

# NEW MEMBERS ORIENTATION NOTES

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## Session1:

### INTRODUCTION:

Welcome to our church's new members orientation. We are glad that you have been attending our church and now are interested in becoming a member.

Please go through the following notes as to know more about our church.

### OUR OBJECTS:

The church recognizes Jesus Christ as its Supreme Head, and undertakes to manage its affairs according to New Testament teaching, believing that as the body of Christ it is equipped by His Spirit to act, decide and direct all the affairs of the church. [Constitution 3.1]

The Objects of the Church shall be:

- to glorify the Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church.
- to proclaim the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in the Scriptures and to encourage and support the proclamation of the Gospel (in accordance with Matthew 28:18-20) to the end of the earth.
- To provide instruction and fellowship for believers, seeking to build them up to the measure and stature of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:13). [Constitution 3.2]

### OUR STATEMENT OF FAITH:

We believe:

1. In one God eternally existing in three persons – Father, Son and Holy spirit (2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2)
2. That Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and is true God and true man (Luke 1:35; Matthew 1:21)
3. That God created man in His own image; that man sinned and thereby incurred the penalty of death – physical and spiritual; and that all human beings inherit a sinful nature; which issues actual transgression, involving personal guilt (Genesis 1:27; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1-3)
4. That the Lord Jesus died for our sins (a substitutionary sacrifice) according to the Scriptures, and that all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood (1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Ephesians 2:18; Romans 4:25; Romans 5:1)

5. In the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, His ascension into heaven, and His present life as our High Priest and Advocate (John 20:21; Acts 19; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1)
6. In the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 1-2; John 14:3; Titus 2:2-14).
7. That all those who receive the Lord Jesus Christ by faith are born again of the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God (Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:12; Ephesians 1:13-14)
8. In the personality of the Holy Spirit, His regenerative work and abiding presence in the true believer.
9. That all Christians are called to a life of holiness, devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ and service for Him.
10. In the resurrection both of the just and the unjust, the eternal blessedness of the redeemed, and the eternal banishment of those who have rejected the offer of salvation.
11. In the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament in their original writings as fully inspired of God, and accepts them as the final authority for faith and life (2 Timothy 3:16)  
[Constitution 4:1]

In addition to the above we also strongly hold to Baptist Principles:

- The local church, as a manifestation of the universal church, is fully autonomous.
- Believer's baptism is an act of obedience and a sign of personal repentance, faith and regeneration.
- Congregational church government is practiced, where a duly constituted church meeting, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, is the highest body of authority.
- The priesthood of all believers, where each believer has direct access to God, through our High Priest, Jesus Christ.
- Each believer has religious liberty and should not be coerced by the state, a secular, ecclesiastical or religious group in matters of faith.
- We believe in the separation of church and state. We need to be good citizens, but always put God above the state.
- Marriage should be celebrated only between one natural man and one natural woman, within the confines of lawful matrimony.
- [Constitution 4:2]

## Session2:

### OUR VALUES:

The things we hold dear form the basis of all that we do:

#### INTENTIONAL CARING

Since people have spiritual, mental, emotional and social needs, we seek to help meet each of those needs. If we fail in meeting one, we fail in meeting them all.

#### HOLISTIC WORSHIP

We believe worship is much more than singing. We worship God by giving our time, our finances, and our lives. When we do sing, our worship will be Spirit led, and inclusive of different styles and approaches.

#### PERSONAL SERVICE

We are individually responsible for making sure that God's work gets done. This will not be done only by the workers in the church and by a small minority.

#### ACTIVE DISCIPLESHIP

We acknowledge that we have a responsibility to encourage and develop each other in our relationships with Jesus. We commit to being accountable to one another in this regard.

#### CONTINUAL PRAYER

Every decision we make or every project we embark upon will be supported at every stage by fervent prayer.

#### OPEN PARTNERSHIP

We will endeavor to work with other parts of the body of Christ to serve and reach out in mission

### OUR FOCUS:

#### Living it out in practical ways:

Members live in a dynamic relationship with Jesus. A church, whose members are dynamically living out their relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, should live a life of worship, prayer, Bible reading, evangelism and service to Him.

#### The Holy Spirit has control:

We seek to be a church where the Holy Spirit is free to move and direct as He chooses.

**Members live in unity:**

We are a multi-cultural church that epitomizes unity across many cultural and ethnic groups that make our country so rich.

**Members live in close community:**

The members of our church live in close community with each other for the purpose of caring and spiritual discipleship.

**Members are being built up for service:**

Members of our church are being actively trained and developed through Christian service, mentoring and teaching, so as to ensure a growing body of servant leaders.

**A praying church:**

Members of our church pray together regularly for our city, our country, and our world.

**A vibrant youth and children's ministry:**

We want to develop a vibrant youth and children's ministry with conscious and committed investment in the lives of the young people in our community. The impact we have on young people directly affects the church of today, and is the investment we make in the future.

**Evangelism and outreach:**

A believe in a dynamic program, evangelizing and making disciples, including:

12. Ministry in our community in close proximity to our church.
13. Church planting.
14. Ministry to our business and commercial community.
15. A ministry to the less privileged, with committed and active compassionate ministry taking place.

**Local and global mission as central:**

The mission of our church is Missions. We believe that the whole church should take the whole Gospel to the whole world. Spreading the Gospel here, there and everywhere.

**Homework: Spiritual Gifts.**

## Session 3:

### RESPONSIBILITY OF CHURCH MEMBERS:

#### Full identification with the church

Jesus often spoke of the importance of being identified with Him as His disciples. Church membership can be part of that process. Membership is a public statement of allegiance to a church, signifying agreement with what the church believes and stands for.

#### Accountability to the church.

Being a member means being willing to live by the beliefs and standards of the church. It means abiding by the church's constitution and rules. Membership makes accountability possible. Accountability is essential for maintaining purity within the church. Without membership it is very difficult to have church discipline, or hold people accountable to the standards of the church.

#### Accountability and care within the church.

Membership clarifies the primary group for whom the church is most responsible when it comes to care and concern. Those who are members are also more accountable to care for each other.

#### Responsibility for the church.

A member not only enjoys the blessings and benefits of being part of the church ministries, but also accepts responsibility for the church. When a person fulfills the requirements and is publicly accepted into membership, that new member assumes some responsibility for the ministries of the church, such as helping set direction, financial support, active attendance, prayer, involvement in the program, and making oneself available for leadership.

#### Selection of Leadership.

Because members have publicly declared their allegiance to the church by becoming members, so elders, deacons and other key leaders are selected from the membership, as stated in the Constitution.

#### Fulfillment of legal requirements

To be a legally recognized organization, there must be officially elected officers and trustees who are responsible for the property and operations of the organization. It is the formal members who elect people to those recognized leadership roles.

The church will be registered with the Department of Social Welfare and SARS to be both a Public Benefit Organization (PBO) and a Non-Profit Organization (NPO).

## **Admission of members**

Church membership shall consist of:

- Those whose names are on the church register of members at the time of the adoption of this constitution.
- Those who have given evidence of their personal salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, have confessed that faith openly, have been baptized (by immersion), have accepted the church constitution and who have been admitted to membership.
- Those who have been accepted by transfer from another Baptist Church.  
[Constitution 5]

Admission of members:

- Every application shall be decided on at a General Meeting.
- Application to church membership shall be made in the first instance to the Pastor or Secretary. The Executive shall make careful enquiry regarding the applicant's spiritual experience and submit their recommendation to the General Meeting.
- In the case of transferred members the Executive shall apply for a letter of transfer for submission to the General Meeting.
- [Constitution 6]

## **Discussion: Spiritual Gifts**