

Gratefully receiving the love of God and giving it away to others



WELCOME
And
INDUCTION INFORMATION
FOR PEOPLE ENQUIRING ABOUT JOINING THE CHURCH

“Those who accepted the message were baptised and.... were added to their number, ... they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer ... and the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

Reg Charity 1069579

Welcome to our church!

We are so glad that you are now at the stage of enquiring about commitment to The King's Church.

The idea behind these pages is that they will be used by one of our leaders to help you understand "where we are coming from", and so we in turn can get to know you better. It should take some three or four evenings.

Basically:

- It is only right for you to know who we are, and for us to get to know you. (Session 1)
- It is good for you to know what is important to us, and for us to know if you share these same convictions and values (Session 2)
- It would also be good for you to know what we are aiming for, and for us to know if you want to join us and assist us on the journey! (Session 3 – Vision)

There will be lots of time for questions to be asked. These pages only 'outline' matters.

Hopefully, you will want to make a public statement of your considered decision to join us. We in turn will commit ourselves to you, bless you and give you a warm welcome!

At that stage, we will ask you the following:

1. Do you believe that Jesus Christ the Son of God is the only Saviour, and do you confess him as your risen Lord and Saviour?
2. Do you accept the love, care, counsel, discipline and oversight of this church and its leadership?
3. The Lord enabling and equipping you, is it your sincere desire, as you are able, to be active in the life, ministry, strengthening and growth of this church?

Upon your answering "Yes" to these questions, we in turn will promise:

1. To love you sincerely in brotherly love
2. To be devoted and committed to you in Christian faithfulness and prayer
3. To help you, honour you, "rejoice with you and weep with you", and to encourage and exhort you to live lives worthy of the Lord.

OUR 'ROOTS': WORD and SPIRIT

“Look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn” Isaiah 51:1

We want to avoid being bound by ‘tradition’, but we do want to honour our roots and to live in the good of our inheritance.

There are perhaps two main themes to mention here:

1. **Word.** The first comes from our foundations in the free evangelical churches. From this we get our emphasis upon the Bible, and upon the church as a “gathered together” community of baptised believers, who relate lovingly to God and to each other. This is because the roots of the present church come from an initiative from Cornerstone Evangelical Church (that was itself once called Hyson Green Baptist Church). In the mid 1980s the Northern house group of Cornerstone began to sense, along with others, that the Lord wanted them to establish a church in Arnold. This eventually came about in 1987.
2. **Spirit.** The other big theme is that of openness to the present day ministry of the Holy Spirit. This is more complex to trace, but we can see the influence of the ‘charismatic movement’ through members attending Spring Harvest, Vineyard Conferences and such Bible weeks as Stoneleigh and Grapevine. From such sources comes our emphasis upon the need of the empowering of the Holy Spirit for us to continue the ministry of Jesus – “in words, works and wonders”, right here and right now!
3. We learnt, also, about the importance of not being isolated, but being part of a family of churches in which the Ephesians 4 gift ministries of Apostle/Prophet/Evangelist/Pastor/Teacher operate and flow. In this, we relate to the Ground Level Ministry Team led by Stuart Bell based in Lincoln. They also host the Grapevine celebration, over the August Bank Holiday, held at the Lincoln Showground. We try to attend this, as a church, every year. Our link person to Groundlevel is Graham Bell.

There are, of course, other themes! But you need to know, if you are considering joining us, that we are committed to the dynamic of:

‘WORD and SPIRIT’

LEADERSHIP

The church is led by a team of elders. The team leader is Rex Childerhouse, married to, and complemented in ministry by Jenny. The other elders and wives are Duncan & Heather Lyon, Andrew & Joy Pickin, Mick and Caroline Tinkler, Mark and Sarah Hopkins, and Robert & Eileen Burwood. They each oversee various aspects of the church's life and ministry. We believe that God set aside such elderships to lead, direct, care for and protect the local church. (If you are a Christian from a church background without an eldership, you could look at the following passages to help you understand this form of church government: Acts 20:27-32; 1 Thessalonians 5:12,13; 1 Timothy 5:17-19; Titus 1:5-9; and Hebrews 13:7,17.

Other members of the church family join with the elders to help them lead and look after the church and its various ministries, and the elders greatly value this and honour these servants of God. The elders want to be approachable and open to people's insights and concerns. In other words, although we believe in the rule of elders (rather than majority voting), we want to be accessible and consultative, as above all else we want to know and discern the will, mind and heart of the Lord together.

VALUES

You will find on the next page our Values Statement. (There is a longer version at the back of this folder if you wish to read it).

As you consider joining this church, what we would ask you to reflect on is this:

- What is really important to you as a believer?
- What do you give your time, energy and money to?
- What can you not 'do without'!

Now read our Values Statement – are we in agreement? Can we get along together harmoniously? (As the prophet says: “Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so” Amos 3:3)

THE KING'S CHURCH

"Gratefully receiving the love of God, and giving it away to others."

VALUES

These are our values, we want them to influence and flow through all that we do. Every church has a "personality", and we have outlined here our heart for our church: that which is important to us as we live together and fulfil our purpose and vision. These values are about us as a community of God's people, about our "being" and come before any of our "doing"!

WE VALUE:

The Bible: The inspired Word of the Living God.

Salvation through Jesus: Forgiveness, wholeness and freedom through Christ's death for us on the Cross.

The Holy Spirit: Life in the Spirit; the baptism, filling, gifts, fruit of the Spirit.

Grace: Living, rejoicing, resting in God's amazing grace and unmerited favour for us!

Worship: As the offering of the whole of our lives to God. Worshipping the Lord in Spirit and Truth, freedom and reality.

Faith: Living our lives in active dependence on God; believing Him, His Word, promises and power.

Prayer: As vital and central to our lives, individually and together.

The Body of Christ, the Church:

a)Individuals. Each Christian as valuable and special; all being encouraged to be secure in the Father's love and to grow and fulfil their potential.

b) The Local Church. It's key place in God's purpose. The unity of the church; sharing life and a "one-anothering" culture. The mobilising, training and growth of the church.

Love: As the hallmark of the church.

Marriage and Family: Based upon a public, life-long covenant between a man and a woman; the only valid Biblical context for sexual union. Strengthening and nurturing family, extended family and single people within the fellowship of the church.

Leadership: As one of God's vital gifts to his church. Praying for, loving, supporting leaders, recognising that they will not be perfect as they serve the church!

Evangelism: Sharing the gospel as the natural overflow and result of knowing God's love as Christians.

The Kingdom: The present dynamic rule and reign of God, which is growing and advancing, to be finally realised at the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

VISION

Next, we would ask you to read our Vision statement (next page). This is where we want to travel together, as a people who share similar values. We do not claim to be a long way to building such a church on the north side of Nottingham – but this is our intended destination! A vigorous, healthy, loving fellowship that fits the ‘dreams’ outlined in the Vision!

Do you share such hopes and dreams and intentions for the 21st century church? If so, will you join us, stand with us and seek to build such a church for the glory and fame of Jesus Christ?! It won't be easy, ... but is there anything else really worth spending our lives on?

Responsibilities if you do join:

We would expect you to:

- Be actively involved, according to your gifting and circumstances.
- Give financially – as you are able- to the work. (It is very advantageous to draw up a covenant payment for tax purposes – it makes your gift worth some 28% more!). See Mick or Lesley to chat about this.
- Join one of our house groups. Through these we express in a living way some of our Values. We want Jesus at the centre of the church and of the cell groups! Other values include: Every one being involved; Everyone growing; Supportive, caring relationships – with some accountability to each other - calling for honesty and openness. And we look to the groups to grow numerically, as one means of our evangelism.
- Join in the prayer life of the church.

THE KING'S CHURCH

"Gratefully receiving the love of God, and giving it away to others."

VISION

On the North side of the City, we exist:

- ❑ To love God and enjoy His grace.
- ❑ To love, value and encourage one another.
- ❑ To guard and teach God's truth.
- ❑ To be a church filled with the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.
- ❑ To clearly communicate the good news about Jesus Christ.
- ❑ To make prayer central to our lives.
- ❑ To grow numerically as new Christians, and others, join the church.
- ❑ To disciple, train and equip the church members of all ages, including our children and youth.
- ❑ To express the love of God to the needy in our community.
- ❑ To work together with other like minded churches in our locality.
- ❑ To be part of building the Kingdom of God, nationally and internationally.

A member of the Evangelical Alliance.

Part of the Groundlevel network of churches.

Jesus Christ: King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

NAME:

ADDRESS:

PHONE:

EMAIL:

1. **Spiritual Life and Experience**

- a. When & where did you become a Christian?

- a. Have you been baptised by immersion as a believer. (This would be our normal expectation).

- b. Have you been in membership with a church previously? If so, have you left on good relations?

- c. Have you been baptised with the Holy Spirit and released in spiritual gifts?

2. **Have you any particular gifts, skills or interests with which you would be prepared to serve the church - under the guidance of the leadership?**

(If you are stuck for ideas have a look on the next pages for some prompts!)

Have you read our Values and Vision Statements? Are you comfortable with them?

Is it your sincere desire to receive the ministry and teaching of the elders of the church here, and are you willing to submit to their authority as Christ's under-shepherds; to keep good relationships with other members of the church, to give (as you are able) to the work of the church and to be committed to the regular gatherings of God's people?

Signed:

Prompt list to remind you of your gifts!

Art work (posters, notices, drawing)
Audio-visual skills
Baby sitting
Banner making
Bookstall and/or Library work
Business administration and financial skills
Carpentry and care of premises
Children's' work
Cleaning
Communion
Cooking
Counselling/Listening
Creche
Dance
Driving (including minibus/collecting people)
Electrical skills
Evangelism (visiting, personal work)
Flower arranging
Fundraising
Gardening
Healing/Discernment
Helping
Hospitality
I.T.
Intercession
Magazine distribution/Mail shots to local area
Mission Support (letter writing, raising prayer matters)
Music – instrumental – singing etc
Nurturing new believers
Overhead projector operation
Open air work
PA/Sound desk skills

Painting

Pastoral Work – caring, visiting sick or elderly

Plumbing

Prophecy (If so, we need to talk to you about our guidelines for bringing a prophetic contribution).

Secretarial work: correspondence, keyboard skills

Stewarding: putting out chairs, welcoming visitors

Teaching

Taping sermons and Tape Library administration

Video

Vehicle maintenance

Writing articles for press/church magazine

Young people's work

Any other skills?

Appendix 1

VALUES (Longer version!)

These are our values, we want them to influence and permeate all that we do. Every church has a personality, and we have outlined here what is important to us as we live together and fulfil our ministry. Values act as red and green lights, influencing our decisions and determining the direction and flow of our limited resources of time, energy and money. Some of the values reflect aspects of our faith - what we believe. Some are more a statement of our ethos and culture. There is no great significance in the order given, but taken together they reflect our heart for what our church should be.

The Bible

- ❑ As the infallible, inerrant, inspired Word of the living God. Our supreme authority for faith, life, and doctrine.
- ❑ Thinking Biblically and obeying Scripture.
- ❑ Following Jesus' example in believing, speaking, living the Word.
- ❑ The reading of the Bible individually, and the teaching ministry in the life of the church.
- ❑ The unity of Word and Spirit, and the need of the Holy Spirit in making us alive to the Scriptures.

The Holy Spirit

- ❑ The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit, the third Person in the Trinity.
- ❑ Being baptised and filled with the Spirit; just as Jesus our Saviour was for his ministry.
- ❑ The gifts and ministries of the Spirit in our daily lives and gatherings.
- ❑ The fruit of the Spirit in our characters.
- ❑ We value Him and want to make Him welcome in us, and in our meetings, not quenching, resisting, grieving Him.

Grace

- ❑ Living and rejoicing in God's grace and unmerited favour towards us.
- ❑ Not striving anxiously to earn and merit God's love and acceptance, but receiving this in Christ.

- Living to please our Father out of love and gratitude.
- Establishing a culture of grace; living in it and extending it to others.
- Developing a family feel, with informality and flexibility as keynotes; resisting formality, rigid structures and traditionalism.

The Body of Christ the Church

The Individual

- Each Christian as valuable and special as a child of God.
- Being secure in God; overcoming low self-esteem and finding our place in the church.
- Being trained, and going on to maturity in Christ, developing gifts and talents to God's glory.
- Being gentle and meek, avoiding manipulation and coercion.
- Avoiding a performance mindset, doing nothing for effect; being real and transparent.
- Rejecting status through position or labels; relating to leaders as people and not as impersonal office bearers.

The local Church

- The mobilising and training of all the members of the church.
- Sharing life together in unity and love.
- Having a one-anothering culture, being friends together.
- Maintaining unity by sorting out problems.
- Anointed with the Holy Spirit to continue the ministry of Jesus.
- A new wineskin, flexible and open to change and expansion.

Worship

- Worshipping the Lord in Spirit and Truth.
- Glorifying God for his grace to us in Jesus.
- As the offering of the whole of our lives, not just Sundays.

- Relying on the Holy Spirit to give life, freedom and power.
- The involvement of our bodies, minds and spirits, valuing the outward expression of the heart within.
- Being consistent in what we say and do.

Love

- As the hallmark of God's people.
- Knowing and showing the love of God.
- Living in this love, which is grounded in the Cross.
- Oneness, unity and love that Jesus prayed for.
- Maintaining love by being humble, forgiving and ready to apologise.
- Watching out for and supporting every member.

Marriage and Family

- Marriage based upon a public, life-long covenant between a natural man and a natural woman.
- The only God given context for the physical and joyful expression of our sexuality.
- As the gracious gift and calling of God for Christians, who are to marry “in the Lord”, that is to another believer.
- Valuing the gift and calling of some Christians to celibate singleness, whatever their sexual orientation.
- As symbolic of the union between Christ and his church; calling for the husband's loving, sacrificial, Christlike leadership and headship, with mutual love, support, tenderness, loyalty, and partnership in the Holy Spirit's empowering.
- As the Biblical foundation of family life in which children, God's gift, are raised and nurtured.
- Accepting the sad fact of marital breakdown, with the possibility of reconciliation, but also of justifiable divorce and remarriage within Scriptural bounds.

Leadership

- Valuing leaders as one of God's gifts to his church.
- The essence of leadership as servanthood
- Leaders working in teams.
- Allowing leaders to work according to their strengths, gifting and calling.
- Loving, supporting and encouraging leaders in their work, recognising that they will not be perfect.
- Eldership as God's means of directing the church, and equipping every member for ministry.
- Raising issues, concerns and questions directly with leaders.
- **Evangelism**
- As the natural overflow of knowing God's love and wanting to share this with others.
- Seeking to obey God's command to make disciples and bring them through to maturity.
- Being involved personally, locally and wider afield.
- Training Christians in Spirit-filled evangelism, with the expectation of signs, wonders and divine appointments.
- Being culturally relevant, informal and flexible.

Salvation through Jesus

- Focusing on and being proud of the Cross of Jesus.
- Earned for us once and for all by Jesus by his death on the cross and his resurrection.
- Knowing salvation and wholeness, being freed from sin and it's consequences in the past, present and future.
- Choosing not to sin, not letting sin reign in our lives. Salvation as a process, admitting our faults and confessing our sins.
- Looking forward to the completion of our salvation when we will be free from the power and presence of sin.

Prayer

- As vital and crucial, individually and together.
- Praying in the Holy Spirit, in tune with him.
- Relying on Jesus as our Advocate.
- Accepting our own weakness in this area and learning to draw on God's strength.
- Using the gift of tongues.
- Seeing fasting as a powerful weapon.
- Maintaining a clear conscience so that we can pray.

Faith

- As the gift of God so that we may know him.
- A life lived in active dependence on God.
- Sharing the whole of our lives with God.
- Not being paralysed by worry; resisting panic.
- In faith serving God, fulfilling his purposes and overcoming obstacles and barriers.
- Knowing the dynamic force of faith in signs, wonders, healings, miracles and deliverance.

The Kingdom

- The great theme of Jesus' teaching and ministry.
- As the rule and reign of God, dynamically present now, growing and advancing, to be finally realised in the Second Coming.
- Seeing the church as the community of the Kingdom; serving, seeking and praying in the Kingdom.
- That this is the age of the Holy Spirit, and that we need his power in the battle against darkness, disease and death.

- Rejoicing in the victory of our King Jesus in his Cross, Resurrection, Ascension, Exaltation and Second Coming.
- Seeing ourselves as servants and soldiers of this Kingdom, with lives of destiny and purpose.

Appendix 2

This is our more formally worded statement of doctrine. We would expect the *regular* teaching of the church by preachers and youth/childrens workers to be in line with this.

A SUMMARY OF BASIC CHRISTIAN TRUTHS

The doctrinal basis of the church's current teaching and preaching:

1. The Bible - The Word of God

God has revealed himself in the Bible which consists of the Old and New Testaments. Every word was originally given by the inspiration of God through human authors, so that the Bible in its entirety is the Word of God, without error and fully reliable in fact and doctrine. The Bible not only contains but is itself the Word of God. The New Testament is fully reliable in its testimony to the character and authorship of the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit gives us the ability to have a true understanding of the Scriptures and He helps us to see truth more and more clearly. The Holy Scriptures constitute our only standard and rule of faith and practice.

References: Ps 19; Is 8: 20; Matt 5: 17, 18; Lk 2: 26, 27, 44-47; John 10: 34, 35; John 16: 13; Rom 3: 1, 2; 1Cor. 2: 6-16, 13: 9, 12; 14: 37, 38; Eph 1: 17; Phil 3:15; Heb 1: 1-4; 1Thess 1: 5, 2: 13,5: 21, 2Tim. 3: 15-17; 1Pet 1: 10-12; 2Pet. 1: 19-21; 3: 15, 16.

2. The Father, The Son, The Holy Spirit - One God

There is one God who exists eternally in three distinct but equal persons - the Father being God, the Lord Jesus Christ the Son being God, the Holy Spirit being God, these being equal in power and glory, one Lord God Almighty - Sovereign in Creation, Providence and Redemption. He is unchangeable in his holiness, justice, wisdom and love. He is all present, all knowing, all powerful. He alone is worthy of our worship.

References: 1Kings 8: 27; Neh 9: 6; Is 6: 1-8; 45: 1-25; 46:10; Matt. 3:16-17; 28: 19; Rom 1: 18-20; 2 Cor. 13: 14; John 1: 3, 14, 18; John 17:1-10; Luke 1:37; 10: 22; Eph 1; 4:4-6; Heb 4: 13; 11: 3; 1Jn 4: 16; Rev 4: 11.

3. Jesus Christ - True God - True Man

The Lord Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. We believe in the essential, absolute and eternal Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ; in His conception by the Holy Spirit; in His birth of the virgin Mary; in His real but sinless humanity; in the authority of His teaching and truthfulness of all his words; in His voluntary humiliation in life as a Man of Sorrows culminating in His substitutionary and atoning death on the cross where he bore the wrath of God and shed His precious blood as the sacrifice for sin;

in His bodily resurrection on the third day; in His ascension into heaven as the only and eternal Mediator between God and Man; in His present High Priestly intercession and reign as King for His people at the right hand of the Father; and in His personal return in power and glory.

References: Is 9: 6, 7; Is 53; Mark 10: 45; Luke 1: 29-38; Acts 1: 1-14; 2: 33-36; 20: 28; John 1: 1-16; 10: 14-16; 17: 1-9; Ch 20; Rom 8: 34; 1Cor 15; 2Cor 5:21; Gal 3: 13; Eph 5: 25-27; Phil 2: 5-11; Col 1: 15-22; 2: 9; 1Tim 3: 16; Hebrews 1; 4: 14-16; 7: 25, 9: 14, 15, 23-28; 1Peter 2:24.

4. The Holy Spirit - Giver of Life

God the Holy Spirit is a person and has been sent from heaven to glorify Christ and to apply his work of salvation. He convicts of sin and gives spiritual life. He indwells all believers, brings assurance of salvation and produces increasing likeness to Christ. He is absolutely necessary for the building up of the Church and we need his gifts and need to know his power to worship, serve, minister, heal and evangelise. Through the power of the Spirit the Church is enabled to be an effective agent and instrument of the Kingdom of God.

References: Mt 28:19 Luke 3: 16, 22; 4:14: 5:17, 24: 49; Acts 1: 8; 4: 8, 31; John 3: 3-8; 4: 23, 24; 15: 26; 16: 13, 14, 17: 17; Roms. 8: 2-4, 26-27, 30; I Cor. I: 12; 12-14; 2Cor 3: 18; 13: 14; Eph 2: 1-10; 4:30; 1Th 5: 19; Heb 2: 4; 1Peter 1: 1-3, 23.

5. Fallen Man - A Sinner

All men and women being created in the image of God have inherent and equal dignity and worth. Their greatest purpose is to obey, worship and love God. As a result of the fall of Adam and Eve, every aspect of human nature has been corrupted so that all men and women are without spiritual life, are guilty sinners and hostile to God and in danger of hell. Man is unable to will any spiritual or meritorious good to achieve salvation and therefore needs to be born again, forgiven and reconciled to God.

References: Genesis 1: 27; ch 3; Jer 13: 23; 17: 8, 9-10; Mt 15: 17-20; John 3: 7; Roms: 1 – 5; 8: 7, 8; 1Cor. 2: 14; 2Cor 4: 1-6; Gal 5: 19-21; Eph 1, 2: 1-10; 4: 17-24; 1Jn 1: 8.

6. Salvation by Grace Through Faith

God in his love grace and mercy gives salvation to sinners whom he chooses and calls, granting them repentance and faith. He justifies and acquits them forever, only by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ whose death and righteousness is put to their account (i.e. is "imputed" to them). God accepts and adopts them into his family, making them joint heirs with Christ and ensures their certain perseverance and eternal security. This salvation is entirely the result of God's sovereign grace.

References: Ps 32: 1-2; Mt 1: 21; 11: 25-30; John 6: 37-44, 64, 65; 15: 16; 10: 27-29; ch.17; Acts 13: 48; Roms: 3: 24, 28; 5: 9, 10, 17-19; 4: 5-8; 8: 17,28-30; Eph ch

1; 2: 8-10; 1Cor 1: 30, 31; 2 Cor 5: 21; Phil 1: 6, 3: 8-9; Roms 6; Hebrews 6: 17-20, 7: 25; Jas 1: 18; 1Peter 1: 3-7; 1John 2: 19; Rom 8: 17; 2Tim 1: 12; 4: 18.

7. Holiness - Evidence of Conversion

A holy life and walk with God on the part of professed believers is a necessary evidence of their conversion to God.

References: Mt chs 5-7; 1 Jn. chs 1-5; Roms chs 6, 8, 12; Eph chs 3-6; Col: chs 3-6; James chs 1-5; 2Cor 7: 1; Eph 1: 4; 2: 10; Titus 2: 11-14; Heb 12: 14.

8. Human Sexuality and Marriage

Man, male and female, is made in the image & likeness of the Lord, the Triune God: to reflect his harmonious inter-personal relationships & interdependence (The Word was “face to face” with God, John 1), his equality of personhood, dignity & worth, his distinctive functions & roles within the Trinity. Equality does not thus deny the uniqueness of the sexes.

The New Testament sees the unfallen creation order as normative for sexuality and marriage: the body and sex are good. Marriage is good; and the calling of a single person to celibacy is neither inferior nor better.

Christian marriage has these marks: heterosexual, monogamous, voluntary, sexual exclusivity, intimate in oneness – physically, emotionally, and spiritually. The latter unity calls for marriage to be between believers. It reflects the union between Saviour and Church/Bridegroom and Bride – the husband and wife being “corresponding opposites”, precluding same-sex marriages and homoerotic sexual practice for the Christian.

The husband as head provides loving, considerate, sacrificial, Christlike leadership, the wife voluntary submission out of devotion to Christ. Love will put each other first, avoiding harshness, aggression, passivity or usurping of roles.

Marriage is ideally a stable, permanent union. Divorce and remarriage are permissible on certain grounds such as sexual unfaithfulness & desertion.

References: Gen 1:26-28, 2:20-24, 5:1,2; Ex:20.14; 21:10,11; Lev 18:22, 20.13; Ps 127, 128; Pr 2:17, 5:15 -19; ch 31; Ecl 9.9; Song; Jer 3; Ezek 16; Hos ch1-3; Mal 2:14-16; Mt 5:32; 19:3-12; Mk 10.2 -12; Lk 16.18; John 1:1,2,18; 2:1-11; Rom 1:24-27, 7:1-5; 1 Cor 6: 9-20; 7:1-16,32-36; 11:1-12; ch 13; 2 Cor 6.14; 11.2; Gal 3.28; Eph 5.3,21f; Col 3.18,19; 1Th 4.3-7; 1 Tim 1.9-10; 2.11-15; 3.2; 4:1-5; 5.14; Heb 13.4; 1 Pet 3.1-7; Rev 19.6-9

9. The One Church - Called to be Pure

a. The Universal Church comprises the redeemed of all ages; there is a spiritual unity of all who truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. They have a duty to maintain in themselves and in the Church a standard of life and doctrine that is in conformity with the teaching of God's Holy Word. Active fellowship between like-minded churches expresses the unity of the body of Christ. There can be no true fellowship with churches that are unfaithful to the Gospel.

References: Matt 16: 18; John 17; Acts 20:28; Eph 1, 4, 5; 2Tim 1: 13.

b. The local church is the visible, historical demonstration of the universal church, comprising believers gathered together in commitment to one another and to their leaders, under the Lordship of Christ as Head of the Church. It is vitally important for individual Christians to commit themselves to such true local churches and to be living active members of the body of Christ. The marks of the local church include steadfast adherence to the Biblical faith and gospel, to the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and to the maintenance of true godliness, truth and love among the members.

References: Acts 2: 38-42; 8: 1; 13: 1; 1Cor 1: 2, 3; 10, 16, 17; 12: 14ff; Eph 4: 11-16; Phil 1: 1, 2; 1Th 1: 1; 2: 14; 1Tim 3: 15; 5: 17; Heb 10: 24, 25; 13: 17; 1Pet 2: 4, 5, 9; 1Cor 5; Mt 16: 19; 18: 18; Titus 3: 10, 11.

10. The Ordinances of Believers Baptism & The Lord's Supper

Baptism and the Lord's Supper have been given to the churches by Christ as visible signs of the truths of the gospel and for our spiritual good. The baptism of believers is into the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and is by total immersion in water upon the confession of Christ as Lord and Saviour, symbolising union with Christ. Baptism is a means of spiritual blessing but does not convey regenerating grace. The elements of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper are symbols and pledges commemorating the one self-offering of our Lord on Calvary. Those believers who partake in faith express their continuing union with Christ and receive and are strengthened by Christ spiritually, not physically. The Lord's Supper is not a sacrifice for sin and does not involve any change in the substance of the ordinary bread and wine. Attendance at the Supper is the privilege and duty of the Christian.

References: Matt. 28: 19; Acts 2: 38-47; 1Cor 10: 16, 17; 1Cor. 11: 23-26; Rom. 6: 4-6.

11. The Future – Heaven or Hell

The Lord Jesus will return in power and glory. He will raise the dead and judge all men in righteousness. Then will begin the everlasting blessedness of the saved, and the everlasting punishment of the lost. God will make all things new and there will be a new heaven and a new earth.

References: I Cor. 15; Phil 3: 20, 21; 1Thess. 4: 1-17; Matt. 24; 25: 31-46; Luke 16: 26; Jn. 5: 22-29; 11: 21-27; 14: 1-6; Rom 2: 6-8; 2Cor 5: 1-11; Titus 2: 11-14; 2Peter 3; Rev 21, 22; 2Thess 1: 5-10. (revised doc. June 2004).