**Discovering Church Membership**

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**Introduction**

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**Welcome To Discovering Church Membership**

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We’re glad you’ve chosen to find out more about Lighthouse Community Fellowship! This class is the basic introduction to our church family. Since we have members from many different church backgrounds, this class was designed to clearly explain who and what our church is.

Discovering Church Membership is divided in four sessions of an hour each.

**The Basics For This Class**

3

*“...You are a member of God’s very own family...and you belong in God’s household with every other Christian.”* Eph. 2:19 (LB)

***Key Truths:***

1. The church is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. God expects you to be\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of a church family.

3. A Christian without a church family is an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**The Goal Of This Class**

4

**...That I will commit myself to\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and to the\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**What Makes Lighthouse Community Fellowship A Family?**

5

**Four things unite us:**

 • **Our Salvation** (What God has done for us)

 • **Our Statement** (Why we exist as a church)

 • **Our Strategy** (How we fulfill our purpose)

 • **Our Structure** (When and where we fulfill our purpose)

**History of the fellowship of community churches**

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* The Fellowship of Community Churches was originally founded on the 15th July 1888.
* The first formal church building was in Devilliers Street – 1930.
* In 1950 the church moved to Joubert Park as the The Central Baptist Church.
* In 1984, under the pastorate of Rev C.B. Temlett; the church left the Baptist union and started operating as a charismatic church – Central Community Fellowship.
* In 1986 Pastor Ivor Temlett took over from his dad and from then till 2002, the church grew to over a thousand people.
* In 2002 it was decided to multiply the church and plant 4 congregations viz. Eagles Community Fellowship, Northern Community Fellowship, Lighthouse Community Fellowship and Central Community Fellowship.
* LCF’s first service was held on the 7th July 2002 in the Kensington Secondary School Hall.
* In December 2002 LCF moved to the Hellenic Church in Bezuidenhouts Valley.
* 4 years later in July 2006 LCF, like the other 3 churches planted in 2002 was released by FCC to become an autonomous church.
* In June 2015 LCF was planted out of LCF.
* The FCC continues to provide spiritual oversight and guidance to the four churches on a relational basis.

**Session One**

7

**The Lighthouse Community Fellowship Strategy**

8

*(Paul) “I have been all things to all sorts of people that by every possible means I might win some to God. I do all of this for the sake of the Good News.”*

1 Corinthians 9:22-23 (Ph)

**We Are A Cell Church**

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**Why a Cell Church Strategy?**

A Cell Church:

* is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* allows exponential growth.
* allows the Holy Spirit to work in signs and wonders.
* allows \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of members for ministry.
* allows ­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­fast expansion of leadership base by developing Leaders in a directed and systematic matter
* allows \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to take place in the cell.
* allows discipleship in the context of body life.
* allows the Church to reach out through community evangelism.

**Our Vision**

**ONE CELL – ONE SOUL – ONE MONTH**

**Who Are We Trying To Reach?**

10

*“...Yes, whatever a person is like, I try to find common ground with him so he will let me tell him about Christ and let Christ save him.”* 1 Cor. 9:22 (LB)

**5 Circles of Commitment**

11



Our strategy is to move people from the community to the core.

**The Four LCF Covenants:**

**1. The Membership Covenant...**

12

is a commitment to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

*“You are members of God’s very own family...and you belong in God’s household with every other Christian.”* Eph. 2:19 (LB)

*“We are all parts of Christ’s Body, and it takes every one of us to* *make it complete, for we each have different work to do. So we belong to each other and need all the others.”* Rom. 12:4-5 (LB)

**2. The Maturity Covenant...**

13

is a commitment to the\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ necessary for spiritual growth?

*“****Continue to grow*** *in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”* 2 Peter 3:18

*“Take* ***the time and trouble*** *to keep yourself spiritually fit.”* 1 Tim. 4:7 (Ph)

**3. The Ministry Covenant...**

14

is a commitment to discovering and using my God-given gifts and abilities in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_God and others.

*“God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other...”* 1 Pet. 4:10 (LB)

*“There are different kinds of service to God...together you form the Body of Christ and each one of you is a necessary part of it.”* 1 Cor. 12:5, 27 (LB)

**4. The Missions Covenant...**

15

is a commitment to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_the Good News with others.

*“...you will be my witnesses for me...to the ends of the earth.”* Acts 1:8 (GN)

*“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do it with gentleness and respect...”* 1 Peter 3:15

**Why do we have these covenants?**

**We Become What We Are**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**The LCF Strategy**

*3 Key Points That Make Our Church Great*

16

**KINGDOM AGENDA** (Matt. 22:36-40 & 28:19-20)

**CELL GROUPS** (Acts 5:42)

**FAMILY – FELLOWSHIP** (Acts 2:42)

**Session Two**

17

**The Lighthouse Community Fellowship**

**Structure**

18

*“For God is not a God of disorder, but of peace...*

*Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.”*

1 Cor. 14:33,40

**How Our Church Is Structured?**

19

The structure of the church should *not* be determined by culture, business practices, or even denominational traditions.

**The nature of the church determines its structure.**

**I. The Church Is A\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

20

*“They continued steadily learning the teaching of the apostles, and joined in the fellowship...”* Acts 2:42 (Ph)

**A top priority in a fellowship is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*“****Make every effort*** *to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”* Eph. 4:3

*“****So let us concentrate*** *on the things that make for harmony and the growth of our fellowship together.”* Rom. 14:19 (Ph)

ANY attitude that causes disunity is sin.

Col. 3:15, 1 Cor. 1:10, 2 Tim. 2:14, Pr. 17:14, 2 Cor. 13:11,

Phil. 1:27, 2:1-3, Col. 2:2, Phil. 4:2, 1 Peter 3:8, 1 Cor. 14:33,

John 13:34-35, 2 Tim. 2:23, Rom. 15:5-6, Rom. 12:16-18,

Col. 3:13-14, Ps. 133:1

**Implication: A good structure promotes unity and downplays\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*“(Often)...your meetings do more harm than good because I hear that when you come together as a church,* ***there are divisions among you****...”* 1 Cor. 11:17-18

“Voting” tends to create \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***At Lighthouse Community Fellowship, we only vote on:***

 • *Purchase of land or buildings*

 • *Calling the senior pastor*

1. *Changes in the church constitution*

**II. The Church Is A\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

21

*“You should be like one big happy family, full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds.”* 1 Peter 3:8 (LB)

Gal. 6:10, Heb. 2:10-12, 1 Peter 4:17

**So we operate on the basis of\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ not\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*“Don’t reprimand a senior member of the church, appeal to him as a* ***father****. Treat the young men as* ***brothers****, and the older women as* ***mothers****. Treat the younger women as* ***sisters****...”*

 1 Tim. 5:1-2 (Ph)

*“(A Pastor) must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. If anyone does not know how to* ***manage his family****, how can he* ***take care of God’s church****?”* 1 Tim. 3:4-5

**III. The Church Is A\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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1 Cor. 12:27, Eph. 5:23, Eph. 1:22-23, Col. 1:18, 2:19

We are a body — not a business!

We are an organism — not an organization!

**Therefore, we need to use our gifts and talents to serve the body.**

*“Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We each have* ***different gifts*** *according to the grace given us.”* Rom. 12:4-6

**In an organization, “maintenance” becomes the focus. But in an organism, “ministry” is the focus.**

At Lighthouse Community Fellowship we have a simple STRUCTURE, so we can maximize\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and minimize\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*“God gave...some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God’s people for* ***works of ministry****, so that the body of Christ may be built up...”* Eph. 4:11-12

**Our Structure**

**• The people are the “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”.**

**• The pastors are the “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”.**

**IV. The Church Is A\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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 (Jesus’ favorite description of the church) John 10:1-30, Matt. 26:31, Matt. 25:33

**Therefore, it is cared for and led by\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*“Jesus asked Simon Peter, ‘Do you really love me?’ ‘Yes Lord,’ said Peter. ‘Then* ***take care*** *of my sheep.’”* John 21:16-17

Three different terms are used in the New Testament to refer to the *same* church leaders:

*“To the* ***elders*** *I say...****Be shepherds*** *of God’s flock, serving as* ***overseers****...”* 1 Pet. 5:1-2

*“Paul sent to Ephesus for the* ***elders*** *of the church. When they arrived he said to them... Guard yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you* ***overseers****. Be* ***pastors*** *of the church of God...”* Acts 20:17-18, 28

**Session Three**

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**The Lighthouse Community Fellowship Statements**

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*“Let there be real harmony among you so there won’t be any split in the church. I plead with you to be of one mind, united in thought and purpose.”*

1 Corinthians 1:10 (LB)

*“Be kind and compassionate to one another forgiving each other just as in Christ God forgave you.”*

Ephesians 4:32

**Our Purpose Statement**

*Why We Exist As A Church*

26

The purpose of our church is summarized in a single sentence based on two key scriptures:

**“We believe a great commitment to the great\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and the**

## great\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_will grow a great church!”

**The Great Commandment:** *“Jesus said, ‘****Love the Lord*** *your God with all your heart...soul...and mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it:* ***Love your neighbor*** *as yourself. All the Law and Prophets hang on these two commandments.’”* Matt. 22:36-40

**The Great Commission:** *“Jesus said, ‘****Go and make disciples*** *of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and* ***teaching them*** *to obey everything I have commanded you.”* Matt. 28:19-20

• *To “Love God with all your heart” is* ***“WORSHIP”.***

• *To “Love your neighbor as yourself” is* ***“MINISTRY”.***

• *To “Go...make disciples” is* ***“EVANGELISM”.***

• *To “Baptize...” is to* ***“INCORPORATE INTO FELLOWSHIP”.***

• *To “Teach them...all things” is* ***“DISCIPLESHIP”.***

**Lighthouse Community Fellowship Church Exists:**

**1. To\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ God’s Presence (Worship)**

**2. To\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ God’s Love (Ministry)**

**3. To\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ God’s Word (Evangelism)**

**4. To\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ God’s Family (Fellowship)**

**5. To\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ God’s People (Discipleship)**

**I. We Exist To Celebrate God’s Presence**

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**Worship: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*“Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.”* Matt. 4:10

*“...The Father seeks worshipers...and His worshippers must worship Him in spirit and in truth.”* Jn 4:23-24

***Expressions of Worship***

 • **Singing** (Ps. 89:1, 95:1, 105:2, Eph. 5:19) • **Commitment** (Romans 12:1-2)

 • **Praying** (Ps. 95:6) • **Hearing the Word** (John 17:17)

 • **Giving** (1 Cor. 16:1-2) • **Baptism** (Romans 6:3-4)

 • **Meditating** (Hab. 2:20) • **Lord’s Supper** (1 Cor. 11-23-26)

***LCF Worship Style***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **“Celebration”**Psalm 122:1 | **“Inspiration”**Isaiah 40:31 | **“Preparation”**Eph. 4:11-12 |

**II. We Exist To Communicate God’s Word**

28

**Evangelism: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*“His intent was that through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known...”* Eph. 3:10

*“Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. But who can ask Him to save them unless they believe in Him? And how can they believe in Him if they have never heard about Him? And how can they hear about Him unless someone tells him?”* Rom. 10:13-14 (LB)

**Why Our Church Must Never Stop Growing**

**1. Because**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*“The Lord...is patient,* ***not wanting anyone to perish****, but wants everyone to come to repentance.”* 2 Pet. 3:9

2 Cor. 5:14, Luke 15:3-10, Matt. 9:12-13

**2. Because**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*“Go out into the country...and urge anyone you find to come in,* ***so that My House will be full***.” Luke 14:23 (LB)

*“...you will be my witnesses...”* Acts 1:8

**3. Because**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*“Under Christ’s control, the whole Body is nourished...and grows as* ***God wants it to grow****.”* Col. 2:19 (GN)

*“(Jesus) I will build my church.”* Matt. 16:18

***Unbiblical Excuses For Not Growing:***

 • *“God isn’t interested in numbers.”*

 • *“Our church wants quality not quantity.”*

 • *“Large churches are impersonal”*

**We believe our church must grow\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_at the same time.**

*“And the Good News of the Kingdom will be preached to the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and* ***THEN*** *the end will come.”* Matt. 24:14

**III. We Exist To Educate God’s People**

29

**Discipleship: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

“Let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ **and go on to maturity**...” Heb. 6:1

*“Grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* 2 Peter 3:18

*“(God has given)...some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of ministry, so that the Body of Christ may be built up until we all...become mature...like Christ.”* Eph. 4:11-13

**More will be details will be covered in**

**Discovering Spiritual Maturity CLASS #201**

**IV. We Exist To Demonstrate God’s Love**

30

**Ministry: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*“By this shall all men know that you are my disciples* ***— that you have love for one another****.”* John 13:35

1 John 3:16-17, Matt. 25:34-40, Heb. 13:16, Rom. 12:13

The heartbeat of Lighthouse Community Fellowship is our \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Every member needs to be a part of one.

*“Now God gives us many kinds of special abilities.. and there are different kinds of service to God (ministry)...* ***All of you*** *together form the one Body of Christ and* ***each of you is a separate and necessary part of it****.”* 1 Cor. 12:4-5, 27 (LB)

***At LCF...***

 • *Every member is a:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

 *• Every task is:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

 *• Every member is a “10” in:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

**Our Statement of Faith**

*What We Believe*

31

**• In essential beliefs — we have unity.**

 *“There is one Body and one Spirit...there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of us all...”* Eph. 4:4-6

**• In non-essential beliefs — we have liberty.**

 *“Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters... Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls... So then each of us will give an account of himself to God... So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God.”* Romans 14:1,4,12,22

**• In all our beliefs — we show charity.**

 *“...If I hold in my mind not only all human knowledge but also the very secrets of God, and if I have the faith that can move mountains — but have* ***no love****, I amount to nothing at all.”* 1 Cor. 13:2 (Ph)

**The Essentials We Believe:**

**1. About God**

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God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three personalities: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God.

Genesis 1:1,26,27, 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14

**2. About Jesus Christ**

33

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven’s glory and will return again someday to earth to reign as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

Matthew 1:22, 23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5; 14:10-30; Hebrews 4:14,15; 1 Corinthians 15:3,4; Romans 1:3,4; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Timothy 6:14,15; Titus 2:13

**3. About the Holy Spirit**

34

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He give every believer a spiritual gift when they are saved. As Christians, we seek to live under His control daily.

2 Corinthians 3:17; John 16:7-13, 14:16,17; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16; Ephesians 1:13; Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 5:18

**4. About the Bible**

35

The Bible is God’s Word to us. It was written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because it is inspired by God, it is the truth without any mixture of error.

2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20,21; 2 Timothy 1:13; Psalm 119:105,160, 12:6; Proverbs 30:5

**5. About Human Beings**

36

People are made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. People are the supreme object of God’s creation. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called “sin”. This attitude separates people from God and causes many problems in life.

Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6a; Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:1, 2

**6. About Salvation**

37

Salvation is God’s free gift to us but we must accept it. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God’s offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin’s penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith.

Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8,9; John 14:6, 1:12; Titus 3:5

Galatians 3:26; Romans 5:1

**7. About Eternal Security**

38

Because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the true believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. If you have been genuinely saved, you cannot “lose” it. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and keeping power of God that gives us this security.

John 10:29; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25, 10:10,14; 1 Peter 1:3-5

**8. About Eternity**

39

People were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence.

John 3:16; John 14:17; Romans 6:23; Romans 8:17-18; Revelation 20:15; 1 Cor. 2:7-9

**Our Lifestyle Statement**

*What We Practice*

40

Beliefs are not worth much unless they are translated into actions. Based on what the Bible teaches, we feel very strongly about the following seven practices:

**Bible As Our Sole Authority**

41

***“The whole Bible was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and make us realize what is wrong in our lives; it straightens us out and helps us to do what is right.”*** 2 Tim. 3:15

Since God’s Word is the only completely reliable and truthful authority, we accept the Bible as our manual for living. Our first question when faced with a decision is “What does the Bible say?” We practice daily Bible reading, Bible study, and Bible memorization. The Bible is the basis for all we believe.

**Autonomy of Each Local Church**

42

***“Christ is the head of His Body, the church. He is the source of the Body’s life...”*** Col. 1:18 (GN)

Christ is the recognized head of our church, not any person, group, or religious organization. While recognizing the value of associating and cooperating with other groups of Christians, we believe every local church should be self-governing and independent from any denominational control. In relating to our “daughter churches” that we sponsor, we encourage each congregation to determine it’s own strategy, structure, and style.

**Priesthood of Every Believer**

43

***“Christ loves us, and by His death He has freed us from our sins and made us a kingdom of priests to serve God...”*** Rev. 1:6 (GN) ***“You are...the King’s priests...God’s own people, chosen to proclaim the wonderful acts of God.”*** 1 Pet. 2:9 (GN)

The Bible teaches that every Christian is called to “full time” Christian service, regardless of his or her vocation. We practice the truth that every believer is a minister by encouraging every member to find a place of service and ministry. Every believer has direct access to God through prayer and Bible reading.

**Tithing**

44

***“A tithe of everything you produce belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord.”*** Lev. 26:30

At Lighthouse Community Fellowship we practice tithing for the support of Christ’s body, the church, as God commands. We recognize that giving 10% of our income is the Biblical standard of giving.

**Immersion**

45

***“For when you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ...”*** Col. 2:12 (GN)

We practice baptism by immersion under water — the way Jesus was baptized, and the way the Bible commands.

**Spirit-led Living**

46

**(Jesus said), *“I am the Vine, you are the branches. If you abide in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; but apart from me you can do nothing.”*** John 15:5

We believe the only way possible to live the Christian life is by God’s power within us. So we seek to practice a daily dependence on God’s Spirit to enable us to do what is right. (Phil. 2:13, Eph. 5:18)

**Telling Others About Christ**

47

***“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.”*** 1 Peter 3:15

It is the responsibility of every Christian to share the Good News with those with whom God brings us into contact. We practice personal sharing about Christ and inviting friends to church.

**Session Four**

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**Our Salvation**

49

*“For now we are all children of God through faith in Jesus Christ, and we who have been baptized into union with Christ are enveloped by Him. We are no longer Jews or Gentiles, or slaves or free men, or even merely men or women, but we are all the same — we are Christians; we are one in Jesus Christ.”*

Galatians 3:26-28 (LB)

**What Does It Mean To Be A Christian?**

50

Most people live their entire lives without ever knowing *“WHY?”* They exist year after year with no idea of why they live or God’s purpose for their lives. The most basic question a person can ask is, *“What is the meaning of life?”*

Everyone wants to be happy. People try many ways:

 ...Some look for happiness by **acquiring possessions.**

 ...Some look for happiness by **experiencing pleasure.**

 ...Some look for happiness by **gaining prestige & power.**

But real happiness comes from understanding my\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**I. Why Am I Here?**

51

**1. God made me to\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_me!**

God says, “*I have loved you with an everlasting love!”* Jer. 31:3

*“Even before the world was made, God had already chosen us to be His through our union with Christ...****because of His love****. God had already decided that through Jesus Christ He would make us His children — this was God’s pleasure and purpose.”* Eph. 1:4-5 (GN)

**2. We were created to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_a personal relationship with God and to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_all of the rest of God’s creation! This makes us special!**

*“So God created human beings, making them in His image. He blessed them, and said,...live all over the earth and bring it under control. I am putting you in charge.”* Gen. 1:27-28 (LB)

*“God richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.”* 1 Tim. 6:17

Jesus said, *“I have come in order that you might have life — life in all its fullness!”* John 10:10

**3. When we know and love God, and live in harmony with His purpose for our**

 **lives, it produces tremendous benefits in our lives:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Clear Conscience**Rom. 8:1 | **Life & Peace**Rom. 8:6 | **Help with Weakness**Rom. 8:26 |
| **Purpose**Rom. 8:28 | **Confidence**Rom. 8:31 | **Security**Rom. 8:39 |
| **Power & Strength**Phil. 4:13 | **Fulfillment**Phil. 4:19 | **Freedom**John 8:32,36 |

**II. What’s The Problem?**

52

Man has a natural desire to\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and to ignore God’s principles for living.

 *“Look out for #1. Do your own thing.”*

 *“If it feels good, do it - regardless of what God says about it.”*

 *“It’s my life and I’ll do what I please!”*

**The Bible calls this attitude:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*“****All of us****, like sheep, have gone astray, and each of us has turned to his own way.”* Isaiah 53:6

*“If we say that we never sin, we are only fooling ourselves, and refuse to accept the truth.”* 1 John 1:8

**Sin breaks our close relationship with God. It causes us to fear God and try to live our lives outside of His will.**

*“The trouble is that your sins have cut you off from God.”* Isaiah 59:2 (LB)

*“All have sinned and fall short of God’s glorious ideal.”* Romans 3:23

**When our relationship to God is not right, it causes PROBLEMS in every area of our lives — marriage, career, relationships, finances, etc.

WHEN PEOPLE HAVE PROBLEMS, THEY OFTEN TRY MANY DIFFERENT WAYS OF COPING BEFORE TURNING TO GOD.**

*“There are ways that SEEM right to man, but they only end in death.”* Proverbs 16:25

**Even when we know that our deepest need is God, we often try wrong ways of getting to know Him:**

 • “My mother was a Christian so...”

 • “It doesn’t matter what you believe, just be sincere.”

 • “I’ll give up all my bad habits.”

 • “I’ll work real hard and earn it.”

 • “I’ll be religious and go to church.”

**III. What’s The Solution?**

53

Jesus Christ said, *“I AM THE WAY, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father, except THROUGH ME!”* John 14:6

God Himself came to earth as a human being to bring us back to Himself. If any other way would have worked, Jesus Christ would not have had to come. The Way is a Person!

**JESUS HAS ALREADY TAKEN CARE**

**OF YOUR SIN PROBLEM!**

*“The wages of sin in death, BUT the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”* Rom. 6:23

**God did this for us because He loves us and wants us to know Him.**

*“God demonstrated His love for us in that while we were still separated from God by sin, Christ died for us.”* Rom. 5:8

*“God is on one side and all people are on the other side, and Christ Jesus is between them to bring them together, by giving His life for all mankind.”* 1 Tim. 2:5

God has already done His part to restore our relationship to Him. He took the initiative. Now He waits for each of us to individually accept what He has done for us.

**IV. What Does God Want Me To Do?**

54

**1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that God has not been first place in your life and ask Him to forgive your sins.**

*“If we* ***confess*** *our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from every wrong.”* 1 John 1:9

**2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_that Jesus died to pay for your sins and that he rose again on Easter, and is alive today.**

*“If you confess that Jesus is your Lord, and you* ***believe in your heart*** *that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”* Romans 10:9

*“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name (Jesus) by which we must be saved.”* Acts 4:12

**3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_God’s free gift of salvation. Don’t try to earn it.**

*“For it is by grace you are saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the* ***gift of God*** *— not by works, so that no one can boast.”* Ephesians 2:8,9

Our relationship to God is not restored by anything we do, but on the basis of what Jesus already did for us!

**4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Jesus Christ to come into your life and be the director (“Lord”) of your life.**

*“To all who* ***receive*** *Him, He gives the right to become children of God. All we need to do is to trust Him to save us. All those who* ***believe*** *this are reborn! — not a physical rebirth...but from the will of God!”* John 1:12-13

*“Jesus says, ‘Listen! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in...’”* Rev. 3:30

**You can take these steps by praying a simple prayer of commitment to God:**

“Dear Jesus, thank you for making me and loving me, even when I’ve ignored you and gone my own way. I realize I need you in my life and I’m sorry for my sins. I ask you to forgive me. Thank you for dying on the cross for me. Please help me to understand it more. As much as I know how, I want to follow you from now on. Please come into my life and make me a new person inside. I accept your gift of salvation. Please help me to grow now as a Christian.”

***“Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.”*** Romans 10:13

**The Importance of Being Baptized**

55

**I. Why Should I Be Baptized?**

56

**1. To follow the example set by\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*“At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river.”* Mark 1:9

**2. Because Christ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_it.**

*“Jesus said, ‘Go then, to all people everywhere and* ***make them my disciples****, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and* ***then teach them*** *to obey everything I have commanded you.’”* Matt. 28:19-20

**3. It demonstrates that I really am a\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*“...many of the people who heard Him* ***believed*** *and were* ***baptized****.”* Acts 18:8

*“We know that we have come to know Him, if we* ***obey*** *His commands.”* 1 John 2:3

**II. What is the meaning of baptism?**

57

**1. It illustrates Christ’s\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and resurrection**

*“Christ died for our sins... He was buried...and He rose again.”*  1 Cor. 15:3-4

*“For when you are* ***baptized****, you were* ***buried*** *with Christ, and in baptism you were also* ***raised*** *with Christ.* Col. 2:12

**2. It illustrates my\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as a Christian.**

*“When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun!”* 2 Cor. 5:17

*“****By our baptism then****, we were* ***buried*** *with Him and shared His death, in order that, just as Christ was* ***raised*** *from the dead...so also* ***we may live a new life****!”* Rom. 6:4

Baptism doesn’t make you a believer — it shows that **you already believe**. Baptism does not “save” you, only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring — it’s the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart.

*“For it is by grace you have been saved,* ***through faith****...it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.”* Ephesians 2:8-9

**III. Why Be Baptized By Immersion?**

58

**Because\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ was baptized that way.**

*“As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water.”* Matthew 3:16

**Every baptism in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_was by immersion.**

(Example) *“...then both Philip and the man went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water...”* Acts 8:38-39

**The word “Baptize” means to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_water.”**

The Greek word *baptizo* means, “to immerse or dip under water.”

**It best symbolizes a burial and resurrection!**

The founders of denominations agree:

**Martin Luther...**“I would have those who are to be baptized to be entirely immersed, as the word imports and the mystery signifies.”

**John Calvin...**“The word ‘baptize’ signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church.”
**John Wesley...**“Buried with Him, alludes to baptizing by immersion according to the custom of the first church.”

**IV. Who Should Be Baptized?**

59

**Every person who has \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_in Christ.**

*“****Those who believed*** *and accepted His message were* ***baptized****...”* Acts 2:41

*“Simon himself* ***believed*** *and was* ***baptized****...”* Acts 8:13

*“But* ***when they believed*** *Philip as he preached the Good News...and the name of Jesus Christ,* ***they were baptized****, both men and women.”* Acts 8:12

At Lighthouse Community Fellowship, we wait until our children are old enough to **believe** and understand the true meaning of baptism before we baptize them.

Some churches practice a *“baptism of confirmation”* for children. This ceremony is intended to be a covenant between the parents and God on the behalf of the child. The parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make his own personal confession of Christ. This custom began about 300 years after the Bible was completed. **This is different from the baptism talked about in the Bible**, which was only for those old enough to believe. The purpose is to publicly confess your personal commitment to Christ.

**At Lighthouse Community Fellowship, it is a membership requirement that every member must have been baptized the way Jesus demonstrated, even though many of us were “confirmed” as children.**

**V. When Should I Be Baptized?**

60

**As soon as you have believed!**

*“Those who believed...were baptized...****that day****!”* Acts 2:41

*“Then Philip began with the scripture and told him the Good News about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water, and the man said, ‘Look, here is water! Why shouldn’t I be baptized right now?’ Philip said, ‘If you believe with all your heart, you may.’ The man answered, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’ So they went down into the water and Philip baptized him.”* Acts 8:35-38

There is no reason to delay. As soon as you have decided to receive Christ into your life, you can and should be baptized. If you wait until you are “perfect”, you’ll never feel “good enough”!

**What should I wear when I am baptized?**

**Men:** Preferably White T-Shirt and Short Pants.

**Ladies**: Preferably a White Top and Skirt or White Dress. **Undergarment:** Preferably **Black** Cycling Shorts and tank tops or body suits. Please dress modestly!!!

NB. Please bring along a towel, a change of clothes and a plastic bag for your wet clothes.

**Will I have to say anything?**

No. At the beginning of the service, Pastor or Leader will briefly explain the meaning of baptism. You will wait at the edge of the pool for your turn to be baptized. Pastor or leader will introduce you, briefly lower you just under the water, and then you can leave the pool, dry off, and watch the others. We encourage you to invite all your relatives and friends to attend your baptism. Two weeks later you will receive your baptism certificate during the Sunday celebration service.

**Special Needs?**

We can perform a private baptism in special circumstances.

**The Meaning of the Lord’s Supper**

61

Jesus never asked His disciples to remember His birth. But He did instruct them to remember His death and resurrection. He gave the church two visible symbols (called *“ordinances*”) as reminders of His death. These two ordinances are: Baptism and The Lord’s Supper. The Lord’s Supper is an object lesson that represents a great spiritual truth for believers.

**I. What Is The Lord’s Supper? (1 Cor. 11:23-26)**

62

**1. It is a**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*“The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed,* ***took bread****...”* (vs. 23)

**2. It is a**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*“...and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; eat it* ***in remembrance*** *of me.’”* (vs. 24)

**3. It is a**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*“In the same way, He took the cup, saying, ‘****This cup*** *is the new covenant in my blood; drink it to remember me.’” (vs. 25)*

**4. It is a\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*“For whenever you eat the bread and drink the cup****, you proclaim the Lord’s death*** *until He comes back.” (vs. 26)*

**II. Who Should Take The Lord’s Supper?**

63

Only those who are already\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Mark 14:22-26)

*“For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment upon himself.”* 2 Cor. 11:29

**III. How Do I Prepare Myself For The Lord’s Supper?**

64

*“Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A person ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.”* 1 Cor. 11:27-28

By...

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1. Self-Examination** 1 Cor. 11:27 | **2. Confessing My Sins**1 John 1:9 |
| **3. Recommitment**Rom. 12:1 | **4. Restoring Relationships**Matt. 5:23-24 |

**Iv. When and How Often Should We Observe The Lord’s Supper? (1 cor. 11:23-26)**

65

Jesus never said when or how often believers should observe The Lord’s Supper. We share communion on the first Sunday of every month and during Easter and Christmas. Believers can also share communion in their homes and in homecell.

**Our Affiliation / spiritual covering**

66

The Fellowship of Community Churches (FCC) is our spiritual covering. While continuing the independent management of its own affairs, the church recognizes the strength of accountability and spiritual guidance.

Every FCC church is completely independent. There is no denominational control or hierarchy, as there are in most other denominations. Each church is self-governed and determines its own affairs.

For example:

 • *Every FCC church chooses its own pastor*

 • *Every FCC church owns its own buildings and assets*

 • *Every FCC church determines its own programs*

1. It allows us to **identify with other Christians** in our network who are known for their commitment to the Bible. Unlike other groups, the FCC has no man-made “creed”. The Bible is our only authority.

**What It Means To Be A Member**

67

The difference between *“attenders”* and *“members”* can be summed up in one word:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**At Lighthouse Community Fellowship we recognize the need for a formal membership. We ask you to commit to membership for four reasons:**

**I. A Biblical Reason:**

 **Christ is committed to the church**

68

*“...Christ loved the church, and he gave his life for it.”* Eph. 5:25

**II. A Cultural Reason:**

 **It is an antidote to “church hopping”**

69

We live in an age where people don’t want to be committed to anything. This attitude has even produced a generation of “church shoppers and hoppers”. Commitment always builds character and fruitfulness in the Kingdom. *“Planted in the house of the Lord they shall flourish in the courts of our God.”* Psalm 92:13.

**III. A Practical Reason:**

 **It defines who can be counted on**

70

Every team must have a roster. Every school must have an enrollment. Every business has a payroll. Every army has an enlistment. Even our country takes a census and requires voter registration. Membership identifies our family.

**IV. A Personal Reason:**

 **It produces spiritual growth**

71

The New Testament places a major emphasis on the need for Christians to be accountable to each other for spiritual growth. You cannot be accountable when you’re not committed to any specific church family.

**What is expected of me as a member?**

At Lighthouse Community Fellowship we never ask our members to do more than the Bible clearly teaches. We only expect our members to do what the Bible expects every Christian to do. These responsibilities are spelled out in the Membership Covenant.

**The Lighthouse Community Fellowship Membership Covenant**

**“Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and been baptized, and being in agreement with Lighthouse Community Fellowship’s statements, strategy and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Lighthouse Community Fellowship church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:**

**I. I will protect the unity of my church**

72

 **...By acting in love toward other members**

 **...By refusing to gossip**

 **...By following the leaders**

*“So let us concentrate on the things which make for harmony, and on the growth of our fellowship together.”* Rom. 15:19 (Ph)

*“Live in complete harmony with each other — each with the attitude of Christ toward each other.”* Rom 15:5 (LB)

*“Have a sincere love for your fellow believers, love one another earnestly with all your hearts.”* 1 Peter 1:22 (GN)

*“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of our mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs...”* Eph. 4:29

*“Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you.”* Heb. 13:17

**II. I will share the responsibility of my church**

73

 **...By praying for its growth**

 **...By inviting the unchurched to attend**

 **...By warmly welcoming those who visit**

*“To the church...we always thank God for you and pray for you constantly.”* 1 Thess. 1:2

*“Go out into the country...and urge anyone you find to come in, so that My House will be full.”* Luke 14:23 (LB)

*“So, warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified.”* Rom. 15:7 (LB)

**III. I will serve the ministry of my church**

74

 **...By discovering my gifts and talents**

 **...By being equipped to serve by my pastors**

 **...By developing a servant’s heart**

*“Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you...”* 1 Peter 4:10 (Ph)

*“God gave...some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God’s people for works of ministry, so that the body of Christ may be built up...”* Eph. 4:11-12

*“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ...who took on the very nature of a servant...”* Phil 2:3-4, 7

**IV. I will support the testimony of my church**

75

 **...By attending faithfully**

 **...By living a godly life**

 **...By giving regularly**

*“Let us not give up the habit of meeting together...but let us encourage one another.”* Heb. 10:25

*“But whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ.”*

 Phil. 1:27 (Ph)

*“Each one of you, on the first day of each week, should set aside a specific sum of money in proportion to what you have earned and use it for the offering.”* 1 Cor. 16:2

*“A tenth of all you produce is the Lord’s, and it is holy.”* Lev. 27:30

**Sign: ……………………. Date: …………….………**

**Session Five**

76

**The Cell Church**

77

*“And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their food with gladness and sincerity of heart.”*

Acts 2:46 (KJV)

**Understanding The Cell Church**

**A. What is a Cell Church?**

* It has three components: cell, celebration and equipping journey.
* Cells are not a programme of the Church.
* All the activities of the Church function for the cells, through the cells and in the cells.
* Every member is a minister and a participant in the life and purpose of the Church.
* The Church provides training, supervision and spells out the combined vision to the cell

 groups.

##### B. The Basis for Cells

* The New Testament Church.
* God’s instruction to His children.
* God’s plan for His Church today.

**What is a Cell?**

* The basic building blocks of the Church.
* A small group (7-15 people) which meets together weekly.
* Not a Bible study. We don’t analyse the Word, but the Word analyses us. The key is **application.**
* The agenda of the cell is not the programme, but the **people** - their needs, their growth, etc.
* The cell has a two-fold focus:

1. **Inward** - to edify, build and minister to cell members.

 2. **Outward** - to reach out to unsaved friends, to love them, to serve them and draw them in.

* The secret power of the cell is **Jesus**. The purpose of the cell is to reveal His closeness.

**The Purpose is fulfilled in that which the cell does:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Membership | Community, Caring. |
| Maturity | Discipleship through equipping and role modelling. |
| Ministry | Mobilization of every member, equipped and ready to minister to needs and hurts.Continual development of leaders. |
| Mission | Evangelism to oikoses. Growth and application. |
| Magnify | The real goal. |



**The four major things a cell seeks to do:**

1. The cell must disciple each member in their relationship with Jesus.

2. The cell must equip each person for ministry.

3. The cell must minister to the needs of each person.

4. The cell must multiply by winning the lost.

**Embracing A Cell Church Culture**

**Introduction**

*THE WAY WE THINK IS THE WAY WE ACT!*

* Jesus said in *Matthew 16:18*, “I will **BUILD** my church.” The stones He was to select are called the ECCLESIA”, the “called out ones,” the church.
* Jesus used a significant word in His teachings – the Greek word ***“oikodomeo***”. It is used to describe the construction of a building and is mostly used in the Scriptures to describe a construction using “living stones”.

*1 Cor 3:9* “…you are …God’s **BUILDING**…”

 *Eph 2:21* “in Him the whole **BUILDING** is joined together.”

* The word **“OIKODOMEO”** also describes the main work of the “living stones” themselves.

*Eph 4:16* “From Him, the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and **BUILDS ITSELF UP** in love as each part does it’s work.”

* It is obvious that the “living stones” (*i.e.* you and I) were to be empowered by Jesus (through the Holy Spirit) to share in the building up, or edifying, of nearby “stones” (or fellow believers).
* In *1 Cor. 14*, the word “**OIKODOMEO**” appears six times in the context of using spiritual gifts to build one another up. It also emphasizes that **EACH ONE** is to be involved in the building process.

*1Cor 14:26* “When you assemble, each one has a Psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification (building up).”

* The early church did exactly that. They recognized that there cannot be total participation by every member when the gatherings are only made up of large, impersonal groups, and so the people of God moved from house to house in small groups.

**The home ministry of Jesus and the early Church**

1. It is significant that, in Jesus’ ministry, He operated out of homes and not formal buildings.
2. He often taught His disciples in homes. (Mk 2:1; 7:14-27).
3. We often see Him in the homes of others including Peter, Simon the leper, Zaccheus and Martha.
4. When He sent His disciples out, they lived with families in homes. This is what He instructed the 70 to do. This was a prime strategy for bringing people to personal faith.

There is a very important reason for the early church to be shaped in the homes. It is in this location that values **ARE SHARED**. It may be possible to transmit **INFORMATION** in a neutral building, but few **VALUES** are imparted there.

5. In Ephesians 4:11-12, it is stated that Christ Himself “gave some to be **Apostles**, some to be

 **Prophets**, some to be **Evangelists**, and some to be **Pastors** and **Teachers**, to prepare God’s

 people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.”

1. The first task of an equipper is to model the lifestyle that is to be transferred to members of the body. This can only happen in the context of community.
2. It is in this context that Paul’s comments about elders and deacons dealt with their **CHARACTERS**, not their **DUTIES**. By living in community, character is imparted and it is character that is most vital to God.

**Cells are basic Christian Communities**

1. We have the promise in scripture, “Where two or more are gathered…” Community begins with three and ends at about fifteen.
2. The Godhead is three persons and has always existed in the context of community.

**WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?**

1. **A Cell is not a “meeting”, but a “community.”**

This is a concept that is possibly the major enemy of the transition to a cell church. We are continually tempted to reserve one night a week for “cell”, and then dive back into our busy-ness, surfacing again for “cell” the next week. That was fine when the weekly meeting was just that – a weekly meeting. However, the term “cell” is now not interpreted as “meeting”, but as a “family” or “community”. We know that we do not attend to our families and intimate friends on a weekly basis, but as a continual, flowing, interactive relationship. With them, we are in continual contact, as needs or desires demand. In the same way, god intended the life of a Basic Christian Community (or Cell) to function with unbroken involvement in one another’s lives.

1. **A Cell is not a Department of the Church, but, together with the other cells, it is the Church.**

The way we see our Cell will determine the value and level of priority it has in our lives. This is directly proportional to the benefit and enjoyment we will experience in our Cell Groups – remember the principle of sowing and reaping! Cells are NOT optional activities that Lighthouse Community Fellowship offers. They are the basic building blocks of which the Church is constituted. (It is as foolish as saying that bricks are optional extras one can have in a building if one chooses to).

1. **Cells are not spectator orientated, but participant orientated.**

The old seating format in “Bible Study” meetings told us a great deal about the way it was conducted – people seated in rows, looking at the back of the heads in front of them, and being spoken to by the person standing in front for lengthy periods of time.

In cells, the seating format also tells a story – people seated in a circle in a home, where the leader is almost un-identifiable from the members. The emphasis is on **participation** as opposed to **observation** – from the welcome, ice-breaker, worship, edification (discussion) time, to the “share the vision” (evangelism) at the end. One of the greatest differences between this and the traditional “Bible Study”, is the opportunity for cell members to all participate equally in Spirit-led conversation, in order to break the traditional mind-set of “sit and soak”.

1. **Cells are not inward looking but outward orientated.**

We must always remember the ultimate vision of every cell – TO REACH THOSE, WHO DO NOT KNOW GOD, WITH THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST. We will be discussing this in detail later. However, a life-sentence, where the outcome is stagnation, is the consequence of any cell that focuses only on one another for the duration of each meeting. This has been evidenced to the church, as we have observed in the past, small groups remaining stagnant, in number and individual growth, for YEARS on end!

As comfortable as it is to enjoy ministering to each other on a continual basis, this becomes a dead-end, pointless occupation. Time is set aside at each cell gathering, to minister to needs, encourage and input into each other’s lives and deal with any challenges folk are facing.

However, the major purpose for this ministry time, is to prepare folk to be more effective for the Kingdom of God OUTSIDE the cell. Healthy cells are those that become more excited about the possibilities for the Kingdom of God outside the cell, than the introspection, that can keep us eternally busy, INSIDE the cell. A scientific theory states that “more energy is needed to overcome inertia, than to maintain movement”. For this reason, a cell member needs to really be willing and yielded to be mobilized, by the Holy Spirit, in this area of Kingdom Awareness.

1. **Cells are not Organizations , but Organisms**

“Organisations” can survive for years, or even centuries, without growing or developing. “Organisms”, on the other hand, live, breathe and move. The most obvious characteristic of an “Organism” is its ability to multiply. The average life span of a cell before it multiplies, is expected to be 9 months to a year at the most. Cell members are made aware of this goal at the start of the 9 months, and multiplication then becomes more within the grasp of each person and the cell as a whole.

**Conclusion**

1. Man-made structures have taken the pattern of the church far away from God’s original blueprint for it.
2. We are presently experiencing the “second reformation” – the second most significant reforming of the church into cells to line up with God’s original plan (Basic Christian Communities).

**Session Six**

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**The Holy Spirit**

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*“An But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

Acts 1:8 (KJV)

**The Fullness Of The Spirit**

*In order to live for God, we need to be “born again.” John 3:3*

What is the Baptism of the Spirit:

* It is a separate experience

Three Experiences: - Acts 2:4

* New Birth
* Baptism
* Baptism of the Spirit

*In other words;*

* Repent/have faith
* Be baptized in water
* Be baptized in the Holy Spirit

Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is usually speaking in tongues.

Different terminology

* To be baptized with the Holy Spirit
* To be filled with the Holy Spirit
* The Holy Spirit fell upon them
* The gift of the Holy Spirit

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is:

* a release of the spirit within us
* a total immersion in the Spirit

The Holy Spirit is necessary for service

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you…” Acts 1:8.

The Holy Spirit is a free gift received by FAITH!

“…and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Acts1:8.

**The Baptism Of The Spirit**

To experience spiritual communication, most westerners will have to do the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| DETHRONE THE MIND(Rationalism) | ENTHRONE THE SPIRIT |
| 1. True reality is the physical world. | 1. True reality is the spiritual world. |
| 2. Reality is perceived through the mind. | 2. Reality is perceived through the spirit. |
| 3. My goal is to develop my mind. | 3. My goal is to develop my spirit. |
| 4. I live out of what my mind is telling me. | 4. I live out of what my spirit is telling me. |
| 5. My mind directs me through calculated, cognitive and analytical thoughts. | 5. My spirit directs me through spontaneous, flowing thoughts that are placed in it by the spirit of God. |
| 6. My mind is cultivated by using it in academic studies. | 6. My mind is cultivated by using it in communication with God. |
| 7. Direction is received from it by analysis of stored knowledge. | 7. Direction is received from it by quietly waiting on the Lord allowing Him to spontaneously inject into my heart His thoughts, burden and visions. |
| 8. Out of the mind flows the written Word.  | 8. Out of the spirit flows the rhema or specific word of God for the now. |
| 9. A Christian who has only developed his mind, flows with a knowledge of the written word. | 9. A Christian with a developed spirit flows with a leading of the spirit and is grounded in a knowledge of the Living Word. |

Going beyond rational Christianity

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| RATIONAL CHRISTIANITY | SPIRITUAL CHRISTIANITY |
| 1. Code of ethics | The power that works within |
| 2. Laws | Intimacy (Abba Father) |
| 3. Works | Romance (Marriage of the Bible) |
| 4. Head knowledge | Illumined Truth |
| 5. External guidance | Inner witness of the Spirit |
| 6. Theology | Spirit encounter |
| 7. Conscious level only | Dreams, visions, communion |

Observations

1. Three out of the five accounts of the Holy Spirit was accompanied by the speaking in tongues.
2. One other time in the case of the Samaritans, nothing was mentioned but it was an observable phenomenon. Acts 8:14-17.
3. In the case of Paul, he received healing when filled with the Spirit. Sometime later, he began speaking in tongues. Acts 9:17-19.

Conclusion

1. The fullness of Baptism of the Holy Spirit is an empowering for ministry. It is not a second work of grace but rather as appropriation of the power available to us at salvation.
2. We gain from scripture that you will inevitably speak in tongues after the empowering of the Holy Spirit.

**What Now?**

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**Lighthouse Community Fellowship’s Program To Help You Grow**

**Christian Life And Service Seminars**

 **Overview of Equipping Track**



**Membership**

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To lead people to Christ and **membership** at Lighthouse Community Fellowship

**Maturity**

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To grow people to spiritual **maturity**

**Ministry** 83

To equip people with the skills they need for **ministry**

**Missions** 84

To enlist people to the worldwide **mission** of Sharing Christ