

NEW MEMBER PACKET



CHURCH-IN-THE-GARDEN

Rev. Earl Y. Thorpe Jr., Ph.D. *Pastor*

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Welcome New Member

Dear New Member Candidate,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! I want to personally commend you for taking the formal steps in joining with the Church-in-the-Garden family. I thank God for your public declaration and witness. I am delighted to serve as your pastor!

Please take the time to read this packet in its entirety and familiarize yourself with our mission and goals, basic tenets of our polity and practices, our church history, and our responsibility as Christian Believers to the church. I believe an informed believer is a well-equipped believer. This packet will help you to be an informed believer.

I invite you to set up a time to meet with me so that we can get to know each other better and I can better understand where you are in your Christian journey. On behalf of the Board of Ministry, and the Church-in-the-Garden members, I welcome you to the Church-in-the-Garden family. Please feel free to email me at pastor@churchinthegarden.org and we can arrange a mutually convenient time to meet and talk.

It is my prayer for you that the LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

(Numbers 6:24–26 NRSV)

Blessings Aplenty,



Rev. Earl Y. Thorpe Jr., Ph.D.
Pastor

Paquete de Bienvenida para Nuevo Miembro

Querido Candidato:

Saludos en el nombre de Nuestro Señor y Jesús Cristo Nuestro Salvador!

Personalmente quiero felicitarlo(a) por tomar los pasos formales en unirse a la familia de Church-in-the-Garden. Le doy gracias a Dios por su declaración pública y testigo. Estoy encantado de servir como su Pastor!

Por favor tome un momento para leer este paquete en su totalidad y familiarizarse con la misión y metas, principios básicos de nuestra Iglesia y nuestra responsabilidad como creyentes Cristianos a la Iglesia. Yo creo que un creyente informado es un creyente bien equipado. Este paquete le ayudara a ser un creyente informado.

Lo(a) invito a que haga una cita para reunirse conmigo para que podamos conocernos mejor y para que yo pueda entender mejor en donde está en su camino Cristiano. En nombre de la Junta de Ministerio y los miembros de Church-in-the-Garden, le doy la bienvenida a nuestra familia. No dude en enviar un correo electrónico al pastor@churchinthegarden.org para que podamos planear un tiempo conveniente para reunirnos y poder hablar.

Es mi oración que el SEÑOR te bendiga, y te guarde; el SEÑOR haga resplandecer su rostro sobre ti, y tenga de ti misericordia; el SEÑOR alce a ti su rostro, y ponga en ti paz. (Números 6:24-26)

Bendiciones en Abundancia,



Rev. Earl Y. Thorpe Jr., Ph.D.
Pastor

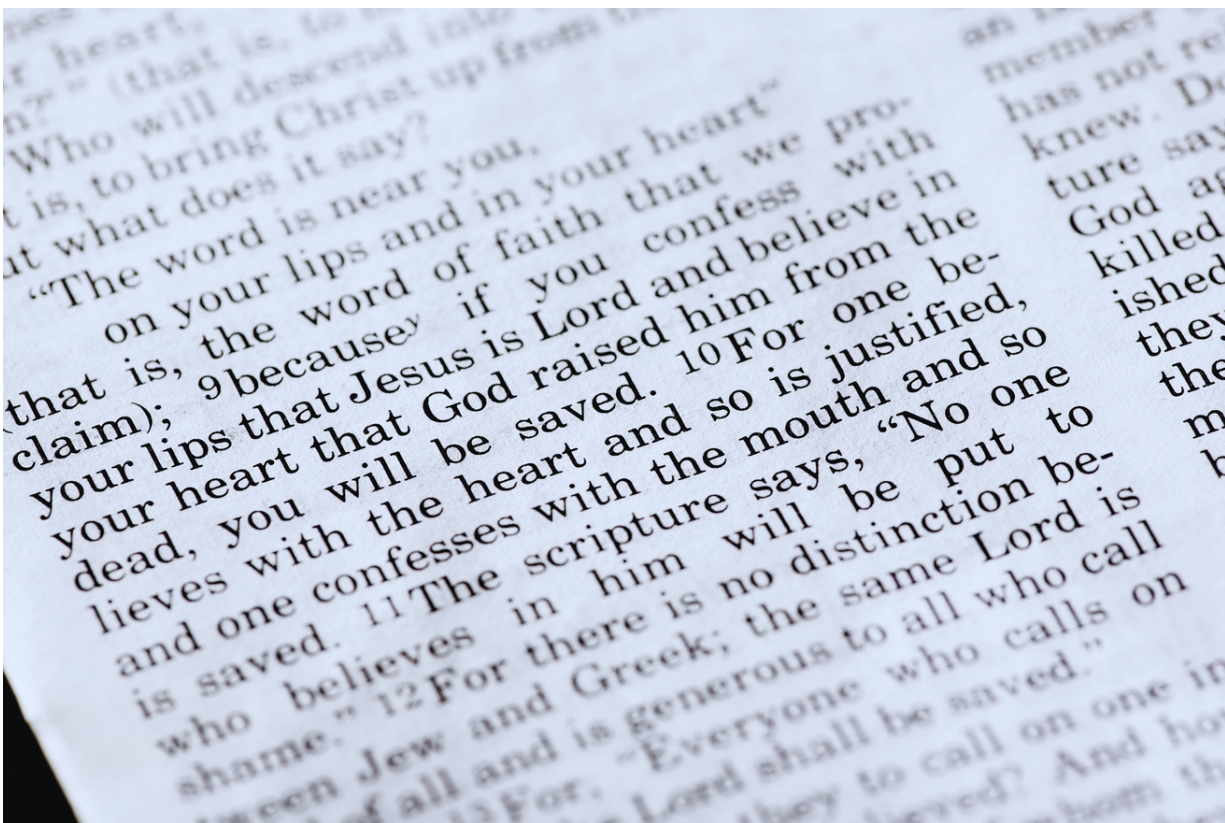
Profession of Faith

Candidate:

Your decision to become a member of this church should have been done with prayer and discernment and a commitment to live out your Christian walk. To that end, please come to know this verse found in the New Testament Book of Romans as a succinct profession of your faith and new life in Christ Jesus as your Lord and Savior:

“that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”

(Romans 10:9 NKJV)



Mission Statement

The Church-in-the-Garden is called by God in Christ to be a Christian community: Open to all to experience God's Grace and share God's Love through empowering evangelism, dedicated pastoral care, sound Christian education, and faithful social concern.

OUR MISSION

We Believe Jesus is Lord

“...every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Philippians 2:11

The word “lord” has a variety of meanings and a number of definitions. However, as Christians, we confess that Jesus Christ is Lord because we owe him our total allegiance, loving service and faithful obedience because of who he is and what he has done.

All Christian groups hold to the truth that Jesus is Lord, but Baptists have a special emphasis that they give to this truth. Baptists believe that Jesus is the exclusive Lord of life. They accept no person or institution as lord of individual Christians or of churches. For this belief, Baptists, like the early Christians, have suffered persecution by both government and religious authorities.

The Importance of the Baptist Commitment to the Lordship of Christ

Why have Baptists held so strongly to the exclusive Lordship of Christ? We have taken our stand on several basic convictions, including the following:

- (1) The Bible teaches the Lordship of Christ, and Baptists look to the Bible as their sole written authority for faith and practice.
- (2) The biblical teaching about soul competency demands that each individual Christian bow to no ultimate authority other than God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- (3) The biblical emphasis on soul competency flows from the Lordship of Christ.
- (4) The New Testament model for the church is founded upon the Lordship of Christ; Christ alone is the head of the church.

The Bible Teaches the Lordship of Christ

The Bible gives a number of reasons why Jesus is Lord of all. He is divine, one of the three persons of the Trinity. Jesus declared, “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30). Concerning Jesus, the Bible states that in him “all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form” (Colossians 2:9 NIV).

Jesus died on the cross for the sins of the world and as such is worthy of all praise and honor as Lord: “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing” (Revelation 5:12).

Jesus rose from the dead, indicating his power over death itself. When we meet the resurrected Christ, we exclaim as did the disciple Thomas, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28).

Jesus ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of the Father making intercession for us, and is coming again to bring a new heaven and a new earth. Before such a One we stand in awe declaring, “Come, Lord Jesus” (Revelation 22:20).

The Extent of the Lordship of Christ

The Bible sets forth the extent of Christ’s Lordship in several ways. The Bible states that Jesus is the Lord of all creation: “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:10-11).

The Bible teaches that Jesus is Lord of every person. Many deny or fail to recognize that Lordship, but for Christians the Lordship of Christ is central. In fact, the Christian life begins with the acknowledgment that Jesus is Lord: “That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10: 9 NIV).

The Bible emphasizes that Jesus is Lord of churches. Jesus declared, “I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18). And Paul wrote concerning Jesus, “And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body...” (Ephesians 1:22-23 NIV).

The Lordship of Christ and Soul Competency

The Bible teaches that Christ's Lordship is direct. No person or institution is to attempt to usurp the authority of Jesus over a Christian. Of course, persons can gain insight and understanding from others, but only Jesus has ultimate authority over a Christian.

The call to be a disciple of Jesus assumes the ability to know and follow the will of Jesus Christ as Lord. The Biblical teaching on soul competency indicates that persons have the God-given ability to know and to do God's will. Persons are not puppets. Their Creator has given them freedom and responsibility of choice.

Baptists have resisted efforts by individuals, government officials and religious organizations to dictate what the will of Jesus is for his followers. Baptists insist that each person has the competence and the responsibility to find and follow the will of Jesus as Lord. As the early disciples declared, "We must obey God rather than men!" (Acts 5:29).

The Lordship of Christ Mandates Religious Freedom

The Lordship of Christ means that persons and churches ought to be free from coercion by government or religious organizations in spiritual and religious matters. Baptists have always denounced such coercive efforts, declaring that only Jesus is Lord. For this resistance Baptists have often paid a high price.

The Lordship of Christ and a New Testament Church Are Inseparable

What does it mean for individual Christians and for the churches of which they are a part to be under the Lordship of Christ? For one thing, it means that they should acknowledge Christ as Lord. The church belongs to Christ, not to them. He is the head of the church; they are not. They are not to rule the church; Christ is.

Furthermore, each member of the church should recognize that he or she has opportunity and responsibility to make decisions regarding the church under the Lordship of Christ. This is the New Testament model of a church. Persons make decisions about the church of which they are part, such as who the deacons and pastor will be, how the tithes and offerings will be spent, and

what sort of building they will occupy. Yet each of these decisions should be made in light of the fact that Jesus is Lord of the church.

In addition, all of the members of the body of Christ are responsible for the decisions of the church. There is no hierarchy in a New Testament church. No pastor, deacon body, or any other individual or group is to lord it over the church (I Peter 5:3). Only Jesus is Lord, of each person and of the church as a whole. Through prayer and respectful discussion as part of a loving fellowship, the members of the church are to seek to know the mind of Christ.

In Summary

The Lordship of Christ is a basic Christian doctrine. For Baptists, it has special meaning and is related to other key Baptist beliefs, such as those about the authority of the Bible, soul competency, religious freedom and the nature of what a church modeled after the New Testament churches is to be.*



*Taken in part from Baptist Distinctives

Baptists Believe in Soul Competency

What does “soul competency” mean? Various terms have been used for this concept, such as soul freedom, freedom of conscience and soul competency. Basically it means the God-given freedom and ability of persons to know and respond to God’s will. Baptists believe that God gives people competency—that is ability—to make choices. Human beings are not puppets or machines.

Baptists emphasize that this ability is not a mere human characteristic, but a gift from God. In creation, God gave to persons the freedom to make choices. The Genesis account of creation makes crystal clear that this freedom carried with it awesome responsibility. We are responsible for our choices. God sets forth the consequences of good and bad decisions. If we exercise our freedom to obey him, we have life. If we use our freedom to deny him, the result is death (Genesis 1—2).

The Bible and Soul Competency

The Bible is filled with examples of soul competency. The Bible considers it a fact that people have freedom of choice. The Bible also teaches that people are accountable to God for their choices.

For example, God’s gift of the Ten Commandments assumed the competency of human beings to understand them and the freedom to accept or to reject them. With acceptance came blessing, and with rejection came punishment. In any case, competency and freedom of choice were assumed (Exodus 20:1-17).

The people of Israel were given choices, indicating a competency to make decisions. Joshua declared, “Choose ye this day whom ye will serve” (Joshua 24:15). This challenge would have been meaningless if the people had no competency or freedom to choose.

The heroes of the faith in the Old Testament, such as Elijah, Jeremiah and Isaiah, refused to give up their freedom of conscience to government rulers.

In various ways, the New Testament affirms soul freedom. Jesus assumed that individuals had a God-given competency to decide to follow him or not. He indicated that persons were free to believe or not to believe but were held accountable for their choice (John 3:16-21). Some believed and followed, but some did not (Matthew 19:16-22). Jesus never coerced or forced persons to follow him and thus never violated the soul freedom of individuals.

Writers of the New Testament consistently set forth the concept of soul freedom. For example, the Apostle Paul wrote, “For why should my freedom be judged by another’s conscience?” (I Corinthians 10:29 NIV). And he pleaded with the Galatians, “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free” (Galatians 5:1 NIV).

Furthermore, leaders in the New Testament churches modeled soul competency. They never forced anyone to follow Jesus as Lord and Savior. In fact, they resisted religious and governmental authorities who tried to force them not to believe and speak for Jesus (Acts 5:17-42).

Attacks on Soul Competency

The concept of soul competency has been attacked for various reasons. Some persons contend that such freedom would limit God’s sovereignty. A Baptist response to this challenge has been that the sovereign Lord of the universe chose to create human beings with freedom of choice. The Bible clearly supports this view of human creation, holding forth as truth both the sovereignty of God and the soul freedom of humans.

Others have charged that the idea of soul competency leads to human arrogance and pride. It can, of course, but correctly understood, it should lead to humility. All human ability is a gift from God, including freedom of choice. Another accusation is that the concept of soul competency results in subjectivism and hyper-individualism with the accompanying neglect of the importance of the community of believers. Of course, doctrines have the potential of being carried to an extreme that is harmful. However, properly understood, soul freedom is exercised in the context of a community of believers.



Important Points of Baptist Theology

What we as Baptist Christians Believe

Baptism by Immersion

The New Testament records that baptism always followed conversion, never preceded it, and was not necessary for salvation (Acts 2:1-41; 8:36-39; 16:30-33). Since Baptists look to the Bible as our sole authority for faith and practice, we believe that baptism is only for those who have put their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Baptists believe that the Bible teaches that baptism symbolizes that a person has been saved and is not a means of salvation. Baptism is not a means of channeling saving grace but rather is a way of testifying that saving grace has been experienced. It does not wash away sin but symbolizes the forgiveness of sin through faith in Christ.

We, as Baptists, believe that we should be baptized by being immersed in water.

- “*Baptizo*” is the Greek word for baptize, which means to immerse in water.
- Baptism is an outward display of an internal conversion.
 - When one is baptized he/she is identifying with Jesus’ death, burial, and particularly His Resurrection.

Romans 6:4 - *Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.*

Romanos 6:4 - *porque somos sepultados juntamente con él para muerte por el bautismo, a fin de que como Cristo resucitó de los muertos por la gloria del Padre, así también nosotros andemos en vida nueva.*

The Lord’s Supper

We, as Baptists, believe that the bread, partaken during The Lord’s Supper is SYMBOLIC of Jesus’ body. The Fruit of the Vine is SYMBOLIC of Christ’s Blood. As Baptists, we support the theological perspective that the bread and fruit of the vine are only symbols of Christ’s body and blood. At the Church-in-the-Garden, we celebrate and open communion table, which means all who come to the church are welcome to receive the communion meal.

1 Cor. 11:23-24 - *For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given*

thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." (NRSV)

1 Corintios 11:23-24 - *Yo recibí del Señor lo que también os he enseñado: Que el Señor Jesús, la noche que fue entregado, tomó pan; y habiendo dado gracias, lo partió, y dijo: «Tomad, comed; esto es mi cuerpo que por vosotros es partido; haced esto en memoria de mí.»*

Separation of Church & State

We, as Baptists, believe that the government/state should not govern the Church and the Church should not govern the government. This belief in religious freedom comes from the Baptist commitment to the authority of the Bible.

In the Bible, Romans 13 offers guidance in how we should think about our interaction with the government, rulers, and those in authority. Yet there are many passages of scripture that also inform our discussion of the separation of church and state. What is meant by the terms "church" and "state"? The term "state" refers to governments. The Bible indicates that governments are ordained by God to provide law and order (Romans 13:1-5). Government leaders are to act for the benefit of the citizens (1 Peter 2:13-14). Baptists and other Christians are to honor and pray for government officials (1 Timothy 2:1-3; 1 Peter 2:17), pay taxes (Matthew 22:17-22; Romans 13:6-7) and obey the government except when obedience would be clearly contrary to God's will (Acts 4:19-20; 5:29).

Ideally, the relation of church and state is mutually beneficial. For example, the state is to provide order and safety; these are useful to the church in carrying out its mission (Acts 13-16). And the church contributes to a positive social order by helping to develop law-abiding, hard-working, honest citizens (Ephesians 4:24-32; 1 Peter 2:11-17).

Baptists contend that this mutual benefit works best when the institutions of church and state are separate and when neither seeks to control the other. The state is not to dictate doctrine, worship style, organization, membership, or personnel for leadership to the church. The church is not to seek the power or the financial support of the state for spiritual ends. Such is the model set forth in the New Testament.

Matthew 22:21 - *Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's."*

Mateo 22:21 - *Y les dijo: Pagad pues a César lo que es de César, y a Dios lo que es de Dios.*

Priesthood of Every Believer

The priesthood of each believer in Baptist thought is tied closely to another concept, that of soul competency. Each person has a God-given competence to know and follow God's will. A decision to follow Christ as Lord and Savior is an individual decision; no one can make it for another. Being a believer priest is a gift from God, not a human achievement; it comes with salvation.

Each believer priest is responsible for his or her own actions. Individual believers can go directly to God without the aid of any intermediary. Individuals can and should read and interpret the Bible for themselves without religious officials dictating to them what to believe. In short, we don't have to confess our sins to another priest. (1 Timothy 2:5)

Believer priests are all equal to one another in Christ (Galatians 3:26-28). There is only one High Priest, that is Jesus Christ (Hebrews 7:23-8:13). Each believer priest has a responsibility to be committed to Christ and to share Christ through word and deed. As Peter stated it: to "declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light" (1 Peter 2:9 NIV).

1 Peter 2:9 - *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

1 Pedro 2:9 - *Pero vosotros sois linaje escogido, real sacerdocio, nación santa, pueblo adquirido por Dios, para que anunciéis las virtudes de aquel que os llamó de las tinieblas a su luz admirable.*

Autonomy of the Local Church

As Baptists, we believe that every Baptist Church is autonomous.

Autonomous is defined as self-governing or self-directing. Each Baptist church, among other things, selects its pastoral leadership, determines its worship form, decides financial matters and directs other church-related affairs without outside control or supervision.

Associations and conventions are a vital part of Baptist denominational life and contribute greatly to the efforts of Baptists to make and mature disciples for Jesus Christ and to minister to persons in his name. However, they have no authority over local churches. Each church can choose to relate to these other Baptist entities or not relate, depending on the will of the congregation.

Biblically, the churches in New Testament times selected from their own membership persons to care for the physical need of members (Acts 6:3-6), determined what persons would be commissioned for specific ministries (Acts 13:1-3) and disciplined their own members (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians

5:1-13). These actions were taken under the lordship of Christ and the guidance of the Holy Spirit without any external direction or control.

Authority of the Holy Scriptures

As Baptists, we believe that the Bible was written of human hands, but divinely inspired by God. We emphasize that the Bible is the sole written authority for Christian faith and practice and deny that other writings such as creeds, confessions of faith, traditions, the teachings of theologians and the statements by founders of denominations have such authority. Although we may gain insight from and express appreciation for some of these documents, they refuse to accept them as authoritative. The Bible is authoritative for us because it is from God and about God. This is one reason why Baptists often refer to the Bible as our sole written authority. God is our ultimate authority. The Holy Spirit inspired persons to write the Bible so that, as The Baptist Faith & Message states, it is a “perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter.” As such, the Bible becomes for us a revelation of God.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 - *All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.*

2 Timoteo 3:16-17 - *Toda la Escritura es inspirada por Dios y es útil para enseñar, para redargüir, para corregir, para instituir en justicia, para que el hombre de Dios sea perfecto, perfectamente equipado para toda buena obra.*

Perseverance of Believers (Saints)

As Baptists, we believe in the doctrine of eternal security (“once saved, always saved”). In essence, when committed to faith in Christ, you cannot lose your salvation. We believe that a person has freedom of choice to believe in Christ as his or her Lord and Savior or to reject Christ. They insist that anyone who responds through repentance and faith in Jesus’ atoning life, death and resurrection can be saved (1 Timothy 2:3-4; 2 Peter 3:9; 1 John 2:2). With conviction they quote the words of Jesus, “Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:15). They also believe that once he or she has been truly saved, a person is kept by the power of God; this is often termed the security of the believer (John 10:27-30).

Ephesians 2:8-9 - *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God not the result of works, so that no one may boast.*

Efesios 2:8-9 - *Porque por gracia sois salvos por la fe; y esto no de vosotros, pues es don de Dios; no por obras, para que nadie se gloríe.*

Two Offices: Pastor & Deacon

Pastor

As Baptists we believe that the Pastor is called by the congregation to lead and guide the church in its spiritual development, worship, growth, and impact. The pastor is tasked to preach to proclaim the Good News, to win souls for Christ, to expand the spiritual sensitivity of the congregation, to proclaim the day of the Lord. The pastor must also be an administrator, caring for the orderly processes and mundane concerns of congregational life together. There is nothing in the life of the church that should be beyond the concern, care, responsibility, and leadership of the pastor. The pastor is charged with ultimate spiritual care and authority in the life of the congregation.

Deacons

The diaconate is the lone nonpastoral office found in the early church. The term deacon comes from the Greek *diakonos*, and, as we recall, literally means “minister” in the specific meaning of servant, as one who “ministers to” or who serves others. In the Scriptures, this meaning applied to the apostles and even to Christ. In the language and experience of the church, however, it has most often referred to specific officers in the church. Deacons are chosen by vote of the church, often having been proposed by means of a nominating committee or upon recommendation by the pastor. They should ideally represent a cross section of the membership of the church with regard to age, circumstances, economic status, and other considerations of membership constituencies. They should, nevertheless, be faithful, prudent, experienced, and spiritually mature persons.¹

¹ Edward Hiscox; Everett C. Goodwin. *The New Hiscox Guide for Churches* (Kindle Locations 1269-1271). Kindle Edition

American Baptist Identity Statement (1998)

“We Are American Baptists”

(revised 6/19/98)

“We Are American Baptists” is an expression of Christian Faith representative of American Baptists adopted by the covenanting partners of American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A., 6/19/98. “We Are American Baptists” can be found in the Standing Rules, under Addendum #1.

American Baptists worship the triune God of the Bible, who is eternally one God in three persons. This one, true God is most clearly revealed to us in the incarnate Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

American Baptists proclaim the Good News of the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, knowing that salvation (forgiveness of sins, release from guilt and condemnation, reconciliation with God) and eternal life are granted in grace to all who trust Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. This Gospel is the central message of the Bible.

American Baptists believe that the Bible, composed of the Old and New Testaments, is the divinely inspired Word of God, the final written authority and trustworthy for faith and practice. It is to be interpreted responsibly under the guidance of the Holy Spirit within the community of faith. The primary purpose of the Bible is to point to Jesus Christ, the living Lord of the Church. Although Baptists have produced numerous confessions to express our common understandings of Christian faith, we hold the Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, as our final authority. We accept no humanly devised confession or creed as binding.

American Baptists affirm that God is sovereign over all and that this sovereignty is expressed and realized through Jesus Christ. Therefore, we affirm the Lordship of Christ over the world and the church. We joyously confess that Jesus Christ is Savior and Lord.

We are called in loyalty to Jesus Christ to proclaim the power of the Holy Spirit, the Good News of God’s reconciling grace, and to declare the saving power of the Gospel to every human being and to every human institution. We celebrate Christ’s charge to “make disciples of all nations” and to bear witness to God’s redeeming reign in human affairs.

American Baptists are summoned to this mission in common with all Christians. With the whole body of Christ, we also believe that God has been revealed in Jesus Christ as in no other, and that “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself” (II Corinthians 5:18). We anticipate the day when every creature and all creation, on earth and beyond, will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:10-11).

God has given this particular community of believers called Baptists a distinctive history and experience. As we share in common with Christians everywhere, so Baptists everywhere celebrate a common heritage.

THEREFORE...With Baptist brothers and sisters around the world, we believe:

That the Bible is the final authority and trustworthy for faith and practice. It is to be interpreted responsibly under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit within the community of faith;

That the Church is a gathered fellowship of regenerated believers, a sign of the coming universal reign of God;

That the freedom to respond to the Lordship of Christ in all circumstances is fundamental to the Christian gospel and to human dignity; and

That witness to Christ is the ongoing task of every Christian and of every church.

Within the larger Baptist family, American Baptists emphasize convictions that direct our special task and ministry.

We affirm that God through Jesus Christ calls us to be:

A Redeemed People

- :who claim a personal relationship to God through Jesus Christ;
- :who follow the Lord in believer's baptism;
- :who gather as a believer's church;
- :who share in the meal of the kingdom known as the Lord's Supper;
- :who honor the priesthood of all believers; and
- :who live their faith as visible saints.

A Biblical People

- :who affirm the centrality of Scripture in our lives;
 - :who pursue the study of God's inspired Word as a mandate for faith and practice; and
- :who seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit for the understanding of Scripture, while respecting the common interpretation of Scripture within the community of believers.

A Worshiping People

- :who gather regularly to praise God;
- :who receive nourishment by communion with the Risen Christ;
- :who share an open and public confession of faith; and
 - :who believe that personal devotion brings vitality to corporate celebration.

A Mission People

- :who strive to fulfill the Great Commission to make disciples;
- :who invite persons to receive salvation and follow Christ;
- :who engage in educational, social, and health ministries;
- :who seek justice for all persons; and
 - :who provide prayer and financial support to sustain a worldwide mission outreach.

An Interdependent People

- :who affirm the Church's unity as given in Jesus Christ;
- :who gladly embody in our practice the ministry of the whole people of God;
 - :who recognize God's gifts for ministry and honor all offices of pastoral ministry;
 - :who live and work together "in association;" and
- :who bring the free church tradition to cooperative and ecumenical Christianity.

A Caring People

- :who care for the needy, the weak, and the oppressed;
- :who care for the earth and for all its creatures;

An Inclusive People

- :who, gifted by a variety of backgrounds, find unity in diversity and diversity in unity;
 - :who embrace a pluralism of race, ethnicity, and gender; and
 - :who acknowledge that there are individual differences of conviction and theology.

A Contemporary People

:who have a remembrance for the past and a vision for the future;
:who are committed to religious liberty and to the separation of church and state; :who call our present world to make Jesus Christ Lord of all life; and
:who trust the Holy Spirit for insight and power to live in the present age.

We further believe

:That God has called us forth to such an hour as this;
:That we live with a realizable hope;
:That all things are held together in Christ;
:That all creation will find its ultimate fulfillment in God;
:That we shall see the One whose we are; and
:That Jesus shall reign for ever and ever. 2



2 Taken from the American Baptist Website <http://www.abc-usa.org/about-us/identity-statement-1998/>



10 Facts
You Should Know About
American Baptists



The 1.3-million members and 5,500 congregations of American Baptist Churches USA share with more than 42 million Baptists around the world a common tradition begun in the early 17th century. That tradition has emphasized the Lordship and atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, believers' baptism, the competency of all believers to be in direct relationship with God and to interpret Scripture, the importance of the local church, the assurance of freedom in worship and opinion, and the need to be Christ's witnesses within society.

The following facts are representative of the tradition and practice of American Baptists.

In 1638 Roger Williams established the First Baptist Church in America in Rhode Island, whose government became the first in history founded on the guarantee of absolute religious freedom.





10 Factores *sobre los* Bautistas Americanos



Con una Membresía de más de 1.3 millones y más de 5,500 congregaciones en los Estados Unidos y Puerto Rico, las Iglesias Bautistas Americanas EUA comparten con más de 42 millones de Bautistas alrededor del mundo una tradición común que tiene sus orígenes en los inicios del siglo XVII. Como Bautistas afirmamos el Señorío y el sacrificio redentor de Jesucristo, el bautismo de los creyentes, el sacerdocio universal del cristiano, la importancia de la iglesia local, la libertad de expresión tanto en lo personal como en la adoración comunitaria y la necesidad de testificar de Jesucristo dentro de la sociedad.

Los siguientes factores representan nuestra tradición y práctica como Bautistas Americanos.

En 1638 Roger Williams estableció la Primera Iglesia Bautista en América en Rhode Island, cuyo gobierno fue el primero en la historia fundado sobre la garantía de una absoluta libertad religiosa.





1

American Baptists believe that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior, and that the Bible is the divinely inspired word of God that serves as the final written authority for living out the Christian faith.

American Baptists celebrate the fact that belief in Jesus Christ assures salvation and eternal fellowship with a loving God. The events of the first Easter week are the cornerstones of our faith: the death of Christ, in which He took upon Himself the sin of the world, and the Resurrection, which gave proof of His triumph over sin and death. Holy Scripture always has been for American Baptists the authoritative and trustworthy guide for knowing and serving the God who is revealed as Creator, Savior and Advocate.

2

For American Baptists the local church is the fundamental unit of mission in denominational life.

Baptist roots date back four centuries to a people seeking the opportunity to worship God as individual members of freely organized and freely functioning local churches. Baptists always have maintained the need for autonomous congregations, responsible for articulating their own doctrine, style of worship and mission.



3

American Baptists partake of two ordinances: believers' baptism and The Lord's Supper.

Baptism, an act of full immersion following Christ's example, is undertaken by those spiritually mature enough to understand its profound, symbolic significance: resurrection to new life in Christ. Through The Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion, the bread and cup that symbolize the broken body and shed blood offered by Christ recall God's great love for us—just as they did for the disciples on the eve of Christ's crucifixion.



4

American Baptists believe that the committed individual Christian can and should approach God directly, and that individual gifts of ministry should be shared.

American Baptists hold that all who truly seek God are both competent and called to develop in that relationship. They have rejected creeds or other statements that might compromise each believer's obligation to inter-



The Praise Team at the 18th Baptist World Congress



1

Los Bautistas Americanos creen que Jesucristo es Señor y Salvador y que la Biblia es la Palabra de Dios, inspirada divinamente, siendo ella nuestra final autoridad escrita para vivir nuestra fe cristiana.

Los Bautistas Americanos celebramos la salvación y la eterna comunión con Dios, quien nos ama, a través de nuestra fe en Jesucristo. Los eventos de la primera Semana Santa son el fundamento de nuestra fe: la muerte de Jesucristo, a través de la cual El tomo en si mismo el pecado del mundo; la resurrección de Jesucristo la cual representa Su victoria sobre el pecado y la muerte. Las Sagradas Escrituras siempre han sido para los Bautistas Americanos la máxima autoridad y guía confiable para conocer y servir a Dios quién se nos revela como Creador, Salvador y Consolador.

2

Los Bautistas Americanos afirmamos que la iglesia local es la unidad fundamental de misión en nuestra vida denominacional.

Nuestras raíces Bautistas nos hacen retroceder cuatro siglos para encontrar personas buscando la oportunidad de adorar a Dios como individuos en una iglesia con libertad para adorar y organizarse. Los Bautistas siempre han sostenido la importancia de la autonomía de la iglesia local, con la responsabilidad de articular su propia doctrina, estilo de adoración y misión.



3

Los Bautistas Americanos practicamos dos ordenanzas: el Bautismo de los Creyentes y la Cena del Señor.

El Bautismo de los creyentes por inmersión completa siguiendo el ejemplo de Jesucristo, es un acto realizado por personas lo suficientemente maduras espiritualmente para discernir su profundo significado y simbolismo: resucitar a una nueva vida en Jesucristo. A través de la Cena del Señor, el pan y la copa nos simbolizan el cuerpo partido y la sangre derramada por Cristo los cuales nos



recuerdan el gran amor de Dios para nosotros, de la misma manera que lo simbolizaron para discípulos la noche anterior a la crucifixión.



4

Los Bautistas Americanos creemos que los cristianos comprometidos pueden y deben acercarse a Dios de manera directa y que los dones individuales dados para el ministerio deben compartirse.

Los Bautistas Americanos sostienen que todos los que realmente buscan a Dios son competentes y llamados a desarrollar esa relación con Dios.

El grupo de Alabanza en el 18 Congreso Mundial Bautista.



Ann and Adoniram Judson were pivotal figures in church growth and discipleship in Burma in the first half of the 19th century.

pret Scripture under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and within the community of faith. American Baptists also celebrate the special gifts of all believers, testifying that God can use each of us in ministry.



American Baptists take seriously the call to evangelism and missionary work.

American Baptist worldwide mission work is a response to Christ's call to "make disciples of all nations." Through the efforts of our missionaries in partnership with others, ministries of evangelism, healing, education and development have made Christ's love known in the U.S. and around the world.



Joanna P. Moore established schools for freed African American women following the Civil War.



Lulu Fleming, the first female medical missionary appointed by Baptists, brought Christ's love to the people of the Congo in the 1880s.



North East Indian dancers at a recent Baptist conference



American Baptists support religious freedom and respect the expressions of faith of others.

As a people whose forbears came together in response to intolerance, American Baptists have cherished freedom and pursued it for millions around the world. Manifestations of that ideal include supporting separation of church and state, advocating for people everywhere to be guaranteed the right to worship free from discrimination, and lifting up respectful dialog as a healthy means to understanding.



American Baptists acknowledge that God's family extends beyond our local churches, and that God calls us to cooperative ministries.

Early Baptists saw that the effectiveness of their ministries would be greater through cooperation with other believers. Today within our American Baptist regions, churches work with each other and with denominational staff and in local and regional ecumenical arenas to increase the vitality and scope of their ministries. That outreach extends worldwide through our relationships with the Baptist World Alliance, the National Council of the Churches of Christ, the World Council of Churches and other groups.





Ann y Adoniram Judson fueron figuras importantes para el crecimiento de la iglesia y el discipulado en Burma durante la primera mitad del siglo XIX.

Ellos han rechazados credos o declaraciones que comprometan la responsabilidad de cada creyente de interpretar las Escrituras con la guía del Espíritu Santo y dentro de la comunidad de fe, testificando así que Dios puede usarnos a cada uno de nosotros en el ministerio.

5

Los Bautistas Americanos tomamos seriamente el llamado al evangelismo y a la labor misionera.

La misión Bautista Americana en todo el mundo es responder al llamado de Cristo de "hacer discípulos a todas las naciones." A través de los esfuerzos de nuestros misioneros y misioneras, en compañerismo con otros ministerios de evangelismo, salud, educación y desarrollo comunitario, damos a conocer el amor de Cristo en los Estados Unidos, Puerto Rico y alrededor del mundo.



Joanna P. Moore estableció escuelas para liberar a mujeres Afroamericanas después de la guerra civil.



Lulu Fleming, la primera doctora misionera llamada por los Bautistas, trajo el amor de Cristo a las personas del Congo alrededor de 1880.



Indios del Noreste danzan en una reciente conferencia Bautista.

6

Los Bautistas Americanos afirmamos la libertad religiosa y respetamos las expresiones de fe de otros.

Como personas que se asocian para responder a la intolerancia, los Bautistas Americanos apreciamos la libertad y la buscamos para millones alrededor del mundo. Manifestaciones a favor de dicho ideal incluyen el apoyo de la separación entre la iglesia y el estado, abogar a favor de la libertad religiosa libre de todo tipo de discriminación y motivando un diálogo respetuoso como un saludable camino para alcanzar la mutua comprensión.

7

Los Bautistas Americanos reconocemos que la familia de Dios se extiende más allá de nuestras iglesias locales y que el llamado de Dios implica desarrollar ministerios cooperativos.

Los primeros Bautistas muy pronto reconocemos que la efectividad de sus ministerios sería mayor a través de esfuerzos cooperativos con otros creyentes. Hoy, dentro de las regiones Bautistas Americanas, las iglesias trabajan en conjunto, con la participación del liderazgo denominacional, tanto en un esfuerzo local, regional, nacional, internacional e interdenominacional a fin de incrementar la vitalidad y el alcance de sus ministerios. El alcance de la misión se extiende a través de relaciones con el Concilio Nacional de Iglesias, el Concilio

Mundial de Iglesias, la Alianza Mundial Bautista y otros grupos reconocidos.





8 *American Baptists have been called to be Christ's witnesses for justice and wholeness within a broken society.*

American Baptists have been led by the Gospel mandates to promote holistic change within society, as witnessed by their advocacy of freed African Americans following the Civil War, the Civil Rights Movement, women in church and societal leadership, ecological responsibility, and many other issues. While not all of one mind as to how to deal with challenges, American Baptists do affirm the need to follow Christ's example by being actively involved in changing society.



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., an American Baptist pastor, brought a ministry of justice, peace and love that transformed U.S. society in the 1950s and 1960s.



10 *American Baptists heed the biblical call to renewal and the need for a vital witness in a new millennium.*

As people of faith, American Baptists seek renewal and revitalization. Informed by their history and tradition, motivated by contemporary needs and challenges, and strengthened by God's leading and the example and sacrifice of their Savior, American Baptists seek to bring a transforming witness to an uncharted future.



Additional information on American Baptist Churches USA resources, tradition and mission is available on the American Baptist Churches USA Website — www.abc-usa.org — or by calling the American Baptist Churches Mission Center at 1-800-ABC-3USA.



9 *American Baptist Churches USA celebrates the racial, cultural and theological diversity witnessed within its membership.*

American Baptist Churches USA today is the most racially inclusive Protestant body. Represented in our churches are equally diverse worship styles, cultural mores and approaches to Scriptural interpretation. The resulting challenges and opportunities have made us stronger — through fellowship, respect, mutual support and



P.O. Box 851
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www.abc-usa.org

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8

Los Bautistas Americanos han sido llamados a ser testigos de Jesucristo a favor de la justicia integral en medio de una sociedad quebrantada.

Los Bautistas Americanos son guiados por el Evangelio a fin de promover un cambio integral dentro de la sociedad, tal como lo atestiguan sus reclamos de libertad después de la Guerra Civil, en el Movimiento de Derechos Civiles, el liderazgo de la mujer en la sociedad y la iglesia, la responsabilidad ecológica, y muchos otros temas. Aunque no todos los Bautistas Americanos coinciden siempre en como lidiar con los desafíos que se nos presentan a diario, afirmamos la necesidad de seguir el ejemplo de Jesucristo al estar activamente involucrados en promover el cambio dentro de la sociedad.



9

Los Bautistas Americanos celebramos la diversidad racial, cultural y teológica representada en nuestra Membresía.

Hoy las Iglesias Bautistas Americanas representan la denominación protestante más racialmente inclusiva. Representadas en nuestras iglesias hay una gran diversidad en los estilos de adoración, culturas y diferentes acercamientos a la interpretación de las Escrituras. Como resultado, los desafíos y oportunidades nos han fortalecido como cuerpo, mediante la comunión, el respeto, el



El Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., quien fuera un pastor Bautista Americano desarrolló un ministerio de justicia, paz y amor que transformó la sociedad americana alrededor de 1950 y 1960.

10

Los Bautistas Americanos sostenemos el llamado bíblico a ser renovados; necesitamos implementar un testimonio vital al enfrentar un nuevo milenio.

Como personas de fe, los Bautistas Americanos buscamos la renovación y revitalización. Informados por nuestra historia y tradición, motivados por nuestras desafíos y necesidades contemporáneas y fortalecidos por nuestro Dios quien nos da su ejemplo a través del sacrificio de Jesucristo, los Bautistas Americanos damos un testimonio transformador en medio de un futuro incierto.



Información adicional de las Iglesias Bautistas Americanas EUA, sus recursos, tradición y misión esta disponible en la página electrónica— www.abc-usa.org— o llamando al Centro de Misión Bautista Americano al 1-800-ABC-3USA.



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About the Church-in-the-Garden

The Church-in-the-Garden is a warm, welcoming, multicultural, American Baptist church family located in Garden City, Long Island. Our members come from many different countries and many different walks of life, yet we are all united in the love of Jesus Christ and our commitment to live and share the Good News of the Gospel with all that we meet.

No matter who you are, where you come from, and where you are in your faith journey, you will find love and acceptance here at the Church-in-the-Garden.

As a new member you should know how our Church is arranged. Firstly, we are congregational in our polity. That means the head of every Christian Church is Christ. In terms of governance, all of the members within the church fellowship are to have equal voice in the governance of the church. Yet, we do have in place an organizational structure in our church that ensures the business of the church is done efficiently and in order.

Pastor

The pastor is charged with ultimate spiritual care and authority in the life of the congregation. The Pastor is the leader of the church in all of its activities. The Pastor shall be a non-voting member of the Board of Ministry and all committees and auxiliary organizations of the church. In other words, the Pastor is *ex officio* of all committees and boards of the church.

Working with the pastor is the Church-in-the-Garden Board of Ministry.

Board of Ministry

Our Board of Ministry consists of individual members who have been elected and tasked with being the stewards of our church. Particular to the Church-in-the-Garden, our Board of Ministry members are both designated as **Deacons** and **Trustees**. Their firm commitment to Christ and to the mission of this church provides the necessary support to keep the church moving forward. Our Church-in-the-Garden Board positions are:

Moderator – The moderator is the person designated to preside over church business meetings and meetings of an advisory council or executive committee.

Treasurer- The church treasurer is an elected officer who works closely with the board of trustees as the custodian of church funds, and, where such responsibilities are separated, with the finance committee for administering the budget of the church. In a large church that employs a church administrator, the treasurer should supervise any activities of the administrator relating to financial affairs.

Church Clerk/Historian- The church clerk is an elected individual officer of the church who is responsible for keeping accurate records of church meetings, writing the official correspondence of the church (regarding reports to denominations, transfers of membership letters, and so on) and maintaining the membership roll in good order. The person selected for this office should be one who is meticulous and accurate in detail and able to participate in the meetings and administrative work of the church.

Financial Secretary - The work of the financial secretary is the exacting and important task of maintaining accurate records regarding members' financial contributions. This is important not only for the ability of the church to project and plan for financial needs but also because individual members will expect accurate records for tax purposes. If a system of pledging or annual commitment is followed, the financial secretary must identify payments and contributions as they are received and keep an accurate accounting of them. Likewise, special gifts for designated purposes, memorials, building funds, or special offerings will need similar record keeping. At regular intervals the financial secretary will send each contributor a written status of account, and, at the end of the year, a complete record of the year's contributions in all categories will help contributors in reporting their taxes.

Assistant Treasurer – the Assistant Treasurer position continues the work of the Treasurer and assumes the responsibility when the Treasurer is unavailable.

Members-at-Large - The Members-at-Large are elected to the Board because they have shown the willingness to be faithful and dedicated persons to the church and its ministry. They are expected to be present at all Board functions and to contribute in time, talent, and tithes to the church.

Expectation of Members

As a member we expect you to endeavor to do the following:

1. Protect the unity of my church

By acting in love toward other members. “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity” (Colossians 3:12-14, NIV).

By refusing to gossip. “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen” (Ephesians 4:29, NIV).

By supporting the leaders. “Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other” (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, NIV).

2. Share the responsibilities of my church

By praying for its growth. “We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3, NIV).

By sharing Christ with others. “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8, NIV).

By warmly welcoming our guests. “Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God” (Romans 15:7, NIV).

3. Serve in a ministry of the church

By discovering my spiritual gifts and human talents. “Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms” (1 Peter 4:10, NIV).

By being equipped by my leaders to serve. “It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up” (Ephesians 4:11-12, NIV).

By developing a servant's heart. "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:4-5, NIV).

4. Support the ministry of my church

By attending faithfully. "Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching" (Hebrews 10:25, NIV).

By living a godly life. "Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel" (Philippians 1:27, NIV).

By giving regularly. "On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made" (1 Corinthians 16:2, NIV).

These expectations are more succinctly formulated in our Church Covenant:

Church Covenant

Having been led to receive the Lord Jesus as our Savior and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We promise, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the spiritual growth of this church and to sustain its worship, ordinances and doctrines. We also promise, as good stewards, to contribute regularly of our time, our talents and our money to the support of the church, the assistance of those in need and the evangelism of the world.

We resolve to maintain family and private devotions, to educate our children in the Christian way of life, to win souls to Christ, to be just in our dealings, faithful in our duties and exemplary in our deportment.

We pledge to watch over one another in brotherly concern, to remember one another in prayer, to help one another in sickness and distress and to strengthen the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love.

We agree that when we remove from this place and can no longer attend this church, we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's word.

We Expect Members to be Good Stewards

Stewardship/Tithing

“Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house, and try me now in this,” Says the Lord of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you *such* blessing That *there will not be room enough to receive it.*”

(Malachi 3:10 NKJV)

“Traed todos los diezmos al alfolí y haya alimento en mi Casa: Probadme ahora en esto, dice Jehová de los ejércitos, a ver si no os abro las ventanas de los cielos y derramo sobre vosotros bendición hasta que sobreabunde.”

(Malachi 3:10 RVR95)

Baptists believe that everything a person owns is a gift from God, and individuals are merely caretakers of their material possessions. Within this context tithing is not viewed as generosity from a Christian to the church, but a way to worship God by returning to him a small portion of that with which he has blessed the believer.

On Stewardship

Faithful disciples of Jesus Christ live with the knowledge that all of life comes from God and belongs to God, and we are entrusted with its use and care. When we consider evangelism to be the process that helps other people give their lives to Christ, then we can also think of stewardship as the process to live our lives for Christ. As faithful disciples learn to be stewards, we practice a lifestyle of stewardship. Baptists believe that everything a person has, including their time and talents, are gifts from God. Behaving as a good steward of these resources entails using them for God’s glory and the service of the church. Baptist teaching emphasizes God receives glory when Christians joyfully, rather than begrudgingly, give of the blessings he has bestowed. The Church-in-the-Garden wants you to be a better steward in your faithfulness to Christ. We are excited that you want share your gifts.

On Tithing

Baptists base their practice of tithing on biblical precedent set forth in the Bible's Old and New Testaments. Deuteronomy 14:22 instructs, "You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year." In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus explains giving monetarily is less about quantity and more about generosity of spirit. After witnessing a poor widow tithe only two coins Jesus says, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on." In other words, **tithing is equal sacrifice not equal giving!**

Here are five things to think about regarding the giving of your tithes:

1) Giving to God allows you to see God as your Provider

1 Chronicles 29:16 O Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a house for your holy name comes from your hand and is all your own.

1 Chronicas 29:16 Jehová, Dios nuestro, toda esta abundancia que hemos preparado para edificar Casa a tu santo nombre, de tu mano procede y todo es tuyo.

Psalms 24:1 The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it.

Salmos 24:1 De Jehová es la tierra y su plenitud, el mundo y los que en él habitan,

2) Giving to God allows you to overcome financial fears and worries

1 Kings 17:13-16 Elijah said to her, "Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son."

1 Reyes 17:13-16 Elías le dijo: No tengas temor: ve y haz como has dicho; pero hazme con ello primero una pequeña torta cocida debajo de la ceniza, y tráemela. Después la harás para ti y para tu hijo. Porque Jehová, Dios de Israel, ha dicho así: "La harina de la tinaja no escaseará, ni el aceite de la vasija disminuirá, hasta el día en que Jehová haga llover sobre la faz de la tierra."

Genesis 28:20-22 Then Jacob made a vow, saying... "of all that you give me I will surely give one-tenth to you."

Genesis 28:20-22 Allí hizo voto Jacob, diciendo: «Si va Dios conmigo y me guarda en este viaje en que estoy, si me da pan para comer y vestido para

vestir **21** y si vuelvo en paz a casa de mi padre, Jehová será mi Dios. **22** Y esta piedra que he puesto por señal será casa de Dios; y de todo lo que me des, el diezmo apartaré para ti.»

3) Giving to God allows you to bring God's order to your finances

Deuteronomy 4:23 The purpose of tithing is to teach you always to put God first in your lives.

Deuteronomio 4:23 Guardaos, no os olvidéis del pacto que Jehová, vuestro Dios, estableció con vosotros, y no os hagáis escultura o imagen de ninguna cosa que Jehová, tu Dios, te ha prohibido.

Proverbs 3:9 Honor the Lord with your substance and with the firstfruits of all your produce.

Proverbios 3:9 »Honra a Jehová con tus bienes y con las primicias de todos tus frutos;

4) Giving to God allows you to fight the dragon of materialism

Luke 12:15 "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions."

Lucas 12:15 Y les dijo:—Mirad, guardaos de toda avaricia, porque la vida del hombre no consiste en la abundancia de los bienes que posee.

1 Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

1 Timoteo 6:10 porque raíz de todos los males es el amor al dinero, el cual codiciando algunos, se extraviaron de la fe y fueron atormentados con muchos dolores.

5) Giving to God allows you to experience more joy

1 Corinthians 16:2 On the first day of every week, each of you is to put aside and save whatever extra you earn.

1 Corintios 16:2 porque raíz de todos los males es el amor al dinero, el cual codiciando algunos, se extraviaron de la fe y fueron atormentados con muchos dolores.

2 Corinthians 8:2 During a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity.

2 Corintios 8:2 porque, en las grandes tribulaciones con que han sido probadas, la abundancia de su gozo y su profunda pobreza abundaron en riquezas de su generosidad.

Tithing Chart

Grow Your Weekly Giving Chart

ANNUAL INCOME	WEEKLY GIVING											
	15%	12%	10%	9%	8%	7%	6%	5%	4%	3%	2%	1%
10,000	29	23	19	17	15	13	12	10	8	6	4	2
15,000	43	35	29	26	23	20	17	14	12	9	6	3
20,000	58	46	38	35	31	27	23	19	15	12	8	4
25,000	72	58	48	43	38	34	29	24	19	14	10	5
30,000	87	69	58	52	46	40	35	29	23	17	12	6
35,000	101	81	67	61	54	47	40	34	27	20	13	7
40,000	115	92	77	69	62	54	46	38	31	23	15	8
45,000	130	104	87	78	69	61	52	43	35	26	17	9
50,000	144	115	96	87	77	67	58	48	38	29	19	10
55,000	159	127	106	95	85	74	63	53	42	32	21	11
60,000	173	138	115	104	92	81	69	58	46	35	23	12
65,000	188	150	125	113	100	88	75	63	50	38	25	13
70,000	202	162	135	121	108	94	81	67	54	40	27	13
75,000	216	173	144	130	115	101	87	72	58	43	29	14
80,000	231	185	154	138	123	108	92	77	62	46	31	15
85,000	245	196	163	147	131	114	98	82	65	49	33	16
90,000	260	208	173	156	138	121	104	87	69	52	35	17
95,000	274	219	183	164	146	128	110	91	73	55	37	18
100,000	288	231	192	173	154	135	115	96	77	58	38	19
150,000	433	346	288	260	231	202	173	144	115	87	58	29
200,000	577	462	385	346	308	269	231	192	154	115	77	38

HOLY
BIBLE

Our History

On September 27, 1944, Stanley B. Hazzard, the Executive Secretary of the Baptist Church Extension Society of Brooklyn and Queens, wrote a letter expressing the desire to start a new church extension enterprise in Nassau County. Accordingly, Reverend Allen C. Crawford was appointed to make a study to determine if there was an interest within the community area referred to as “East of Garden City and south of Mineola.”

In January 1945, Reverend Crawford completed the survey, known as the East Garden City Project, which showed a “keen interest” by the people in the area. The new church enterprise was to serve the people in the vicinity of the Mott Development Community. It was also announced that Mr. Crawford had been appointed Minister-in-Charge and that the first meeting would be held Sunday, January 25, 1945 in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Cursley. As growth took place, a room at the Garden City Hotel was used for worship services, the first of which was held Sunday, February 18, 1945. Although the project was sponsored by the Baptist Church Extension Society of Brooklyn and Queens, the church was to be “interdenominational under Baptist auspices.” Incorporation of the church was completed 1946 using the name Church-in-the-Garden.

In 1946, the decision was made to purchase lots on Osborne Road and Clinton and Stewart Avenues. It was agreed the first section of the building should be the educational wing. By June 22, 1949, the Educational Building was dedicated. Four additional lots were needed and purchased from Garden City Company, which brought the total lots to six that amount to three acres. As the educational wing was outgrown, the Church began making plans for the new sanctuary in November 1953. Groundbreaking for the sanctuary took place in July 1955 and was dedicated on September 9, 1956.

Our Pastors

Reverend Allen P. Crawford (1945 -1947) was the founding Pastor.

Reverend Dr. Joseph C. Robbins (1947-1949) was the first called Pastor to the church. He served in the Philippines for seven years, was president of the Baptist Convention for two terms, and authored four books.

Reverend Evan J. Shearman (1949-1959) He guided the congregation through the major building phases.

Reverend Robert Burdette Rose (1959-1968) He was previously program coordinator of the Council of Finance and Promotion of the American Baptist Convention.

Reverend Edward N. Harrell (1968-1971) was a graduate of the Bible College of South Carolina and Crozier Seminary.

Reverend George E. Vanderpoel (1971-1984) a Navy Chaplain for 25 years, provided a strong teaching ministry. The emphasis of Reverend Vanderpoel's ministry was Bible Study. There were seven new translations to be studied and compared. A church history class was taught by him, which was very informative.

Reverend Paul S. Dodge (1985 to 1994) was called to the church as Pastor after the untimely death of Reverend Vanderpoel. Reverend Dodge and his wife Winnie came to the church having served as missionaries in Thailand for 25 years. Under his pastorate, Sunday School for children was resumed and emphasized, adult Bible study and Bible study groups were mandated, opportunities for fellowship increased, the church became more active in outside ministries, and prayer meeting opportunities were enhanced. As a result of these programs the membership grew significantly. After almost nine years of service at the Church-in-the-Garden, Reverend Dodge and Winnie were recommissioned to missionary duties in Thailand.

Reverend Dr. Donald Hillyard (1996-2000) was called to the church as Pastor in January 1996. Reverend Hillyard and his wife, Betty, brought new attention to the children's programs and began the Vacation Bible School and Pioneer programs. The church began to use the Whole People of God curriculum for the Sunday Bible study for all ages.

Reverend Earl Y. Thorpe Jr., Ph.D., was unanimously called to the church as its Pastor in the summer of 2014. He has led in the redesign of the church website, marketing materials, and streamlining various ministries and operations. He has led the church in the renovation of the sanctuary and plant. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, he implemented a virtual live stream component to worship that has now become a standard part of our worship offering. Church attendance has grown and now welcomes a more diversified multicultural audience.