

# Christian Beliefs

## Doctrine of the Church

### Section 1—Doctrine

#### Crosspointe Community Church—statement of faith

##### The Church

We believe in the universal Church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a body of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, under elders, and associated for worship, service, and fellowship. We believe that the primary mission of the church is to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and make disciples of all nations. (Col. 1:18; Eph. 2:19–22; Gal. 3:26–28; 1 Pet. 5:1–5; Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:23–25; Matt. 28:18–20; Acts 1:8)

##### The Ordinances

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that water baptism of a believer into the name of the triune God signifies one's identification with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of his death until he comes. (Matt. 28:18–20; Rom. 6:3–5; 1 Cor. 11:23–26)

#### I. Nature of the church

- a. Definition -- "Church is the community of all true believers for all time"—Grudem. I prefer—.... believers since Pentecost
- b. Ekklesia—called out ones—or assembly
- c. Verses—Eph. 1:22, Matt. 16:18, Acts 20:28  
*<sup>18</sup> And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock<sup>19</sup> I will build my church, and the gates of hell<sup>20</sup> shall not prevail against it.*

#### II. Church is visible yet invisible

- a. Invisible—universal—Heb. 12:23  
*<sup>22</sup> But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, <sup>23</sup> and to the assembly<sup>24</sup> of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,*
- b. Visible—Local—I Cor. 1:2  
*<sup>2</sup> To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:*

#### III. Metaphors for the church

Body—Col. 1:18; Temple—Eph. 2:20–21; Virgin—2 Cor. 11:2; Bride—Rev. 21:9; City—Rev. 21:9–10; Flock—I Pet. 5:2–4; Chosen people—I Pet. 2:9; Royal priesthood—Hebrews 4:14

#### IV. Marks of a true church—9 marks-Dever

- a. Expository preaching—Acts 2: 42 – (“apostle’s teaching)
- b. Theology that is biblical—Acts 20:27— (“Whole counsel of God”)
- c. Gospel—I Cor. 1:17-18— (“preach the gospel...power of God”)
- d. Conversion—2 Cor. 5:17— (“in Christ is a new creation”)
- e. Evangelism—Rom. 10:15— (“beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news”)
- f. Church membership—Acts 2: 41-47 (“added to their number” and community activities followed); I Cor. 11:17-32— (“do this in remembrance of me”)
- g. Church discipline—Mat. 18
- h. Concern for discipleship and growth—Matt. 28:19-20— (“Make Disciples of all nations”)
- i. Church biblical leadership—I Tim. 3:1-13—elders and deacons

#### V. Purpose of the church—discipleship path

- a. A—adoration—Worship the Father, Son and Holy Spirit-in prayer and the Word—Eph. 1:1-14
- b. C—community—Love one another in unity and acts of love—Phil. 2:1-4
- c. T—teaching—2 Pet. 3:18—“grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord.”
- d. S—service—Be on the move outward with the gospel—locally and globally—Matt. 28:19-20, Acts 1:8

#### VI. Church discipline

- a. Purpose (Matt. 18:15)—Reconciliation  
*<sup>15</sup> “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. <sup>16</sup> But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup> If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.*
- b. For what sin to discipline (Matt. 18:15-20)—Lack of repentance
- c. Pattern—4 steps—1—one on one, 2—take others 3—tell it to the church for prayer  
4—remove from fellowship

#### VII. Church government

##### a. Church officers

##### i. Elder (Pastor/overseer/bishop)

- 1. Plurality (Acts 14:23)  
*<sup>3</sup> And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed*
- 2. Various names—Elder (presbuteros)—Titus 1:5; Bishop (episcopos) or overseer—I Tim. 3:1; Pastor or shepherd-Eph. 4:11
- 3. Function—leadership, teaching
- 4. Qualifications—I Tim. 3, Titus 2

ii. Deacon

1. Service—Acts 6:2-3 is an example

*And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. <sup>3</sup> Therefore, brothers,<sup>10</sup> pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.*

*Phil. 1:1--Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:<sup>1</sup>*

2. Qualifications—I Tim 3

b. Forms of church government

i. Episcopalian—hierarchy

ii. Presbyterian

iii. Congregational

1. Plurality of local elders

2. Congregational rule (Matt. 18, Acts 6), Elder led, Jesus is Head

- II. Women in office—NT pattern is men are elders but women are able to be very involved and are gifted to serve in many capacities, but not as elders (final authority under Christ)
- a. I Tim. 2:11; I Cor. 14:33; I Tim. 3

## ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

### I. Baptism

a. Mode

i. Word means dip

ii. Pattern—Acts 8:38

<sup>38</sup> *And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.*

iii. Symbolism—Rom. 6:3

<sup>3</sup> *Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.*

b. Subjects

i. Pattern was believers—Acts 2:41

ii. If not believers—makes justification less clear

C, Effects of baptism—not for salvation—thief on the cross

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## II. Lord's Supper

### a. Meaning

- i. Christ's death and resurrection—I Cor. 11:26

*<sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.*

- ii. Spiritual nourishment—Jn. 6:53 (not salvation but Communion with HIM)

*<sup>56</sup> Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. <sup>57</sup> As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me.*

- iii. Unity of the believers—I Cor. 10:16-17

*<sup>16</sup> The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? <sup>17</sup> Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.*

- b. **Who should participate in the Lord's supper?** Those in the family of Jesus—I Cor. 11:<sup>27</sup> *Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord.*

## Section 2—Practicing the doctrine of the church

1. The church is the context where we learn to grow in unity with others and exercise our God-given gifts for his kingdom. Share good news in our assembly, neighborhoods and abroad.
2. The church is where we can find fulfilling relationships of fellowship.
3. We are made to be under authority. That provides security. God is our ultimate authority, and the church is structured bring his authority to bear on his people through the leadership of the church and through the congregation
4. The ordinances of the church are important in our growth in grace. We do not come in an unworthy state but with our relationship to God and others "right" because of the redemptive work of Jesus *vain*.

### Discussion questions:

1. Church is not a building but an assembly of believers. In your group, discuss the variety of churches that you have been a part of in your life. What were some of the most encouraging experiences you had with church? What were some hard times (if any) you may have experienced?
2. What do you think of church discipline? Do you wish the church did not do it? What is the benefit of this practice? What controls should there be on the discipline?
3. One of the points of this discussion listed 9 marks of a church (there could be other ways to look at it for sure. Review those and discuss where you think we do well at Crosspointe and how we might do better in some of the areas. Could you help to make some areas stronger?
4. What is the meaning of the Lord's Supper? What do you enjoy most about that service?
5. Baptism is controversial in churches---how to do it and when---such as infant baptism. We hold to believers' baptism by immersion. There are believers who see that differently. How can we maintain our convictions and still love others with different views of baptism and other issues?
6. What are other applications from the biblical teaching of the church?