

YOUTH MINISTRY

The heart of our youth ministry philosophy is the spiritual development of children. Our goal is to provide a Bible education and establish corresponding attitudes and actions. This is accomplished not only through formal teaching in a classroom, but also by modeling it in various activities and settings.

Young people take an active role in our worship services.

MINISTRY TEAMS

Every Christian is to be involved in the work of the church. The elders and evangelists are to equip Christians for the work of service (Eph. 4:11, 12). Deacons are selected men who work with the elders in leading the congregation in various aspects of service and ministry.

Our elders have identified key areas of service in our congregation. Each Christian who worships here is urged to utilize the strengths God has granted in serving with at least one of the following ministry teams.

BENEVOLENCE — helping those in need

OUTREACH — evangelizing our community

WORSHIP — planning and implementing the Sunday morning assembly

PROPERTY — maintaining and improving the physical facilities

EDUCATION — planning and implementing the training of Bible students

MISSIONS — leading the congregation's ministry in worldwide evangelism

FAMILY LIFE — providing opportunities for social interchange

FINANCE — administering the stewardship of monetary resources

WHO WE ARE

OUR HERITAGE

- The church of which we are a part was established by the apostles on the day of Pentecost by the authority of Jesus Christ (Acts 2).
- After centuries of denominating due to human creeds and statements of faith, people from these sects, both in Europe and America, initiated a movement at the turn of the nineteenth century to restore the church to its original form and function, as described in the New Testament. Sharing that conviction and determination to be the church of Christ, we continue to call all believers back to the Bible.

OUR PLEA

- That all those wearing the name of Christ would discard any designations that divide or denominate and be known simply as Christians (Acts 11:26)
- That the Bible alone be the basis for doctrine and practice
- That Bible terminology be used, and only as the Bible employs it

OUR PURPOSE

- To unite all people under the banner of Jesus Christ as free Christians
- To be Christians — nothing more and nothing less
- To fulfill the commission of Christ to make disciples throughout the world (Matthew 28:18-20)

LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Lord reveals in the Bible how His church is to be governed. Elders (a.k.a., bishops, pastors, overseers, shepherds) have delegated authority as overseers of the congregation. See Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4. Deacons are servants who assist in various aspects of service. See Acts 6:1-6; 1 Timothy 3:8-10. Each of our deacons is charged with leading a ministry team.

The role and responsibilities relating to evangelists or preachers may be found primarily in Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus.

The Bible provides for no government above and beyond the local congregation. There is no governing body apart from the elders in this congregation.

MISSIONS

Worldwide evangelism is a primary focus of this congregation. Short-term mission trips for youth and adults have become regular activities that are always generously funded by voluntary gifts.

The congregation, led in this effort by the Missions Ministry Team, provides financial support to ministries of various kinds around the world. These include foreign ministries (some by natives and others by Americans), Bible translators, prison ministry, children's homes, Bible colleges (U.S. and abroad), university campus ministry, and summer youth camp.

All support is sent directly to those who do the work, and all who receive support are known by our members personally, as each reports directly to us in person and through regular accounting by mail. Members of our congregation have also visited several of our missionaries in the field, witnessing first hand the stewardship of the resources provided.

A percentage of all money received in offerings is allocated for worldwide evangelism. For several years, the percentage has been increased at the rate of one percent per year.

MINISTRY STAFF

Gene McCoy has been our preacher since 1993. Ordained by his home congregation in Columbia, MO in 1975, Gene has served as a music and youth minister in Missouri and been the preacher for congregations in Missouri and Ohio. His ministry here is not only the longest for this congregation, but also in his career.

His wife, Becky, is a vital partner in this ministry. She is a Registered Nurse employed at Baxter Regional Medical Center.

Gene and Becky have three adult children, all of whom are faithful Christians and active in a local congregation where they live.

Titus Neuenschwander has been our youth minister since 1998. While yet a student in Bible college, he served as a youth minister in Missouri. The length of his ministry here exceeds that of all previous preachers, except that of our present preacher.

Titus is frequently utilized as a speaker by Christ In Youth, Inc. for their conferences, and has led mission trips for C.I.Y.

His wife, Lesli, is an indispensable partner in the youth ministry here, volunteering her expertise as a certified public school teacher to lead the elementary education department.

Titus and Lesli have five children.

FELLOWSHIP

Since the church belongs to Christ, we are pleased to extend fellowship to all who have obeyed the terms He set forth in the Bible for entrance into His covenant. We, therefore, recognize as our brothers and sisters in Christ all who

- believe that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah), the Son of God Who alone has the authority to forgive sins.
(Matthew 16:16; John 3:16; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 16:31)
- have forsaken the practice of sin in favor of a life characterized by obedience to the Lord and, therefore, of righteousness.
(Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30-31)
- have declared publicly with their lips and at all times with their lives that Jesus is not only the Savior, but also the Lord.
(Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10)
- have been born into the family through baptism into Jesus for the forgiveness of sin.
(Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:1-11; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Galatians 3:27; 1 Peter 3:20-22)
- are committing their will and way to serving the Lord as faithful stewards of all their resources, including their time, talents, and treasure.
(Luke 12:42, 43; 1 Corinthians 4:2; The Revelation 2:10)

This surrender to the authority and deity of Jesus is predicated upon the conviction that the Bible is the complete and inerrant revelation of God's will and the ultimate authority in all things pertaining to one's relationship to God. We eagerly join hands and heart with all who esteem the Bible above all writings, as in a class all by itself, it alone being authored by the Holy Spirit of God.

RESTORATION PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLES

- The Church of Christ on earth is indispensably, intentionally, and structurally one.
- nothing should be forced upon Christians except what is clearly taught in the Word of God.
- It is not necessary that people see all God's truth exactly alike before they are added to His Church.

IDEALS

- "In essentials unity, in opinions liberty, and in all things love"
- "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak, and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent."
- "Call Bible things by Bible names."
- "No headquarters but heaven, no creed but Christ, no book but the Bible, no plea but the gospel, and no name but the divine."
- "Christians only, but not the only Christians."
- "The Bible only produces Christians only."

IDENTIFYING MARKS OF A RESTORED CHURCH

- Weekly observance of the Lord's Supper
- No denominational designation
- Baptism of believers by immersion for the purpose of washing sin away
- No distinctive title for preachers (e.g., pastor, reverend, Brother, Father, etc.)
- No clergy / laity distinction
- No vestments or special garb (e.g., robes, collars, etc.)
- No extra-congregational organization (e.g., hierarchy, delegate convention, etc.)

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

The church is comprised of people who have complied with the terms of the covenant established by God in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus, His Son, and which were made known through the preaching of the apostles beginning on the day of Pentecost immediately following Jesus' resurrection (Acts 2). Specifically, the church is the family of God into which people are born upon their baptism on the basis of faith in the blood of Jesus and repentance from sin.

BIBLICAL DESIGNATIONS FOR THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL

- The mountain of the Lord's temple (Isaiah 2:2; Micah 4:1)
- A kingdom (Daniel 2:44)
- The kingdom of heaven (Matthew 3:2; 4:17; 13:24, 31, 33, 44, 45, 47)
- The kingdom of God (Mark 1:15; 4:11, 26, 30)
- Church and kingdom interchangeably (Matthew 16:18-19)
- Christ's body (1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 27; Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18, 24)
- Church of the firstborn (Hebrews 12:23)

BIBLICAL DESIGNATIONS FOR CONGREGATIONS

- The church at Jerusalem (Acts 8:1; 11:22)
- Elders in each church (Acts 14:23)
- The church of the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 1:2; 2 Thessalonians 1:1)
- The churches of Christ (Romans 16:16)
- The church of God in Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1:1)

CHURCH GOVERNANCE

The church patterned after the New Testament is governed by a plurality of spiritual overseers commonly referred to as elders. The Bible also refers to these men as bishops, pastors, shepherds, and presbyters. These men are charged with guarding and guiding the people in the congregation from which they were selected, and for whom they will give an account to the Lord (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Hebrews 13:17).

The Bible nowhere gives instructions on how the leaders are to be selected. The congregation apparently had a voice in the process, however (Acts 6:3).

While the Bible also says nothing about how decisions are to be made with regard to church property and policies, the congregation is consulted on major issues. Most of the practical day-to-day decisions are made by Deacons and their Ministry Team members who have been charged by the elders to manage various aspects of ministry.

The head of the church is Jesus Christ. Oversight of the local congregation is delegated to elders. Where the Bible speaks on governance issues, the elders simply apply the Biblical teaching. On other issues, however, liberty is enjoyed and latitude is extended.

BAPTISM

Baptism is neither more nor less essential than faith, confession and repentance in the process of receiving the Lord's salvation. The apostles consistently connect faith and repentance with baptism (e.g., Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12), as does the Lord, Himself (Mark 16:16).

Consistent with the Biblical teaching that salvation is by grace through faith, baptism is the expression of faith in the blood and promise of the Lord. This removes baptism from the category of works, a concept which underlies arguments against baptism for the remission of sins. Baptism is not a work of law that makes us worthy, but rather a response of faith to the command and promise of God. It is also an expression of faith in the working of God (Colossians 2:11, 12) in raising to new life the sinner who has died to sin. It is the re-enactment of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, Whom God raised (Romans 6:3-11).

Baptism for the remission of sins is not to be confused with baptismal (water) regeneration. To be saved, one must not trust in baptism, but rather in Jesus Christ. That trust or faith is exhibited to man and recognized by God when the sinner presents himself in the water, there to receive all the grace gifts promised to the repentant sinner (e.g., forgiveness of sins, the Holy Spirit, regenerated heart, everlasting life, covenant relationship, etc.).

Why wasn't the thief on the cross required to be baptized? Very simply, because he lived under the old covenant, which did not include baptism for the remission of sins, as does the new covenant. The new covenant did not begin until Jesus died.

No one verse or passage of Scripture contains everything one must do to be saved. Some do not mention baptism. Others do not mention faith. Still others do not mention repentance or confession. But this does not diminish the necessity of each.

REASONS FOR BAPTISM

- For salvation (Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21)
- For forgiveness of sin and God's gift, His blessed Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38)
- To wash away sins (Acts 22:16)
- To enter the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-13)
- To be clothed with Christ (Galatians 3:27)
- To enter into Jesus' death (Romans 6:3)
- To be buried with Christ and to be raised in the likeness of Jesus' resurrection to a new life (Romans 6:4)
- To have the old self crucified and to be freed from slavery to sin (Romans 6:6-7)

If baptism is not essential for salvation (to become a Christian) then we are saved without

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| • The death of Christ | • Being clothed with Christ |
| • The resurrection of Christ | • Sin being washed away |
| • The atoning blood of Christ | • Our death to sin |
| • Forgiveness of sin and the Holy Spirit | • Our resurrection to new life |
| | • Entering Christ's body |