

EDINBORO

Community Church



**LOVE
GOD**

- > Follow Christ & be publicly baptized as a believer
- > Make Sunday morning worship a priority



**LOVE
OTHERS**

- > Serve in ministry at ECC
- > Serve everywhere God leads



**MAKE
DISCIPLES**

- > Join a Community (C) or Discipleship (D) Group
- > Go make disciples

Membership Class

Participant Guide

Overview	3
Vision, Networks & Discipleship Pathway	5
Loving God.....	6
I. Following Christ.....	6
II. Being Publicly Baptized as a Believer	7
III. Making Sunday Morning Worship a Priority	8
Loving Others.....	11
I. Serve in Ministry at ECC and Everywhere God Leads.....	12
Making Disciples	14
I. Join a Community Group.....	14
II. Join a Discipleship Group	17
III. Go and Make Disciples in the World	19
Leadership Roles and Expectations	21
Key Leaders at ECC	21
Roles and Expectations in the church	22
FAQ.....	26
Edinboro Community Church Member Covenant	27
Constitution and By-Laws.....	28
Edinboro Community Church History	41
Ministry Area Contacts.....	42
What We Believe	46
Full Doctrinal Statement:	48

Overview

Ephesians 2:19 – “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God”

The Goals of This Class:

1. To be sure we are all _____ of God’s family, then become _____ of Edinboro Community Church who walk with others in community, serve sacrificially, and give generously.
2. To give prospective members an introduction of the church leadership, the vision of the church and how they can join in on mission with the church to make disciples of Jesus in our area.
3. To allow our elders to learn how they can best partner with and minister to our future members.
4. To provide a place to answer questions about theology, practice and structure in a helpful environment.

We believe in the importance of church membership for 3 reasons:

1. Church membership models Christ’s _____ to the church.

Ephesians 5:25 – “Husbands love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.”

1 John 2:6 – “whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.”

2. _____ encourages taking _____ to follow God’s call to be _____ with one another as Kingdom people.

At peace (Mark 9:50)	Wash feet (John 13:14)	Love (John 13:34)	Show honor (Rom. 12:10)	Live in harmony (Rom. 12:16)	Don't pass judgement (Rom. 14:13)	Welcome (Rom. 15:7)
Instruct (Rom. 15:14)	Greet (Rom. 16:16)	Avoid lawsuits (1 Cor. 6:7)	Care (1 Cor. 12:25)	Comfort (2 Cor. 13:11)	Agree (2 Cor. 13:11)	Serve (Gal. 5:13)
Bear Burdens (Galatians 6:2)	Be Kind (Eph. 4:32)	Submitting (Eph. 5:21)	Being Honest (Col. 3:9)	Forgiving (Col. 3:13)	Teaching (Col 3:16)	Build Up (1 Thess. 5:11)
Do Good (1 Thess. 5:15)	Exhort (Heb. 3:13)	Encourage (Heb. 10:25)	Confess Sins (James 4:16)	Pray (James 4:16)	Show Hospitality (1 Peter 1:9)	Show Humility (1 Peter 5:5)
Fellowship (1 John 1:7)	“ONE ANOTHERS” IN THE NEW TESTAMENT					

3. _____ so the leaders will know who we are responsible for here at ECC.

*1 Peter 5:2-4 – “Shepherd the flock of God **among you**, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.”*

“By calling someone a member of your church, you are saying that the individual has our church’s endorsement as a Follower of Christ.”

-Mark Dever, Senior Pastor, Capitol Hill Baptist Church, Washington, DC

* What is _____ of me as a member?

* Only what the _____ expects.

John 17:17 – “Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.”

Table Discussion:

1. Share with your table the reason you desire to become a member of ECC

Vision, Networks & Discipleship Pathway

ECC is part of a regional network of churches along with Millcreek Community Church and Harborcreek Community Church in Northwest Pennsylvania dedicated to making disciples who make disciples. The shared vision of these churches is to see people become disciples of Jesus Christ who love God, love others and make disciples. We are sending churches that celebrate the multiplication of Community Groups, Discipleship Groups and churches.

Nationally, we are part of the larger affiliations of the Great Commission Baptists and the SEND Network. We are a member of the PA/South Jersey Baptist Resource Network. We share this not because we are overtly passionate about being in a denomination, but because by partnering in this cooperative effort of churches you are considering joining followers of Christ across the world that make up the largest missions (IMB) and church planting organization (NAMB) that has ever existed. You are on a path to become part of a group of people globally that are making more of an impact through Christ than ever before!



Loving God Wholeheartedly

Matthew 22:37-38 – “And he said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment.’”

I. Following Christ

1. _____

Genesis 1:1 – “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

2. _____

Romans 3:10, 23 – “None is righteous, no, not one...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...”

3. _____:

Galatians 1:4 – “(Jesus) gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father”

_____ that I personally need His forgiveness and presence in my life.

John 6:44 – “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.”

_____ in Christ.

Mark 1:15 – “Jesus said, ‘Repent and believe...’”

_____ Him publicly.

Romans 10:9 – “If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved...”

4. _____

Revelation 21:5 – “Behold, I am making all things new”

Table Discussion:

1. How did you come to follow Christ?
2. What is one way you are being transformed in this season of your life through restoration?

II. Being Publicly Baptized as a Believer

1. Why Should I Be Baptized after I believe?

a. To _____ the example of Christ

Mark 1:9 – “. . . Jesus . . . was baptized by John in the Jordan.”

b. To _____ the command of Christ

*Matthew 28:19-20 – “Therefore **(1a)** go and **(1)** make disciples of all nations, **(1b)** baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and **(1c)** teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

c. To follow the Biblical order of steps of growth in Christ _____

Acts 10:47 – “Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?”

Acts 2:38–41 – “38 And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.’ 40 And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, ‘Save yourselves from this crooked generation.’ 41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.”

-NOTICE THE ORDER-

2. Proclamation of Baptism

a. Illustrates Christ's _____

Romans 6:4 – “We were buried with him through baptism into death...”

b. Illustrates our _____.

Romans 6:4 – “. . . we too may live a new life.”

3. Why Baptism by Immersion?

a. It is the _____ example.

Matthew 3:16 – “As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water”

Acts 8:38 – “...they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.”

Have you been baptized as a believer in Christ?

Table Discussion:

1. Have you been baptized as a believer in Christ?
2. Share how or when it happened?

III. Making Sunday Morning Worship a Priority

1. Importance of Gathering

A. _____

Hebrews 10:24-25 – “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

B. _____

1 Corinthians 11:18 – “...when you come together as a church...”

1 Corinthians 14:23 – “If, therefore, the whole church comes together...”

Acts 20:7 – “On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread...”

1 Corinthians 16:2 – “On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.”

2. Purpose/Organization of Gathering at ECC

A. _____

Ways to praise God on Sundays:

Clapping and rejoicing

Psalm 47:1 – *“Clap your hands, all peoples; Shout to God with the voice of joy.”*

Lifting holy hands

1 Timothy 2:8 – *“Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension.”*

Be glad and sing to Him

Psalm 9:2 – *“I will be glad and exult in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.”*

Sing and praise God to encourage others

Ephesians 5:19 – “...addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart”

Praise with eternity in mind

2 Corinthians 4:17-18 – “For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.”

Prepare ourselves before we come here - Sing several songs before we hear God’s Word to prepare us in worship and to be ready to listen and obey.

Psalm 100:4 – *“Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name.”*

B. _____

Ephesians 6:18 – “...praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints”

C. _____

Luke 4:14-16 – *“¹⁴ And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵ And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. ¹⁶ And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read.”*

Acts 6:2 – *“And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, ‘It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables.’”*

2 Timothy 4:2 – *“preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.”*

D. _____

Mark 16:15 – “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.”

E. _____ **(1 Corinthians 11:23-34)**

1. Basic Facts Concerning the Lord’s Supper (communion)

a. A _____ Supper

“The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread,”

b. A _____

“. . . do this in remembrance of me.”

c. A _____

“This is my body.”

d. A _____ of faith

“Proclaim the Lord’s death”

2. Who Should Take the Lord’s Supper?

* All believers

3. How Do I Prepare Myself for the Lord's Supper?

a. _____

1 Corinthians 11:28 – "Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup."

b. _____

1 John 1:9 – "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

c. _____ to the Lord's manner of thinking.

Romans 12:2 – "... be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

d. _____ relationships

Matthew 5:23-24 – "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift."

4. When and how often should we have the Lord's Supper?

*As the Lord directs _____ church or individual.

F. To Exercise Gifts

1 Peter 4:10 – "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace..."

Loving Others Sacrificially

John 13:34-35 – “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Matthew 22:39 – “...You shall love your neighbor as yourself...”

I. Serve in Ministry at ECC and Everywhere God Leads

A. What Are Spiritual Gifts?

Spiritual gifts are spiritual abilities God uses to empower the believer to accomplish certain ministries. Understanding spiritual gifts will enable you to know what God has called you to do and what God has not called you to do.

B. Basics of Spiritual Gifts

1. Received at _____.

1 Corinthians 12:13 – “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.”

2. Gifts indicate the _____ of the Spirit.

Ephesians 4:7-8 – “But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it says, ‘When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, And He gave gifts to men.’”

3. Gifts are given based on God's will for the common _____.

1 Corinthians 12:7, 11 – “But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good...But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.”

C. For a look into the Biblical list of Spiritual Gifts see Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12-14, and Ephesians 4:

Evangelism: Someone who desires that people come to know the truth that Jesus Christ is the only solution for mankind's sin problem. This person is gifted to proclaim the gospel message. (John 6:8-10 and John 12:22)

Pastor: Word that means 'shepherd.' Pastors are gifted to lead, guide, and set an example for other Christians. Concern is for the spiritual growth and protection of God's people. (Eph 4:11-13, 1 Tim 3:1-7, Jude 1:3, 1 Cor 12:28)

Teacher: Someone able to understand the more difficult things of God and explain them in a way that is easy to understand and live by in daily life. Pastor and teacher are connected in Scripture. (Eph 4:11-13)

Service: Supernatural ability to do for others whatever needs to be done. Divine ability to carry another burden or task without focusing on earthly applause or reward. (Romans 12:7, Luke 17:7-10)

Exhortation: The ability to motivate Christians to follow Christ and to obey Christ. (1 Cor. 1:10 and 1 Cor. 4:16)

Giving: Being blessed by God with resources or time and being able to give them where and when they are needed with a cheerful heart. (Phil 4:15, 2 Cor 8:3)

Leadership: God-given insight into when something needs to be done, who can do it, how it can be completed, and how to lead people to accomplish it. (Acts 27)

Mercy: A heart to care for and encourage those who are not able to care for themselves and whom no one else would tend to care for. Sensitive to needs of others. (Luke 23:52)

Table Discussion:

1. What is my continual desire and passion?
2. What have I been good at in the past?
3. What do others observe and comment on about me?
4. Have I spent time asking God to reveal to me my gifts?
5. Am I serving now in order to experience growth?

Making Disciples of the Real Jesus

“If you aim to make disciples you will get the church, but if you aim to make a church you will rarely get disciples.”

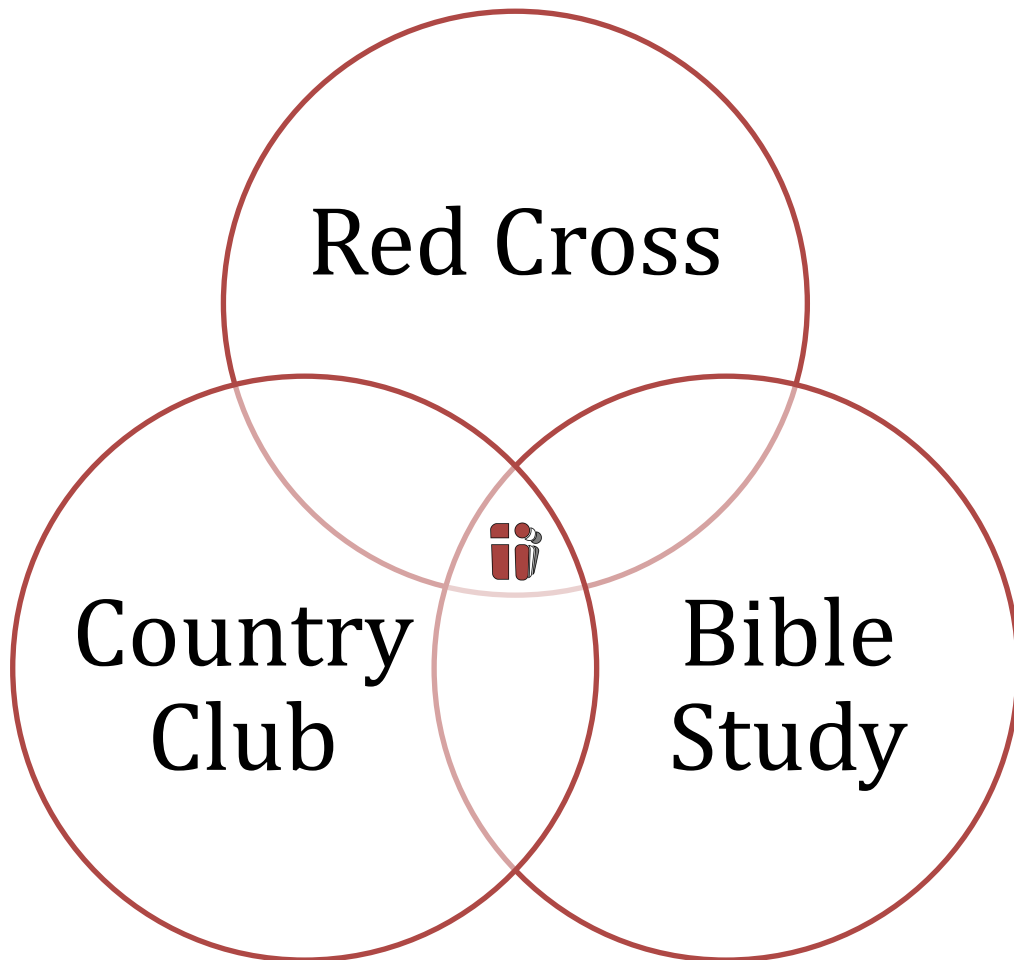
~Mike Breen

I. Join a Community Group

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 – “Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up.”

Acts 2:46 – “Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart.”

A. Vision for Community groups



In the experience of many people, church is reduced to attendance at a service on Sunday morning. This is not really church. ...The biblical metaphor of "family" more appropriately describes what the church should resemble—a group of people, few enough in numbers to sit around in a circle, facing each other and sharing the joy and the benefits of togetherness. Every church that aspires to function as community must make a small group structure available to its constituency . . . It is in small groups that people can get close enough to know each other, to care and share, to challenge and support, to confide and confess, to forgive and be forgiven, to laugh and weep together, to be accountable to each other, to watch over each other, and to grow together. Personal growth does not happen in isolation. It is the result of interactive relationships. Small groups are Gods gift to foster changes in character and spiritual growth. (Gilbert Bilezikian)

1. _____ Together in Community

Acts 2:42-47 – “And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

2. _____ the Community

1 Peter 4:10 – “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace”

1 Corinthians 9:19 – “For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them.”

3. _____ in the Gospel to Reach the Community

Ephesians 4:11-14 – “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.”

4. _____ Groups

1 Peter 4:9 – “Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.”

5. _____ Groups

a. Groups multiply when three parts of an equation come together:

An Equipped Leader + A committed Core + A Common Vision = A New Group

- Each new leader is equipped and has been disciplined by a former leader
- A group of people are willing to go (or already exists and has a need for a leader) to start a new group
- A common vision for a new place of missional impact exists to live on mission together

II. Join a Discipleship Group

2 Timothy 2:2 – “and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.”

Acts 20:24 – “But I count my life of no value to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of God’s grace.”

D-Groups – One of the most beneficial ways for a person to grow in maturity in Christ is to walk with another believer. Jesus modeled this as He walked with His disciples for three years, traveling from town to town and showing them what it meant to live a Godly life. At ECC we desire to make disciples as Jesus made disciples. This happens through regular meetings of Christ centered study of His word, prayer, accountability, encouragement and living life together. Each Disciple-making Group, or D-Group, has a basic make up including:

- * 3-5 People of the same sex
- * Biblically based
- * An encouraging environment that promotes Christ-likeness
- * People committed to multiplying their groups over time
- * Investing in life-on-life discipleship

It is our expectation that we all be in a community group and stay in one as a member of ECC for God’s glory, our growth & to benefit others.

A. How to Start a D-Group

As with most endeavors, starting is the hardest part. However, the benefits of participating in a D-Group are life-changing. Here are five steps to help you begin the journey:

1. PARTICIPATE in a D-Group for 1-3 years.
2. PRAY about whom God would have you ask to be in your group.
3. APPROACH those individuals and invite them into your group.
4. COVENANT with them to be committed and accountable to each other.
5. INVEST your life into your D-Group participants for the next 1-3 years.

B. Daily Disciplines of a Disciple

Every D-Group should be founded up these four disciplines:

1. Pray *continuously*.
2. Read/journal *daily*.
3. Memorize Scripture *weekly*.
4. Rely on the Spirit *consistently*.

C. The MARCS of a Healthy Group

How do I know if it's working? Here are five MARCS that you can use to assess whether or not the people in your group are growing in spiritual maturity:

M – _____
How have I shared the Gospel through words/actions?

A – _____
Is anything preventing me from loving God, loving others or making disciples?

R – _____
How close are we to multiplying?

C – _____
Have we connected in a meaningful way outside of group?

S – _____
How have I enjoyed Christ through His Word?

D. What a D-Group Looks Like

A D-Group is a group of 3-5 people primarily from the same C-Group, of the same gender, meeting weekly for 1-3 years to read, memorize and journal through Scripture in order to make disciples who love God and love others.

E. Structure of the D-Group Time

1. Review "highs and lows" of the week.
2. Pray for God to work in your lives during this time.
3. Review & recite memorized Scripture.
4. Share HEAR Journals.
5. Pray for each other & the lost.

III. Go and Make Disciples in the World

Matthew 28:18-20 – “And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

I. My mission: _____.

Romans 10:13-14 – “For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. But how can they call on Him they have not believed in? And how can they believe without hearing about Him? And how can they hear without a preacher?”

Mark 4:26–29 – “26 And he [Jesus] said, ‘The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. 27 He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. 28 The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. 29 But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.’”

2. My motive: _____.

2 Corinthians 5:14 – “For the love of Christ compels us...”

3. My message: _____.

Mark 16:15 – “And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.”

What is The Gospel?

God offers eternal Life in _____.

John 10:10 – “Jesus said: ‘I have come so that you might have life and have it to the fullest!’”

4. My method: _____.

1 Peter 3:15-16 – “but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.”

Leadership Roles and Expectations

Key Leaders at ECC

Lead Pastor – Brad Wingler



14 years ago Brad and Jill moved to Erie to serve in the youth ministry of our sending church, Millcreek Community Church. In 2013 Brad transitioned to the role of Executive Pastor and began to pursue his Doctor of Ministry degree. He finished this in 2017 and felt called to plant a church in Northwest PA with the same disciple-making vision as MCC.

Brad now serves as the lead pastor at ECC. He is married to his wife, Jill. They have three children: JP, Haddon and Cindy. Brad has a passion for discipleship and completed his Doctor of Ministry from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary with this focus. In his free time Brad enjoys running ultra-marathons through the trails of Pennsylvania.

Elder – Ryan Thompson



Ryan serves as an elder and is one of the founding members of ECC. He and his wife, Katie, have three children: Eddie, Emma and Lily. Ryan preaches from time to time at ECC. Ryan is a Technical Editor for the Unwin Company and and Katie is a teacher in the GM school district.

Elder – Kevin Hultberg



Kevin serves as an elder and praise team leader for ECC. He and his wife, Cindy, were a part of ECC's launch team. Their perfect day always involves walking their beloved dogs!

Roles and Expectations in the church

ECC is _____. We believe that the first century churches were led by teams of elders (*Acts 14:23; 20:17-28; James 5:14*).

The terms “_____”, “_____” and “_____” are used interchangeably in the New Testament, stressing different functions of the same man (*1 Peter 5:1-12*). Therefore, our Elders lead our church. We are not a congregational ruled church. The congregation does vote on certain issues, but most of the time the decisions of ministry are made by the individuals actually doing the ministry. The Elders are to be servant leaders who live for God's glory and other's good.

They are to meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. The Elders must pass the test of biblical qualifications and must agree with ECC's ministry philosophy. There are currently three elders.

We use the term “staff” and “coordinator” to refer to both paid and volunteer leaders of ministry. The pastors and staff oversee and help individual leaders develop for ministry. The Senior Pastor and Elders serve as the church's main leadership, setting direction, protecting doctrinal and moral purity, and guiding the church. The staff and leaders from the congregation walk together in taking care of the daily nuts and bolts of ministry.

Although we are an elder-led church, the congregation votes on a few key areas: _____
_____ are two main areas. Please read your constitution for a detailed description of this process.

Pastor Brad Wingler serves as the Lead Pastor of ECC, but in many ways he is responsible to the Elders. The Elders make all decisions together. We do not vote on leadership, other than the installment of a lead Pastor, at ECC because leadership is not a popularity contest and also because voting on a person leads to *“winners and losers”* and does not promote church unity. Leaders are observed and invited into ministry. We believe the success of God’s church is based on God’s faithfulness as He works in the lives of His people.

Roles defined:

_____ – Lead elder whose primary role is to preach and equip the saints for the work of ministry.

_____ – ECC is an elder led church. Because these men are the primary leaders and are responsible to God and the church there is much listed below to define what they do and how they are chosen.

When identifying members to serve as Elders, the Elder team will seek a balance of _____ Elders. Any potential Elder candidate will be assessed by the Elders after prayer, a 360 evaluation of the candidate, and input (at the discretion of the Elders) from the congregation to ensure that the candidate meets the Biblical requirements set forth by scripture at 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

The Elders of the Church will serve as overseers of the welfare of the Church as set forth in scripture at 1 Timothy 3:1-13. The Elders are ultimately responsible, and have the discretion, final oversight and authority for maintaining the direction and vision of the Church. Such responsibility includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Oversee the overall welfare of ECC while allowing the Lead Pastor to direct the daily operations of ECC, lead paid staff and ministry volunteers, and fulfill the ECC purpose statement, *“Love God, Love Others, Make Disciples.”*
- (b) Extending an offer of employment to any pastor of the Church and the ability to terminate employment of any pastor of the Church. In the limited case of employment and/or termination of the Senior Pastor, such matter must be confirmed by the Members as set forth by Article 5, Section 3. The Elders otherwise have the discretion to take such steps as necessary and required to hire pastors, including the formation of a search team, and shall otherwise generally hold the pastors and staff of the Church accountable for conduct, ministry faithfulness, and Christlike morality.
- (c) Assist the Senior Pastor in the selection, hiring and evaluation of staff, the construction and approval of a yearly budget, conflict management within

the Church and such other day-to-day business and spiritual matters that arise.

- (d) Have the ultimate discretion and decision-making power and authority in any manner of grievance that involves or occurs amongst the Members, pastors, staff and/or individual Elders with humility, Biblical teaching, prayer and Christ-like compassion and resolution. Any such issue will be addressed as set forth in scripture at Matthew 18:15-20.
- (e) The Elders shall have the discretion to amend and revise the Church's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.

Intentional roles of the Elder:

The elders at ECC will intentional seek to make contact with each member monthly to _____ the church.

This happens through monthly phone calls, face to face time, text messaging and emails. These efforts exist to know what is happening in the lives of our church and how we can best pray for our members intentionally.

_____ – Primarily the lead servants of the church and their roles are determined by giftings and can include building/maintenance, finance, construction, lawn care, or any other area as needed. The deacons serve in a variety of ways and are always led by an elder. The choosing of a deacon will be completed by the elder team according to the requirements set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

_____ – A person of the church who is committed to the vision of discipleship at ECC, generous with their time, talents and treasure in order to accomplish this vision.

Three main areas the elders check in on for our members. The elders review the membership covenant, but it can be boiled down to be accountable with one's _____.

_____ – are you walking with others in Christ-like community at ECC?

Hebrews 10:24-25 – “²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

1 Thessalonians 2:8 – “So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us.”

_____ – are you using your God-given gifts to serve others at ECC?

1 Peter 4:10 – “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace”

_____ – are you using the blessing of your God-given finances as good stewards at ECC?

2 Corinthians 8:2 – “in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part.”

2 Corinthians 8:5 – “they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us.”

2 Corinthians 8:9 – “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.”

2 Corinthians 9:6-7 – “...whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

FAQ

1. How do we develop leaders and disciples?
2. How do we impact our community and the world?
3. How do we preach and teach through the Bible?
4. What do we teach? Any unique doctrine/beliefs?
5. What is our mission?
6. Who are the leadership and how do they operate?
7. Why do you sing what you sing?
8. How did the church start and what is its history?
9. How are the finances handled?
10. What is the procedure for reporting crimes?
11. ECC compared to Roman Catholic
12. ECC compared to other churches
13. What sets us apart?

Edinboro Community Church Member Covenant

Love God – Love Others – Make Disciples

Having trusted in Christ as my Lord and Savior, having been baptized as a believer by immersion, and being in agreement with Edinboro Community Church’s statement of faith and discipleship pathway (Love God, Love Others, Make Disciples), I now am led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the ECC church family. In doing so, I understand that by the Holy Spirit, the following is to characterize my life in God’s family:

LOVE GOD (Matthew 22:37-38)

1. I agree to love God through:

- Spending consistent time alone with God Luke 5:16
- Assembling together with God’s family on Sunday Hebrews 10:24-25
- Giving financially with a generous and cheerful heart 2 Corinthians 8:6-7

LOVE OTHERS (John 13:34-35, 1 John 4:11)

2. I agree to love others through:

- Showing Christ like love toward other members of God’s family 1 John 4:7-8
- Meeting together with God’s family in a Community (C) group or Discipleship (D) Group Acts 2:46
- Serving in ministry here at ECC 1 Peter 4:10

MAKE DISCIPLES (Matthew 28:18-20, 2 Timothy 2:2)

3. I agree to make disciples through:

- Praying and inviting others into God’s family and the ECC Family Romans 10:13-15
- Living out and sharing the gospel as a way of life 1 Peter 3:15-16
- Intentionally discipling others to maturity in faith Matthew 28:18-20

With God’s strength, I commit myself to God and this covenant knowing that I am accountable to other members of God’s family (Matthew 18:15-20) and responsible to encourage others toward Christ-like living. I declare openly that I desire to continue growing in Loving God, Loving Others, and Making Disciples.

(Signature, printed name and date)

Constitution and By-Laws

EDINBORO COMMUNITY CHURCH

Article 1

Name & Offices

1. Name and Registered Address. Edinboro Community Church (the "Church") is a Pennsylvania non-profit corporation with a registered address of 4444 Sterrettania Rd., Erie, Pennsylvania 16506.
2. Other Offices. The Church may also have offices at such other places as the Elders (defined below) may from time to time designate, or the activities of the Church may require.

Article 2

Charitable Purpose and Mission Statement

1. Charitable Nature. The Church is incorporated under the provisions of the Act of November 25, 1972, P.L. 271, as amended from time to time. The Church does not contemplate pecuniary gain or profit, incidental or otherwise. The Church is organized and shall be operated exclusively as a nonstock charitable corporation organized for religious purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and the regulations thereunder, as they now exist or may hereafter be amended (the "Code").
2. Prohibited Transactions. No part of the net earnings of the Church shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, any director, officer, employee, volunteer, or other private persons, except that the Church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the Articles of Incorporation. The Church shall not participate or intervene, directly or indirectly, in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for political office. No substantial part of the activities of the Church shall be devoted to attempting to influence legislation by propaganda or otherwise. Notwithstanding any other provisions in these Bylaws, the Church shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law).

3. Mission Statement. The mission statement for the Church shall be the following:
To Love God, Love Others, & Make Disciples.



**Article 3
Membership Covenant**

1. Membership Covenant. Members of the Church agree that they shall each live by the following covenant, and agree to make a public declaration of their personal commitment to abide thereby upon a grant of membership (the "Membership Covenant"):

I agree that having received Christ as my Lord, Savior, and Treasure and having been baptized as a believer by immersion and being in agreement with Edinboro Community Church's statement of faith and discipleship pathway, I now am led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Edinboro Church family, through time, giving and service.

Article 4
Independence & Shared Mission

1. Independence & Shared Mission. The Church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of any denominational control. Recognizing, however, the benefits of cooperation with other churches in world missions, the Church voluntarily affiliates with the Southern Baptist Convention in its national, state and local expressions.

Article 5
Membership

1. Membership Generally. Membership in this Church shall consist of all persons who have met the qualifications for membership as determined by the Elders (hereinafter, a "Member"), including, but not limited to the following:

- (a) A personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior,
- (b) Baptism by immersion (not sprinkled) as a testimony of salvation as set forth in scripture at Romans 6:3-4,
- (c) Completion of the Church's membership class,
- (d) An interview with at least one of the Elders, and
- (e) A public commitment to abide by the Membership Covenant at a Sunday Celebration Service.

2. Responsibilities of Membership. Each Member of the Church shall strive by God's grace to live and maintain the tenants of the Membership Covenant in his or her daily life.

3. Voting Rights of Membership. Subject to the Voting Limitations set forth by Article 5, Section 6, below, the Members shall have the right to vote upon any of the following items proposed by the Elders at a Membership Meeting:

- (a) The disposition of substantially all of the assets of the Church,
- (b) The merger, affiliation or dissolution of the Church,
- (c) The acquisition of real property and any indebtedness related thereto,

- (d) A candidate identified by the Elders to serve the Church as Senior Pastor,
- (e) A decision by the Elders to terminate the employment of a Senior Pastor of the Church, and
- (f) Any additional matters at the discretion of the Elders.

4. Termination of Membership. A Member shall lose or otherwise forego membership in the Church in the event of the following:

- (a) Death of the Member,
- (b) Transfer by the Member to membership in another church and/or religious congregation,
- (c) Upon personal request of the Member, in writing,
- (d) Formal dismissal of membership by the Elders. The Elders may formally dismiss a Member of the Church in the event of the following:
 - (i) Continual and repeated conduct by a Member that indicates he or she intends to hinder the purpose and mission of the Church as a whole, or
 - (ii) In the event a Member engages in ongoing immoral conduct, continual gossip or slander about other Members of the Church or Church leadership, continual refusal to follow the Membership Covenant, and or, any other conduct that violates the following scripture verses: Ephesians 4:29, Hebrews 13:17, Ephesians 5:3-5, and 2 Corinthians 12:20-21).

The Elders shall have all discretion hereunder to remove an individual from Church membership; however, in so doing, the Elders will take every step and measure necessary to honor the process set forth in scripture at Matthew 18:15-17, and thus seek to privately deal with an issue, ask witnesses to come into the process as needed, and if necessary and required, go before the Members of the Church to announce the need for and request cooperation and understanding. Removal from Church membership in the event a Member warrants formal dismissal, will be the final step should such Member remain unrepentant and the matter at issue remains unresolved.

5. Restoration of Membership. In the event a Member's membership in the Church is revoked by the Elders, such Member may be restored and reinstated as a Member of the Church at the discretion of the Elders. Any reinstatement hereunder by the Elders shall be done in accordance with the spirit and intent set forth in scripture at 2 Corinthians 2:7-8, but only after the former Member shows and demonstrates a clear repentance and willingness to abide by the tenants of the Membership Covenant. Implementation of this Article V, Section 5 by the Elders shall be done in full consideration of the guidance and discretion set forth in scripture at Acts 3:19, Acts 8:22, and Psalm 119:71.

6. Voting Limitations. A Member is prohibited to vote by proxy at a Membership Meeting; however, a Member may vote by absentee ballot if such ballot is obtained from the Church office one week prior to a scheduled vote. Only Members of the Church that are eighteen (18) years of age or older are eligible to vote hereunder. All votes of the Members hereunder shall pass upon the affirmative vote of a majority of the Members of the Church. The form of voting, whether by show of hands, ballot or otherwise, shall be determined on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Senior Pastor, or an Elder of the Church named at the discretion of the Senior Pastor.

Article 6 Meetings of Members

1. Membership Meeting. A meeting of the members (a "Membership Meeting") may be called at any time by the Elders or the Senior Pastor of the Church.

2. Notice Requirements. In the event a Membership Meeting is called by the Elders or the Senior Pastor of the Church, notice thereof shall be provided to the Members no less than two (2) weeks prior to proposed Meeting Date. The notice provided shall indicate the time, location and intended agenda of the Membership Meeting, and may be given by any of the following methods:

- (a) Distribution of written notice to Members at a Sunday Celebration Service,
- (b) Written announcement to the Members in the weekly Church worship guide,
- (c) Oral announcement to the Members at a Sunday Celebration Service, or
- (e) By sending the written notice to the Members by U.S. Post, or by electronic mail, with receipt of delivery service notification.

3. Quorum. A minimum of ten percent (10%) of the Members, and two-thirds (2/3) of the Elders shall be necessary to constitute a quorum at a Membership Meeting.

Article 7 Officers

1. Officers Generally. The Church, as a Pennsylvania non-profit corporation, shall have a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. It shall be the duty of such officers to act as legal representatives of the Church and to take such actions and execute such documents as necessary and required from time-to-time on behalf of the Church. The Elders may appoint and designate such other officers as determined to be necessary and required in the future.

2. President. The Elders shall name the Senior Pastor to serve as the president of the corporation, and he shall have such power, authority and responsibility as is normal and customary for a president of a non-profit corporation. The Senior Pastor shall serve as the Chairman of the Board of Directors.

3. Vice President. The vice president of the corporation shall be named by the Elders in consultation with the Senior Pastor. The vice-president shall have such power, authority and responsibility as is normal and customary for a vice-president of a non-profit corporation.

4. Secretary. The secretary of the corporation shall be named by the Elders in consultation with the Senior Pastor. The secretary shall have such power, authority and responsibility as is normal and customary for a secretary of a non-profit corporation.

5. Treasurer. The treasurer of the corporation shall be named by the Elders in consultation with the Senior Pastor. The treasurer shall have such power, authority and responsibility as is normal and customary for a treasurer of a non-profit corporation.

Article 8 Board of Directors/Elders of the Church

1. Board of Directors. The business and affairs of the Church shall be managed by the Board of Directors, which shall not be less than three (3), but not more than nine (9) directors. Individual directors shall be referred to as an "Elder" hereunder. The Board of Directors may be referred to as the "Board of Elders" herein.

2. Eligibility. The Elders of the Church have the discretion to request that a Member of the Church apply to serve as an Elder. When identifying members to serve as Elders, the Elder team will seek a balance of congregational and pastoral Elders, and any potential Elder candidate will be assessed by the Elders after prayer, a 360 evaluation of the candidate, and input (at the discretion of the Elders) from the congregation to ensure that the candidates meets the Biblical requirements set forth by scripture at 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Staff Elder candidates must also complete a two (2) year equipping period before consideration. The Senior Pastor can determine whether to present a staff pastor as a candidate to be on Elder team. If determined

as eligible for a vote to serve as an Elder, an individual shall be named as part of the Elder team upon the affirmative of vote of a majority of the Elders. The Elders have the discretion, but not the obligation, to extend an offer to any other pastor of the Church to serve as an Elder hereunder.

3. Term. Each Elder of the Church shall hold office until the expiration of the term for which he was elected, or his earlier, death, resignation or removal. Elders may be reelected to serve for additional terms upon the affirmative of vote of a majority of the remaining Elders. A term of office shall consist of a five (5) year period. Upon notification to the Senior Pastor that an Elder would like to continue to serve he can agree to another five (5) year period if both the Elder and a quorum of the Elder team are in agreement.

4. Annual Meeting. The annual meeting of the Elders shall be held in the month of January or February following the Church's year-end at such time and at such place as shall be determined by the Elders.

5. Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the Elders shall be held on a monthly basis, or from time to time at such places and at such times as may be fixed by resolution of the Elders at the Annual Meeting. Unless otherwise provided by these Bylaws or by a resolution of the Elders, the president may postpone or re-schedule the time and place of a regular meeting of the Elders for any proper purpose, including, but not limited to, the following purposes: (i) to assure attendance of a quorum, and (ii) to assure that the agenda (or other matters which are likely to come before the Elders) for the meeting in question is of sufficient magnitude to warrant convening of the Elders; and (iii) to assure the timely and expeditious consideration of matters which are to be brought before the Elders.

6. Special Meetings. The president may call a special meeting of the Elders whenever he deems such meeting appropriate. The president shall call a special meeting of the Elders within ten (10) days of having received a written request for a special meeting signed by a majority of the Elders. Unless otherwise stated in the notice provided to the Elders regarding the special meeting, any business of the Church may be addressed and voted upon at a special meeting as if the special meeting were a regular meeting of the Elders. The president has no obligation to invite or otherwise provide members of the Advisory Council with notice of a special meeting of the Elders.

7. Notice.

7.1. Generally. Written or personal notice of the time and place of every meeting (including postponed, rescheduled or recessed meetings) of the Elders shall be given to each Elder at least five (5) days prior to the day named for the meeting. Neither the business to be transacted at, nor the purpose of, any meeting of the Elders need be specified in the notice of the meeting. Notice may be given to an Elder by delivering a copy thereof to the Elder either: (i)

personally; (ii) by first class or express mail, postage prepaid; (iii) by facsimile transmission; or (iv) by electronic mail, with receipt of delivery service notification.

7.2. Waiver. Whenever any written notice is required to be given to any Elder hereunder, a waiver thereof in writing, signed by the Elder or Elder's entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice. Except as otherwise required by law, neither the business to be transacted at nor the purpose of a meeting need be specified in the waiver of notice of such meeting. Attendance of an Elder at any meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting.

8. Quorum. A majority of the Elders then in office shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the votes of a majority of the Elders present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the acts of the Elders.

9. Majority Vote. Any matter considered hereunder by the Elders shall be determined upon receipt of the affirmative vote of the majority of the then serving Elders eligible to vote thereupon.

10. Action by Consensus in Lieu of Meeting. Any action which may be taken at a meeting of the Elders may be taken without a meeting if a consent or consents in writing setting forth the action so taken shall be signed by all of the Elders and shall be filed with the secretary of the Church.

11. General Responsibilities of Elders. The Elders of the Church will serve as overseers of the welfare of the Church as set forth in scripture at 1 Timothy 3:1-13. The Elders are ultimately responsible, and have the discretion, final oversight and authority for maintaining the direction and vision of the Church, and such responsibility includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Oversee the overall welfare of ECC while allowing the Lead Pastor to direct the daily operations of ECC, lead paid staff and ministry volunteers, and fulfill the ECC purpose statement, "Love God, Love Others, Make Disciples",
- (b) Extending an offer of employment to any pastor of the Church and the ability to terminate employment of any pastor of the Church. In the limited case of employment and/or termination of the Senior Pastor, such matter must be confirmed by the Members as set forth by Article 5, Section 3. The Elders otherwise have the discretion to take such steps as necessary and required to hire pastors, including the formation of a search team, and shall otherwise generally hold the pastors and staff of the Church accountable for conduct, ministry faithfulness, and Christlike morality,

- (c) Assist the Senior Pastor in the selection, hiring and evaluation of staff, the construction and approval of a yearly budget, conflict management within the Church and such other day-to-day business and spiritual matters that arise,
- (d) Have the ultimate discretion and decision-making power and authority in any manner of grievance that involves or occurs amongst the Members, pastors, staff and/or individual Elders with humility, Biblical teaching, prayer and Christ-like compassion and resolution. Any such issue will be addressed as set forth in scripture at Matthew 18:15-20, and
- (e) The Elders shall have the discretion to amend and revise the Church's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.

12. Pastors as Elders. The Senior Pastor of the Church shall serve as an Elder hereunder. All other Pastoral Elder candidates must complete a two (2) year equipping period before consideration, as well as meet the criteria outlined in Article 8, Section #2 "Eligibility". The Senior Pastor can determine whether to present a staff pastor as a candidate to be on Elder team. The Elders have the discretion, but not the obligation, to extend an offer to any other pastor of the Church to serve as an Elder hereunder.

13. Salaries. Elders shall not be entitled to receive any compensation for their services as Elders of the Church. However, an Elder may serve the Church in another capacity and receive compensation for those services.

14. Resignation or Removal. An Elder may resign at any time by tendering his resignation in writing to the President and Board of Elders. The resignation shall become effective upon receipt or at such subsequent time as shall be specified in the notice. An Elder may be removed at any time, with or without cause, upon the affirmative vote of majority of the other Elders.

15. Personal Liability of Elders. An Elder shall not be personally liable for monetary damages as such for any action taken, or any failure to take any action, unless the breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, willful misconduct or recklessness. Personal liability protection shall not apply in the event the Elder is otherwise in violation of any criminal statute.

Article 9
Advisory Council of Affiliated Church Elders

1. Generally. The Church serves as the sole member of other Pennsylvania non-profit corporations that operate as Christian community churches (individually, an "Affiliated Church," and collectively, the "Affiliated Churches"). In order to facilitate mutual collaboration, dialogue and support by and between the Church and the Affiliated Churches, the Church will maintain and establish an advisory council composed of elders serving at such Affiliated Churches (the "Advisory Council").

2. Membership & Term. Each Affiliated Church may nominate up to three (3) individuals to serve on the Advisory Council at any given time. To serve on the Advisory Council, such individual must be an elder of an Affiliated Church and approved by the Elders of the Church. Each member of the Advisory Council shall hold such position until the expiration of their term (as set forth and approved by the Elders), or until his earlier death, resignation or removal. A member of the Advisory Council may be reelected to serve for additional terms upon the affirmative vote of the majority of the Elders. A term of office shall consist of a five (5) year period, but a member of the Advisory Council may be removed upon the affirmative vote of the majority of the Elders of the Church at any time.

3. Observational Role. Members of the Advisory Council are encouraged to attend the annual and regular meetings of the Elders in an observational role to learn of the Church's activities, and provide insight into the activities of his respective Affiliated Church. A Member of the Advisory Council is not permitted to vote on any matter at a meeting of the Elders.

Article 10
Indemnification

1. Indemnification. The Church shall indemnify each of its directors, officers, agents, and employees (and his or her executor, administrator and heirs), whether or not then in service as such, against all reasonable expenses actually and necessarily incurred by him or her in connection with the defense of any litigation to which the individual may have been a party because he or she is or was a director, officer, agent, or employee of the Church to the full extent provided under law. The right to indemnity for expenses shall also apply to the expenses of suits which are compromised or settled if the court having jurisdiction of the matter shall approve such settlement.

2. Rights Not Exclusive. The foregoing rights of indemnification shall be in addition to, and not exclusive of, all other rights to which a director, officer, agent or employee may be entitled.

Article 11
Records and Reports

1. Maintenance of General Records and Reports. The Church will maintain the following records and reports:
 - (a) Adequate and correct books and records of accounts (financial records),
 - (b) Minutes of the proceedings of its Members and Elders,
 - (c) A record of the Members with his or her contact information, and
 - (d) Contribution statements in order to maintain a listing of all contributions made by contributors to the Church.

Article 12
Statement of Marriage and Sexuality

1. Biblical Nature of Marriage and Sexuality. The Church and membership thereof, believe, maintain and abide by the belief that the term “marriage” has only one meaning, that is, marriage is sanctioned by God to join one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union as man and wife as set forth by scripture at Genesis 2:25 and Ephesians 5:31: *“For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.”* As such, the Church, and its Members believe, maintain and abide by the following:

- (a) That God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other,
- (b) That God has commanded that no intimate, sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.
- (c) That any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography, any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.
- (e) That in order to preserve the function and integrity of the Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the Church in any capacity, or who willingly serve in our various ministries should abide by and agree to this Statement of Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly,

- (f) That God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin and seek God's mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ, and
- (g) That every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture nor the doctrines of the Church.

Article 13 Deacons

1. Deacons are primarily the lead servants of the church and their roles are determined by giftings and can include building/maintenance, finance, construction, lawn care, or any other area as needed. The deacons serve in a variety of ways and are always led by an elder.

Article 14 Dissolution

1. Dissolution. The Elders may dissolve the Church in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, and thereafter shall distribute all of the remaining assets and property of the organization exclusively to religious organizations which would then qualify under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Code and its regulations as they now exist or may be amended.

Article 15 Reserve Powers of MCC

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Bylaws, MCC shall have the following reserved powers:

1. MCC shall have the right to approve any amendment to the Church's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.
2. MCC shall have the right to approve any plan of merger, consolidation, division, dissolution, or the total or partial liquidation of the Church, or any sale of all or substantially all of the assets of the Church.
3. MCC shall have the right to approve all annual capital and operating budgets.
4. MCC shall have the right to approve all unbudgeted operating and capital expenditures in excess of \$5,000. The Church will have the right to approve lesser amounts without the additional approval of MCC so long as debt service covenants

of the Church have not been violated nor are likely to be violated in light of projected revenues of the Church.

5. MCC shall have the right to preapprove any matter listed in Article 5, Section 3 before it is presented at a Membership Meeting by the Elders for approval by the Members.

Any action or item requiring the approval of MCC set forth in this Article 14 shall be proposed by the Church's Elders to MCC and subject to the majority vote of the MCC elders; *provided, however,* that any such action or item shall not take effect unless and until the MCC Elders have given their express, affirmative approval thereto.

Adopted March 2018

Edinboro Community Church History

Edinboro Community Church began with a God given dream to see disciple making churches exist and thrive in Northwest Pennsylvania. Pastor Brad Wingler had served at Millcreek Community Church, our sending church, for 12 years and the leadership began to pray and discuss areas to grow and reach people for Christ. When looking at where the people from MCC were coming from we realized a large bulk of people were coming from the southern end of the county. There were two MCC elders living in the area and Pastor Brad's wife was from the area. These situations, orchestrated by God, led to the plant of Edinboro Community Church.

In December of 2017 a core team was established with about thirty people from MCC. This group began to meet weekly to pray, plan and dream together about reaching Edinboro for Jesus. On Mother's Day 2018 ECC had their first preview service in the gymnasium of the YMCA and held several throughout that summer. ECC is currently partnering with the North American Mission Board to grow the church and see disciples of Jesus made in our Edinboro community.

On Sunday, September 9, 2018, 155 people attended the first service.

By God's grace this is who we are currently serving (financially or physically) in our community and world:

Community	World
1. County YMCA	1. Lottie Moon (SBC Missions Fund)
2. Edinboro Senior Centers	2. Annie Armstrong (SBC Church Planting Missions Fund)
3. General McLane School District	3. Southern Baptist Convention
4. Local Civil Servants	
5. Edinboro University	
6. Women's Care Center	

ECC desires to be part of further church planting in the future in Northwest PA.

Our focus and cause for planting ECC has been to seeing people Love God, Love Others & Make Disciples through Biblical celebrative worship, community groups, and Biblical teaching.

ECC is committed to proclaiming the Good News of grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, according to the Word alone, to the glory of God alone.

Ministry Area Contacts

Lead Pastor

- Brad Wingler – 814-544-5656 or brad@edinboro.org

Elders

- Brad Wingler – 814-544-5656 or brad@edinboro.org
- Ryan Thompson – 814-746-8053 ryan@edinboro.org
- Kevin Hultberg – (814) 434-2080 kevin@edinboro.org

The Elders may be contacted in case of an emergency when the Pastor is out of town or unavailable.

Deacons

- None at this time.

Pastor Brad Wingler oversees the Deacons

First Impressions

- Brad Wingler – 814-464-6371 or brad@edinboro.org

Community Groups (Check the website for a complete listing of all the groups.)

- Brad Wingler – 814-464-6371 or brad@edinboro.org

M.O.P.S.

- Jill Wingler – 814-450-9630 or wingler.js@icloud.com

Member Care/Counseling

- Brad Wingler – 814-544-5656 or brad@edinboro.org

KidMin C-Group

- Katie Thompson – 412-979-9040 or katie@edinboro.org

Administrative Assistant

- Kate Guerini – 814-544-5656 or katelynn@edinboro.org

Finances

- Kate Guerini – 814-544-5656 or katelynn@edinboro.org

Prayer Ministry

- Denny Russin 814-490-2591 drussin@zoominternet.net

Praise Team

- Kevin Hultberg – 814-434-2020 or kevin@edinboro.org

Membership Classes

- Brad Wingler – 814-544-5656 or brad@edinboro.org

International Missions

- Brad Wingler – 814-544-5656 or brad@edinboro.org

Local Missions

- Brad Wingler – 814-544-5656 or brad@edinboro.org

Worship Guide Deadlines

- Information must be submitted in writing by Tuesday at 10AM. All information can be emailed to Kate Guerini at katelynn@edinboro.org

ECC Ministry Flow Chart
Updated - 1/25/23

Pastor Brad

- Global Missions
- Staff/Office Ministries
 - Planning Center People – Kate Guerini
 - Worship Guide – Kate Guerini
 - Administrative Assistant – Kate Guerini
 - Finance – Kate Guerini
 - Money Counters – Kate Guerini
 - Weddings
- Communion – Bill Russin
- Prayer Ministry – Denny Russin
- Staff
- College Ministry
- Security
 - Security Team
- Audio/Visual
 - Camera/Videos
 - Audio
 - Computer/Faithlife
- Care Ministries
- Benevolence
- Discipleship Ministries
 - Community Group
 - D-Groups
- Web/Computer/IT
- Social Media
- MOPS – Jill Wingler
- Membership Process & Class
- Baptisms
- Community Groups
- Community Outreach
- First Impressions Team
 - Greeters
 - Welcome Center
 - Outside Greeters

Katie Thompson

- KidMin C-Group

Kevin Hultberg

- Music/Media
 - Praise Team

What We Believe

Our Purpose is to Love God, Love Others, and Make Disciples

Love God

We teach that following Christ is the first priority for every person. A person who follows Christ will long to enjoy God and will have a desire to share that love for God with others. Proclaiming the inner change of life through an outward expression of water baptism by immersion is an act of obedience and expression of publicly following Christ. Continuing to grow by meeting with God's people weekly to worship Him will be natural. (John 1:12; Acts 10:47-48; Galatians 3:27; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Acts 8:36-39; Hebrews 10:24-25)

- Following Christ is the first priority for each person.
 - John 1:12 – “But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God”
- Taking part in Baptism by immersion is the first step of obedience for each follower of Jesus to show the world that our new identity is found in Christ.
 - Acts 10:47-48 – ““Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?”” And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.”
 - Galatians 3:27 – “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”
 - 1 Corinthians 12:13 – “For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body— Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.”
 - Acts 8:36-39 – “And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, ‘See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?’ And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.”
- Making Sunday worship a priority
 - Hebrews 10:24-25 – “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

Love Others

We teach that the main way we love others is through meeting needs out of the generosity of the time, talents, and treasure that God has given us. This generosity enables us to follow the example of Christ and serve at both our church and anywhere God leads us in the world in order to proclaim the Good news of Jesus. (Galatians 6:10; Hebrews 6:10; Matthew 23:11; Mark 10:45)

- Serve at MCC
 - Galatians 6:10 – “So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.”
 - Hebrews 6:10 – “For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do.”
- Serve anywhere God leads
 - Matthew 23:11 – “The greatest among you shall be your servant.”
 - Mark 10:45 – “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Make Disciples

We teach that every follower of Jesus is to be a multiplying disciple-maker. The making and growing of disciples happens through relationships, weekly Community Groups, Discipleship groups, and being sent out to the world to share the good news of Jesus with others. (Acts 5:42; 2 Timothy 2:2; Matthew 28:18-20)

- We teach the need for regular fellowship through Community Groups
 - Acts 5:42 – “And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.”
- We explain the importance of teaching the next generation through discipling others in Discipleship Groups
 - 2 Timothy 2:2 – “and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.”
- We teach “Go make disciples” as a way of life
 - Matthew 28:18-20 – “And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”

Full Doctrinal Statement:

WHAT WE TEACH

THE SCRIPTURES

We teach the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments to be the full record of God's self-disclosure to humanity. Different men, while writing according to their own styles and personalities, were supernaturally moved along by the Holy Spirit to record God's very words. We trust in the verbal, complete inspiration of the Scriptures and that they contain all the words of God that we need in order to love, enjoy, trust, and obey Him. The Scriptures are without error in their original writings (Psalm 119:97-104; Psalm 119:160; Matthew 5:18; John 5:46-47; John 10:35; 2 Timothy 3:15-16), completely dependable in their instruction (Proverbs 6:32; 2 Peter 1:19), eternal in duration (Isaiah 40:8; 1 Peter 1:23-25), the final authority and the standard for Christian faith and daily practice (Matthew 4:4; Psalm 119), and sufficient for counsel in every spiritual and relational issue of life. (Psalm 19:7-14; John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16) We teach the Bible versions which translate God's Word most literally into modern English should be preferred. It is in Scripture that we see Jesus and gain His joy for daily living. (John 5:39; John 15:11)

THE TRIUNE GOD

We teach there is one living and true God, eternally (John 17:3) existing in perfect unity as three equally and fully divine Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19-20) Each Person of the Godhead, while fulfilling distinct but complementary roles in redemptive history, has precisely the same nature, attributes, and being, and is equally worthy of the same glory and honor and obedience. (John 1:1-4; Acts 5:3-4)

God the Father

We teach God the Father created all things in six literal days for His glory according to His will (Revelation 4:11), through His Son Jesus Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit. God upholds all things by the Word of His power, exercising sovereign authority over all creation, including the restoration of those who have rebelled against Him. (Genesis 1:1-2:3; Isaiah 46:9-10; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3)

God the Son

We teach that Jesus Christ, the eternal Son, moved by love in accordance with the will of the Father, took on human flesh. (John 1:1, 14, 18) Conceived through the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit, He was born of the virgin Mary. He, being fully God and fully man (John 14:8-9), lived a sinless life and sacrificially shed His blood and died on the cross in our place, accomplishing redemption for all who place their faith in Him. (Mark 10:45; Ephesians 2:8-9) He arose visibly and bodily from the dead three days later and ascended into heaven, where, at the Father's right hand, He is now Head of His Body the Church, the only Savior and Mediator between God and man, and will return to earth in power and glory to complete His redemptive mission. (Matthew 28:1-10; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; 1 Timothy 3:16)

God the Spirit

We teach the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ during this age. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He draws those who are in rebellion toward Him to repentance and faith, and at salvation imparts new spiritual life to the believer, bringing that person into a reconciled relationship with Jesus Christ and the Body of Christ. The Holy Spirit sanctifies, seals, satisfies, guides, instructs, comforts, equips, empowers, permanently indwells at salvation, and bestows spiritual gifts to the believer for Christ-like living and service. (John 16:8, 13:15; Titus 3:5; Ephesians 1:22, 4:11-12; Romans 8:9-17, 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 12:4-5, 11-13, 19; Galatians 5:25; Hebrews 2:1-4; 2 Corinthians 12:12)

HUMANITY

We teach God created mankind—male and female—in His own image and likeness, free of sin, to glorify and enjoy Him. Adam and Eve were given the privilege to oversee all of God’s creation under His guidance and care. Tempted by Satan, but in the sovereign plan of God, Adam and Eve chose to disobey God, bringing sin, death, and a death sentence to all people. All human beings are totally corrupt by nature and by choice. Alienated from God without defense or excuse and subject to God’s righteous justice, all of humanity is in desperate need of the Savior. (Genesis 1:26-27, 3:1-6, 6:5; Romans 1:18, 32; Romans 3:10-19)

SALVATION

We teach the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures as the substitutionary atonement in our place and that salvation is found in none other than Jesus Christ. Before Creation, God chose His people and granted each one unearned grace solely based on His good pleasure. Jesus Christ’s death on the cross was the sole and complete payment for sin, fully satisfying God’s righteous justice, for each person that turns from sin in repentance and places his or her faith in Christ alone by grace alone. If we go to heaven, it is because of God’s unmerited grace through Jesus Christ, and if we are eternally separated from Him, it is because of our own rebellion. We hold these two truths with humility and awe. (John 6:39, 44, 8:23-24) At salvation, each person is made a new creation by the Holy Spirit, declared righteous before God, and adopted as a child of God forever. Genuine faith continues in obedience and love for Jesus Christ with a life eager to glorify God and persevere to the end. (Romans 8:37-39; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Corinthians 12:13; John 14:15)

THE CHURCH

We teach that upon placing one’s faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, the believer is made part of the Body of Christ, the one universal Church, of which Jesus Christ is the Head. The Scriptures command believers to gather locally in order to devote themselves to worship, prayer, teaching of the Word, encouragement and partnership, the ordinances of baptism and communion, service to the local body through the development and use of talents and spiritual gifts, and outreach to the world to make disciples. (Ephesians 1:22-23; Acts 2:42-46; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 Corinthians 14:26; Matthew 28:18-20) Wherever God’s people meet regularly in

obedience to this command, there is the local expression of the Church under the watchful care of a plurality of elders. A church's members are to work together in love and unity, intent on the ultimate purpose of glorifying Christ and proclaiming His Good News to all the world. (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Ephesians 4:16; Mark 16:15)

BAPTISM AND COMMUNION

Baptism and communion are the two ordinances required in the church. We teach Christian baptism by immersion in water is a public identification with Jesus Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. Although baptism is not required for salvation, it is commanded of all believers, declares one's allegiance to Jesus as Lord and Savior, and is for believers only in order to declare that we are saved by God's grace through Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:38-41; Acts 18:8; Romans 6:1-4; Ephesians 2:8-9) Scripture shows that a person was baptized after receiving forgiveness of sin through trusting in God's grace through Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:41, 8:36-38, 10:47; Romans 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5) Baptism by immersion is a symbol of our death, burial, and resurrection to newness of life that happens when we become new creations in Christ. (Colossians 2:12; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 6:1-4)

Communion is the remembrance by believers of Christ's death for us, and a reminder—through the bread and the juice—of the Savior's broken body and shed blood for us. We are reminding ourselves that Jesus satisfies as the Bread of Life when everything else leaves us unfulfilled and empty. (John 6:48-51; Jeremiah 2:13) Communion is to be a time of self-examination and also a time of celebration of who we are in Jesus Christ. (Romans 6:3-6; 1 Corinthians 11:20-32; John 1:12; Ephesians 1:5; Romans 6:6; 1 Peter 2:9, 3:18) We encourage believers to take communion in their homes and small groups as a way of life as God leads. (Matthew 26:26-29; Acts 2:41-42)

MISSIONS

Every believer has the calling and privilege to glorify God by being active participants in the Great Commission call of Jesus Christ; that is, to go and make disciples of our family, neighbors, and all nations. The primary focus and priority of this call is centered on establishing and strengthening disciple makers who make other disciple makers who then strengthen and plant churches for future generations and God's glory. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Ephesians 6:1-4; 2 Timothy 2:1-2)

THINGS TO COME

We teach and expectantly await the glorious, visible, personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ. The blessed hope of His return has vital bearing on the personal life, service, and mission of the believer. (Colossians 3:3-6; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) We teach the bodily resurrection of both the saved and the lost. (John 5:25-29) The lost will be raised to a righteous judgment and experience eternal justice. (Matthew 25:46; 2 Thessalonians 1:9) The righteous in Christ will be raised to eternal joy in the new heaven and new earth in the manifested presence of God. (Acts 1:3, 8-11; Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 20:11-15, 21:1-4; Matthew 25:23)

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

A local church is a regular assembly of people who profess and give evidence that they have been saved by God's grace alone, for His glory alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. (Ephesians 1:1-14) We teach the importance of offering an intentional and clear path for people to start and continue in healthy, encouraging, committed, accountable, and growing relationships with others in the church body. Church membership is a byproduct of people who are growing in Christ and who understand the importance of fulfilling God's call to love one another and reach the world with the Good News of Jesus Christ. Church membership helps make the gospel clear to non-Christians by providing a unified witness of what it means to be a follower of Christ. Pastors and elders also need to know for which of God's people they are responsible to personally know, lead, feed, and protect so that they can tend to them most responsibly and effectively. Church membership reveals devotion and commitment to Christ, His people, and His mission. (John 13:34-35, 17:20-26; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-6; 1 John 4:20-21; Acts 2:40-47; 1 Corinthians 12:14-26; Ephesians 4:11-16)

CHURCH PARTNERSHIPS

The Body of Christ exists to glorify God through the fulfillment of the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. (Matthew 22:37-38, 28:19-20)

The Great Commission is fulfilled as disciples of Jesus Christ grow in relational and spiritual depth with Him and His people. (John 15:5, 7-8) God is glorified as we enjoy and manifest His presence, live for His glory, and go disciple others who will, in turn, disciple others. (Acts 4:13; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 2 Timothy 2:2)

In seeking to fulfill the church's purpose by the empowerment of God's Spirit (Ephesians 5:18), we recognize the extraordinary value in multiplying the reach of God's ministry by cooperating with existing, like-minded biblical churches. God is glorified when we and other like-minded churches walk with one another in order to foster relationships that encourage, support, lovingly admonish, and prayerfully strengthen fellow disciple makers. (Luke 9:49-50; John 13:34-35)

COUNSELING PHILOSOPHY

The Lord changes lives and accomplishes His purposes directly through reading and applying the Scriptures, meditating on the truths of the Scriptures, prayer and the influence of the Holy Spirit that leads to obedience to Jesus. (John 5:39, 17:17; Ephesians 5:18; Luke 24:45; Acts 1:8; John 14:15, 15:14; 2 Corinthians 3:16-18) The Lord uses those who proclaim His Word as they encourage, exhort, admonish, strengthen, and console others toward Christlikeness. (Romans 8:29; 1 John 2:6; 1 Thessalonians 1:6) God needs no new or unique insight into the human condition in order to change lives. God alone through His Spirit, word, and people provides sufficient relationship, truth, insight, empowerment, and wisdom that transforms lives. (Colossians 2:8-10; 2 Corinthians 3:18; John 15:12-13; Romans 12:1-2; John 7:37-39)

Only the God of the Scriptures can offer real solutions that lead to godliness and a successful, joyful life. (Luke 4:18; John 15:11; 1 Timothy 4:8; Psalm 1:1-3) God has given the church everything we need for life and godliness. (2 Peter 1:3, 2 Timothy 3:16-17) He changes all of us as we trust Him and walk together in obedience to the Word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit. (1 Timothy 4:7; Hebrews 5:14; 2 Peter 1:3-11; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Philippians 1:6)

Because of the rebellion of Adam and Eve there are medical, genetic, and cognitive issues that need medical and holistic care. We will cooperate with any qualified medical professional to get individuals proper medical care. We also teach holistic care of the human body which includes proper eating, exercise, and rest. (Genesis 9:3; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Proverbs 20:1, 23:20-21, 25:27; Mark 6:31; Psalm 127:2; Mark 2:27)

CREATION AND EVOLUTION

We teach God is the creator of the universe and all things and that He created the earth in six twenty-four-hour days and that before He created the universe, nothing except God existed. (Genesis 1; Exodus 31:17; Psalm 33:6-9; Acts 17:24; Hebrews 11:3; Colossians 1:16) God chose to create the universe and all that is in it to reveal His glory, divine nature, eternal power, infinite wisdom, supreme authority, and great joy. (Isaiah 43:7; Psalm 19:1-2; Jeremiah 10:12; Romans 1:20; Revelation 4:11; Genesis 1:31; John 17:13; Matthew 25:23)

We reject the theory of macroevolution, which states that nonliving substances gave rise to the first living material, which then reproduced and diversified to produce all living creatures. We teach all people are descendants of Adam and Eve, whom God created as complete human beings. (Genesis 1:26-27, 2:7, 2:21-22; 1 Corinthians 11:8-9) The fall of Adam and Eve infected all people with sin and death, but the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ gives the opportunity to receive God's gift of eternal life. (Romans 5:18-19, 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22) God rules over His creation, cares about it, and is actively involved in the lives of individuals. (Job 12:10; Acts 17:25, 25:28; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:13; Ephesians 4:6)

SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

All human life is sacred and created by God in His image. (Genesis 1:26; 2:24, 9:6) Because our Creator created us for His glory, human life is of immeasurable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. (Genesis 5:1-2; Ecclesiastes 3:11; Malachi 2:10; Matthew 19:4; John 1:3; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 10:31; Philippians 2:11) We are called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Psalm 82:4, 140:12; Proverbs 14:31, 24:11; Matthew 25:39-40)

PHYSICIAN ASSISTED SUICIDE

God commands, "You must not murder." (Exodus 20:13) Jesus also commands us, "love your neighbor as yourself." (Mark 12:31) Allowing someone to naturally die by withholding treatment combines these two commands, because the intention is to care for a person in the best and most humane way possible, rather than to cause someone's death.

The moral distinction between physician-assisted suicide and allowing someone to die involves intention, benevolent care, and allows God-given timing to run its course. It is in this space of God-given timing of suffering and eventually death that we can be part of God's plan to mature us, our families, and those watching in deeper awareness and dependence upon God: "Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." (James 1:2-4)

GOD'S SPIRIT, CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT, AND TONGUES

We teach the main calling of the local church is to glorify God through the fulfillment of the Great Commandment and Commission with the supernatural empowerment of the Holy Spirit and God's word. We are a Spirit-led and biblical church that welcomes all who know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior as well as all who are by God's grace seeking Him. We teach the Christian life is supernatural and that the Lord continues to perform miracles, especially the work of salvation in a rebellious person. We do not seek to control personal, individual interactions with the Lord; however, the expression of tongues and other sign gifts are not to be overtly expressed at meetings that are under the authority of the elders of our church. (Matthew 22:37-39, 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 12; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; 2 Timothy 1:9; Galatians 5:22; Acts 1:8; John 15:7-8; Luke 6:43-45; Matthew 7:20, 12:33)

ALCOHOL, MARIJUANA, AND WISE CONSUMPTION OF FOODS

Alcohol in itself is not evil or forbidden in Scripture. Jesus Himself drank wine and was even mistaken for a drunkard because He drank wine. (Psalm 104:14-15; John 2:3-5; Matthew 11:18-19)

We are given clear warnings concerning any amount of alcohol that changes our cognitive capabilities, impacts our judgement, or alters our behavior. Drunkenness is clearly forbidden. (Romans 13:13; Galatians 5:21; Ephesians 5:18)

Since today's modern fermentation methods often result in higher levels of alcohol than could ever have been achieved in biblical times, we must be wise and prayerful with alcohol. (Isaiah 5:11; Proverbs 23:17, 21, 29-30)

Food, alcohol, or whatever we consume is to be for God's glory and our enjoyment, not for self-medication. Believers who feel it is better not to drink any alcohol have the freedom to abstain. Those who choose to drink alcoholic beverages must always do so wisely and thoughtfully so that they do not harm others, their own testimonies, or themselves. (Romans 14:1-23; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

Marijuana, unless medically prescribed, is prohibited by law in many states, and we are to obey our God-given authorities. (Romans 13:1) Where marijuana use is legal, the Bible prohibits intoxication. We are told that all food, plants, and herbs are for our benefit to digest, but we

are never told that we can transform those into new substances that we smoke, snort, or inject into our veins. (Genesis 1:29) Since marijuana makes a person high or intoxicated, then there is no way to smoke it and obey God's commands against drunkenness. If a person has some tolerance to marijuana, the fact that marijuana negatively influences the clarity of the mind and can impact the health of the body prohibits us from consuming it for God's glory and our good. (Proverbs 23:29-35; 1 Peter 5:8; 1 Corinthians 6:12, 19-20)

Lastly, food can also be misused. We are to enjoy all that God gives us but also eat in a way that honors and strengthens the body God gave us and brings God glory. Self-medicating with food can be as problematic and sinful as any drug. (Proverbs 23:21; 25:16; 1 Timothy 6:17; 1 Corinthians 10:31)

PHYSICAL HEALING, PRAYER, AND MEDICATION

God still performs miraculous works today. Every time an individual is saved from his or her sin nature and is turned into a redeemed follower who loves God, a miracle has transpired. (Ezekiel 36:26-27; Ephesians 2:1-5; Titus 3:1-8) We are to pray for physical healing and rescue and trust God with His answer in how He heals and rescues. (Matthew 7:7, 26:39; Romans 15:13; James 5:14-15) Although God still physically heals and rescues today, He may choose not to do so when He will get greater glory in not doing so. (2 Corinthians 12:8-10; Hebrews 11:36-38) A Christian's use of prescription drugs is between the Christian and the Lord and is not forbidden in Scripture. (Romans 14; Proverbs 31:6; 1 Timothy 5:13) The believer should, however, care for his or her body as being the temple of the Holy Spirit and be careful that no prescription drug masters his or her life if at all possible. (1 Corinthians 3:13, 6:12)

ETERNAL SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER

It is God's divine love that saves a person from his or her rebellion, and it is God's kindness and patience that leads a person to repentance. (Ephesians 1:1-14; Romans 2:4) All glory for the salvation and security of every believer belongs to God alone. (Romans 3:21-31; Ephesians 1:7-9, 2:8-9; Jude 1:24-25) We teach everyone who is born again by the Spirit through Jesus Christ is eternally assured of salvation from the moment of conversion. (Philippians 1:6) This assurance relies on God's grace rather than on the Christian's performance. (Ephesians 2:8-9) A person who professes genuine faith in Christ immediately becomes God's eternal possession (Luke 23:42-43; Acts 2:40-41, 16: 30-34), and nothing can snatch that person out of God's hands. (John 10:27-29) We are protected by God's unlimited power. (1 Peter 1:4-5) Obedience, good works, and fruit-bearing do not earn or maintain the believer's salvation but indicate the reality of the person's love of Christ and profession of faith. (Luke 6:46; John 14:21, 15:7-8; James 2:17-18)

THE PROCESS OF CHRISTLIKENESS AND MATURITY

Mature disciples go, grow, and glorify God through their relationship with Jesus Christ. A person in a reconciled relationship with Christ will see growth in personal Christlikeness over time and will experience a more mature and enjoyable relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ because

we are already “complete in Christ.” (Colossians 2:8-10) Growing Christlike over time with God’s word, by His Spirit, and walking in community with other believers is to be a way of life for every follower of Christ. (Colossians 1:9-10, 1:28; Ephesians 4:11-15) Our leaders are committed to multiplying the godly characteristics of God’s work in their lives into others. (1 Corinthians 11:1; 2 Timothy 2:2) This multiplication of ministry is key to the healthy growth of the church. Healthy disciples reproduce healthy disciples. (Matthew 4:19) All disciples of Jesus Christ should serve others and reproduce healthy disciple makers in the local church rather than just the “professional pastors” bearing total responsibility to care for, disciple, and serve the congregation. (1 Peter 4:10; Ephesians 4:11-13; 2 Timothy 2:2)

SPITIRUTAL WARFARE

Demonic activity is real, but God being in us is greater than any demon or anything that demonic forces can do to us. Christians, therefore, should neither fear demons nor go looking for them. We have authority to reject Satan’s attacks and daily live out our freedom in Christ. (Galatians 5:1; James 4:7; 1 John 4:4) Although Satan and his demonic servants oppose the work God performs for, in, and through His people, God, Who is infinitely more powerful than Satan, in due time will always have complete victory over Satan’s present work in this world. (1 Peter 5:8; Genesis 3:1-7; Ephesians 6:12; 1 John 4:4; Revelation 20:1-10)

Although it is appropriate to pray in Jesus’ name for protection against demonic activity, the Scriptures do not instruct the Christian to “bind Satan in Jesus’ name.” Rather, the Scriptures instruct the Christian to combat Satan by:

- Humbly drawing near to God, knowing that He will give grace, mercy, and strength (2 Corinthians 12:7-9; Hebrews 4:15-16; James 4:8; 1 Peter 5:6-10)
- Resisting Satan’s temptations (James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8-9)
- Applying the truth of the Scriptures (Matthew 4:1-11; John 8:44; Ephesians 4:24-27)
- Forgiving offenses (2 Corinthians 2:10-11)
- Putting on the armor of God’s truth, righteousness, readiness to share the Gospel, faith, salvation, and prayer (Ephesians 6:11-20)
- Enduring trials with God’s Spirit and strength while not growing weary in doing what is good (Galatians 6:9; Ephesians 5:18; Revelation 2:10, 2:13, 3:9-10)

ELDERS, PASTORS, AND WOMEN IN MINISTRY

In Scripture, elders—also called pastors or overseers—are called to lead the church (1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 5:1-2), teach the Word (1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:9), protect the church from false teaching (Acts 20:17, 28-31; Titus 1:9), pray for the sick (James 5:14), equip the saints (Ephesians 4:11-13), and use proper judgment in theological and doctrinal matters. (Acts 15)

The qualifications for the office of elder are given primarily in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-5. In these passages, elders are expected to model spiritual, moral, and social godly character. They are to live sincere, generous, faithful, and hospitable lives. They are students of Scripture, holding to biblical truth, and able to teach others. If married, they are to be faithful

husbands of one wife, with home lives that prove that they apply the truth of Scripture not only in public, but also in private.

Biblical requirements for elders preclude women from serving in that role. We do not see this as an issue of equality, for men and women are equal under God. (Genesis 1:26-28) We affirm the God-ordained and significant role that women are to have in a local church. The testimony of Scripture shows that women are equal partners in salvation, in theology, and in mission. Every leadership opportunity is open to women except those that are excluded by Scripture. Scripture provides no examples of women who served the church in the capacity of elder overseeing a local church, and the consensus from church history corroborates this perspective. More pointedly, Scripture forbids women from teaching with the authority of an elder and exercising spiritual authority over men in the church. (1 Timothy 2:12, 3:15)

Women are called to exercise all of the same spiritual gifts as men within the community of faith and in the world, including teaching, explaining the truth of Scripture, and proclaiming the truth of Jesus Christ from Scripture. (Acts 2:17–18; Colossians 3:16; 1 Peter 4:10–11; John 5:39)

GENDER, MARRIAGE, AND SEXUALITY

We recognize that all have sinned, and as a result, our brokenness is demonstrated in numerous ways that are contrary to God’s ways, including greed, selfishness, covetousness, and immorality. We teach all people must be shown compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Any behavior or attitudes not displaying these qualities should be rejected, as they are not in accord with Scripture or the Spirit of Christ. (Galatians 5:14; Luke 6:31-38)

We teach God wonderfully created each person as distinctly male or female. (Genesis 1:26-31, 2:18-25, 5:1, 2) These two distinct and complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. Gender identity is determined by biological sex and not by one’s self-perception – a perception which is often influenced by fallen human nature in ways contrary to God’s design. (Ephesians 4:17-18; Jeremiah 17:9) Rejection of biological and God-given gender is a rejection of the image of God within that person. We extend love and compassion to those whose sexual self-understanding is shaped by a distressing conflict between their biological sex and their gender identity. We also offer the Good News of freedom through Jesus Christ. (Luke 4:18-19; 1 John 1:9)

We teach marriage was created and sanctioned by God to join one man and one woman in a single and exclusive union for a lifetime. (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6)

We teach God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. Any form of sexual intimacy outside of marriage is sexually immoral and is sin against God and His design for healthy relationships. (1 Corinthians 6:15-7:6; Ephesians 5:3-7) Sexual immorality includes, but is not limited to, adultery, sexual activity outside of marriage, homosexual conduct, and pornography. (Matthew 15:18-20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4)

We teach God offers forgiveness, transformation, and restoration to all who confess and repent from their sin and humbly ask for God's forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 6:11; John 8:31-36) Our love for the Gospel and urgency for the Great Commission includes declaring what Scripture teaches about God's design for us as male and female persons created in His image, for His joy, and for His glory. (Psalm 34:8; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 20:27; Romans 11:36)

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

God's main purpose in marriage is not to make us happy by uniting us with the perfect person, but to help in making us holy by teaching us to love and live like Him. Marriage is a relationship in which God fuses two lives into one for His glory, their good, and for future generations to be blessed. The two individuals become one flesh. Our lives, finances, bodies, parenting, discipling others, and much more become one. More than a contract, marriage is a covenant relationship with God and a companionship for partnership and for procreation (either biological children, adoptive children, or spiritual children whom we disciple). God designed marriage to reflect the Trinity: distinct persons, one essence, and one main goal to make the name of God glorious to everyone. (1 Corinthians 10:31; Psalm 78:6) This kind of covenant unity cannot just be discarded. It's not a contract where we negotiate terms and have a buyout option. It's a fusion of two lives that creates oneness. (Genesis 2:24-25; Matthew 19:1-12)

Is it ever okay to divorce?

Jesus says that divorce should not be an option except in the case of ongoing and unrepentant adultery. (Matthew 5:32, 19:9) Adultery kills the covenant. When a person unites himself or herself to another person sexually, he or she has destroyed the covenant. You are free to remarry if your spouse dies; it is the same if a person commits adultery. Adultery nullifies the covenant, which makes divorce a legitimate biblical option.

Another biblical reason for divorce is if an unbelieving spouse abandons the covenant relationship and leaves the marriage. (1 Corinthians 7:10-15) An individual is no longer bound to the marriage because the departing spouse has killed the covenant.

What if there is technically not adultery or the departure of an unbeliever, but one spouse is abusive, or the spouse is involved in illegal activity that he or she won't stop--one that is endangering the family?

First, one would need to leave the situation, seek help and safety, and ask people around you to encourage and walk with you.

Many Bible scholars say that the logic of Paul and Jesus' statements may allow for divorce when a spouse has killed the covenant by becoming an unsafe partner through his or her rebellious behavior. Some theologians teach separation but not divorce. Each individual must make a choice through prayer, with biblical guidance, and in humility. (Romans 14:1-12; Philippians 3:15) From the beginning of creation, God established marriage as a loving and covenant relationship between a man and a woman for a lifetime, not a consumer or throw-away relationship. Divorce is to be as radical as amputating a leg or arm—a last resort. (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:1-12; Malachi 2:15-16)

The empty tomb is the answer for a soul broken and beat up by divorce. You can't change the bad decisions that you or someone else has made in the past. Those failures, sins, and missteps do not mean that God is done with you. God loves redeeming the worst situations, even the hardest cases. Trust your past, present, and future fully to God and His grace, and move forward with Him. (Psalm 51:1-10; Jeremiah 17:14; John 8:1-10; 1 John 1:9; 1 Peter 5:10)

GAMBLING

Scripture endorses three ways to obtain goods or money: working, obtaining goods through exchange, and receiving gifts or inheritance. (Numbers 27:6-11; Proverbs 31:15-19; Colossians 3:23-24; 2 Thessalonians 3:7) Gambling tends to cultivate a materialistic view of life and often takes from those who cannot afford to lose their monies or goods. Gambling also cultivates winners and losers through games of chance. For someone to truly succeed in gambling, someone else must lose their monies or goods. None of these can reflect the Great Commandment or Great Commission. (Matthew 22:37-39, 28:18-20) There could be certain types of gambling in which one does not have the motivation to take from others and win by seeing others lose (investments, the stock market, penny poker, and games of fun), but one must have the motivation to love his neighbor, do so in good conscience, and not cause others to stumble. (Romans 13:10, 14:1-23)

WORSHIP

The chief purpose of mankind is to glorify God by loving and enjoying Him with the entire heart, soul, mind, and might. (Deuteronomy 6:5; Isaiah 43:7; Matthew 22:37) All believing men, women, and children are to glorify God and fulfill the purpose of their existence. Worship glorifies God through reverence (Psalm 95:6), praise (Psalm 99:5), prayer (Daniel 6:10-11), thanksgiving (Nehemiah 12:46), and a complete yielding to Him (Romans 12:1-2). Worship declares His worth, makes much of Him, and celebrates Him in a life of joyful obedience. We seek to worship the Lord in spirit and in truth for His glory and others' good. (Exodus 15:1-21; 2 Samuel 6:14-16; Psalm 5:7; John 4:23-24; Revelation 4:11; 5:12; Matthew 22:37-39)

When we gather, we seek to:

- Make much of the name of Jesus Christ (John 4:22-26; John 12:32; John 14:6)
- Lead God's people to know and exalt Christ in music and Christ-honoring lyrics (Nehemiah 12:45-46; Psalm 66:1-4, 95:1-2)
- Ask the Lord to speak through the proclamation of Scripture as we prepare ourselves to hear from Him and follow Him (Psalm 95:6-9; John 5:39; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; James 1:22-25)
- Emphasize fresh and contemporary expressions of praise while retaining traditional elements that recognize the richness of our heritage in the faith (Deuteronomy 32:7; Psalm 33:3; Isaiah 46:8-9; Matthew 13:32; Ephesians 5:19; Revelation 5:9)
- Pursue Spirit-led direction in worship, knowing that God alone through His word and Spirit can lead us to transformation and true worship (John 4:23-24; Luke 10:21; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Ephesians 5:18-20; Colossians 3:16-17)