that Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19), by taking numerous angels with him in his fall (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 12:1-14), and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve (Genesis 3:1-15).

We teach that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Isaiah 14:13-14; Matthew 4:1-11; Revelation 12:9-10); the prince of this world, who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 16:20); and that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

## **LAST THINGS (ESCHATOLOGY)**

### **DEATH**

We teach that physical death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness (Revelation 6:9-11), that the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ (Luke 23:43; Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8), that there is a separation of soul and body (Philippians 1:21-24), and that, for the redeemed, such separation will continue until the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17), which initiates the first resurrection (Revelation 20:4-6), when our soul and body will be reunited to be glorified forever with our Lord (Philippians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 15:35-44, 50-54). Until that time, the souls of the redeemed in Christ remain in joyful fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:8).

We teach the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life (John 6:39; Romans 8:10-11, Romans 19-23; 2 Corinthians 4:14), and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Daniel 12:2; John 5:29; Revelation 20:13-15).

We teach that the souls of the unsaved at death are kept under punishment until the second

resurrection (Luke 16:19-26; Revelation 20:13-15), when the soul and the resurrection body will be united (John 5:28-29). They shall then appear at the Great White Throne judgment (Revelation 20:11-15) and shall be cast into hell, the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41-46), cut off from the life of God forever (Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:41-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

### **THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH**

We teach the personal, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ before the seven year tribulation (1 Thessalonians 4:16; Titus 2:13) to translate His church from this earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-5:11) and, between this event and His glorious return with His saints, to reward believers according to their works (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

### **THE TRIBULATION PERIOD**

We teach that immediately following the removal of the church from the earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) the righteous judgments of God will be poured out upon an unbelieving world (Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 12:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12; Revelation 16), and that these judgments will be climaxed by the return of Christ in glory to the earth (Matthew 24:27-31; Matthew 25:31-46; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12). At that time the Old Testament and tribulation saints will be raised and the living will be judged (Daniel 12:2-3; Revelation 20:4-6). This period includes the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy (Daniel 9:24-27; Matthew 24:15-31; Matthew 25:31-46).

### **THE SECOND COMING AND THE MILLENNIAL REIGN**

We teach that, after the tribulation period, Christ will come to earth to occupy the throne of David (Matthew 25:31; Luke 1:31-33; Acts 1:10-11; Acts 2:29-30) and establish His messianic kingdom for a thousand years on the earth (Revelation 20:1-7). During this time the resurrected saints will reign with Him over Israel and all the nations of the earth (Ezekiel 37:21-28; Daniel 7:17-22; Revelation 19:11-16). This reign will be preceded by the overthrow of the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and by the removal of Satan from the world (Daniel 7:17-27; Revelation 20:1-7).

We teach that the kingdom itself will be the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel (Isaiah 65:17-25; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Zechariah 8:1-17) to restore them to the land which they forfeited through their disobedience (Deuteronomy 28:15-68). The result of their disobedience was that Israel was temporarily set aside (Matthew 21:43; Romans 11:1-26) but will again be awakened through repentance to enter into the land of blessing (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:22-32; Romans 11:25-29).

We teach that this time of our Lord's reign will be characterized by harmony, justice, peace, righteousness, and long life (Isaiah 11; Isaiah 65:17-25; Ezekiel 36:33-38), and will be brought to an end with the release of Satan (Revelation 20:7).

### **THE JUDGEMENT OF THE UNSAVED**

We teach that following the release of Satan after the thousand year reign of Christ (Revelation 20:7), Satan will deceive the nations of the earth and gather them to battle against the saints and the beloved city, at which time Satan and his army will be devoured by fire from heaven (Revelation 20:9). Following this, Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10) whereupon Christ, who is the Judge of all men

(John 5:22), will resurrect and judge the great and small at the Great White Throne judgment.

We teach that this resurrection of the unsaved dead to judgment will be a physical resurrection, whereupon receiving their judgment (Romans 14:10-13), they will be committed to an eternal conscious punishment in the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:11-15).

## **ETERNITY**

We teach that after the closing of the millennium, the temporary release of Satan, and the judgment of unbelievers (2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:7-15), the saved will enter the eternal state of glory with God, after which the elements of this earth are to be dissolved (2 Peter 3:10) and replaced with a new earth wherein only righteousness dwells (Ephesians 5:5; Revelation 20:15, 21-22). Following this, the heavenly city will come down out of heaven (Revelation 21:2) and will be the dwelling place of the saints, where they will enjoy forever fellowship with God and one another (John 17:3; Revelation 21-22). Our Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24-28) that in all spheres the triune God may reign forever and ever (1 Corinthians 15:28).



# By-Laws

## **OUR STANDARD: The Word of God**

We believe that the church must exist and function on the principles laid down in the Scriptures. There are sufficient guidelines in the Scriptures as to how the church is to act and operate. The church is to be the body of the continuing ministry of Jesus Christ. To be thus, the church must be Bible-centered.

When the church as a whole is Word-conscious, believers see themselves in the sphere of the eternal. Heaven, hell, redemption, sin and the reality of a loving and sovereign Creator have gravity to them. The preaching of the Word is seen as the source of the knowledge of the Creator and the clear declaration of His one and only plan for their salvation. We, at Edgewood Bible Church, stand as a Bible-centered church.

## **ARTICLE I: Name**

The name of this local assembly, a church incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Washington shall be Edgewood Bible Church.

## **ARTICLE II: Purpose and Function**

The purpose of this local assembly is to glorify God through making disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, calling people to repentance from sin and to faith in him, and edifying the Body of Christ to the praise and glory of His grace. This we endeavor to do by corporate, as well as individual, worship, praise, prayer, and study of God's Word.

To the same end:

1. We purpose to edify fellow Christians in the "most holy faith" by the preaching (Jude 20) and teaching of God's Word, by prayer, by fellowship, and by the breaking of bread (Acts 2:42).
2. We purpose to make the Gospel of Jesus Christ known to the world by the preaching and teaching of God's Word, by lifestyle, and by sending and supporting, financially and otherwise, of Christian Missionaries (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).
3. We purpose to "do good to all people, especially to those of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10).

## **ARTICLE III: Statement of Faith (Doctrine)**

Refer to our Statement of Faith, or Doctrinal Instruction.

## **ARTICLE IV: Membership**

### Section 1: Purpose of the Membership

The assembly of Christian believers who have applied for membership and have been accepted shall be individual members of this local church body, united for the purpose set forth in Article II.

### Section 2: Active Membership

Active membership in Edgewood Bible Church shall be open to all persons who confess Christ as Savior and Lord and who have been baptized. Only active members of Edgewood

Bible Church will be given the opportunity to serve as leaders in specific ministries under the appointment and direction of the Pastoral Staff and Board of Elders. Members who are not in good standing or who are under the discipline of the Church as set forth by Article IV, Section 10 will be asked to step down from any context of leadership until such matters are resolved Biblically and the Board of Elders has restored them to active membership.

### Section 3: Application for Membership

All requests for membership shall be made to a Pastor or Elder of Edgewood Bible Church. Upon making such a request, the person shall be given an application for membership, along with a copy of these By-laws. Each applicant shall meet with two or more Elders, giving testimony to their personal faith in Jesus Christ, their commitment to the Bible as God's inspired, inerrant, and authoritative Word, and their agreement to submit to the By-laws of Edgewood Bible Church, including the doctrinal teaching of Edgewood Bible Church as expressed in Article III. The Elders conducting the interview will then submit their names to the Board of Elders for approval.

### Section 4: Denial of Membership

If, upon the review of an application for membership or after meeting with a prospective member, the Board of Elders determines that the applicant does not confess Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior, or that there is a lack of evidence of a godly lifestyle, membership shall be denied. The decision made by the Board shall be final and there shall be no appeal to any court from that decision. At a later date, if the applicant that repented and demonstrated faith in Jesus Christ they will be encouraged to apply for membership.

### Section 5: Admission of Applicants

Applicants admitted to membership shall present themselves at a worship service designated by the Pastor and Board of Elders, at which time new members received by the Board or Elders shall publicly express their desire for membership. The Congregation will be given 14 days and two Sundays to approach the desired member with any concerns relating to their personal testimony and character. If these concerns are not resolved Biblically, the existing member should, as principles set forth in Matthew 18 ask for accompaniment of another member of good standing and preferably an elder or pastor to come with them to address the concerns together before the desired member. If the issue remains unresolved at this point, the matter must be brought before the Board of Elders for final resolution. At which time if there is deemed to be evidence of an unrepentant heart and manifestation of unbiblical attitudes the desired members request to become a member will be denied and restitution will be sought before the members will be considered for membership again. If during the 14 day period no issues are brought to the attention of the Board of Elders, the desired member will be asked to publicly affirm his or her membership commitment and be acknowledged as a member.

### Section 6: Responsibilities of Members

1. Each individual member shall pursue the unity of the faith in cooperation with the other members of this local body of believers, and shall purpose to serve in consideration of

the other members of this local church, under the leadership and oversight of the Elders.

2. Each member is responsible to exercise his/her spiritual gifts to the other members of the assembly in regular participation in the life and services of the church, and to provide voluntary financial support of the church as the Lord prospers.
3. Each member shall walk uprightly in the world so that by life and witness others will be attracted to the Savior.
4. Membership in this church shall not vest in any member any proprietary rights in the Corporation, but each member is given the responsibility and opportunity to discuss, advise, encourage, and affirm those matters that the Board of Elders chooses to submit to the church membership for counsel and affirmation.
5. Each member, according to Hebrews 13:17 is instructed to obey their leaders and to submit to them. Furthermore they are to possess a spirit in doing so that allows the leadership to do this "with joy". Members who do not display this Biblical attitude of submission will be pursued, encouraged, and instructed in this process. If their attitude remains contentious and there is a continual pattern of sinful behavior to stir up strife among the brethren, they will be formally brought under the discipline of the Church as set forth by Article IV, Section 10.

#### Section 7: Non-Voting Membership

Edgewood Bible Church members shall have no voting rights. Any action which would otherwise require approval of the members shall only require approval of the Board of Elders. All rights which would otherwise vest in the members shall vest solely in the Board of Elders. This shall not be construed to limit the right of the Edgewood Bible Church to refer to persons associated with Edgewood Bible Church as 'members'.

#### Section 8: Congressional Affirmation

Certain items, at the discretion of the Board of Elders, may be brought before the members of Edgewood Bible Church for affirmation. The affirmation process may provide the congregation with time to comment, in a Biblical fashion, on a topic prior to the final decision being made by the Board of Elders. Matters presented to the congregation will be at the sole discretion of the Board of Elders unless otherwise specified in the by-laws. Elders have the sole decision-making authority of Edgewood Bible Church.

#### Section 9: Removal of Membership

The removal of members from this church is subject to the discretion of the Board of Elders. Any individual member may be removed from membership of this church for the following reasons:

1. Lack of regular attendance in a worship service for a period of three months or longer unless reasonable mitigating circumstances exists
2. Request of transfer of membership to another church
3. Exercise of the fourth stage of church discipline with no demonstration of repentance

## Section 10: Active Membership

The church must properly and lovingly exercise church discipline upon those members who in the judgment of the Board of Elders have persisted in sinful behavior without demonstration of godly repentance (2 Corinthians 7:9-10).

The purposes of church discipline are:

1. To maintain purity in the local church (1 Corinthians 5:6)
2. To deter sin in other members (1 Timothy 5:20)
3. And to seek after the spiritual well-being of the sinning believer by calling him or her to Biblical conduct in their way of living (Galatians 6:1).

The procedure shall be according to Matthew 18:15-17, allowing reasonable time for repentance after every effort has been made to call, exhort, and admonish the person.

Members of this church, and all other professing Christian who regularly attend or fellowship with this church, who err in doctrine or who engage in conduct that violates Scripture as determined by the Board of Elders, shall be subject to church discipline.

## Section 11: Regular Meetings

A meeting of the church members shall be held annually. This annual meeting will be the time for the members to consider reports of the affairs of Edgewood Bible Church and affirm such other business as the Board of Elders determine shall be brought before the meeting (see Article IV, section 8), including but not limited to affirmation of the appointments made by the Elders of those who shall be newly installed as Elders and Deacons (see Article V, Section 1.3).

## Section 12: Notice of Meetings

Notice of the annual meetings shall be given from the pulpit by someone designated by the Board of Elders, for two successive Sundays prior to the meeting. In addition, notice shall be published in the church bulletin for two successive Sundays prior to such meeting.

## **ARTICLE V: Leadership and Officers**

### Section 1: Elders

#### 1. Powers

Subject to the limitations of the Articles of Incorporation and these By-laws and of pertinent restrictions of the Statutes of the State of Washington, all the activities and affairs of Edgewood Bible Church shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Board of Elders, who are responsible for shepherding and oversight.

The Board of Elders shall constitute the board of directors of this not-for-profit corporation. Without prejudice to such general powers, but subject to these same limitations, it is hereby expressly declared that the Board shall have the following powers in addition to other powers enumerated by the By-laws:

- A. To select and remove all the officers (president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer of the board of directors), pastors, staff, and employees of Edgewood

Bible Church; prescribe such duties for them consistent with the Scriptures, with law, and with the Articles of Incorporation, or with these By-laws; and fix the terms of their offices and their compensation.

- B. To make such disbursements from the funds and properties of Edgewood Bible Church as are required to fulfill the purposes as are more fully set out in the Articles of Incorporation, and generally to conduct, manage, and control the activities and affairs of Edgewood Bible Church and to make such rules and regulations consistent with the Scriptures, with law, with the Articles of Incorporation, and with these By-laws, as they deem best.
- C. To establish policies and practices for the church consistent with the purposes of Edgewood Bible Church.
- D. To assist the Senior Pastor in the administration of the ordinances of Baptism and Communion.
- E. To borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purposes of Edgewood Bible Church and to cause to be executed and delivered, in Edgewood Bible Church's name, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, deeds of trust, mortgages, pledges, hypothecations, or other evidences of debt and securities.

## 2. Number of Elders

The plurality of leadership will be present with at least three appointed Elders. If there are not three qualified men to be appointed as Elders, then a leadership committee of four men will be appointed by Northwest Independent Church Extension until such time where plurality of leadership can be maintained.

## 3. Nomination and Selection

Recommendations to fill the office of Elder may be requested from all church members, as the need for an elder is determined by the Board of Elders. A nominating committee consisting of two elders and one deacon shall be appointed by the Board of Elders, who will also designate a chairman of the committee. This committee shall review all nominations and determine each nominee's qualifications. A recommendation of nominees prepared by the nominating committee shall then be submitted to the Board of Elders.

The Board shall then approve, disapprove, or add to the list of nominees. The list of nominees shall be publicly posted in alphabetic order at the location of the worship services, and also printed in the church bulletin at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting of the church members. At the annual meeting, or at the gathering of corporate worship, the nominees shall be presented to the members to affirm the decision of the Elders. A time period of 30 days will be given for any members with concerns relating to the character and qualifications of the recommended Elder to go to them to resolve any concerns. If the members concerns are not resolved the member must come to the Elders in order that the Elders may discern the issues that are involved. If the Elders that the candidate is not "above reproach" (1 Timothy 3:1-7), the recommendation will be denied. If the slate of nominees is affirmed by the church members, then newly elected Elders shall assume office immediately.

#### 4. Qualifications

Each member of the Board of Elders must be an active member of Edgewood Bible church and possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. He shall be:

- A. Blameless as a steward of God; above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6-7)
- B. Husband of one wife; a one-woman man who is devoted to his wife (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6)
- C. Temperate, sober, vigilant (1 Timothy 3:2)
- D. Sober-minded, prudent (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
- E. Of good behavior, orderly, respectable (1 Timothy 3:2)
- F. Given to hospitality (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
- G. Apt to teach; able to teach; he can exhort believers and refute false teaching (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9)
- H. Not given to wine (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- I. Not violent; not pugnacious; not contentious; not easily angered or quick-tempered (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- J. Patient, moderate, forbearing, gentle (1 Timothy 3:3)
- K. Not covetous; not a lover of money; not greedy base gain (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- L. Rules well his own house; his children are faithful, not accused of rebellion to God (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:7)
- M. Not a novice; not a new convert (1 Timothy 3:6)
- N. Has a good report or reputation with outsiders (1 Timothy 3:7)
- O. Not self-willed (Titus 1:7)
- P. A lover of good men and things (Titus 1:8)
- Q. Just, fair (Titus 1:8)
- R. Holy, devout (Titus 1:8)
- S. Self-controlled (Titus 1:8)
- T. If married, it is the command of Scripture that the wife of an elder possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:11 and Titus 2:3-5. They must be dignified, reverent in behavior, not slanderers, sober minded, faithful in all things and to teach what is good to younger women, to love support and submit to their husbands, love their children and to be keepers of the home.

#### 5. Vacancies

A vacancy or vacancies in the Board shall be deemed to exist in case of significant growth of membership or the death, resignation, or removal of any Elder. Removal of Elders

Any Elder may be removed from office at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Elders if he is found to be physically or mentally unable to perform the shepherding responsibilities as an elder, or is found to be spiritually unqualified (according to pertinent Scriptures, including 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9) after thorough investigation by the Elders in accordance with the procedures prescribed by Scripture, including Matthew 18:15-18 and 1 Timothy 5:19. When an Elder is removed because of sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify him from shepherding, and if he refuses to repent from that sin, the removal shall be accompanied by a public rebuke, and notice

shall be made before the church and the congregation at a regularly scheduled worship service as prescribed in 1 Timothy 5:20.

## 6. Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the Board shall be held. Regular meetings shall be open to church members to observe, except for discretionary matters.

## 7. Decisions of the Board of Elders

Decisions shall be reached after prayerful consideration by unanimous agreement in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself.

In decisions regarding the removal of an Elder or the Senior Pastor, unanimous agreement is required with exclusion to the vote of the Elder or Pastor being removed.

## Section 2: Senior Pastor

### 1. Description of Position

- A. The Senior Pastor shall be a man of God, called by God as an under shepherd of God's people, gifted by the Holy Spirit for this position.
- B. He shall serve as a fellow Elder, as the overseeing spiritual leader of the Elders, and is responsible to the Board of Elders.
- C. He shall be called to this position at Edgewood Bible Church by the Board of Elders of Edgewood Bible Church and affirmed by the membership.
- D. He shall remain in office for an indefinite period of time subject to the following reservations:
  - i. The Elders reserve the right to dismiss the Senior Pastor upon giving him three months' notice of their intention to dismiss.
  - ii. The Board of Elders shall have the authority to terminate the Senior Pastor's ministry any time within the three months should the Board deem it necessary for the best interest of the church to do so, provided that if the Senior Pastor's ministry is terminated abruptly in this manner, he shall receive salary for 30 days in advance.
  - iii. The Senior Pastor must give three months' notice if he intends to resign. The time limit of a Senior Pastor's resignation or dismissal is subject to a lesser time limit if both the Senior Pastor and the church by mutual agreement provide otherwise.

### 2. Duties

- A. The Senior Pastor shall attend to the duties of the spiritual ministry of preaching and teaching.
- B. He shall perform all the usual functions of the ministry.
- C. He shall arrange for and conduct all public and regular services of the church and shall be responsible for general spiritual welfare of the church.
- D. He shall oversee and give guidance to the pastoral and office staff.

### 3. Membership

By virtue of his office, the Senior Pastor and his wife shall become members of Edgewood Bible Church. He shall be ex-officio member of all boards and committees.

## Section 3: Staff Pastor

### 1. Description of Position

- A. A Staff Pastor shall be a man of God, called by God as an under shepherd of God's people, gifted by the Holy Spirit for his position.
- B. He shall serve under the authority of the Senior Pastor serving in the role of direct oversight and ministry guidance for any and all Staff Pastors.
- C. If called by the Board of Elders, a Staff Pastor may serve in the office of Elder, but will continue to function in ministry and responsibilities under the oversight of the Senior Pastor.
- D. A Staff Pastor shall be appointed to his position at Edgewood Bible Church by the Board of Elders of Edgewood Bible Church, including the Senior Pastor, and affirmed by membership (see Article IV, section 8).
- E. A Staff Pastor shall remain in office for an indefinite period of time subject to the following reservations:
  - i. The Board of Elders, including the Senior Pastor, reserves the right to dismiss a Staff Pastor upon giving him one month notice of their intention to dismiss.
  - ii. The Board of Elders, including the Senior Pastor, shall have the authority to terminate a Staff Pastor's ministry any time within the one month period should the Board deem it necessary for the best interest of the church to do so, provided that if the Staff Pastor's ministry is terminated abruptly in this manner, he shall receive salary for 30 days in advance.
  - iii. A Staff Pastor must give one month notice if he intends to resign. The time limit of a Staff Pastor's resignation or dismissal is subject to a lesser time limit if both the Senior Pastor and the church by mutual agreement provide otherwise.
- F. More than one Staff Pastor may be hired by the Board of Elders to serve at Edgewood Bible Church

### 2. Duties

A Staff Pastor shall perform the duties as prescribed for them by the Senior Pastor consistent with their job description and the needs of the ministry of Edgewood Bible Church.

### 3. Membership

By virtue of his office, a Staff Pastor and his wife shall become members of Edgewood Bible Church.

## Section 4: Deacons



## 1. Duties

A Deacon shall be a member of Edgewood Community Church appointed by the Board of Elders and affirmed by the membership to assist the Elders in specific ministries of the church. A Deacon is to serve and provide leadership for ministries of Edgewood Bible Church under the direction of Elders.

## 2. Qualifications

The qualifications for a Deacon are set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. A Deacon shall be a man of dignity, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not found of sordid gain, holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience, first tested and found above reproach.

If married, it is the commands of Scripture that the wife of a deacon possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:11, Titus 2:3-5. They must be dignified, reverent in behavior, not slanderers, sober minded, faithful in all things and to teach what is good to younger women, to support and submit to their own husbands, love their children and to be keepers of the home.

## Section 5: Other Committees and Councils

As circumstances and needs require, the Elders may establish committees to fulfill specific needs of the church ministry. All such committees shall be responsible to the Board of Elders.

### **ARTICLE VI: Ordination**

A man may be ordained to the Gospel Ministry by Edgewood Bible Church after having received a favorable recommendation by the Elders and an Ordination Council made up of Pastors and Christian Leaders.

### **ARTICLE VII: Dissolution of Corporation**

In the event of the dissolution of Edgewood Bible Church, the Church's property shall not be conveyed to any organization created or operated for profit or to any individual, but all assets remaining after payment of the corporation's debts shall be conveyed or distributed to another Corporation(s) with purposes similar to Edgewood Bible Church as determined by the Board of Elders, under applicable provisions of Internal Revenue Law and Regulations as a non-profit corporation.

### **ARTICLE VIII: Amendments**

These By-laws may be amended by unanimous agreement of the Board of Elders.

# Edgewood Bible Church Membership

We are honored and thankful for your desire to become a part of the body of Christ here at EBC. Please carefully work through the following membership application. It is designed to assist you in articulating your faith and desire for church membership.

Becoming a member of a local church is an important step for each believer. The Bible teaches that we are already members “one with the other” because of our spiritual union with Jesus Christ. In this sense, we are already all part of that great body of individuals who have come to salvation through personal faith in God’s Son.

It is clear from the New Testament, however, that God’s design is for each Christian to also be an accountable part of an organized, local group of believers who assemble under the oversight of church leadership. The loving, mutual service which results among the people of God is His means of presenting Christ to the watching world, and is also an essential way for us to show love for God. Therefore, we highly encourage church membership as a means of personal spiritual growth and of commitment to the building up of Christ’s body.

At Edgewood Bible Church, membership is extended to all believers who:

- Apply for membership and submit a written testimony of one’s personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior to the elders.
- Desire to live a life separated from sinful habits of the flesh and worldliness.
- Evidence a burden for those without Jesus Christ as Savior and desire to be used to share the Gospel.
- Agree with the Doctrinal Essentials and will abide by the By-Laws of this Church.
- Have been baptized as a believer.
- Demonstrate a commitment to each other and to God by consistently giving of one’s time, talents, and financial support to the ministry of the Church.
- Meet with two elders to review the above areas and upon a positive affirmation by the church body be accepted into membership.

# Membership Application

**First & Last Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Occupation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Marital Status:** ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed ☐ Remarried

**Church previously attended:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Are you still a member of this, or another church?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please give the church's name and address.

**Church:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please give a description of your relationship with Jesus Christ in the following areas:**

(please use another sheet of paper or the back of this page)

- When and how did you come to know Jesus Christ as your Savior? (Include in your remarks your understanding of what it means to be a person who has come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Also include any Scripture passages or verses that are significant to your understanding of salvation.)

**Have you been baptized since you became a Christian?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Immersion ☐ Sprinkling

**What way(s) do you desire to serve within our church family (based on your interests, abilities, gifts, and time)?**

# Membership Agreement

Thank you for taking the time to fill out the Membership Application. This information will be given to the Elders for their review. Please acknowledge that you agree with these statements:

**Membership Covenant**

I have read and am in full agreement with the Membership Covenant.

**Doctrinal Essentials and By-Laws**

I have read the By-Laws and Doctrinal Essentials. I am in full agreement with Article IV of the By-Laws regarding church membership and church discipline. I also affirm that I will not teach any position that contradicts the teachings in the Doctrinal Instruction so as to avoid any confusion or potential conflict among the body. If I were to find myself in a situation where I was at odds with one of these doctrines, I would humbly remove myself from that section of teaching and allow others to teach who are in full agreement.

If you have any reservations or unanswered questions about the Doctrinal Instruction or Membership Covenant, please wait until after your Elder interview to sign.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(printed name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)