

LIVING STONE CHRISTIAN CENTER – LIVING STONE CHURCH

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT (TENETS OF FAITH)

§1 We believe that the accepted canon of the Bible is the inspired Word of God equally in all parts and without error in its original manuscript, absolutely infallible, and our source of supreme revelation from God, superior to conscience and reason; and it is therefore, when rightly interpreted by the Holy Spirit, our infallible rule of faith and practice. (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Peter 1:23-25; Heb. 4:12; 1 Cor. 2:13; Psalms 45:1; Ezek. 1:3; Matt. 24:35; Luke 24:27; Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Pet. 1:21)

§2 We believe in one God who has revealed Himself in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are all co-eternal, all stand equally superior to time, free from the temporal distinctions of past and future. (Gen. 1:26; 12:33; Deut. 6:4; 33:27; 1 Kg. 8:60; Psalms 90:2; 102:27; Micah 5:2; Matt. 28:19; Mark 12:29; Jn. 1:1-2; 8:58; 14:26; 15:26; Acts 2:33; Rom. 1:20; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 1:3-14; 4:4-6; Heb. 1:8; 9:14; 1 Tim. 1:17; Jas. 2:19; 1 Pet. 1:2; 3:18; 1 Jn. 1:2; 5:7; Rev. 1:4-5; 1:8)

§3 We believe that man was created by a direct and immediate act of God. We believe that man by transgression fell from a state of righteousness and holiness in which he was first created, into total spiritual depravity, a state of death in trespasses and sins in which he is held as a slave of sin and an enemy of God, being unable to attain divine righteousness by his own efforts; unregenerate man, with a beast nature, needs a Savior. (Gen. 1-3; 2:4; Rom. 3:23; 5:12-21; 6:23; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:1-4)

§4 a) We believe the Lord Jesus Christ to be the only Savior of all men. We believe in the pre-existence, incarnation and virgin birth of Jesus Christ, conceived by the Holy Spirit, who came into the world to reveal the Father, and was the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person; that Jesus Christ was the Creator of all things, for by Him all things were made. We further believe that in Christ dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily and that He was very (fully) God and very (fully) Man. We believe in Jesus Christ's sinless life, miracles, substitutionary death, bodily resurrection and His ascension into Heaven, and acknowledge His Lordship; that Jesus Christ is Lord over all things in heaven and in earth, and under the earth. Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose again according to the Scriptures. He personally appeared in His new body to His disciples before ascending to His seat at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. Jesus' finished work (His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension) reversed the curse concerning the spirit, soul, and body of the first man Adam. He is the only Way to the Father, the only valid Door and entry into the realm of Spirit. (Gen. 3:15; Matt. 1:18-25; John 10:1; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Cor. 15:1-8; Gal. 3:13-14; Heb. 4:14-16; 8:1-6; 10:12-13; Phil. 2:9-10; Rom. 4:25; Jn. 1:1-2, 14 & 18; 1 Tim. 3:16; Acts 7:37-38; Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:26-35)

b) We believe in Christ's bodily ascension into heaven, in His exaltation and His personal return in power and great glory, and in His everlasting Kingdom and dominion. (Acts 1:11; 3:19-21; Daniel 7:14; Revelation 20:4)

§5 We believe that each believer must lay a foundation of Biblical truth and experience upon which he builds his life. These "foundation stones" are; repentance from dead works, faith toward God, doctrine of baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, eternal judgment and perfection. (Hebrews 6:1-3)

§6 We believe in personal regeneration, that one must be born again to see and enter the Kingdom of God. This initial salvation of sinners is by grace through faith in the perfect and all-sufficient finished work of Jesus Christ. The ground of this justification by faith is the blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God. (John 1:29; 3:1-8; 17:4; 19:30; Acts 13:38-39; Rom. 5:1-2; Eph. 2:8-9; Rev. 13:8)

§7 We believe that repentance and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ produces the work of justification in the believer. Through faith in the shed blood of Christ, he is justified and made a partaker in the death of Christ. This is the initial step of salvation. (Romans 5:1, 9; Luke 22:20) We believe that repentance is a gift from God. It is simply not true that a person can repent at any time. Repentance is dependent upon the conviction action of the Holy Spirit in the lives of sinners and believers. The conviction of the Holy Spirit, which often accompanies the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, will result in the revelation of the sinfulness of self which should lead to Godly sorrow. Remorse, or worldly sorrow, is a feeling of deep regret, hopelessness or even despair. It does not lead to constructive change. On the other hand Godly sorrow, which may at times be mistaken for worldly sorrow, produces repentance which causes us to turn away from sin and selfishness and to receive faith for change. Worldly sorry is destructive, but repentance is life giving. Repentance changes the way we feel and act about sin, self and God. Repentance is a total change of heart, mind, attitude, emotions, will, actions and lifestyle flowing from the turmoil and sorry of Holy Spirit conviction of sin. (2 Corinthians 7:10; Psalms 51; Acts 11:18; 2 Timothy 2:25; Genesis 6:3; Romans 1:18-32; Matthew 9:12-13)

§8 We believe that this conversion experience should be followed with water baptism by immersion in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ (which we believe to be the fulfillment of the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit) for the remission of sins and the circumcision of the heart. The old man is put to death and the new creation man arises to walk in newness of life. Blood, water (baptism), and Spirit constitute the three witnesses that initiate the New Covenant. (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 2:28-29; 6:1-14; Col. 2:11-12; 1 John 5:8; Col. 2:9-13; Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:34-36; 19:1-6)

§9 We believe that "by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not by works lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9) We further believe that the emphasis for a continuous walk in grace should be the emphasis of heart righteousness and purity, believe in the

keeping power of God, walking after the Spirit and not after the flesh in a lifestyle that demonstrates the character, standards and convictions of Jesus Christ, not being conformed to the world. (Jude 24; Galatians 5:16-25; Romans 4:1-5; 5:11; 8:25; 12:1-2; Hebrews 9:12)

§10 We believe that the Pentecostal experience of the Holy Ghost Baptism is separate from and subsequent to conversion. God sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts; this is Christ in and among all of us, the hope of glory. We believe that the initial evidence of this Baptism to be historical and experiential distinctive of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. However, speaking with other tongues is not necessarily the evidence of a Spirit-filled life. The fruit of a genuine Pentecost is the writing of the law of God upon one's heart. (Mark 16:17; Acts 1:4-8; 2:1-4; 10:44-46; 19:6; Gal. 3:14-15; 4:6; Eph. 5:17-18; Col. 1:27; and Ex. 19:1 with Lev. 23:15-22)

§11 We believe that sanctification is once and for all as well as progressive in nature: first, from the time of conversion, God Himself sets the believer apart by the blood of Jesus; then the believer separates himself unto a holy God by washing himself daily with the Word. The Spirit-directed life is one of detachment from this present world system, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (Matt. 5:48; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 6:11-7:1; Eph. 5:25-27; Col. 3:8-13; Heb. 9:12; 12:14; Jas. 1:27; 1 Pet. 1:15; 1 John 2:15-17)

§12 We believe that resurrection is past, present, and future. Our spirit was resurrected from a state of spiritual death and passed unto life when we were born from above and translated into His Kingdom. Our soul is being transformed, our minds renewed, from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord; our mortal bodies are presently being made alive by the same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead. Ultimately, there will be a resurrection in which He shall change these vile bodies and fashion them like until His glorious body. Not all will sleep, or die; there will be a people or generation, like Enoch and Elijah, who experience the out-resurrection, a spiritual and moral resurrection while yet in the body. (Job 14:14; Psa. 16:10; 17:15; John 5:24; 11:25; Rom. 8:11, 23; 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 15; 2 Cor. 3:18; 5:6-10; Col. 1:9-13; Phil. 3:11, 21; Rev. 20)

§13 We believe in observing often the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. This Eucharist, the Table of the Lord, is the ongoing celebration of the New Covenant. (Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:17-20; 1 Cor. 10:16-17; 11:23-30)

§14 We believe in the doctrine of the laying on of hands for:

- The confirming of believers in the faith. (Acts 14:22)
- The confirmation of one's call when accompanied with prophecy. (Acts 13:1, 3)
- The impartation of the spiritual gifts when accompanied by prophecy. (1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6)

- The ordination and official recognition and setting apart of ministry.
- The impartation of the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 8:17-18)
- The ministry of healing the sick. (Mark 16:16)
- The blessing and dedication (setting apart) of children. (Mark 10:16)

§15 We believe in the five-fold ministries given to the Church at the ascension of Jesus Christ and that they continue to be needed and should be expected today, that is, ministries of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. (Psalms 68:18; Ephesians 4:11-12; Philippians 1:1)

§16 We believe and teach the rite of foot washing for all New Covenant believer-priests as a means of prophetically removing the defilement of this world from one another. We further believe that all are instructed to do so by the Lord Jesus Christ. (John 13:14-15)

§17 We believe that all authority centers in Jesus Christ and that He has delegated His jurisdiction into the home (domestically), the local church (ecclesiastically), and civil government. We believe in the theocratic (God-ruled) local church government and order (elders, deacons, and saints). Divine order in the New Testament maintains a plurality of eldership and leadership, but there is a set man at any given time with a distinctive anointing to father the flock of God. (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 13:1-2; 15:19; Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 1:20-23; Phil. 1:1; 2:5-11; 1 Tim. 1:3-13)

§18 We believe in the full restoration of the five-fold ascension-gift ministries that Jesus Christ sent to equip and mature the Church: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Their mission is to produce a perfect, full-grown, many-membered new creation Man in the earth, the manifestation or unveiling of the nature and ministry of Jesus Christ in His brethren. (Rom. 8:19-23; 1 Cor. 13:8-13; Eph. 2:20; 3:1-5; 4:11-16; Col. 1:25-29)

§19 We believe that ordination and commissioning is a separation and recognition of a specific gifting of God. We believe that God calls men and women into specific ministries as Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers. God calls. Man can only recognize the call and acknowledge it. Ordination is on the basis of that recognition of God's gifting. Men called to a specific office by God and ordained or commissioned by this church will have the right to participate in the traditional sacramental and ordinal functions of the church such as marriage, funerals, baptisms, and the like. They shall also be expected to function in the spiritual giftings of their office and to demonstrate the reality of their calling. We reject the efficacy of ritual and the concept of a separate priestly class.

§20 We believe in the practice of worship with one's total being as set forth in the Word of God. We believe in the order of worship given by revelation in the Tabernacle of David and restored to the Church today. This includes the voice (singing, shouting), the hands (clapping, raising, playing instruments), and the whole body (standing, bowing, kneeling, dancing). (2 Sam. 6; 1 Chron. 13-16; Psa. 150; Acts 15:13-17; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Acts 24:14; Ephesians 5:18-19)

§21 We believe that the fruit of the Spirit is the divine nature and character of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Pattern Son for every believer. We are called to be like the One who is the firstborn among many brethren. (Rom. 8:28-29; 2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 5:22-23; 2 Pet. 1:3-4; 1 John 3:1-3)

§22 We believe that the gifts or manifestations of the Holy Spirit are the supernatural ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that every member of the Body of Christ should flow in several of them. New Testament ministry is the outflowing of the indwelling Christ. The Church is called to a spiritual ministry of speaking, knowing, and doing. These nine manifestations enable us to talk like God, think like God, and do the works of God. (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 1:8; 4:7-10, 29-31; 5:12; 8:5-13; 10:38; Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 4:20; 12:8-11; 14:1-40; Heb. 2:3-4; 1 Pet. 4:10-11)

§23 We believe that healing for man's spirit, mind, and body was provided for in the New Covenant when our Lord Jesus was striped in His death on the cross and rose again in the power of His resurrection. Divine health is a reality for the believer. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law: sin, sickness, poverty, and death. We believe in healing as practiced by, but not limited to, the early church as God will do unprecedented miracles through His Body. (Ex. 15:26; Isa. 53:4-5; Mark 7:26; 16:18; John 10:10; 14:12; Acts 4:30; 10:38; 19:11; Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 12:9; Gal. 3:13-14; Jas. 5:13-16; 1 Peter 2:24-25)

§24 We believe that the Kingdom of God is a present reality and will expand until the knowledge of His Lordship covers the earth, The Government of God is the purpose of God; it is the extension of His rule and dominion in the earth and the universe. The Church, universal and local, mystical and tangible, invisible and visible, is the instrument through which that purpose is to be realized. (Gen. 1:26-28; Dan. 2:44-45; 7:27; Hab. 2:14; Mark 1:14-15; Rom. 14:17; Eph. 3:21; Heb. 12:25-29; Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 11:15; 19:1-6)

§25 We believe that we are one body, being members of one another and that the basis of our fellowship is in Christ in the power of the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:13-22; 4:3-6; 1 John 1:6-7)

§26 We believe that the Church is the Body of Christ expressed as the church individual, the church local, and the church universal and invisible (all saints of all places and all times united together under one Lord). As such, we believe the church to be more than just a building or a gathering of people. It is a

body living in relationship and harmony under the direction of the head, Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 6:15; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Romans 16:5; 1 Peter 2:4-5; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31; Romans 12:4-5; Ephesians 4:11-16) The local church is an expression of the community and fellowship of God. As the Body of Christ in the earth it is an intimate community of people that is devoted to apostolic teaching, to fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer. The local body will meet together regularly as a whole and in smaller groups in the homes of the members of the congregation. We consider the fellowship of the saints together in private homes and other locations to be an essential expression of the life of faith of the church. Indeed to this end, the Word of God frequently refers to the church as a "household". (Matthew 16:13-20; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-47; 1 Peter 4:17; 1 Timothy 3:15; Ephesians 2:19; 1 Peter 2:5; Acts 18:8; Romans 16:5, 10, 11; 1 Corinthians 1:11, 16; 16:15, 19; Philippians 4:22; Colossians 4:15; 2 Timothy 1:16; 4:19)

§27 We believe in church discipline administered within the church in a spirit of meekness and confidentiality. The purpose of such discipline is the restoration of the one subject to the discipline and/or the purification of the church. The steps of discipline are one on one private confrontation, private confrontation and witnesses, and finally, exposure to the church, Board of Elders, and/or the congregation for judgment leading to restoration or separation. (Matthew 18:15-20; Galatians 6:1; Romans 16:17; 2 John 9-11; 1 Corinthians 5; 2 Corinthians 2:6-8; 1 Timothy 5:20)

§28 We believe as members of the same body of Christ, baptized by one Spirit into one body that we must endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace and as such that we are discouraged from bringing a lawsuit in a civil court against another person who professes to be a Christian or against a Christian ministry. We believe that all such disputes should be resolved within the Body of Christ without taking them before unbelievers for judgment. (1 Corinthians 6:1-8; Ephesians 4:3-6)

§29 We believe the Church to be the seed of Abraham, God's Holy Nation and 11Chosen Generation, the true Circumcision, the Heavenly Jerusalem, the spiritual Israel of God. The Jew is us (the Church). Like Jesus, we are the Seed of the Woman, the Seed of Abraham, and the Seed of David; as such, we are heirs together of the grace of life, sharing His pain, His promise, and His power. (Rom. 2:28-29; 9:6; 15:8 with Acts 3:13; then Gal. 3:7, 16, 29; 4:21-31; 6:16; Matt. 21:42-43 with 1 Pet. 2:9-10; Phil. 3:3; Heb. 12:22-24; then Gen. 3:15; Matt. 1:1; Rom. 8:16-17; 1 Pet. 3:7; 1 John 4:17)

§30 We believe that faith without works is dead. We do not believe, as a matter of the fundamental beliefs and doctrines of this church that any matter can be believed without there being an accompanying and corresponding action. Our faith is an active faith that requires the doing of acts in the world. Our faith is not a passive or complacent system of intellectual believe or assent to doctrine but is an active force in our lives that requires and results in actions being taken. A living, active faith will be manifested not only in belief and mental assent, but in actions expressing and based upon that belief. If a belief is truly held it will be acted upon. The act is as much a fundamental aspect of our faith as the

belief upon which the act is based. (James 2:14-26; Eph. 2:8-10; Matt. 5:16; 7:21, 24-27; 16:27; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 2:23; 22:12)

§31 We believe that in all matters concerning the Body of Christ, in its direction, discipline, ministry and functioning that specific guidance and instruction, revelation and discernment of truth from falsehood, is available by the leading of the Holy Spirit who enables us to know spiritual things by the spirit and we are confident in basing decisions and actions upon such faith and direction. (Acts 13:1-3; 1 Timothy 1:18; Romans 8:14; 1 Timothy 5:22; John 16:13-15; 1 Corinthians 5:3)

§32 We believe that God's judgments are past, present, and future. Our sins were judged in Christ; it was appointed unto man once to die, and Jesus met that appointment. After that we are to stand in His presence and learn how to righteously judge ourselves and others. Thirdly, we shall be judged, for every man will give an account of himself; in that day, the Judge of all the earth shall do right, for His judgments are unto victory. In time to come, the Church will execute and administer the judgment, which He is, when we judge the world and angels. (Gen. 18:25; Eccl. 12:14; Matt. 5:13-16; 12:20; John 5:22; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:16; 14:10-12; 1 Cor. 6:1-3; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Thess. 2:7-10; Heb. 9:27; 12:23; Rev. 20:12; 21:8)

§33 We believe that there shall be a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. (2 Peter 3:13; Rev. 21:1)

§34 We believe in Spirit-filled prayer and intercession, and that fasting (abstaining from food) intensifies prayer. Spiritual warfare is waged and won on the basis of Jesus' finished work. We are to cast out demons in the Name of the King. Satan, our adversary, is a reality, and was completely defeated by our Lord's death and resurrection. We are called to enforce Jesus's victory, to occupy until He comes, to call those things which be not as though they were, to prophetically decree a thing so that it will be established unto us. (Job 1:7; 22:28; Matt. 4:2; 12:25-29; Mark 16:17; Luke 4:2; 10:17-20; 19:13; Acts 8:18-24; 13:6-12; 19:13-20; Rom. 4:17; 2 Cor. 2:11; 11:14, 27; Eph. 6:10-18; Heb. 2:14; Jas. 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8-9; 1 John 3:8)

§35 We believe that the Father has given the earth to the children of men. The earth is the Lord's; it belongs to Jesus and His Church, not the devil. The meek shall inherit the earth. As kings and priests, we shall reign on the earth. Heaven is the realm of God, and God is omnipresent Spirit; Heaven is nearer than men think. Therefore, we believe in the coming of the Lord, not the going of the saints; in the appearing of the lord, not the disappearing of the saints. Throughout the Scriptures, God comes to dwell with man. Jesus is coming now (in Spirit) to be glorified "in" the saints; He will come (literally) "with" the saints once His enemies are made His footstool, once He has received the early and latter rains, once we have come to the unit disclosed in John 17 and Ephesians 4, and once He has restored all things spoken by all His holy prophets since the world began. His coming is not "any minute" but "until" (a word

denoting time) - no man knows that day or hour. (Gen. 28:10-17; Psa. 24:1; 37:3, 9, 11, 22, 29, 34; 110:1-6; 115:16; Matt. 5:5; 6:10; 24:36; John 1:51; 3:13; Acts 3:18-24; Eph. 4:13; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Thess. 1:6-10; Heb. 10:12-13; Jas. 5:7; Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 21:1-11)

§36 We believe a divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry is provided by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, for the two-fold purpose of the evangelization of the world and of the edification and oversight of the body of Christ. (Mark 16:15-20; Ephesians 4:8-13; Acts 20:28)

§37 We believe there is the occasional need for deliverance. Deliverance is manifested by an inability to be free from a bondage: e.g., mental (emotional), physical or spiritual normally associated with demon activity, it is God's desire to bring deliverance to His people. (Job 5:19; Psalms 91:3; 2 Timothy 4:13; Hebrews 2:15; 2 Peter 2:9) We have been granted the authority in the name of Jesus to bring deliverance to others. (Mark 16:17; John 14:12; 1 Corinthians 12:8-11) We must understand that our warfare is with the forces of evil (Ephesians 6:12), our weapon is the Word of God, our authority and power is from Jesus himself (Mark 16:17; Acts 1:8) and that the battlefield is first of all in the spiritual realms. (Ephesians 6:10-18; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Romans 8:9; Galatians 5:22-23)

§38 We believe that God is the Creator of man, marriage, and family. We believe that God created man and that He created them male and female. As such, He created them different to complement and complete each other. God instituted monogamous marriage between a biological male and a biological female as the foundation of the family, the basic structure of human society. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. (Genesis 1:27-28; Genesis 2:20-25; Ephesians 5:25; Ephesians 5:24)

We believe for this reason, homosexuality and gender reassignment is unnatural, sinful, and unacceptable to God. Therefore, we believe same sex marriage deviates from God's original intent for the institution of marriage. The Church is the pillar and support of truth and has a God-given obligation to uphold the teaching of Scripture, even in the face of societal pressure or cultural disagreements. We welcome anyone to attend our church and pray they feel genuinely loved and accepted. We also call everyone to a life of surrender to Jesus and freedom from sin. We strive to show everyone love and compassion as they discover their God-given identity, first as a child of God and then in their God-given gender. (1 Cor. 6:9-11; 1 Tim. 1:9-11; Romans 8:12-17; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Matthew 9:10-13; Genesis 1:27)

We believe that children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. We believe that all human beings are also persons, including embryos and fetuses in utero. A human is not a person simply because he or she is fully functional, but because he or she possesses fundamental value—whether or not they are able to survive on their own—within or without the womb. God made every single person in His image, which endows every person with intrinsic value. Every life is precious to God. (Genesis 1:26,27-28; Psalm 139:13-16; Job 31:15; Psalm 22:9, 10; Isaiah 44:2; Psalm 119:73; Psalm 127:3-5)

§39 We believe that the Scriptures are clear concerning helping those in need. We are commanded to do good to all people as we have opportunity, with a special emphasis upon caring for those who profess to be fellow Christians, especially those of our own fellowship of believers. We are commanded to be generous and willing to share, laying up treasure for ourselves in the coming age by our kindness and generosity in this life. This is true for the church as an organization as well as for the individual members of the church. Therefore, in accordance with the biblical commands, as a fundamental aspect of the practice of our faith, we will share of our material goods with those in need and will minister to them to the best of our abilities, whatever the need. (Proverbs 25:21; Isaiah 58:10; Galatians 6:10; 1 Timothy 6:18-19; Hebrews 13:16)

§40 The Church, by its very composition, is a membership organization. The local church is the manifestation within our society of The Church. Each local church exists for an express purpose in God's plan. Individual members of the Body of Christ will wish to associate with our congregation as members. All believers are members of The Church. The Lord will set some of those members of The Church into this local congregation as members as it pleases Him. As members of this local congregation they are given into the care and oversight of the leadership which must give an account to God for their souls. The elders of this church shall have the right to determine who may attend church meetings and functions. This church is owned by the Lord Jesus Christ, who has entrusted the care of the flock to the leadership He has raised up here. It is not a place of public accommodation, nor is it a public institution, and its property is not a public place, but is rather, private property belong to this church. (Acts 20:28-31; 2 Peter 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 1:20; 6:5; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 2 John 9-11; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Titus 3:10-11; Romans 16:17)

§41 We believe that the scriptures clearly define that members of a congregation can seek out advice, consultation, direction, purpose, resolution, and guidance from amongst the shepherds, elders, mature men and women, and Five-Fold Ministry Gifts within the Body of Christ. (1 Kings 1:12; Proverbs 11:14; 27:9; Psalms 55:13-14) We further believe that consultation and instruction is applicable by the scriptures through sessions, a company of persons in close deliberation set together, to lay a foundation, set in place and give wise counsel. This also provides safety, defense, rescue and freedom from trouble. (Psalms 55:13-14; Proverbs 1:11-14; 12:15) The personal care of the saints is the sanctification of the whole person, body, soul and spirit, (1 Thessalonians 3:13; 5:23) through the love that flows from faith, patience and hope, and the redemptive power of the Cross of Christ, (Romans 3:25; Luke 9:23). The atoning blood of Jesus, (Ephesians 2:13-16; 1 Peter 1:18-19). The transformation of the soul through the Word of God, (Romans 12:1-2) the denying of the old nature (Galatians 2:20; 5:24; 1 Peter 1:13-15) salvation through grace not works, (Ephesians 2:1-8) and the promise of the resurrection, (John 3:16; 10:25-26) are the effective working mechanisms that characterize pastoral care ministry. Such ministry is foundational to the practice of our faith.

§42 We recognize and believe that the Church in these last days has been and is in a revival of restoration, because much truth was lost from the Church during the medieval times (also known as the Dark Ages). We maintain that God, in this hour is moving to restore the Church to the complete and full New Testament pattern, power and practice, but shall not be limited to just this. We believe that a complete revelation and truth of God is already written and contained in the scripture and that its progressive unfolding will only add to and not take from what God has already restored to the Church. We remain open to be taught, corrected, and adjusted in our vision.

We, therefore, shall examine all and any new doctrinal concepts, that are not covered in the previous tenets of faith; in the light of the full revealed Word of God, by prayer and witness of the Spirit, and by documented discussion of the Elder leadership. When and if they shall be found to be in harmony with the scriptures and are in alignment with the mission and vision of the local church, they shall be accepted, taught and practiced as instructed by church leadership.

(Isa. 55:9; 1 Cor. 2:9-16; Eph. 3:1-6 & 16:21; Acts 3:21; 2 Peter 1:20)