

CHURCH 101

Discovering Church Partnership

CENTERPOINT COMMUNITY CHURCH



Building People and Transforming Lives

Student's name: _____



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Welcome to Church 101: Discovering Church

APPRECIATION AND RECOGNITION

We first want to express great appreciation to Pastor Rick Warren and the Saddleback Valley Community Church for their development of the purpose Driven Church model of ministry and a model of this course. We would encourage all Church leaders to read *The Purpose Driven Church* by Rick Warren (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995.)

We also want to express appreciation to the “We Build People” team that are part of the Assemblies of God for the “Values Statements” and We Build People logo. We would encourage all Church leaders to read *We Build People: Making Disciples for the 21st Century* by Mike Clarensau, Sylvia Lee, and Steve Mills and *We Build People Pastor’s Kit: Implementation Guide* by Steve Mills, ed (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1997.)

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Session One: His Church



SESSION ONE: HIS CHURCH

What Is the Relationship of the Church to Scripture?

“The Church is wholly dependent upon the _____ and has no existence without it.”¹

James Smart

“The entire life and being of the Church lie in the _____ of God.”²

Martin Luther

“I will build my church...” Jesus in Matthew 16:18

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.” — 2 Timothy 3:16

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.

What is the Definition of the Church?

The Church is Christian _____
Demonstrating _____
Under _____.

“He [Christ] is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.” — Colossians 1:17-18

“And God placed all things under his [Christ’s] feet and appointed him [Christ] to be head over everything for the church.” — Ephesians 1:22



What are the Purposes of the Church?³

The Church's ultimate purpose is to do the work of Christ in the world—it is Christ-likeness. The Church is to carry out Christ's ministry.

“Again Jesus said, ‘Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.’”
— John 20:21

“It was he [God] who 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 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, **attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.**” — Ephesians 4:11-13

“We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present **everyone perfect in Christ.**” — Colossians 1:28

The Purposes of CENTERPOINT COMMUNITY CHURCH

“Therefore 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. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
— Matthew 28:19-20

As a dynamic church proclaiming the Word of God, we purpose to make disciples of Christ by:

1. _____ *God. (Worship)*

“Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.”
— Psalms 95:6

“...Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.” — Matthew 4:10

“Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.” — John 4:23-24

“...Day and night they never stop saying: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come’ ... the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: ‘You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and

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power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.” — Revelation 4:8-11

| Some Expressions of Worship in Scripture | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Singing | Ephesians 5:19 |
| Praying | Psalms 95:6 |
| Hearing the Word | John 17:17 |
| Giving | 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 |
| Baptism | Romans 6:3-4 |
| Meditation | Habakkuk 2:20 |
| Communion | 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 |
| Celebration | Psalms 122:1 |
| Clapping your hands | Psalms 47:1 |
| Lifting your hands | Psalms 63:4, 134:2 & 1 Timothy 2:8 |
| Praise | Psalms 103:1 |
| Musical instruments | Psalms 150:3-5 |

2. Christians toward spiritual maturity.

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” — Romans 12:1-2

“Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.”
— Romans 14:19

“Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity...”
— Hebrews 6:1

“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”
— 2 Peter 3:18

Every partner should enroll in CHURCH 201: Experiencing Spiritual Maturity.
Ongoing spiritual maturity is taught primarily through preaching, small groups and the
Sunday School.

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3. _____ *Christians for ministry.*

“Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.’” — Matthew 9:35-38

“It was he who 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.” — Ephesians 4:11-12

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord...Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.” — 1 Corinthians 12:4-5, 27

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” — 1 Peter 2:9

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 partner to find a place of service and ministry. Every believer has direct access to God through prayer and Scripture.

**Every partner who has completed CHURCH 201 should enroll in
CHURCH 301: Exploring Personal Ministry.**

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4. _____ *the world for Christ.*

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

— Acts 1:8

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?”

— Romans 10:13-14

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

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

We encourage every partner to enroll in “*How to Become a Contagious Christian*” or a similar evangelism training course.⁴

What is the Value of a Stated Purpose?

- ❖ **A stated purpose will _____ us.** When we discover and move toward God’s will, we will experience the energizing power of God in our lives.
- ❖ **A stated purpose will keep our _____ straight.** When we discover and move toward God’s will, we will focus on the things that really matter to God.
- ❖ **A stated purpose will develop our _____.** When we discover and move toward God’s will, we will become all that God intends for us individually and collectively as a church.



What Makes CENTERPOINT COMMUNITY CHURCH Special?

- ❖ _____ **Worship!** Worship is alive and vibrant.
- ❖ _____ **Ministry!** You will have opportunity to use your gifts and abilities.
- ❖ _____ **Relationships!** It is a place you can give and receive genuine love and acceptance.
- ❖ _____ **Spirituality!** Christ is the focus of all we do.
- ❖ _____ **Leadership!** Our leadership team helps empower you for service.

Why Must the Church Grow?

- **Because God _____ People.**

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.” — Luke 19:10

There are thousands of lost and unreached people within our ministry area that God loves and wants to receive, forgive and empower.

- **Because God _____ us to reach out.**

“As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.” — John 17:18

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...” — Matthew 28:19

The church is the only real answer to the deep needs of unreached people. Government is not the answer to the real needs. Education is not the answer to the real needs. Economic growth is not the answer to the real needs. The real answers only come from Christ through His Church and His people.

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➤ *Because God's Spirit _____ us to share the Good News.*

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

— Acts 1:8

We can accomplish much more together than we could ever do individually. But even more significantly, God empowers us with His Holy Spirit to do what we are otherwise incapable of accomplishing.

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Session Two: Our Values, Vision, and Strategy



SESSION TWO: OUR VALUES, VISION AND STRATEGY

What Are Our Values?

CENTERPOINT COMMUNITY CHURCH embraces the four non-negotiable values from “We Build People.” The values are built on the principle that “Every person is valued and is the focus of our ministry.”

1. _____ *person has the right to a presentation of the Gospel at his or her*
_____.

There are several key phrases in this value:

- ❖ **“Every person”**
God’s heart is to reach every person with his love and salvation. There is no one He does not love and want to save.
- ❖ **“Has a right to a presentation of the Gospel”**
We as a church and individuals must do everything we can to share Christ with those who do not know Him. This must take priority over lesser things.
- ❖ **“At his or her level of understanding”**
We must learn to communicate the gospel in ways that a non-Christian can understand.

2. *Every person needs a _____ moral compass to guide and protect him or her throughout life.*

No one can live their life in their own strength and wisdom. We all need guidance. We believe the Bible is the key to living meaningful lives.

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3. *Every believer has unique _____ to be discovered, developed, and used to _____ the Church.*

God has given to every Christian spiritual gifts, abilities and experiences that He wants to use to impact others.

4. *Every believer has a _____ in advancing the global _____ of Christ and the Church.*

Individually we can never impact the world, but together we can impact our communities and the world. We do this in many ways:

- Living holy lives
- Building relationships with non-Christians
- Sharing the good news with those around us
- Praying for our communities and the lost
- Going where the Lord sends us
- Giving to support the work of others

CENTERPOINT COMMUNITY CHURCH also has some local values



What Is Our Vision?



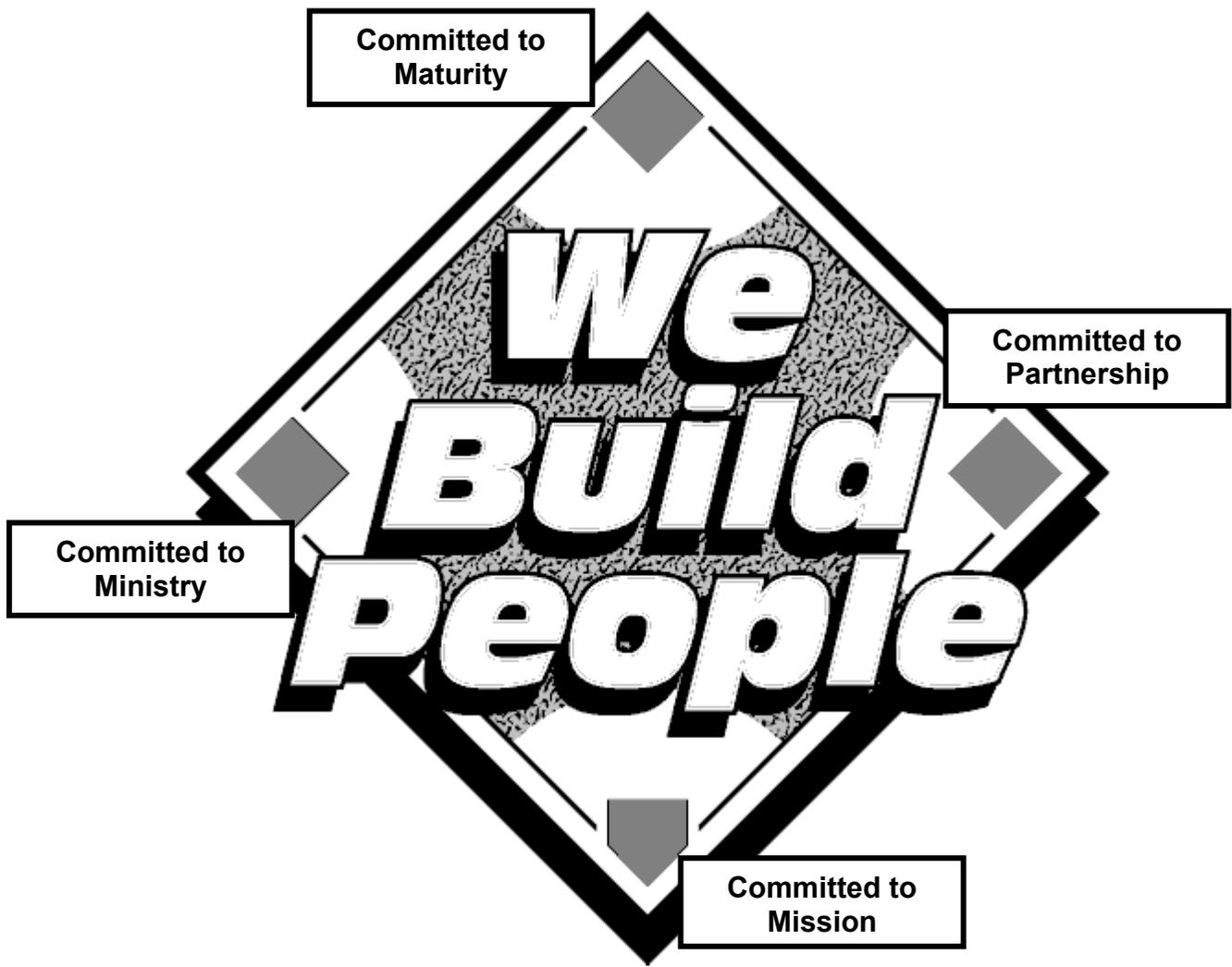
What Is Our Strategy?

Our strategy is built around three diagrams. The first two were adapted from Rick Warren's book *The Purpose Driven Church*. The third comes from *The Pyramid Principle of Church Growth* by David Womack.

The first illustrates how people grow in their faith and ministry.

Strategy Diagram #1 The _____ of Spiritual Growth.⁵

This diagram tells us, "How do we help people grow spiritually?"



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Session Two: Our Values, Vision, and Strategy



How do we move someone toward first base? Through our relationships and the bridge building ministries of the Church!

- ◆ In one study of over 10,000 Christians it was found that 70-90% pointed to key relationships with friends and relatives as a very significant factor in them coming to Christ.
- ◆ Another study indicated that if people did not make at least seven friends in the first six months of attending church, they would drop out of the church.

What does this tell us as a church? Every one of us must work at building relationships with people in and outside the church! We must be the kind of people and church that the unchurched can relate to. We must also individually and corporately do things to attract the unreached to us.

We anticipate the point when they will experience salvation. As a Church we will help them begin their growth as a Christian. They will want to be baptized in water and participate in Communion. At that point they are on the way to first base.

1. FIRST BASE – Discovering Church

The beginning of or birth into the Christian life is salvation. It is a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, not Church that starts the process but Church is a sign of this step. With salvation we have started the process of growing in Christ and maturity. When a person has experienced salvation and is a partner of a local church they have reached first base!

2. SECOND BASE – Experiencing Spiritual Maturity

How does someone move toward second base? We start the Christian life as spiritual infants and must grow up. When someone comes to Christ, the Bible says they are a new creation - a baby spiritually. Paul says we should be “like a mother caring for her little children” or a “father dealing with a son.”—1 Thessalonians 2:7-12

The founder of the Navigators said, “You can lead a soul to Christ in twenty minutes, but it takes from twenty weeks to a couple of years to get them on the road to spiritual maturity.”

This can take place one-on-one, in a Sunday School class or small group, and in other training that is offered by the Church.

The second base represents being a “disciple” of Christ’s. This is when a convert grows beyond infancy and is established as a Christian. This might compare to our training of children and youth.

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“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.” — Colossians 2:6-7

3. THIRD BASE – Exploring Personal Ministry

How does someone move from second base to third base? By being **equipped to minister** - through the Holy Spirit and the “**equipping**” ministries of the Church. We will help you become equipped for ministry!

When you have been saved and discipled, it is God’s design for you to become involved in ministry to others.

We will offer many opportunities for you to become equipped to minister. We can provide the training, but you have to choose to grow. The mark of a mature Christian is that they are involved in ministry.

“It was he who 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 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, **as each part does its work.**” — Ephesians 4:11-16

This is a continuation of the discipling process, but at a more advanced level. This base includes gift development and training in specific skills.

How does someone move from third base to home plate? By **servicing** in ministry. When you use the gifts and abilities that God has given to you, you move toward home plate.

4. HOME PLATE – Ministry And Mission

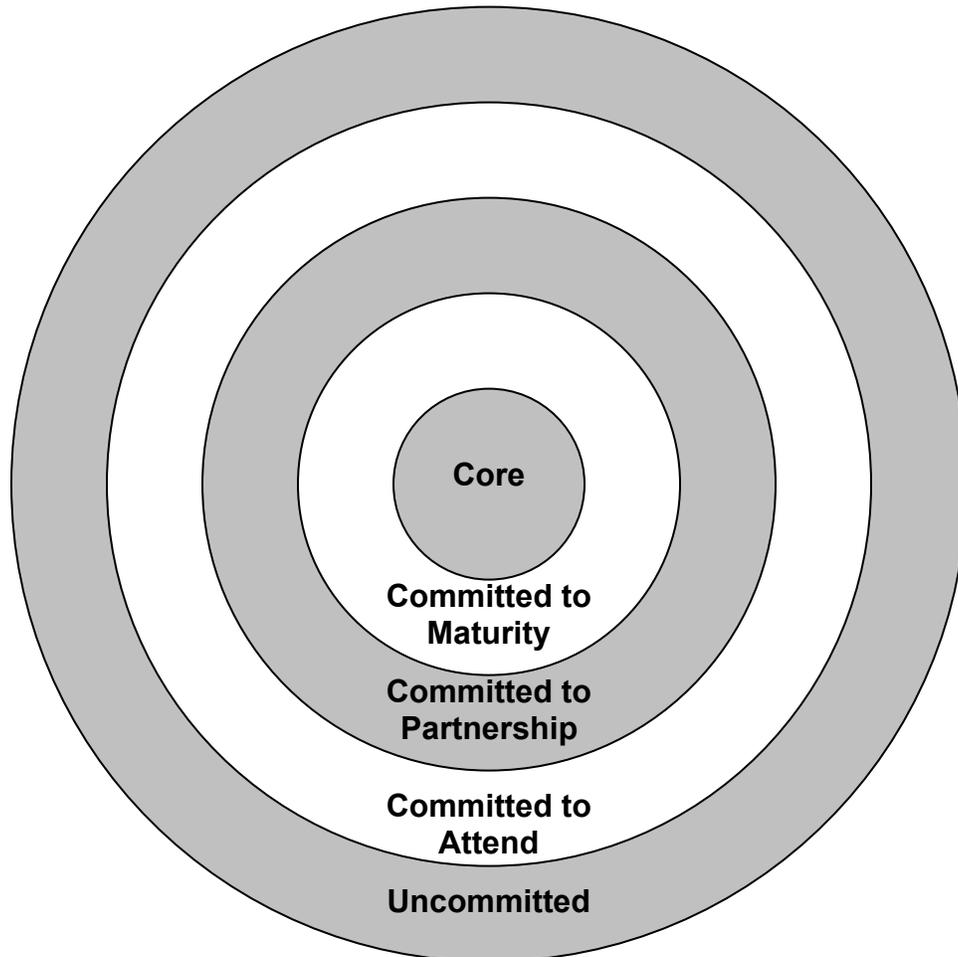
When you have been saved, discipled and started ministry, you will experience the joy of becoming a reproducer. To lead someone to Christ is a great thrill, and there is no greater thrill than to see someone you ministered to lead someone else to Christ!

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Strategy Diagram #2 The _____ of Commitment.⁶

This diagram tell us, “How do we help people increase commitment?”



We desire to help people grow in their commitment to God. This usually involves a process:

- People start out in the outer circle which represents the “**Uncommitted**” and includes the unchurched and occasional attenders who live within our ministry area.
- The “**Committed to Attend**” circle includes those who regularly and semi-regularly attend our services.
- The “**Committed to**” circle includes the people who have joined CENTERPOINT COMMUNITY CHURCH.

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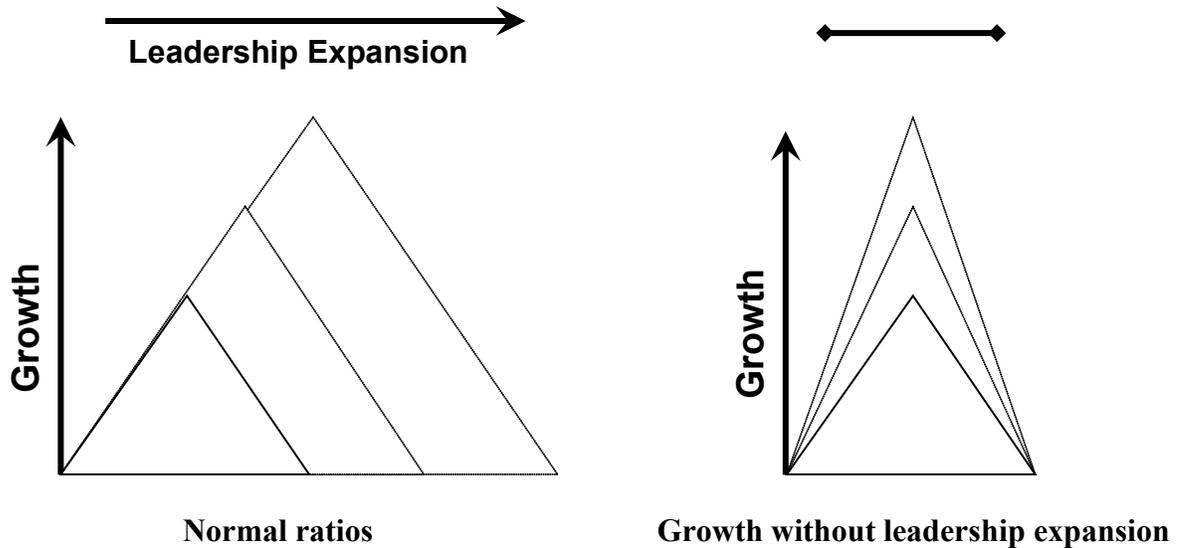
- The “**Committed to Maturity**” circle includes those partners who are growing strong in their faith.
- The “**Core**” includes those who are partners, mature, have been equipped for a ministry and are actively ministering.

The key is to help people move toward the core, one circle at a time. When they reach the core they are ready to invest themselves in others.



Strategy Diagram #3 The _____ for Growth & Leadership⁷

This diagram tells us, “How do we expand the leadership base of CENTERPOINT COMMUNITY CHURCH?”



If we grow as a church but do not increase the ministry core, the work will crush those in ministry. But if we expand the ministry core in the same ratio as the attendance, the core partners will be able to provide great leadership to the church and enjoy their ministry. This diagram helps us understand the need to expand the leadership core.

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Session Three: Our Faith



SESSION THREE: OUR FAITH

What Does it Mean to be a Christian?

“The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.”—Acts 11:26

A person of Italy is called Ital-ian .
A person of Christ is called _____-ian.

How does one become a person of Christ?

“Jesus declared, ‘I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.’” — John 3:3

➤ *All people are separated from God by _____ . (Romans 3:23)*

A branch of apple blossoms cut from a tree and set in a vase of water appears to be alive and is in some sense alive. But it is separated from the source of ongoing life. The branch cannot reconnect itself to the source of life. People separated from God are like that branch. They are not connected to the source of eternal, spiritual life. And they cannot reconnect themselves. They need someone to graft them into the source of life. Jesus referred to this as being born again.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” — John 3:16

➤ *God _____ the people He created, but He is holy and must punish sin.*

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➤ ***The punishment for sin is _____.* (Romans 6:23)**

“If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” — Revelation 20:15

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” — Romans 5:8

Jesus Christ never sinned. He was fully God and fully human. Because he lived a sinless human life, He was the only person who did not deserve to be punished for sin. He took the death we deserved and gave Himself as a substitute for us so that our sin could be forgiven and we could be reconnected to God.

➤ ***Romans 6:23 tells us the _____ of God is eternal life.***

As with any gift, we must receive it before we can experience it. We receive the gift of eternal life by faith in Jesus Christ. This does not mean we just believe that He really existed as the Son of God, but that we turn from our own sinful way of living and put our hope and trust in Him, accepting His authority in our lives. We do this through a prayer of repentance. When we repent and put our hope and trust in Jesus Christ, He connects us to God, the source of eternal life. This is what Jesus meant by being “born again”.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” — 2 Corinthians 5:17

Of course we could not live a new kind of life on our own, but since we are connected to God, He can be our constant helper. He enables us to live as a person of Christ—a *Christian*.



Why do we Baptize in Water?

The first person we see baptizing people in the New Testament is _____.
(Matthew 3:11)

John “the Baptist” was sent by God to prepare the people to receive Jesus, the promised savior, who was soon to come. One of the most noted aspects of John’s ministry was baptizing people, as his title suggests. He called the people to repent and turn to God. When the people repented, God forgave them and “washed” away their sins. This washing is what the baptism symbolized. It was an important public statement of the change in their hearts.

“John told the people, ‘I baptize you with water for repentance...’” — Matthew 3:11

1. Water baptism is commanded in Scripture.

After Jesus rose from the dead, before He returned to heaven, He gave instructions to His followers.

Jesus told them, “Therefore 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. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” — Matthew 28:19-20

He also said, “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.” — Mark 16:16

In Acts 2:38-41 we find an example of how Jesus’ followers did just as He had commanded. To a crowd in Jerusalem,

“Peter replied, ‘Repent and **be baptized**, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.’ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, ‘Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.’ Those who accepted his message **were baptized**, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.”

— Acts 2:38-41

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Session Three: Our Faith



2. Water baptism is a public sign of repentance and identification with Christ.

Jesus died, was buried and rose to life on our behalf, to pay the penalty for our sin. Water baptism is a picture of the death of our sinful nature. Going under the water symbolizes burial with Christ, coming up out of the water symbolizes rising to new life in Him.

“Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.” — Romans 6:3-4

Who Should Be Baptized?

We read Jesus’ words, “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved,” and Peter’s, “Repent and be baptized.”

A person should be baptized if they have _____ and _____.

To believe and repent people must be old enough to understand that they are sinners and need forgiveness in Christ. Jesus blessed the little children but His command of baptism was for believers. Our tradition of “dedicating” infants is modeled after Jesus blessing the children.

How Do We Baptize?

We baptize by immersing a person in water, that is, dipping them under the water, for several reasons: That is the way it was done in New Testament times, the word baptize in Scripture meant immerse, and the symbolism of death to sin and resurrection to new life in Christ is clearly pictured by immersion.

If you have believed in and received Christ through repentance, but have not been baptized in water, you will want to obey this important command of Christ. Ask the leader of this session for information about being baptized. We hope to celebrate this important milestone in your spiritual journey with you soon!



What is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit?

“On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: ‘Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’” — Acts 1:4-5

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”
— Acts 1:8

When Jesus was preparing to return to heaven after His death and resurrection, He instructed His followers to wait in Jerusalem for the baptism in the _____.

After this baptism they would be ready to take the message of Jesus to _____.

After His return to heaven, they obeyed this instruction and stayed in Jerusalem, praying together for several days. On the day of Pentecost they were all together praying when suddenly the sound of wind and the appearance of flames occurred in the room. Then the Bible says:

“All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” – Acts 2:4

Later that day Peter preached in the power of the Holy Spirit to the crowd who came to see what was happening. About 3,000 accepted his message!

“Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.’” — Acts 2:38-39

The promise was for _____.

Throughout the book of Acts we see the continuing pattern of believers being baptized in the Holy Spirit evidenced by worshipping God in “other tongues”, that is, languages they had not learned. (Acts 10:46, 19:6)

God continues to empower His people by baptizing them in the Holy Spirit. Our part as believers is to ask God in faith for the Holy Spirit baptism and wait in prayer to receive.



Why Do We Share Our Faith with Others?

❖ *God purposes to reconcile people to Himself.*

God has been working to restore people to relationship with Himself since sin first separated Adam and Eve from fellowship with Him. From the first part of the Bible (Genesis 3:15) He promised someone (Christ) would come to defeat Satan's destructive agenda. The New Testament book of Hebrews points out that Old Testament people like Noah and Abraham were accepted by God because of their faith in Him and His promises. Even in those early times, God was seeking people to have a relationship with Him through faith.

❖ *Jesus' purpose on earth was to bring lost people to God.*

"Jesus said to them, 'My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working.'" — John 5:17

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." — Luke 19:10

Jesus was doing the work of His Father which was to _____ and _____ lost people.

❖ *Our purpose as Christians is to bring lost people to God.*

"Again Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.'" — John 20:21

"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore 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. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'" — Matthew 28:18-20

Jesus commanded us to _____ and make _____ of all nations.

We do this out of obedience and out of compassion for lost people because we realize that Jesus Christ is their only hope for eternal life.

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved. —Acts 4:12



Why Do We Participate In Communion?

❖ ***On Jesus' last night with His disciples before His death, He ate the Passover meal with them.***

Long before Jesus' life on earth, when the Israelites were slaves in Egypt, God sent Moses to lead them out of Egypt to the Promised Land. Pharaoh would not agree to let them leave. God sent a series of miraculous signs to convince Pharaoh to let them go. When God was going to send the last sign He had Moses instruct all the Israelites to kill and roast a lamb to eat. Some of the lamb's blood was sprinkled around the door of each Israelite home. In the middle of the night God sent an angel to kill the firstborn son in every home in Egypt. But wherever the blood was on the door posts, in all the Israelite homes, the angel passed over without killing anyone. After this last sign, Pharaoh finally let the people of Israel leave Egypt. The Passover was celebrated yearly to commemorate God's miraculous deliverance.

In 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 we read about Jesus' last Passover meal with His disciples.

“For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.’ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.’ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.”

God had kept His covenant with Israel. *Jesus was establishing a new covenant.* In this covenant it would be *His* blood that protected us from judgment for our sin, not the blood of a lamb. (1 Corinthians 5:7)

❖ ***Jesus commanded us to eat this meal in His memory.***

It is a meal of thanksgiving (1 Corinthians 10:16) in which we recognize the body of Christ and look forward to His return. Besides honoring Jesus' gift of His physical body at His crucifixion, recognizing the body of Christ also implies being in right relationship with other Christians because Christians now are the “body of Christ” in the world.

“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.”

— 1 Corinthians 12:27

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❖ *We are advised to prepare our hearts before we eat the communion.*

“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 man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.”

—1 Corinthians 11:27-29

IN REVIEW:

Jesus instituted Communion at the _____ meal. He established a new _____. Communion is eaten in _____ memory. In addition to repartnering His death we look forward to His _____.



What Are the Gifts Of The Holy Spirit?

The gifts of the Spirit are given for the _____ good.

“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.”

— 1 Corinthians 12:7-11

Each partner is an important part of the _____ of Christ.

“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.”

— 1 Corinthians 12:7-27-28

In the body of Christ, each partner belongs to _____.

“So in Christ we who are many form one body, and each partner belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.” — Romans 12:5-8

God’s people are to be prepared for _____.

“It was he who 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.” — Ephesians 4:11-12

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The _____ of the HOLY SPIRIT are abilities given supernaturally by the Holy Spirit to the Church, the body of Christ. Just as a nose, a hand and a foot have different roles in the physical body, God gifts partners of the Church to function differently within the _____ of Christ.

Just as the physical body needs all its parts to function correctly, the church needs each partner to function correctly. An entire class, “CHURCH 301” is devoted to finding and using your giftedness to minister as part of the church.

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CENTERPOINT COMMUNITY CHURCH



Session Four: Our Church and



SESSION FOUR: OUR CHURCH &

What Is Our Heritage?



What Is Our Denomination?

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

— Acts 1:8

History of the Assemblies of God

1. The Assemblies of God is the largest Pentecostal denomination in the world, as well as the fastest growing.
2. The Assemblies of God has roots in the religious revival of the late 1800's. Many Christians in the United States and other parts of the world felt the need for more of God's power. In response, the Holy Spirit came on large numbers of them as in the book of Acts. Since this was initially associated with the Jewish holiday of Pentecost, the name “Pentecostal” was given to them.
3. The beginning of the modern Pentecostal movement is generally traced to prayer meetings at Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kansas on January 1, 1901. Revival spread to Missouri and Texas and then to California. A three-year revival meeting at Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles attracted believers from across the nation and overseas. This served as a springboard to send the Pentecostal message around the world.
4. The Pentecostal aspects of this revival were not generally welcome in established churches. Many were asked to leave and they formed their own churches.
5. By 1914 leaders and laymen realized the need for several things:
 - a. Formal recognition of ministers.
 - b. Approval and support of missionaries.
 - c. Full accounting of funds.
 - d. Increasing in doctrinal unity, gospel literature and permanent Bible training schools.



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6. Therefore, they gathered for a “General Council” in Hot Springs, Arkansas in 1914. A cooperative fellowship emerged from that meeting. It was incorporated with the name “The General Council of the Assemblies of God.” In 1916, they added the Statement of Fundamental Truths. It was a simple statement and remains virtually unchanged. It continues to provide a sound basis for the Fellowship, giving a firm position on vital doctrine.
7. The Assemblies of God has always emphasized missions and evangelism.
8. Today the constituency is numbered at _____ in the United States and _____ overseas with _____ churches in this country and _____ churches overseas.⁸
9. The denominational organization consists of the General Council (The United States), District Councils (e.g. the Oklahoma District), Sections and local churches.



What Do We Believe?'

The Bible is our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice. This statement of Fundamental Truths is intended simply as a basis of fellowship among us (i.e., that we all speak the same thing, 1 Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42). The phraseology employed in this statement is not inspired or contended for, but the truth set forth is held to be essential to a full-gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all Biblical truth; only that it covers our need as to these fundamental doctrines.

1. The Scripture Inspired

The scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).

2. The One True God

The one true God has revealed himself as the eternally self-existent "I AM," the Creator of heaven and earth, the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son and Holy Ghost (Deuteronomy 6:4, Isaiah 43:10,11, Matthew 28:19, Luke 3:22).

3. The Deity of the Lord Jesus

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare his:

- a. Virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31,35)
- b. Sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22)
- c. Miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38)
- d. Substitutionary work on the cross (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
- e. Bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Corinthians 15:4); and
- f. Exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9, 11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9, 11; Hebrews 1:3).

4. The Fall of Man

Man was created good and upright; for God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Genesis 1:26, 27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12-19).

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5. The Salvation of Man

Man's only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

a. Conditions of Salvation

Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11, 3:5-7).

b. The Evidences of Salvation

The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12).

6. The Ordinances of the Church

a. Baptism in Water

The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus, they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47, 48; Romans 6:4).

b. Holy Communion

The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements - bread and the fruit of the vine, is the symbol expressing our sharing in the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4); a memorial of his suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26); and a prophecy of his second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers "till he comes!"

7. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian Church. With it comes the endowment of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9). With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:28), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to his work (Acts 2:42), and more active love for Christ, for his Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20).

8. The Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4).

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9. Sanctification

Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Romans 12:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). The Scriptures teach a life of “holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). By the power of the Holy Ghost, we are able to obey the command: “Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:15,16) (Romans 6:1-11,13; Romans 8:1,2,13; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:12,13; 1 Peter 1:5).

10. The Church and Its Mission

The Church is the Body of Christ and each believer is an integral part. (Ephesians 1:22, 23; 2:22; Hebrews 12:23).

Since God’s purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshipped by man, and to build a body of believers in the image of his Son, the priority reason-for-being of the Assemblies of God as part of the Church is to be:

- a. An agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16);
- b. A corporate body in which man may worship God (1 Corinthians 12:13); and
- c. A channel of God’s purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of his Son (Ephesians 4:11, 16; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 1 Corinthians 14:12).

The Assemblies of God exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason-for-being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience:

- a. Enables them to evangelize the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 4:29-31; Hebrews 2:3,4);
- b. Adds a necessary dimension to a worshipful relationship with God (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 1 Corinthians 12,13 and 14); and
- c. Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit, gifts, and ministries as in New Testament times for edifying the body of Christ (Galatians 5:22-26; 1 Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11,12; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Colossians 1:29).

11. The Ministry

A divinely-called and scripturally-ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for a threefold purpose of leading the Church in:

- a. evangelizing the world (Mark 16:15-20),
- b. worshipping God (John 4:23,23), and
- c. building a body of saints being perfected in the image of his Son (Ephesians 4:11-16).

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12. Divine Healing

Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided in the atonement, and is the privilege of all believers (Isaiah 53:4,5; Matthew 8:16, 17; James 5:14-16).

13. The Blessed Hope

The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church. (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1 Corinthians 15:51,52).

14. The Millennial Reign of Christ

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with his saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27, 30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21,22; Zephaniah 3:19,20; Romans 11:26,27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalms 72:3-8; Micah 4:3,4).

15. The Final Judgment

There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the Devil and his angels, the beast, and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8).

16. The New Heavens and the New Earth

We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21 and 22).



How does a Person Become a Partner?

- ✓ Experience salvation
- ✓ Be baptized in water
- ✓ Attend Church 101 “Discovering Church”
- ✓ Sign the “Covenant”
- ✓ Meet with a representative of the Church Board
- ✓ Be received into Partnership by the Church Board
- ✓ Be introduced to the congregation.



What is our Covenant?¹⁰

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and having been baptized in water, and being in agreement with CENTERPOINT COMMUNITY CHURCH's purpose, beliefs, values, strategy, and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the CENTERPOINT COMMUNITY CHURCH family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other partners to do the following:

1. I Will Protect the _____ of My Church

- ...By acting in love toward other partners
- ...By refusing to gossip
- ...By following the leaders

“Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.”
— Romans 14:19

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

“...have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.”
— 1 Peter 1:22

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs...” — Ephesians 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 of no advantage to you.” — Hebrews 13:17

2. I Will Share the _____ of My Church

- ...By praying for its growth
- ...By inviting the unchurched to attend
- ...By warmly welcoming those who visit

“We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers.” — 1 Thessalonians 1:2

“...Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full.” — Luke 14:23

“Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.”
— Romans 15:7

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

3. I Will Serve the _____ of My Church

- ...By discovering my gifts and talents
- ...By being equipped to serve
- ...By developing a servant’s heart

“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.” — 1 Peter 4:10

“Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you...”
— 1 Peter 4:10 (Phillip’s)

“It was he who gave 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...” — Ephesians 4:11-12

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others...but [Christ] made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant...”
— Philippians 2:3-4,7

4. I Will Support the _____ of My Church

- ...By attending faithfully
- ...By living a godly life
- ...By giving regularly

“Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” — Hebrews 10:25

“Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ...”
— Philippians 1:27

“On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income...” — 1 Corinthians 16:2

“A tithe (tenth) of everything....belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD.”
— Leviticus 27:30

Signature

Date



Who Are Our Key Leaders?

WHAT NOW?

After completing CHURCH 101, you should plan to participate in the next offering of CHURCH 201 when you feel ready.



ENDNOTES

- 1 Smart, James. *The Teaching Ministry of the Church*. Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1954, p. 25.
- 2 Ibid., 28.
- 3 Two excellent books on the purposes of the Church are: Warren, Rick. *The Purpose Driven Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995 and White, James Emery. *Rethinking The Church: A Challenge to Creative Redesign in an Age of Transition*. Baker Book, 1997.
- 4 Mittelberg, Mark, Lee Strobel and Bill Hybels. *Becoming a Contagious Christian* is a training course produced by Zondervan Publishing House based on the book by Bill Hybels and Mark Mittelberg *Becoming a Contagious Christian*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994.
- 5 Warren, Rick. *The Purpose Driven Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Womack, David A. *The Pyramid Principle of Church Growth*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany Fellowship, 1977.
- 8 This information is updated yearly and is available from the Office of Public Relations of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, 1445 Boonville Ave. Springfield, MO, 65802. <http://www.ag.org/>
- 9 Statement of Fundamental Truths of the Assemblies of God.
- 10 *Discovering Church C.L.A.S.S. #101* notes written by Rick Warren at Saddleback Community Church pages 37-38. The materials are available from the Encouraging Word, 20131 Ellipse, Foothill Ranch, CA 92610. Phone: 949-829-0300 Fax: 949-829-0400, Email: info@pastors.net Order Online: <http://www.pastors.net/>