

Constitution of Lakeside Community Fellowship.

Mission and Objectives

A. Our Mission

Our mission is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever (Eph. 3:21; Rom. 11:36; I Pet. 4:11). Therefore, we as a church will strive to bring glory to God in all that we do.

B. Our Objectives

1. Internal Objectives and Functions

- a. Instruction in the Word of God: Teaching:
- b. Fellowship
- c. Worship
- d. Ministry

2. External Objectives and Functions

- a. Outreach
- b. Holy Behaviour
- c. Showing Mercy

Doctrine

Since the Word of God is foundational and absolutely essential to true spirituality, fellowship, spiritual sustenance, effectiveness in service, ministry, faith and doctrinal accuracy, we believe that the most important function of this local church, and its central thrust, is consistent teaching and study of the Word of God (1 Tim. 4:6-7; 2 Tim. 2:15).

A. The Scriptures

We believe that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God,” (2 Tim. 3:16), by which we understand the whole Bible is inspired in the sense that holy men of God “were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21), to write the very words of Scripture and that this divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the writings in the original manuscripts.

B. The Godhead

We believe that the Godhead eternally exists in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and that these three are one God, having precisely the same nature, attributes and perfections, and worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence and obedience (Matt. 28:18-19; Mark 12:29; John 1:14; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Cor. 13:14; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 1:4-6; Isaiah 9:6; Col. 2:9; John 1:1).

C. Man Created and Fallen

We believe that man was created by God as a human being, and did not evolve from a lower order of life. We believe that man was originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, and that he fell through sin and, as a consequence of his sin, lost his spiritual life becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and that he became subject to the power of the devil. We also believe that his spiritual death, or totally depraved human nature, has been transmitted to the entire human race, Christ Jesus alone being excepted.

(Gen. 1:26; 2:17; 6:5; Psalm 14:1-3; 51:5; Jer. 17:9; John 3:6; 5:40; 6:53; Rom. 3:10-19; 8:6-7; Eph. 2:1-3; I Tim. 5:6; I John 3:8).

D. The First Advent

We believe that the eternal Son of God came into this world that He might manifest God to men, fulfill prophecy and become the Redeemer of a lost world. To this end He was born of the virgin and received a human body and a sinless human nature (Luke 1:30-35; John 1:18; 3:16; Heb. 4:15). He voluntarily accepted His Father's will and became the divinely provided sacrificial Lamb and took away the sin of the world (John 1:29). His death was therefore substitutionary and He became the Saviour of the lost

(Luke 2:11; Rom. 3:25-26; 2 Cor. 5:14; Heb. 10:5-14; 1 Pet. 3:18).

We believe that according to the Scriptures, He arose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, and was seen among witnesses (I Cor. 15:1-8), and that His resurrection body is the pattern of that body which ultimately will be given to all believers (John 20:20; Phil. 3:20-21).

E. Salvation Only Through Christ

We believe that, owing to universal death through sin, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they have been born again. They receive a new nature imparted by God. This new life is absolutely essential and only those thus saved are sons of God. (Lev. 17:11; Is. 64:6; Matt. 26:28; Rom. 5:6-9; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; 6:15; Eph. 1:7; Phil. 3:4-9; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; I Pet. 1:18-19, 23). We believe that this new birth comes only through faith in Christ and that repentance is a vital part of believing. (John 1:12; 3:16, 18, 36; 5:24; 6:29-35; Acts 13:39; 16:31; Rom. 1:16-17; 3:22, 26; 4:5; 10:4; Gal. 3:22; Eph. 2:8-9).

F. The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, though omnipresent from all eternity, took up His abode in the world in a special sense on the day of Pentecost according to divine promise. He dwells in every believer and, by His baptism, unites all believers in Christ in one body. He is the source of all power, worship and service and He never departs from any true believer. (John 14:26; Rom. 8:26; Gal. 5:22-23; 1 Cor. 6:19; Rom. 8:9)

G. The Church, A Unity of Believers

1. The Universal Church

We believe that the church is composed of all who are united by the Holy Spirit to the risen and ascended Son of God, and that by the Spirit we are all baptized into one body. Being members one of one another, we are responsible to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (Matt. 16:16-18; Acts 2:42-47; Rom. 12:5; I Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:20-24; 4:3-10; Col. 3:14-15).

2. The Local Church

We believe that in the present age God gathers believers in local churches, committed to the Lord and to each other for the purpose of communicating God's truth to the people of God, worship, prayer, the loving care for one another, and the spread of the gospel to the ends of the earth. These churches function under the lordship of Christ and the influence of its own mature leaders (Acts 2:41-47; 4:19; 5:29; I Cor. 1:1-2; I Thes. 1:1; Heb. 10:24-25).

H. The Ordinances of the Church

We believe that Christ, the head over all things to the church (Eph. 1:22), has commanded us to baptize believers in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19); and to partake at His communion table (I Cor. 11:23-26).

I. Christian Service

We believe that gifts for service are bestowed by the Spirit upon all who are saved. These gifts were given by God for the perfecting of the saints unto their work of ministry (Rom. 12:6; I Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:11; I Pet. 4:10-11).

Organizational Structure

First, the local body operates under the headship of Jesus Christ according to the Word of God and the ministry of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 18:20; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:16; 5:21; Col. 1:18; 2:19).

Second, leadership is supplied by a group of elders who lead the church and to whom the congregation submits under the headship of Christ. These men have the authority and responsibility to delegate to individuals, or other groups, authority and responsibility to carry out the business or ministry of the church in spiritual and material matters (Acts 20:28; 15:6; Eph. 4:11-12; Phil. 1:1; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; Heb. 13:7, 17). In using their delegated authority, and in making decisions, the elders must seek to be guided by the Scriptures, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and by input from the congregation (Acts 20:32; 6:2-5a; 11:22; 15:22; 2 Cor. 8:19).

Elders

A. Qualifications

Elders shall be men whose lives are characterized by the qualities set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 and who are in agreement with the constitution of this church.

B. Authority

The ministry of this church shall be under the direction of the Lord Jesus Christ working in and through the elders and the congregation. The elders will be the primary decision makers, however, it is critical that they make decisions based on carefully assembled facts, scriptural insight, the leading of the Holy Spirit, and input from the body (Acts 6:5; 15:6, 22; Heb. 13:17; 1 Thess. 5:12-13). This input is important especially on practical matters of church life.

C. Duties

The elders must first and foremost exercise a personal spiritual walk which promotes self examination, maintain a servant-like quality in life, and serve with gentleness and humility in all that they do. The elders shall strive to maintain open communication with the flock, both to discern needs, concerns and viewpoints, and to communicate information and decisions.

D. Appointment

The Scriptures emphasize that elders in the church are not appointed by men, but by God (Acts 20:28). This will be carried out in a practical manner through the elders and members of the congregation putting forth recommendations as to those qualified to serve as elders. The final decision on those chosen and added to the board of elders rests with those currently serving as elders and the congregation will be asked to affirm their decision based on the qualifications laid out in the Scriptures (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9). The whole church should be on the alert for men whose lives characterize these qualifications.

Deacons

A. Qualifications

Deacons shall be men who desire to be servants of the local church body, who are able to serve, who meet all the qualifications of Scripture set forth in Acts 6:3 and I Timothy 3:8-12, and who are in agreement with the constitution of this church.

B. Duties

In Acts 6:1-4, certain men were appointed to minister to the physical needs of the flock. Adhering to this example, deacons will be appointed to assist in ministering to the physical needs of the body, although they may serve in other capacities as their gifts and training allow. Their specific duties will be designated by the elders according to the needs of the church and their particular gifts, capacities and talents.

C. Appointment

Deacons shall be appointed to serve as long as they are qualified and are willing to serve and as long as a need for their ministry exists. Church members and the elders should be on the alert for anyone who demonstrates the qualifications of a deacon. Recommendations may be made to the elders as the body plays an important role in choosing deacons (Acts 6:1-6) and they will be appointed by the elders.

Church Committees

The church will form committees as needed to assist in the planning and direction of the church. Each committee will choose a chairperson and conduct its business under the supervision of the elders. Recommendations from each committee will be presented to the elders for consideration.

Finances

Each believer is to give according to their ability as God provides. They are to give from an attitude of cheerfulness and commitment to the Lord (2 Cor. 8:12-15; 9:7), recognizing that we are only stewards of what God already owns. We do not believe that the New Testament believer is required to tithe as was the Old Testament Jew as Scripture records no such required tithe for believers in the church age. Because giving is done unto the Lord, it is critical that the local church handle the finances given with care and wisdom both for the glory of the God and the testimony of the church (2 Cor. 8:20-21).

All gifts given as designated gifts will be used as designated so long as those designations are in accord with biblical principles. All other gifts will go into the general fund.

In order to keep orderly records, a treasurer shall be appointed by the elders and the treasurer shall keep all necessary books, pay necessary bills and prepare monthly financial statements.