

Week 5 - Our Outpost

Summitview Community Church (continued)

As we discussed last week:

“Our Statement of Faith describes the beliefs we have in common with the universal Christian church. Our core values describe the convictions we share as a local church that make us unique within the universal church.”

While these convictions may be shared in other congregations, we believe they are a mix of strengths that God has entrusted us to carry. Understanding these core values will enable you to more deeply understand our vision and direction as a church. The last two sessions of Discovery will provide the remaining information necessary for you to decide whether to continue your spiritual journey with us and become a member of Summitview Community Church.”

Today we will continue with our discussion on Summitview’s Core Values. Following that discussion we will address our convictions on church finances, and, finally, we will give you an opportunity to officially unite with us in a spiritual journey—by signing our membership commitment. We believe that God desires for us to be loyal and committed to community. Our membership commitment is a formal way of doing this.

Today we will discuss:

Our Core Values Part 2
Our Core Values - A Review
The Membership Commitment

“Having a common purpose is precisely what made the first-century church in Jerusalem so dynamic. Luke records these words in the book of Acts: “All the believers were together, but they all had their own ideas as to why they were there.” Wait a minute—that’s not what it says! The verse reads: “All the believers were together and had everything in common.” Do you wonder what that means? Just two verses earlier Luke says that the believers “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer”—to a distinct set of beliefs and practices. They did this together. They were all on the same page; they had a common purpose. Later, Luke tells us that “all the believers were one in heart and mind.”

Randy Fra-

zee

“Remember: A stingy planter gets a stingy crop; a lavish planter gets a lavish crop. I want each of you to take plenty of time to think it over, and make up your own mind what you will give. That will protect you against sob stories and arm-twisting. God loves it when the giver delights in the giving.”

The Apostle Paul as recorded
in 2 Corinthians 9
In *The Message*

Our Core Values Part 2

Local church development of character-based leadership

Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. (Acts 20:28)

“The church at this moment needs men, the right kind of men, bold men... We languish for men who feel themselves expendable in the warfare of the soul, who cannot be frightened by threats of death because they have already died to the allurements of this world.”

A.W. Tozer

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. (1 Peter 5:1-4)

We value the development of our leaders within the church.

Recalling our discussion from Week 3 (page 39):

“The primary qualifications for leadership in the church are character-related because it is poor character, not poor education, that can inhibit the clear communication of the Holy Spirit.”

“The true index of a man’s character is the health of his wife.”

Cyril Connolly

Now the overseer must be (1 Timothy 3):

above reproach	the husband of but one wife
temperate	self-controlled
respectable	hospitable
able to teach	not given to drunkenness
not violent but gentle	not quarrelsome
not a lover of money	

Insisting on these character requirements as a prerequisite to leadership in the church ensures that leaders are also examples. Developing home-grown leaders ensures that a potential leader’s character is understood before they have any responsibility in the church. Emphasizing discipleship and leadership development within the church also helps us preserve our core values over time.

“A true and safe leader is likely to be one who has no desire to lead but is forced into a position of leadership by inward pressure of the Holy Spirit and the press of the external situation.”

A.W. Tozer

We provide mentoring and education to assist in developing pastors and leaders within the church.

Mentoring

Pastoral leadership development at Summitview is largely an organic and relational process because issues of character are best addressed in everyday relationships. Leaders at Summitview (pastors, discipleship team leaders, ministry leaders, etc.) are continually seeking opportunities for the development of the next generation of leaders. As individuals display leadership potential, the leaders in *their* life seek opportunities for that potential to be “tested.”

Our Core Values Part 2

Local church development of character-based leadership (continued)

Paul refers to this process for *deacons* (probably most analogous to our discipleship team and ministry leaders) in 1 Timothy 3:

They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. (1 Timothy 3:9-10)

Each leader is given an area of responsibility and is coached (usually by a pastor) one-on-one through the challenges of that leadership responsibility.

NOTE: We rely on the equipping and character development of these “life lessons.” We also rely on the spiritual transformation of the disciplines. That is why any discipleship or coaching relationship includes “spiritual training” (1 Timothy 4:6-8) in the study of the Scriptures, prayer, worship and generosity.

Leaders are then moved into areas of greater influence as their leadership seems to be used by God to bring people closer to Himself and build His kingdom.

The root of the righteous yields fruit. (Proverbs 12:12)

Pastors in our church are men who have been members of our congregation and have been coached through this “testing” process. In Acts 20:28, Paul addresses pastors as men whom “*the Holy Spirit has made overseers.*” This process of coaching in increasing areas of responsibility allows us to see the Holy Spirit doing just that—“making pastors.” That is why we refer to our pastor ordination as a “recognition.” We are simply recognizing what the Holy Spirit has already done.

Education

He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. (Titus 1:9)

The development of leaders also requires education in doctrine. We provide formal instruction specifically to leaders three times a year at the “*Great Commission Leadership Institute*” (referred to as the GCLI). The GCLI program is a national educational program developed by our association of churches.

Periodically, as the need arises, we have provided a leadership training class that consists of several weeks of instruction in areas of doctrine, skill and character.

“He who cannot obey, cannot command.”

Benjamin Franklin

“A thorough knowledge of the Bible is worth more than a college education.”

Theodore Roosevelt

“For the overseer must be above reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.”

Titus 1:7-9

“Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.”

1 Corinthians 9:24-47

Our Core Values Part 2

Local church development of character-based leadership (continued)

“Nothing distinguishes the kingdoms of man from the kingdom of God more than their diametrically opposed views of the exercise of power. One seeks to control people; the other to serve people; one promotes self; the other prostrates self; one seeks prestige and position, the other lifts up the lowly and despised.”

Chuck Colson

“It is not by driving away our brother that we can be alone with God.”

George MacDonald

“There must be communion and community among the people of God: not a false community, that is set up as though human community were an end in itself; but in the local church true fellowship must be evident as the outcome of original, individual salvation. This is the real Church of the Lord Jesus Christ—not merely organization, but a group of people, individually the children of God, drawn together by the Holy Spirit for a particular task either in a local situation or over a wider area. The Church of the Lord Jesus should be a group of those who are redeemed and bound together on the basis of true doctrine.”

Francis Schaeffer

Some words on accountability and servant leadership

Paul’s admonishment to the pastors in Ephesus in Acts 20:28 emphasized a responsibility to “watch over yourselves.” We believe that pastors should not lead alone as a lone authority. Therefore our pastoral team is viewed as a council of equals with a variety of roles.

Jesus’ leadership was never one that “exercised” authority. He lived among the disciples as “one who serves”. This paradox in Christian leadership is counter to our cultural understanding of both servants and leaders. “Servant-leadership” can only be achieved by the power of the Holy Spirit. Pastors and leaders are not to have a sense of superiority over the people they lead—they are to lead by example, not by “pulling rank.”

Biblically-based relationships in the church and family

One of God’s primary concerns is the unity and love among His children.

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:34-35)

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit-- just as you were called to one hope when you were called-- (Ephesians 4:2-4)

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. ...Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ... Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ...Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. ...Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. ...And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him. (Ephesians 5,6)

If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. 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. (Philippians 2:1-4)

Our Core Values Part 2

Biblically-based relationships in the church and family (continued)

True community exists as a place of selfless love and service to one another. Yet the same standard of love is expressed differently for different God-given relationships. This balance of the same love but different responsibilities can only exist when Christ is at the center.

Jesus stated clearly that the authenticity of His message would be evaluated based on the quality of community His followers would create. Therefore, our church strongly encourages the pursuit of healthy, committed relationships in families and discipleship teams. We place an emphasis on working through differences and hurt feelings to pursue unity. Gossip and division are intolerable practices in Christ's church and consequently are not an acceptable part of the church community at Summitview.

Role relationships: Everyone has their part

Unity, love and appreciation for one another is bolstered in a community where every person has a specific assignment. In the Trinity, there are role relationships; the Father leads, provides for and protects the Son, the Son follows the Father's lead and works on his behalf. Each one has a role, but none is more important or valuable than the other. In this community, each member has an essential value.

We believe the Scriptures establish role relationships in the church and family, and we embrace them as God's idea for strengthening and uniting community. These "biblical relationships" are then a reflection of God's identity.

Here are some unique expressions of the biblical role relationships that are encouraged at Summitview:

- Husbands/Fathers as servant-leaders in their home, reflecting the Christ's sacrificial leadership and strong protection of the church (Ephesians 5:23-26).
- Wives/Mothers as helper-lovers to their husbands (Genesis 2:18 and Titus 2) and lovers of their children (Titus 2). This role reflects the beauty of the church, of God and of Jesus in his relationship to the Father (1 Peter 3:1-6).
- Children honor and obey their parents, and parents train their children with discipline and instruction (Ephesians 6:1-4).
- Pastors as servant-leaders of the church (Luke 22:25-27) with authority granted by God and under God (1 Peter 5:1-6).

"Never listen to accounts of the frailties of others; and if anyone should complain to you of another, humbly ask him not to speak of him at all."

John of the Cross

"You will not become a saint through other people's sins."

Anton Chekhov

"The United States has rightly rejected the traditional family as it really existed. Yet nothing better has replaced it. That's why I believe God's people have a wonderful opportunity at this moment in history. We do have an alternative to offer, one that will meet our hearts' desire for love, trust, fairness, and mutual fulfillment."

Robert Lewis

"The average reader may be thinking, this kind of authority structure and accountability will never work in America. If this is true, it is because a culture of individualism won't let it happen. As a matter of fact, all characteristics of community are counter cultural!"

Randy Frazee

“A healthy community is built on friendships, on people who are committed to the art of caring engagement, an art that only the Gospel makes possible in its richest form. It is built on shepherding, on people committed to the art of mentoring or passing along hope. Shepherds are simply older friends whose experience allows them to give hope that whatever is happening can be well survived.”

Larry Crabb

“Healthy communities also include spiritual direction, the art of discerning the deepest recesses of the soul with a sensitivity to what the Spirit is doing accompanied by offering one’s presence to another. Spiritual directors need to think about Biblical categories for understanding themselves and others. They must immerse themselves in spiritual theology (where truth dynamically impacts life). They will read widely in spiritual classics and good literature and will ponder lessons from life and the arts. And they will learn to recognize and disrupt the evil passions and plans of the flesh while clinging to a vision of what could be released in another’s life.”

Larry Crabb

“... faith and obedience carried out in community yield maturity.... Hypocrisy is still the fastest way to quench the Spirit.”

Pastor Mark Bowen,
Evergreen Community Church
(our sister church
in Minneapolis)

Our Core Values Part 2

Whole life discipleship

The discipleship Jesus talked about means more than the accumulation of Biblical knowledge. It also means more than finding an area of service or ministry. Being a disciple of Christ means allowing Him to lead our lives in every area—in our personal lives, marriage, finances, work, parenting—Jesus has a plan and a way for every dimension of life. Since His work is accomplished as “the body. . .grows and builds itself up in love as each part does its work,” Christians in a church must address and support spiritual growth in every area of life. A church should provide each believer with teachings and relationships that bring about the full spectrum of Christian growth.

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

Experiencing Christ’s example of “disciple-making” will, then, include an intensely personal element where our whole life can be addressed and conformed to the image of Christ. We believe that a person can and should have a variety of influences in their life, but it is one-to-one discipleship that brings about a significant life transformation in a person’s whole life.

And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. (2 Timothy 2:2)

You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance. Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God. Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. (Titus 2:1-6)

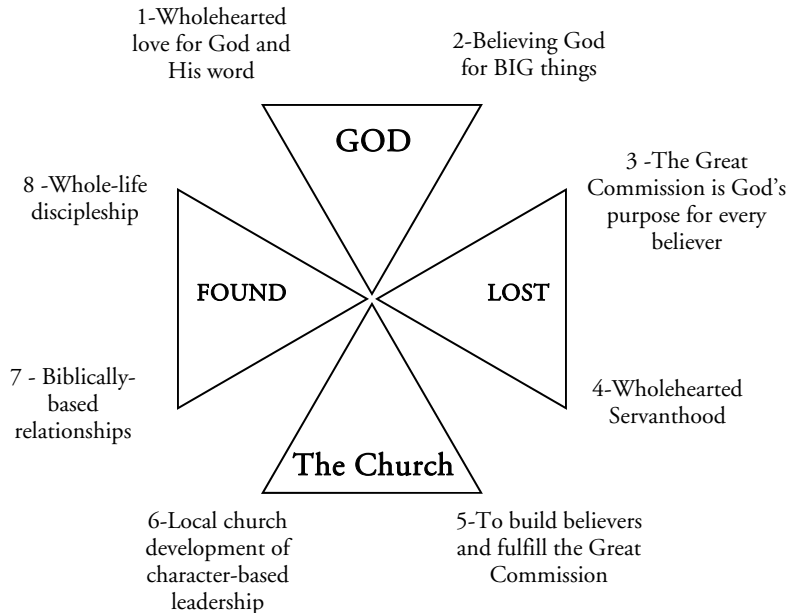
Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. (Hebrews 13:7)

Referring to these Biblical instructions, it is noteworthy that in Titus 2 there is specific instruction to address a person in terms of their particular season of life (old and young, men and women). This is yet another reason for our individual Season of Life communities.

Our emphasis on “whole life discipleship” is evidenced in the thrust of our ministries being highly relational as opposed to instructional. The transparency and vulnerability required for a dynamic discipleship team experience is also the platform for personal discipleship. The “working together” and unity required to clean the church or set-up the sound equipment occurs on a personal level. Much of this is intentional to provide opportunities for everyone to be under the tutelage of someone and have their life be an “open book” to a trusted and respected “teacher”.

Our Core Values-A Review

The following diagram has been created as a memory aid to our eight core values.



"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star." (Revelation 22:16)

*Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.
(1 Corinthians 12:27)*

Our convictions on church finances

Budget of the church is the tithe of the saints

Summitview Community Church is supported by the tithes and offerings of those who consider this their church. As we examine the Scriptures, we see that the ministry of the Tabernacle and the Temple, and churches in the New Testament, were supported in this way.

Hudson Taylor said, "God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply." And we believe that, as every member of our church focuses their giving towards God, His leading of those individuals will generate the exact provision needed to fund the exact work He intends for our church.

Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

Proverbs 3:9-10

Our Core Values Part 2

Our convictions on church finances (continued)

“That which you cannot give away; you do not own it, it owns you.”

Unknown

“About two-thirds of Jesus’ parables make reference to our use of financial resources. He once warned that “where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” He talked often about these matters because he understood what was at stake. He knew that, left to our own devices, this area would quickly become a source of pain and frustration—and sometimes bondage. Worse, he saw how easily our hearts would be led astray from pure devotion to God into areas of worry and even obsession over possessions. He wanted to protect us from these pitfalls and to show us the liberty that comes from following him fully in every area of life, including this one.”

Bill Hybels

We believe God calls all who know Him to honor Him through financial giving (Proverbs 3:9-10). As we give to God we honor Him as our provider and as our one true master (Deuteronomy 14:23). A tithe indicates that we know who has given us all of our wealth and that our hearts are devoted first to Him.

We believe that the Bible teaches us, as God’s children, to return a tithe (or a “tenth part”) of our income back to God.

God stated this.

A tenth of all you produce is the Lord’s, and it is holy. (Leviticus 27:30)

Jesus verified this as well.

Yes, you should tithe, and you shouldn’t leave the more important things undone either. (Matthew 23:23)

Specific uses

Church contributions provide for the programs, facilities and staff at Summitview. Along with that, ten percent is given to Great Commission Northwest, our region of GCAC, and is used to support and start churches. Three percent of regular church giving is used for benevolence purposes, both in the church and the community.

Yearly we provide a financial report for the fiscal year which is available at either the information table in the lobby or in the church office.

Special giving

Periodically the pastors will determine a financial need that is proper for the church as a whole to address. Church plants, facilities or giving to meet desperate needs in families or in other churches may require special giving above and beyond the tithe.

Not under compulsion

We believe God is pleased when His followers give cheerfully and not under compulsion (2 Corinthians 9:7). That is why you won’t see a collection plate passed during our services. God will continue to bless our church, its work, and our lives individually as we honor Him with what He’s given us as a cheerful act of our will.

Our Core Values Part 2

What it means to be a member of Summitview

Whether membership in a church is formal or informal, there is a difference between “attendees” and “members” that can be summed up in one word:

commitment.

We strongly encourage every believer to find a church that will help them grow deeper in their relationship with God. Making a definite commitment to be part of a local church is important for at least 4 reasons:

A cultural reason: It is an antidote to our society.

We live in an age where very few want to be committed to anything ... a job ... a marriage ... our country. This attitude has even produced a generation of “church shoppers & hoppers.” Membership swims against the current of America’s “consumer religion.” It is an unselfish decision. Commitment always builds character.

A practical reason: It defines who can be counted on.

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. A membership commitment identifies our family.

A personal reason: It produces spiritual growth.

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.

A biblical reason: Christ is committed to the church.

... Christ loved the church, and he gave his life for it. (Ephesians 5:25)

At Summitview, formal membership is our way of clearly communicating who we are and what we value as a church family, and it offers people a clear way to become part of that family.

What is expected of me as a member?

At Summitview we would 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 Commitment.

*“You cannot care for me,
with no regard for her-
If you love me, you will love
the church.”*

**Musician Derek Webb’s lyrics
describing Jesus’
feelings for the church**

Our Core Values Part 2

Our affiliation

Summitview Community Church is part of the Great Commission Association of Churches. GCAC had an informal beginning in 1969 when a group of young people, moved by the example of what God had done in the book of Acts, began starting student fellowships with a goal of pursuing the Great Commission given by Jesus.

The Association now consists of over 100 churches in numerous countries around the world, including Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, the Ukraine, Germany, and a number of countries in Central and South America. Support from churches in the Association was instrumental in establishing Summitview in 1989 and has also been a part of each of our new congregations.

More information about GCAC and the exciting things that are happening throughout the world through its members can be found on our website, www.summitview.com, or by asking one of the Pastors.

A Review of Summitview Community Church's Bylaws Regarding Membership

ARTICLE 4. MEMBERSHIP IN THE CONGREGATION

SECTION 4.1 Membership. The Church shall have only one class of members, who shall have no voting rights. The requirements for attaining and maintaining membership in the Church congregation shall be: (1) that one confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior; (2) that the controlling influence of Jesus Christ over one's life be apparent from one's outward actions and attitudes; (3) that one agree with the Church's tenets of faith, as set forth in or pursuant to, these bylaws; (4) that, so long as one desires to remain a member of the Church, one agrees to abide by the Church's charter, bylaws and membership commitment. 5) In order to be received into membership, a person must sign a Membership Commitment form, and be accepted by the Board of Trustees. It is encouraged that they also attend a membership course before signing a Membership Commitment form, but it is not absolutely required. A person's membership never expires unless there is a request to be removed from membership.

SECTION 4.2 Membership Removal. Members may be removed from membership at their own request by informing a pastor or the church office in written form (email or letter) of their intention to withdraw and the reasons therefore. If a member requests to withdraw because of specific problems or disappointments with the church, the Board of Trustees shall attempt to resolve those matters so that the member may remain in the church and enjoy greater fruitfulness and personal spiritual growth. If it appears to the Board of Trustees that a member has requested removal merely to avoid church discipline, that request shall not be given effect until the disciplinary process has been properly concluded (see Matthew 18:12-20; Bylaw Section 4.5 Procedure for Discipline). If a person has quit attending the church for 6 months, a letter will be sent to them informing them they will be removed from membership unless they contact the office requesting otherwise.

SECTION 4.3 Member Duties. Although all governing authority of the Church is vested in its Board of Trustees, pursuant to Scripture, the Church's charter and these bylaws, the members of the church are vital to its success in bringing the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ to a dying and sinful world. Members shall seek to stimulate one another to love and to good works, and shall submit to one another in love for mutual edification, for accountability, and in the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry. Members shall provide a framework of love and acceptance, in which truth and righteousness may prosper, and the gospel may be proclaimed. Members shall not be factious or divisive, and shall agree to submit to the spiritual authority of the Trustees as leaders of the Church.

SECTION 4.4 Restoration. If any member of the congregation is overcome in a fault, it is the commission of the body of Christ, through those who are spiritual, to restore such member in a spirit of gentleness. The church shall be entitled to act in the process of restoration, which may include discipline, in order to prevent a brother or sister from further harm to himself or herself, and in order to protect the integrity and purity of the membership. The process of restoration by the local congregation shall be exercised only in accordance with the Word of God, in a spirit of love, and not in a spirit of self-righteous judgment or vindictiveness.

A Review of Summitview Community Church's Bylaws Regarding Membership (continued)

SECTION 4.5 Procedure for Discipline. Trustees shall be responsible for admonishing members who willfully neglect their responsibilities to the church or who err in doctrine or conduct.

A. Mutual accountability and discipline within the church is commanded by God in Scripture and is one of the most important responsibilities of a true church of Jesus Christ (see Matt. 18:12-20; Romans 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 2:5-11; Gal. 2:11-14; Eph. 5:11; 1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6-15; 1 Tim. 1:20; 5:19-20; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Titus 3:10; Heb. 10:24-30; 12:5-17; 2 John 7-11; Rev. 3:19).

B. Church discipline is the exercise of that authority that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed to the visible church for the preservation of its purity, peace, and good order. All members of the church are under the care of and subject to the discipline of the church. The ultimate goal of all discipline is to train Christians to be self-disciplined so that they may share in the holiness of God (see Heb. 12:7-13).

C. Erring members: Any member known to err in doctrine or conduct shall be counseled according to the procedure outlined in the New Testament Scriptures. Any member having knowledge of such error shall, in the spirit of Christian love, seek to restore the erring member. If he or she does not heed this counsel, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the Trustees, which shall, in meekness and gentleness, seek to restore the member.

D. After the above process has been completed, dismissal of a member remaining in gross error in doctrine or conduct may result by a two-thirds vote of all current Trustees.