

Starting Point Statements



Our Mission

“REACH people with the love of Jesus, TRAIN them to follow Him, and SEND them out to reach others.”

Our Vision

“To plant 30 churches in the triangle area in the next 15 years through making disciples that disciple others and planting a church that plants others.”

Our Purposes

This church will be focused on the purposes of making disciples through:

- **Worshipping** Jesus with our lives.
- **Teaching** the Bible and how to study it
- Living in **Community** with other believers
- **Serving** the poor in our city and around the world
- **Sharing** the message of Jesus in our city and around the world

Statement of Beliefs

The Bible - God wrote a book

The Bible is God's Word to all people. It was written by human authors under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. Because it was inspired by God, the Bible is truth without any mixture of error and is completely relevant to our daily lives.

(Deuteronomy 4:1-2; Psalms 119:11, 89, 105; Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 22:29; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 3:16)

Trinity - God: Three in One

God has existed in relationship with Himself for all eternity. He exists as one substance in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Although each member of the Trinity serves different functions, they each possess equal power and authority.

(Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 61:1; Matthew 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 1:35; John 5:21-23; 14:10, 16; Romans 8:9-11; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1:8-10; James 2:19)

The Father - God is great, God is good

God is great: He is all powerful, all knowing, ever present, unchanging, completely worthy of our trust, and above all, holy. It is in Him that we live, move and exist. God is good: He is our Father. He is loving, compassionate, and faithful to His people and His promises.

(Exodus 3:14; Numbers 23:19; Leviticus 11:44-45; 19:2; Psalm 11:4-6; Malachi 3:6 John 3:16; 4:24; 5:26; 14:1; Acts 17:28; Romans 3:3-4)

The Son - God became man

Jesus Christ is completely human, but at the same time completely God. He is the only plan for bringing people who are enemies of God back into a right relationship with God. He lived a perfect life, so that He could be a substitution for us in satisfying God's demands for perfection. He defeated death in His resurrection so that we could have life.

(Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 14:33; 16:16; 28:5-6; Luke 22:70; 24:46-47; John 1:1, 14; 10:30; 11:25-27; 17:1-5; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 8:1-3; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; Gal 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:15; 2:9; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16)

The Holy Spirit - God is always present

His presence assures us of our relationship with Christ. He guides believers into all truth, and exalts Christ. He convicts people of their sin, God's righteousness, and the coming judgment. He comforts us, gives us spiritual gifts, and makes us more like Christ.

(Genesis 1:2; Psalms 51:11; 139:7 ff; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Mark 1:10; Lk 1:35; 4:1; 11:13; 12:12; John 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; 13:2; Romans 8:9-11, 14-16, 26-27; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 1:13-14; 2 Peter 1:21; Revelation 22:17)

Eternity - Somewhere forever

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

(John 3:16, 36; Romans 6:23; 1 John 2:25; 5:11-13; Revelation 20:15)

Man - God's image bearers

Man is made in the image of God and is the supreme object of His creation. Man was created to have fellowship with God, but became separated in that relationship through sinful disobedience. As a result, man cannot attain a right relationship with God through his own effort. Every human personality is uniquely created, possesses dignity, and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

(Genesis 1:26-30; 2:7, 18-22; 3; Psalms 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18, 23; 5:6; 6:6; 7:14-25; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19, 21-22; Ephesians 2; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11)

Salvation - God's only way

The blood of Jesus Christ, shed on the cross, provides the only way of salvation through the forgiveness of sin. Salvation occurs when people place their faith in the death and resurrection of Christ as sufficient payment for their sin. Salvation is a gift from God and it cannot be earned through our own efforts.

(Isaiah 1:18; 53:5-6; 55:7; Matthew 1:21; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:12; 3:16, 36; 5:24; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 16:30-31; Romans 1:16-18; 3:23-25; 5:8-10; 6; 1 Corinthians 1:18; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; Ephesians 2:8-10; Philippians 2:12-13; Hebrews 9:24-28; Revelation 3:20)

The Church - God's design for community

The church is a local community of baptized believers unified through faith in Christ. It is committed to the teachings of Christ, to obeying all of His commands, and it seeks to bring the gospel to the world. The Church works together in love and unity, intent on the ultimate purpose of glorifying Christ.

(Matthew 16:18-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-47; 5:11-14; 13:1-3; 14:23; 16:5; 20:28; 1 Corinthians 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:10-12; 5:22-32; Colossians 1:18; 3:15; 1 Timothy 4:14; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 21:2-3)

Our Practices

Beliefs are not worth much unless they are transformed into actions. Based on what the Bible teaches, we feel very strongly about the following 15 practices:

We practice submission to the Leadership of Jesus over the church.

18 He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning..."

- Colossians 1:18

Christ is the recognized leader of our church, not any person, group, or religious organization. While recognizing the value of associating and cooperating with other groups of Christians, we believe every local church should be under the leadership of Jesus and look to him for guidance on every decision.

We practice obedience to the commands of Jesus.

21 "Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me."

- John 14:21

"Don't leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised...then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives..."

- Acts 1:4b, 12

Since Jesus is the leader of the church we have a responsibility to obey the commands that he gives us in scripture.

We practice Spirit-led living.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you."

- Acts 1:8a

We seek to live in constant communication with the Holy Spirit and to let him guide our every action and reaction.

We practice carrying out Christ's mission in our city, state, country and the world.

8 "...You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

- Acts 1:8b

We practice prayer because of the power and guidance offered through Jesus to his church.

14 "They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers."

- Acts 1:14

We practice the spiritual discipline of prayer both privately and on a church-wide level.

We practice sharing the good news of eternal life through Jesus.

"The Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd."

- Acts 2:14

We practice baptism by immersion.

41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

- Acts 2:41

We practice baptism as an act of obedience to Jesus' command and to show those around us we are giving ourselves to Jesus. We practice baptism by immersion under water -- the way Jesus and his disciples baptized.

We practice seeking scripture for direction in all matters.

42They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching."

- Acts 2:42a

16"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;
17so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

- II Timothy 3:16-17

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.

We practice devotion to the church

"They devoted themselves to...the fellowship."

- Acts 2:42b

We believe devotion to your Spiritual family should be your next priority after your earthly family. After all you will be with them forever!

We practice taking communion on a weekly basis.

42"They devoted themselves...to the breaking of bread."

- Acts 2:42c

26...For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

- I Corinthians 11:26

The Lord's Supper is observed as a celebration of Christ's death for the believer and is practiced regularly.

We practice sacrificial giving.

44....All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need."

Acts 2:44-45

32All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had...34There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales 35and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.

Acts 4:32,34-35

We encourage sacrificial giving for the support of God's people, the church and for the support of the poor in our community.

We practice doing life together.

46 "Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people."

Acts 2:46-47a

We believe the community of believers should minister together, spend time together, take communion together, eat together, spend time in each other's homes, and praise God together. We believe that life is better when we do it together!

We practice Jesus' command to make disciples not just attendees.

19Therefore go and make disciples of all nations."

Matthew 28:19

“Converts grow a church, but disciples change the world.”

- Bob Roberts Jr.

We practice Paul's example of planting new churches.

For two years Paul disciplined men in Ephesus. These disciples went out and planted churches all over Asia so that every person heard the Gospel. The church of Ephesus planted these eight churches in the following cities: Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse. We desire to be a church like Ephesus that has a worldwide impact for Christ and to be men and women like Paul who are committed to planting churches.

We practice the priesthood of every believer.

5" ...To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood-- and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father..."

- Revelation 1:5-6

9But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION...so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous 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 member to find a place of service and ministry. Every believer has direct access to God through prayer and Bible reading. We don't believe in different classes of Christians.

Our Leadership

We believe in a plurality of elders/pastors

13 "...Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James."

- Acts 1:13b

We see in scripture more than one leader at every church. For this reason we practice the biblical example of having a plurality of elders to prevent any one person as being viewed the leader of the church instead of Jesus. The elder board will seek the direction of Jesus Christ and act as his representatives in the local church.

Qualifications of an elder/pastor

"If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be 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. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap."

1 Timothy 3:1-7

We believe that the role of an elder is a position of authority and is reserved for men that meet the requirements set forth by 1 Timothy 3:1-7.

Role of an elder/pastor

- Teaching (1 Timothy 3:2)
- Discipling (2 Timothy 2:2)
- Equipping (Ephesians 4:11-12)
- Building the Church (Ephesians 4:11-12)
- Praying (Acts 6:4)
- Studying the Word (Acts 6:4)

2Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach.”

1 Timothy 3:2

2And 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

11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,
Ephesians 4:11-12 NKJV

“and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.”

Acts 6:4

We believe in appointing deacons/ministry leaders as chief servants

“It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are know to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.”

Acts 6:2-4

Qualifications of a deacon/ministry leader

“Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. 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. In the same way, their wives (deaconesses) are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers, but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. Thos we have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.”

1 Timothy 3:8-13

Role of a deacon/ministry leader

We believe that the role of deacon is not a position of authority, but of service. We do not believe that the role of deacon is a role of authority. The primary focus of the deacon is to lead significant areas of ministry in the church to free up the pastors to be able to focus on teaching, discipling, equipping, praying, and studying the word.