

Discovery

How I Got Here

Lesson #6

Relationships are important in life. At Christ Community Church we want to do all we can to encourage a right relationship with Jesus Christ and others. To do this we want to help you ascertain the status of your relationship with Christ and His church. Answer the following questions the best you can.

1. Have you come to the place in your spiritual life where you know for certain that if you were to die today you would go to heaven?

There is a second question that will help clarify the matter.

2. Suppose you were to die today and stand before God and He were to say to you, "Why should I let you into My heaven?" What would you say?

3. If you are coming directly from another church body, are there any unresolved issues or conflicts that would hinder your participation with Christ Community Church? Please Explain

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I. An Effective Personal Testimony

If you are certain of your personal relationship with Christ, it becomes important to be able to share that relationship with other people. Sharing such a relationship is often referred to as sharing your personal testimony. By testimony, we mean a concise description of how you came to know Jesus Christ as Savior. Preparing a testimony in writing helps you to crystallize your thoughts with precision. It becomes a "ready-made" statement that can be given on a moment's notice with accuracy and clarity – just like we are instructed in *1 Peter 3:15*.

We want to encourage the following steps in preparing to share your testimony:

1. Read and reflect on the timely suggestions by Chuck Swindoll.
2. Fill in the testimony worksheet.
3. Write a narrative testimony.

A personal word to you who are feeling confused or insecure about preparing your testimony: Maybe you're asking, "Do I have a testimony? I'm not really sure." If this is the case, please talk with us. The last thing we want is to cause you embarrassment or for you to feel put on the spot. Our desire is to encourage your confidence in your relationship with Christ and your ability to share your story with others. You may want to discuss your situation with the pastor, an elder or a small group leader.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PREPARING YOUR TESTIMONY

You want to be listened to, so be interesting. No one, no matter how gracious, enjoys being bored. It's a contradiction to talk about how exciting Christ really is in an uninteresting way. Work on your wording, your flow of thought, and your key terms. Guard against religious clichés and hard-to-understand terminology.

You want to be understood, so be logical. A good suggestion is that you think of your salvation in three phases – and construct your testimony accordingly: (a) before you were born again – the loneliness, lack of peace, absence of love, unrest and fears; (b) the decision that revolutionized your life, and (c) the change – the difference He has made since you received Christ.

You want the moment of your new birth to be clear, so be specific. Be extremely careful here. Don't be at all vague regarding how you became a Christian. Speak of Christ, not the church. Refer to the decision you made, the moment of time when you received the Lord. Be simple and direct. Emphasize faith more than feeling.

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You want your testimony to be used, so be practical. Be human and honest as you talk. Don't promise, "All your problems will end if you will become a Christian" for that isn't true. Try to think as an unbeliever would as you are speaking. Refuse to pick theological lint. Restrain yourself from plucking the wings off religious flies. Theoretical stuff doesn't attract attention as much as practical reality.

You want your testimony to produce results, so be warm and genuine. A smile breaks down more barriers than the hammer blows of cold, hard facts. Be friendly and sincere. Let your enthusiasm flow freely. It's hard to convince another person of the sheer joy and excitement of knowing Christ if you're wearing a jail-warden face. Above all, be positive and courteous.

-Chuck Swindoll

Now go to it and write out your testimony!

YOUR TESTIMONY WORKSHEET

Fill in the appropriate information in the worksheet below. Don't worry about form or filling in every blank. Just relax and write down as much information as you want in the areas that apply to you.

1. What were you like before you received Christ?

What were your attitudes, needs, and problems?

Around what did your life revolve? What was most important to you?

Where did you look for security, peace of mind, happiness? How did you find your activities unsatisfying?

2. Explain the decision that revolutionized your life.

When did you first hear the Gospel? How?

What were your initial reactions to Jesus Christ?

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When and why did you begin to feel positive about Christianity?

What was the turning point in your attitude?

What mental barriers did you experience?

How and when did you make a conscious decision to follow Christ?

3. What happened after you trusted Christ?

What changes did you see in your life, actions, attitudes, problems? (Use specific examples.)

How long did it take before you noticed change?

Conclusion: What does Jesus Christ mean to you now?

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MY PERSONAL STORY

(Narrative)

Please include with your signed Membership form

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II. Preparing An Effective Gospel Preparation

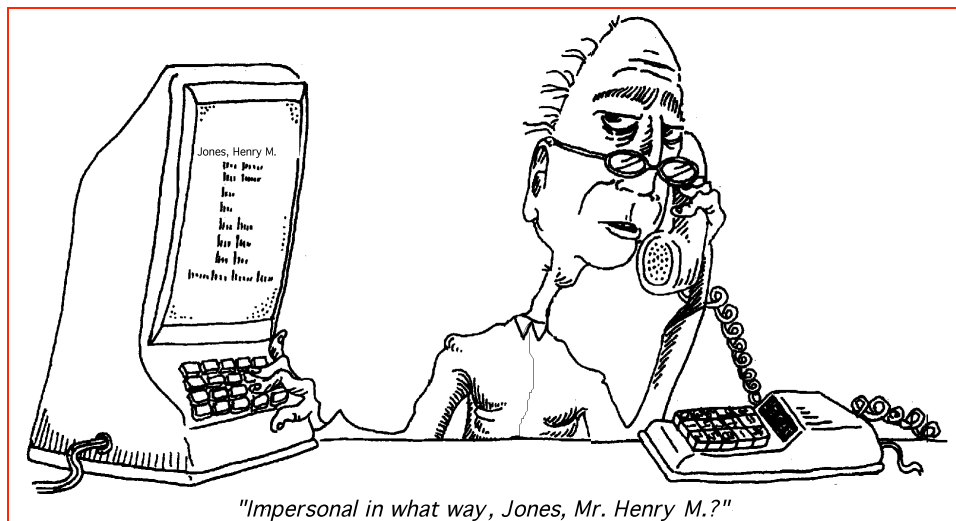
Here again, simplicity, clarity, and precision are the keys. It is so easy to "beat around the eternal bush" or to become lost in the forest of religious hang-ups when attempting to share Christ with another person.

To combat these dead ends, a short prepared gospel presentation is often helpful, especially if you are not yet accustomed to regularly sharing your faith.

III. Preparing An Effective Follow-up Program

As we have said, personal follow-up is essential to every new believer. As *1 Peter 2:2* states, these "newborn babes" need nourishment to encourage their growth in their new relationship with Christ.

The real key in follow-up is your personal availability and commitment to stay alongside a person and help them grow.



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♥ Sending it Home ♥

♥ **Begin to look and be sensitive** to a time when you might be able to share with others the story of where you are on your spiritual journey.

♥ **Consider setting up a personal appointment with them.** It may be a lunch between office hours, a coffee break, or a visit to their home. However it is done, get alone with them for your special encounter. You will find this effort requires great faith. But that is exactly how God wants us to live (Hebrews 11:6). Right?

♥ **Hand in your written testimony to the leader of the membership class.** You may want to make a copy so that you also have a record to brush up on your testimony as you seek to share your story.

There you have it. One objective of every member of CCC is to reach out to new people in order to bring them into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. That is the need of the hour. There should always be room in your lifeboat for one more!



BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

CCC Statement of Faith

I. THE BIBLE

The Bible is the inspired Word of God, the written record of His supernatural revelation of Himself to man, absolute in its authority, complete in its revelation, final in its content, and without any errors in its original manuscripts. We believe in the plenary-verbal inspiration of the Bible. We also believe that the Scriptures are given to reveal God's plan of salvation for mankind, and to provide the source of our teaching reproof, correction, and training in righteousness. We do not judge the Book...we let the Book judge us.

Exodus 24:4a; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 6:6-9; Psalm 119; Isaiah 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; Ezekiel 2:3-7; 3; Matthew 5:17-18; Mark 13:1; Luke 1:35; 24:44-45; John 1:1; 5:46; 17:17; Romans 1:16-17; 10:17; 15:4; 16:25-26; I Corinthians 2:6-16; II Timothy 2:15; 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; I Peter 1:24-25; II Peter 1:19-21; Revelation 1:1-3; 22:18-19.

II. GOD

There is only one true God. He is eternally existent, having no beginning nor end. He reveals Himself as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Genesis 1:1; 1:26; Exodus 3:14; Deuteronomy 6:4; II Samuel 7:22; Matthew 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; 12:29; John 14:26; 15:26; Acts 7:55-56; Romans 8:11; 14:11; II Corinthians 1:21-22; 13:14; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:17; 4:4-6; James 2:19; I Peter 1:2.

A. God the Father

God the Father is the Eternal Father who rules all creation with perfect love, kindness, and justice. He is sovereign in the affairs of men including but not limited to world events, government affairs and leaders, and the personal lives of each of His creation. He is all wise and reveals Himself in His providential care, absolute wisdom, and utter truth. He is majestic in holiness, and is faithful to His Word to perform all that is written therein. He especially displays His Fatherly care toward His prized creation, man.

Genesis 1:1; Exodus 15:11; 20:1-11; Deuteronomy 32:4-6; 33:27a; Psalm 19; 90:1-2; 139; 145; Isaiah 6:1-3; 40; 43:10-13; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10, 12-16; 17:10; Matthew 6:9; 23:9; John 3:16; 4:24; Acts 1:7; 17:24-31; Romans 8:15; I Corinthians 8:6a; I Timothy 1:17; James 1:17; I John 1:5; 4:8.

B. God the Son

God, the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the eternal begotten Son of God. Being God, He, for a time, emptied Himself of the manifestations of His glory and took upon Himself flesh and dwelt on the earth. He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless

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life, and gave Himself as a substitutionary sacrifice by shedding His blood and dying on the cross. He did this to make an eternal, absolute, and total payment for the past, present, and future sins of mankind. He then was resurrected from the dead and ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the one mediator, between God and man. Mankind enters into relationship with God through receiving the Son as Savior and Lord. God the Son will one day return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission.

Genesis 3:15 ; Psalm 2, 22, 23, 24, 110; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6-7; 11; 42:1-4; 53; 61:1-3; Daniel 9:24-27; Micah 5:1b-5a; Matthew 1:18-25; 3:16-17; 14:33; 16:16; 17:1-13; 24:29-31; 26:63-64; 28:18; Mark 1:1; Luke 1:34-35; 3:11; 4:16-21; 24:25-27, 44-48; John 1:1-18; 5:19-47; 10:30, 37-38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:6-13, 28-31; 16:15a, 28; 17:1-5; 20; Acts 1:9-11; 2:22-24; Romans 1:2-4; I Corinthians 8:6b; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:19b-23; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:15-20; 2:9; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; I Timothy 2:5-6; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 12:2; 13:8; I John 1:1-4; 2:1-2; 5:20; Revelation 1:8, 17-18; 5:9-10, 12-13; 19:11-16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

God, the Holy Spirit, is the Spirit of God. He was active in the creation. He inspired the writing of the Holy Scriptures. He convicts all mankind of sin, righteousness, and judgement. He indwells those who believe to illuminate the Word, to cultivate godly character, comfort believers, bestow spiritual gifts by which men serve God, and seal the believer unto the day of final redemption. This indwelling occurs the moment a person receives Jesus Christ as his Savior. Concurrent to the indwelling, the Holy Spirit baptizes the new believer into the body of Christ and energizes him in all areas of life.

Genesis 1:2; I Samuel 16:14; Judges 14:6; Psalm 51:11; 139:7; Isaiah 61:1-3; Ezekiel 36:27; Joel 2:28-32; Zechariah 4:6; Matthew 1:18; 10:20; 28:19; Luke 4:1, 18-19; 11:13; John 3:16; 4:24; 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:4, 17-18; 5:3; 7:51; 13:2; 16:6; Romans 8:1-17, 26-27; I Corinthians 2:9-12; 3:16; 6:19; 12:1-11, 13; II Corinthians 1:21-22; Galatians 4:6; 5:16-18, 22-23; Ephesians 1:13-14; 3:16; 4:30; 5:18; Philippians 2:1-2; I Thessalonians 5:19; II Timothy 1:7; II Peter 1:21; I John 2:27; 3:24b; 4:13; Revelation 22:17.

III. MANKIND

Man was created perfect by God, in His own image. Through the rebellion and fall of Adam, all men, being descendents of Adam, have inherited his disobedient nature which is fallen, sinful, and totally separated from the life of God. This depraved nature exposes the hopelessness of every man and shows how desperate is their need of salvation.

Genesis 1:26-31; 2:7, 21-23; 3; 5:1-2; Psalm 51:5; 139:13-16; Isaiah 53:6; 64:6; Jeremiah 1:5; 17:9; Daniel 12:2; Matthew 15:18-20; 16:26; Mark 7:20-23; John 2:23-25; 3:18-20; 5:28-29; Acts 17:26-28a; 24:15; Romans 1:18-32; 3:10-18, 23; 5:6, 8, 12, 19; 7:14-24; I Corinthians 1:25; 2:14-3:3; 15:21-22; Galatians 5:19-21;

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Ephesians 2:1-3; Colossians 1:21; I Thessalonians 5:23b; Hebrews 4:12; 9:27; Revelation 20:11-15.

IV. SALVATION

Salvation is offered freely to all who receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord by grace through faith. Salvation is a gift, costly to Jesus, free to us. This salvation is predicated by the act of Jesus Christ on the cross and not on the performance of man. Because of God's salvation through Jesus Christ, He removes the penalty of past sin, removes the power of present sin, and will ultimately remove the believer from the presence of all sin forever.

Genesis 3:15, 21; Exodus 15:1-2; Numbers 21:7-9; II Samuel 22:2-4; 23:5; Psalms 27:1; 71:15; Isaiah 12:2; Jonah 2:9c; Matthew 1:21; Luke 1:68-69, 76-77; 2:28-32; John 1:12-13; 3:3-21, 36; 5:24; 6:37, 40; 10:9, 27-30; 14:6; 15:1-17; 17:3; 20:31; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 16:30-31; Romans 1:16-17; 3:23-25; 4; 5; 6; 8; 10:9-10; 12:1-2; 13; 17; I Corinthians 1:18, 15; 6:19; II Corinthians 2:8-10; 6:10-18; Philippians 1:6; 2:12-13; Colossians 1:13-14, 22; 2:6-10; 3:3-4; I Timothy 1:15-16; II Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:3; 9:11-28; 10:8-12; 11:6; 13:5b; James 2:14-26; I Peter 1:2-23; I John 1:5-10; 2:1-2; 3:2; 5:1-15; Revelation 3:20; 22:17.

V. THE CHURCH

The church (The Bride of Christ), composed of all who have received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, is the Body of Christ into which relationship each member of the body enters into the moment of their spiritual birth. The church was born through the death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and subsequent giving of the Holy Spirit at the day of Pentecost by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. This special organism fills a unique position in the redemptive plan of God as it was grafted into God's plan because of the unbelief of the chosen race, the Jews. The Bride of Christ will one day be caught away as a unit to spend time everlasting reigning and ruling with their Savior, Jesus Christ.

Christ Community Church is a local expression of this body bound together by commitment and covenant.

Matthew 16:18b; 18:15-20; 28:18-20; John 13:34-35; 14:2-4; 17:20-26; Acts 2; 6:3-6; 13:1-4; 15:1-21; 20:28; Romans 12:4-8; 13:1-2; I Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 12; 13; 14; Galatians 6:1-2; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11; 4:2-6, 11-16; 5:18-30; Philippians 2:1-5; Colossians 1:18; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; I Timothy 3:1-15; 4:14; James 5:14; I Peter 5:1-5; Revelation 19:11-14; 21:2-3.



BYLAWS OF CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH

ARTICLE I - Preamble

Whereas our Sovereign God has preordained and called out for Himself a body of believers, the head of whom is Jesus Christ Himself, to be in an active relationship with Him, to be involved with His Word, to be in agape fellowship with other believers, and to share His love with non-believers, we have established this local church and declare and establish these bylaws.

ARTICLE II - Name

The name of this church shall be Christ Community Church of Springfield, Missouri, the same being a General Not-For-Profit corporation under the laws of the state of Missouri.

ARTICLE III - Membership

The membership of this church shall consist of those persons who have accepted Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord, who have been led to this church by the Holy Spirit, and who are actively pursuing the same goals, and accept the statement of faith. Participation and ministry with this church are the fundamental evidences of membership. However, because the need exists to identify members, all those desiring to be members will be required to sign a membership form. Those members in teaching or leadership positions will be expected to support the statement of faith and to defer to the interpretations of the Elder Board regarding doctrines not presented in the statement of faith. Members agree to be governed by the bylaws of this church, as may be amended from time to time.

The elders shall have the right and authority to determine the eligibility and acceptability of all applicants for membership. Those approved for membership will be received into the church upon their names being added to the church membership and being presented to the church body. Members requesting to be removed from membership are to do so in writing.

ARTICLE IV - Government

The church of Jesus Christ is not a democracy but a theocracy. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus said, "I will build My church." Therefore, we believe that Jesus is the head of the church and gives guidance to its leadership through scripture, prayer, and spiritual wisdom.

This church shall be governed by a plurality of elders (I Timothy 5:17; I Peter 5:1-5). The elders are God's provision for the care of the church's

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total welfare. They have been entrusted by the Lord with the authority to lead the church, and they will seek the will of the Lord Jesus Christ as found in the scriptures.

There will be, however, a practice of involving the membership in decisions, which need input and discussion. The elders will give periodic reports to the membership.

ARTICLE V - Leadership

I. ELDER (presbuteros), meaning overseer, is used interchangeably with pastor (poimen), meaning shepherd. Elders were established in the N.T. from mature Christians in a local church (I Peter 5:1-5; Titus 1:5). The elders' primary responsibilities are for general spiritual oversight, and they are to model what all participants of the church are trained to accomplish in evangelism and discipleship. A church is to have a plurality of elders who lead the church by a unified team effort. It is recognized that God uniquely gifts individuals for leadership roles who serve under the authority of the elders. These include pastor-teachers and evangelists (Ephesians 4:11-13).

A. Qualifications The qualifications for elders are established by God through the apostle Paul and shall be those listed in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. Therefore, an elder must have experienced the new birth, being a new creation in Christ Jesus, and living out that new life in Him. His reputation must be above reproach. He must be the husband of one wife. He must be temperate. He must be sober-minded. He must be a lover of hospitality. He must be a capable teacher. He must not be given to wine. He must not use violence. He must not be a lover of money. He must be patient. He must not be contentious. He must rule his household well, keeping his children under control. He must not be a new convert, but spiritually mature. He must have a good reputation with those outside the church. He must not be self-willed. He must not be quick-tempered. He must be a lover of goodness. He must be a just and devout man. He must hold fast to the sure Word of God and be a defender of the faith.

B. Selection New elders shall be selected by the existing elders. The elders shall confer with the church before making a final decision regarding selection of any men as elders.

C. Term The elder shall serve for a minimum of three years. An elder may serve for consecutive terms indefinitely. Every three years, the elder, along with the remaining elders, will be asked to evaluate his commitment and willingness to serve. After six years, the elder will undergo a formal review that includes submission of a new elder questionnaire and an interview with the existing elders. If he is married,

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his wife will be included in the interview with the elders. The CCC body will also be invited to provide input in the formal review process. At any point in his term, an elder can be relieved of his responsibilities and/or office voluntarily or by unanimous consent of the remaining elders, wherein he can resume elder responsibilities and/or office by unanimous consent of the remaining elders.

D. Function The elders shall be overseers of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the church, being responsible for its total welfare. This includes, but is not limited to practicing church discipline, maintaining doctrinal purity, managing financial matters, and recognizing and implementing of church related ministries.

The church elders, as trustees, shall have the power to buy, own, and sell real and personal property in the name of Christ Community Church.

Title to all real property now owned or hereafter acquired by the church shall be held in trust in favor of Christ Community Church, a General Not-For-Profit corporation. In the event that the church membership shall be divided over doctrinal or other issues secular or spiritual in nature, all property of this church shall remain with those members, whatever their number, desiring continuing affiliation with this church and adhering to its statement of faith. The determination of which group of members desires continuing affiliation with this church, and adheres to its statement of faith shall be decided by the elders of the church, and their decision shall be final and binding.

Any official action by the elders will be by unanimous consent. The only exception to this would be the removal of an elder as discussed in Section I-C above. Minutes will be taken of all elder meetings and shall be kept as a permanent record.

E. Number The number of elders shall be as many as deemed necessary by the elders.

F. Remuneration The elders may financially support an elder, part or full-time, who functions in a capacity that serves this church where time and work demands make it necessary (I Timothy 5:17,18). Salaried elders could be those who serve, for instance, as a pastor/teacher. Financial compensation will not be made without consultation with the church. A salaried elder shall not be viewed as having any special authority except that which is delegated to him by the remaining elders. A salaried elder shall be subject to the same qualifications and selection as all elders. A salaried elder's position as elder and his remuneration are understood to be subject to the same terms as stated in Section I-C above.

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The elders may financially support any deacon or staff member for his or her service to this church. Full-time salaried positions will not be established without prior consultation with the church. Full-time salaried people will be given a job description and a written statement outlining his/her financial package and benefits.

II. **DEACON** (diakoneo), meaning to be an attendant or one who serves.

A. Qualifications Deacons shall be spiritually mature men or women who meet the qualifications set forth in I Timothy 3:8-13. See also Romans 16:1,2.

Deacons must be Christian men or women of dignity. They should not be given to double-talk, addicted to wine, or fond of sordid gain. They should hold to the faith with a clean conscience. Their lives should be beyond reproach, after they have been tested. The men should be husbands of one wife. They should manage their children and households well. The women must also be faithful in all things. They should not be malicious gossips, but temperate and dignified. Those who serve well as deacons obtain a high standing and great confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

B. Selection Deacons are gifts of God to the church, appointed by the elders to serve in areas of special ministry. As a need arises, the elders shall appoint as deacons those persons who are qualified and willing to meet the need.

C. Term A deacon may be asked to relinquish his/her office for any of the following reasons.

1. The need or ministry to which he or she was originally called no longer exists.
2. The need or ministry to which he or she was called is no longer consistent with the goals of this church.
3. The deacon's behavior or conduct are inconsistent with the scriptural qualifications of a deacon.
4. The deacon no longer fulfills the responsibilities of his/her duty.

D. Function The deacons shall assist the church by carrying out the various ministries and services needed under the direction of the elders.

E. Remuneration The elders may financially support any deacon for his or her service to this church. Full-time salaried deacons will not be established without prior consultation with the church.

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III. OTHERS

The elders may select certain individuals for ministry functions. These individuals may include, but are not limited to, people who minister in the areas of youth, music, children, counseling, secretarial, maintenance, etc.

A. Qualifications Any member shall have the necessary skills and character commensurate with his or her position.

B. Term The term of any member will be until the elders determine the member no longer meets the qualifications and/or job description or there is no longer any need for the ministry function.

C. Remuneration The elders may financially support any member for his or her service to this church. Full-time salaried positions will not be established without prior consultation with the church.

ARTICLE VI - Church Discipline

A. Grounds Discipline is an exercise of scriptural authority for which the church is responsible. Matthew 18:15-20; Acts 16:4; I Corinthians 5:1-13; II Thessalonians 3:6-15; I Timothy 5:17-21; Hebrews 13:17. The purpose of discipline is to promote repentance and restoration through exposing habitual unrepentant behavior. It is redemptive in nature as well as corrective. Any member of the church is subject to discipline on the basis of unscriptural conduct or doctrinal departure from the statement of faith of this church.

B. Procedure The church will follow the disciplinary procedure set forth in Matthew 18:15-18. The procedure consists generally of the following steps. (1) The Pastor or a designated member appointed by the elders discusses the charges with the member in an effort to resolve the matter

privately; (2) if the first step does not resolve the matter, then the member shall meet with the elders or with a designated committee appointed by the elders in an effort to resolve the matter privately; (3) if the first or second steps do not resolve the matter, then the elders will submit the matter to the church. A member who is habitually unrepentant and continues in the rebellious behavior after the first three disciplinary steps are taken may be dismissed from membership in the church by a public announcement to the body. Matthew 18:17; I Corinthians 5:9-13; I Timothy 5:20. However, lesser sanctions may be imposed as appropriate, depending on the circumstances of each case.

C. Resignations Members who are under discipline by this church forfeit and waive the right to resign from membership in this church. Resignations from membership are possible only by those members in good standing who are not under any disciplinary action.

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ARTICLE VII - Divorce and Remarriage

A. Position Christ Community Church adheres to the sanctity of marriage. Biblical standards are to be applied in the cases of divorce and remarriage. The Bible teaches that only in the case of adultery or in the case of desertion by a non-believing spouse will the “innocent” spouse be granted a divorce and allowed to remarry in the eyes of God (Matthew 19:1-12; I Corinthians 7:7-16). CCC staff will not participate in weddings that violate the biblical standard. For further biblical support please refer to the booklet Rights and Wrongs, A Study of Divorce and Remarriage in the Church by Dr. Robert Lewis in the CCC library.

B. Participation CCC members are requested to prayerfully seek discretion and wisdom when asked to attend or participate in weddings that violate the biblical standards on divorce and remarriage. Decisions to support such weddings in any manner will not adversely affect the standing of any member of this body. Furthermore, those persons who are presently partners in marriages that fail to meet these biblical standards are welcome to participate in activities of this ministry.

ARTICLE VIII - Ordinances

A. Baptism (Acts 2:38, Acts 8:12, Mark 16:16) This church shall baptize only those persons who have come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, who have accepted Him as Lord and Savior of their lives, and who have chosen to follow Him in baptism. The method of baptism shall be by immersion.

B. Communion (The Lord's Supper) (I Corinthians 11:23,24; Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:14-21)

ARTICLE IX- Not-for Profit Organization

A. No Stocks Issued This church is not organized for pecuniary profit, and it shall not have any power to issue certificates for stock or declare dividends.

B. Inurement of Income No part of the net earnings of the church shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, elders, trustees, Directors, officers or other private persons except that the church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered.

C. Benevolent Fund This church will have a benevolent fund whose purpose is to assist in meeting the material needs of the members of this church. This fund will be called the II Corinthians Fund. Suggestions by donors to the II Corinthians fund shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature. The administration of this fund, including all disbursements, is subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the church elders.

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D. Handling of Offerings All cash offerings shall be counted by at least two authorized persons before the funds are removed from the church building. A cash receipts form shall be signed in duplicate by those counting the offering. A record shall be kept of all receipts and disbursements of the local assembly and of all individual giving. All funds shall be deposited in federally insured accounts.

E. Legislature or Political Activities No substantial part of the activities of the church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation and the church shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

F. Operational Limitations Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Articles, the church shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law.

G. Dissolution Clause Upon the dissolution of the church, none of its funds or assets shall be distributed to any officer, deacon, elder, trustee, or any other individual. The elders shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the church, dispose of all of the funds and assets of the assembly by conveying the same to an organization agreed upon by the elders in an official meeting and provided that said organization at the time qualifies as an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law). Any such funds or assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Circuit Court of the county in which the principle office of the organization is then located, to such organization as said Court shall determine, which is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes.

ARTICLE X - Amendments

These bylaws can only be amended by the unanimous consent by the elders.

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Ministry Philosophy

Imagine being given a new bus as a personal gift. Your new vehicle is not just a normal bus—it is a luxurious touring bus. Inside, you have plush, reclining seats, bathroom facilities, and a state-of-the-art stereo system. Outside, your new bus is painted shimmering silver with tinted windows. Your new bus has all the necessary ingredients for a pleasant, comfortable ride. You are proud of your new bus, and all your friends are impressed with your new bus. Months go by and the luster of your new traveling castle wears off. You commit yourself to rekindle your friends' original enthusiasm for your bus. One day you decide to pick up all of your friends and take them on a traveling tour. In the middle of your pleasure run, your bus breaks down on a hill. The only way to get your bus fixed is to have all your friends get out of the bus and push it up the hill. The weather is not ideal. Your friends complain that they didn't get on this bus to work and get dirty, and some decide to stay on the bus. Only a small percentage is willing to get out in the rain and help push.

Now imagine being given the same bus, but this time your purpose has changed. Imagine that your bus is sitting in your driveway, and you get a call from the Fire Chief who tells you that there is a fire in an apartment building across town. Children are trapped in the upper floors of this building! The Fire Chief asks you to gather up as many folks as possible in your bus to help with the life-saving efforts. You hurriedly gather your friends, and they all willingly board your bus. When the bus breaks down this time, there are no complaints about who has to push and who is going to get dirty. Everyone on the bus is committed to saving lives.

Isn't it amazing how much difference it makes when we understand our purpose? It is no different when we are dealing in spiritual matters. God has ordained a vehicle on earth to accomplish His purposes. That vehicle is the body of Christ—His church. His church's purpose is to provide people with the life-saving and life-changing message of Jesus Christ. All who come aboard do so by placing their trust in Jesus Christ. In order to be effective, the objectives and motivations of all who are on board are singularly focused on the call God has placed on them. Each person is committed to do whatever he/she can in the life-saving and life-changing efforts. This vehicle has many parts, but all the parts add up to what is called the church.

Christ Community Church is one expression of this vehicle that God has designed. Below you will find some of the nuts and bolts of our endeavor.

Biblical foundation

Biblical instruction is the foundation for determining direction and vision for the church. In the following section, key passages are considered, along with a short comment on their relationship to the church.

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Matthew 28:19-20

Matthew speaks of the necessity for making disciples, and he addresses the discipleship curriculum as teaching for the sake of action.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Acts 1:8

Christ informs us that there is a spiritual dimension or prerequisite for ministry, namely the power of the Holy Spirit. We also learn that reaching others is a deliberate action.

"You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Acts 2:42

Luke provides us with some necessary elements to add to the corporate life of the body of Christ.

"And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."

I Corinthians 12:4-7

The Apostle Paul instructs us that ministry is a team approach. Instead of spectatorship, Paul encourages everyone to be focused on the "common good."

"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. And there are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good."

Ephesians 4:11-12

The pastors, along with other leaders, are like coaches helping the players (church body) on the field do their job. Spiritual leadership is therefore synonymous with servanthood.

"And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ."

Colossians 1:28

The final "product" of the church is not measured by the size of the buildings or how many are in the congregation. The job of the church is to facilitate an environment that is conducive to Christ-likeness.

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"And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ."

II Timothy 2:2

Ministry of the church should not be strictly a "one to many" format where a crowd comes to hear a polished speaker. When ministries are focused on such an approach, they end up being impersonal and ineffective in establishing meaningful, authentic relationships in the church. There can be no lasting change unless modeling is done in an up-close and personal fashion. Without the context of personal relationships, how effective is spiritual reproduction? We want to take advantage of various environments at CCC including one-on-one, small groups, and a corporate setting.

"And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also."

I Peter 4:10

Peter communicates that all members of a body are ministers. The church is not one minister with many spectators, but many ministers with leaders who serve the members.

"As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

While these verses do not provide a complete examination of the task for the church, they do provide enough information to give an idea of the general direction for Christ Community Church. Any activity or program within CCC should reflect the above biblical injunctions.

No program of CCC is in cement. If we make a "sacred cow" out of a program, we are in danger of losing sight of the original intent. It is critical that the intent of each ministry is clearly understood. Every ministry should have specific goals that are consistent with the scriptural injunctions for the church. Gene Getz in *Sharpening the Focus of the Church*, is helpful here when he says:

We must therefore understand why people resist change. But we must also understand that Christians sometimes have "double-trouble." Because we believe there are things that should never change, we often confuse non-absolutes (those things that should change) with absolutes (things that should not change). Often, this resistance is rooted in insecurity and fear, and it leads to rationalization. After all, what better way to rationalize than to think we are standing for the truth of scripture? However, many Christians resist change because they are honestly confused. They don't understand the differences between absolutes and non-absolutes. They put "beginning the service with the doxology" in the same

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category as the “virgin birth”. Or they think that “meeting at 11 o’clock on Sunday morning” is just as significant as what the Bible teaches about the “second coming of Christ.”

Mission Statement

What kind of church is Christ Community Church? This question is often asked when people want to inquire about CCC. Some people prefer the convenience of defining a church by its denominational affiliation. Questioning a church’s affiliation is certainly a fair inquiry. However, we must go deeper. Identity based solely with a denomination is, at best, incomplete.

One of the ways a church can define its direction is through an accurate mission statement. By accurate, we mean that the mission statement is consistent with biblical truth and unique to the church it represents. Every church, whether it knows it or not, has a mission statement. The mission statement may, in reality, be to compete with another church or to "always do things like we have in the past."

If a church is going to remain healthy, it must know where it is going and how it is going to get there. An accurate mission statement can help to determine direction and properly identify a local body. The mission statement of Christ Community Church is:

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Our mission statement addresses the source of our strength being Christ and the purpose of our activity being “equipping” and having “impact”. How we define impact can be noted below in our discussion on “objectives.” Impacting our world implies that we are to be culturally sensitive, just as any missionary strives for as they minister in a foreign culture. The same cultural sensitivity applies when we minister in the American culture. We are to be creative as we communicate the gospel where God puts us. Our mission statement also addresses both motive and behavior. Organization and organism must both be addressed

As we gaze through the scripture, we see value given to the organism and organization of God’s people. Jethro encouraged Moses to delegate the ministry of Israel to produce better organization. Deacons were instituted to organize the early church and multiply ministry. However, we also see Jesus heading up into the mountains in the early hours of the day to seek the Father before He ministered. We see the disciples waiting on the Holy Spirit in the Upper Room before heading out into church planting.

1 Corinthians 12:4-7 says, “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. And there are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to

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each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” The scriptures teach that we are to value the bent and giftedness of members of the body so that we do not create an either/or status, but a both/and dimension. *“But now there are many members, but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you.”* (I Cor. 12:20-21)

When God brought Israel into the Promised Land, He encouraged His people to participate in both organism and organization. The Ark of the Covenant was to be at the center of worship to remind the Israelites of their constant need to depend on God. However, there was also much activity, advancement, and conquering that God commanded. God never saw a dichotomy between depending on Him and acting, but rather saw them each as a necessary part of life in Him. The abiding presence of God provided clear vision and an unshakeable confidence in Him. This confidence was a springboard to act.

Abiding in God does not mean that we sit around and do as little as possible, as if human activity is the antithesis to dependence upon God. Conversely, it does not mean that we busy ourselves with activity and not really consider what it means to abide in Christ in the process. Both extremes are to be guarded against. As believers, our hearts are to be fueled by the person, power, and promises of Christ, and He then moves us to action.

Nehemiah and Ezra were men of great leadership capacity during the days of reconstruction of the walls of Jerusalem. Both books, that bear their respective names, demonstrate how each man impacted Israel through his diverse giftedness. Ezra the priest reclaimed the worship of Israel through the sacrificial system. He could be heard reading the Words of God for extended periods to bring the people to a place of abiding in God. *“For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel”* (Ezra 7:10). Nehemiah the public official was found scouting the wall of Jerusalem, devising a plan and facilitating a tremendous building project. Was one man more important than the other? No. God valued each man and the contribution he made to Israel. Each man’s bent was valuable and necessary to accomplish the will of God.

As the members of CCC embark upon new frontiers, we must be careful not to discredit the bent God has given to each person. Organization must be baptized in the power, presence, and person of Christ. Let us say, “Amen” for all calls to abide in Him. However, there are also times when those praying at the altar must be shaken to get out to the wall and repair a breach.

Objectives

Jesus seemed to reserve His most scathing rebuke for those in the religious establishment. It is not that religious people are inherently worse than others. The problem is religion can often create a veil over the mind and heart that makes it difficult to see our need for Christ. Jesus said He came to minister to

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those who are sick—not to the healthy. Those who know they are sick will be open to get help. Those who say they are healthy often think they are OK and don't need the kind of help that those “real sinners” need.

Religion can be unhealthy when it foists a veil over the real issues of the heart. *Ephesians 6:6* demonstrates the importance of Christians having obedience start from the right heart when it says, “not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God *from the heart.*”

A veil can be practicing certain sub-cultural behavioral codes that are revered in a denomination or church and thinking such practices are the trump card or designation of real Christianity. These codes can refer to dress, schooling practices, or prohibited activities that mark one in that culture as truly “Christian.”

Another veil can be doctrinal partisanship. Christians are judged “in” or “out” by holding to certain designations such as “reformed” or “Pentecostal” or “dispensational” and the list goes on. A recent inquirer from our web site asked about certain doctrinal positions for CCC and I communicated some thoughts that I think are pertinent for our discussion here:

I appreciate your regard for orthodoxy and find it refreshing that there are still people out there who care about the doctrine of a church. We would however say that orthopraxis (our practice or behavior) should follow our orthodoxy. We do not think that our sanctification in Christ is found in just what we believe or in holding the right doctrines alone. Of course believing right doctrine is critical to our walk in Christ. However, our doctrine is to move us to act, behave in a way that makes us salt and light to the world and provides the unity, love, grace, and holiness that are to be expressed in our lives. A church that has the right doctrine, but does not express unity, grace, holy living, and a heart for the lost is a dead church. You can't sustain the right behavior on bad doctrine, but I have witnessed many dead churches that hold allegiance to certain manmade credos thinking they were healthy. It is our desire at CCC to have orthodoxy and orthopraxis work in unison.

Consider the following biblical passages that speak of a healthy orthopraxis.

⁵*But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. (1 Timothy 1:5)* Notice that doctrine has a goal. The goal is love from a pure heart and a good conscience.

“Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies.” (1 Corinthians 8:1) Knowledge alone in the Christian life actually has a negative effect because it creates an arrogance and partisanship. Unity in the body of Christ will be the result when biblical knowledge is fused with the right heart and actions.

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"¹If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I have the gift of prophesy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 1 Corinthians 13:1-2

In the above passage, Paul doesn't just stop with doctrine alone. I could also speak to angels and have the gift of tongues. I could preach better than Chuck Swindoll. I could know special revelations from God and understand secrets that others don't know. I could explain with perfect clarity the right eschatology and get rid of any tension between man's free will and the sovereignty of God. I could have the kind of faith that does miracles, produces healings, and does other wonderful things for the people of God. I could do all these things, and yet, if I am not relating well to God and to others (love) it amounts to nothing in God's eyes.

Love for God and others is the trump card. Love separates the immature from the mature when it comes to spirituality. Love is what Jesus prayed for to be seen in His children (*John 17:20-23*). Perhaps this is why John said later the greatest thing that gave him joy was to see his children know and **walk** the truth. (III John 3)

Not only does a good orthopraxis spring from a correct understanding of scripture, but it is also consistent with our mission. The church has struggled for centuries and continues to struggle to keep doctrine targeted toward personal transformation. People can get hung up on issues of doctrine or nonessential practices and miss the log in the eye of the church.

Consider Nehemiah, who exhibited a leadership that focused on essential matters. Remember when the wall around Jerusalem was in such disrepair, and God called Nehemiah to build it up in the face of tremendous opposition? We read in *Nehemiah 4:16-23* that the Israelites were to have a brick in one hand and a sword in another. Instead of a group split apart and nitpicking at each other, the Israelites enjoyed one of the greatest moments in their history as a focused unified body. "*At whatever place you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us*" was the cry. How do you suppose they could have pulled off such a great feat if they were arm's length apart at the wall and criticizing one another for the clothes they wore, or that they worshipped too slow or too fast, or whether the guy on their right was pre-millennial? Such actions would have appeared grossly out of place, and so disloyal to the cause, that a person would have certainly thought long and hard before daring to stoop so low.

Our mission--our "wall to build"--is to disciple others. Our mission statement says that we are "*a Christ-dependent community equipping people to impact their world.*" Because of the urgency of our mission, because of the importance of this calling, all other endeavors pale in comparison. Many Christians waste time

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with infighting and fretting over lesser issues because they miss the joy that comes from having their hearts beat consistent with our Lord. The mission of CCC is not to create one event after another, but to see individuals transformed by the gospel and loving others toward the same.

Consider the following discipleship objectives that clearly call our community of faith to action. As a member of CCC, you are agreeing to make these biblical principles life-long, heartfelt objectives. Instead of calling members to be faithful to programs, CCC is calling each and every member to be faithful to biblical objectives and allowing freedom for God to establish those programs that are culturally sensitive and biblically consistent.

CCC Discipleship Objectives

1. A faithful follower of Christ accepts the call of discipleship as normative for all believers. Discipleship is not optional, but a call is given to every person who claims to be a follower of Christ. As such, a faithful follower of Christ seeks to live under the complete Lordship of Jesus Christ. (*Matt. 28:19-20, Luke 9:23-27, 57-62, 14:25-35, John 13:35, II Tim. 2:1-2*)
2. A faithful follower of Christ seeks to think and act consistently with a biblical worldview. Such a worldview permeates every area of life-- including personal, family, vocational, and social realms. (*Deut. 6:1-9, Romans 12:1-2, Phil. 4:8-13, Col. 3:17*)
3. A faithful follower of Christ is a good steward of time, treasure, and talent. They acknowledge the ownership of God, and the need to use all time, treasure, and talent for His pleasure and glory. (*Psalm 24:1, Luke 16:1-13, Acts 2:45-47, 4:3, 2 Cor.9: 6-13, 1 Tim. 6:17-19*)
4. A faithful follower of Christ seeks to live a life of personal holiness, motivated from a heart dependent upon the indwelling Christ. Personal holiness includes not being conformed to values of the world system inconsistent with a biblical worldview (materialism, vengeance, self-promotion, etc.), and includes abstaining from sexual immorality. (*Rom. 12:1-2, I Cor. 6:12-20, Gal. 2:20-21, 5:16-24, Phil.2:13, Col. 3:1-17, I Thess. 4:3-8*)
5. A faithful follower of Christ lives a life that is evangelistically sensitive, building bridges to the unchurched. We are to be sensitive that we do not view unchurched people as a project, but instead we love and respect all people, understanding that they are made in the image of God and are in need of forgiveness of sin. (*Gen. 1:27, I Chron. 12:32, Prov. 14:12, Acts 17:16-34, I Cor. 9:12-27, I Tim. 2:1-4*)
6. A faithful follower of Christ loves and supports the local expression of the body of Christ, and supports the church through time, treasure, and talent for the equipping of the saints, participating in the discipleship process of

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believers, and spreading the gospel for the glory of God. Valuing the body of Christ includes maintaining a quality of relationship with members characterized by grace, loyalty, and the resolving of conflicts. (*Matt. 28:19-20, I Cor. 12:4-26, 16:1-2, Eph 4:1-32*)

7. A faithful follower of Christ upholds and lives consistently with God's design for the family as expressed in scripture, including the biblical framework for marriage, parenting, and singleness. (*Gen. 2:24-25, Matt. 19:1-12, I Cor. 7:1-40, Eph 5:15-6:4*)
8. A faithful follower of Christ seeks to cultivate an abiding, intimate relationship with God through personal and corporate means of worship, Bible study, prayer, fellowship, and service. Such disciplines are not the goal, but a means toward a more Christ-dependent life. (*Joshua 1:8, Psalm 5:3, 119:148, Mark 1:35, Acts 2:42-47, Heb 10:24-25*)
9. A faithful follower of Christ does not favor those rich in this world, but is devoted to warmly receiving, giving, and loving the poor, widows, orphans, and those typically considered outcasts in society. (*Luke 9:1-6, 14:12-24, James 1:27, 2:14-17, I Tim. 6:6-10, 17-19*)

When all the planning is done and all the results are in, we must recognize that the fruit of ministry is only “*By My Spirit’ saith the Lord*”. The Apostle Paul offers a proper perspective for church ministry when he writes in I Corinthians 3:6-8, “*I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor.*” Ultimately any fruit that comes out of CCC is a result of the handiwork of God.

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Christ Community Church Membership Covenant

- ◆ I testify to having placed my trust in Jesus Christ and Him alone for the forgiveness of my sins and my eternal destiny.
- ◆ I will seek to live my life in pursuit of the glory of God and will strive to be faithful to the demands of discipleship. I have read and am willing to comply with the discipleship goals of CCC.
- ◆ I have read completely and am willing to fully comply with the by-laws of Christ Community Church.
- ◆ I have read completely and I agree with the statement of faith and ministry philosophy of Christ Community Church.
- ◆ I will faithfully seek, as gifted by God, to support the ministries of CCC by my presence, my financial resources, and my service.
- ◆ I will faithfully seek by God's grace to edify other members of CCC and maintain the unity of the saints. I will express liberty to brothers and sisters in the Lord who hold positions not essential to the gospel and will guard myself from expressing a critical spirit.
- ◆ I understand that by signing this membership form I am not committing to solely participate in the ministries of CCC. I agree that the body of Christ is much larger than the expression of CCC and I will strive to encourage, pray for, and participate in other ministries as the Lord leads me.
- ◆ I understand that being a committed participant in the above areas is the heart of being a member of CCC. However, signing this form is a sign of my intentions and is a necessary element to the membership process.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Attendance in the Discovery Class is required.
Please attach your Testimony sheet and submit your signed membership form to the CCC office via mail, handing to Mary Douglas or Pastor Kevin, or place in the membership form bin in the church office at the CCC facility.

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