

MEANINGFUL MEMBERSHIP



SEVERNA PARK BAPTIST CHURCH
GROWING GODLY GENERATIONS

last update: February 2021

WELCOME

To Severna Park Baptist Church

Meaningful Membership Orientation

This “Membership Orientation” is designed to be informative (you will likely learn a few things), refreshing (you should walk away encouraged toward faith, hope, and love), and compelling (we hope you consider taking the next step with us for membership). Our desire is for every member and potential member to understand our church’s mission and vision as well as the benefits and commitments in being a member of a local church.

In all, we appreciate your participation and hope that you will be blessed by being a part of this orientation. Please know that this orientation is meant to be interactive, so if you have a question, do not hesitate to ask!

Believing in Jesus Christ and **belonging** to a local church is not an insignificant matter. In fact, both are of extreme importance. Knowing and loving Jesus Christ as Savior from sin and Lord of life is an amazing journey of faith. However, it is best lived out in community with others who can encourage, challenge and support each other. The reality is that Christianity is meant for both believing and belonging. Un-belonging and uninvolved membership are contradictory terms. Membership in a local church is (should be) stronger than being a member in any other organization because it relates to issues of eternity. One person has quipped, “You can’t love Jesus and hate his bride.” Simply stated, we are asking every member to have an understanding and affirmation of this orientation in fulfillment of an active membership status at SPBC. At the end of this orientation you will be asked to sign and date your commitment.

So, what is 'Meaningless Membership' or what happens if we do not have meaningful membership? We lose at least in three key areas:

1. Loss of purity: The church loses its essence and nature of believing and belonging to Jesus Christ. If the Christian church is not made up of Christians, then it's no different than another social organization/club. This mindset encourages a false assurance of salvation (I'm on a roll, so I'm "saved" and "spiritual"); and false sheep (any person detracting from true Christian doctrine/practice or dividing church unity creating self-made mission and agendas).

We must consider that pastors will stand before God giving an account of how they shepherded God's church (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

2. Loss of purpose: The church loses a clear understanding of why it exists in vision, ministry structure and emphasis, etc. Clear communication of purpose must filter through not just leadership but every member of our church for maximum effectiveness and fruit bearing for God's kingdom.

We must consider that pastors and members are not to forsake God's purposes (Matthew 28:18-20; Hebrews 10:19-25).

3. Loss of planning: The church loses focus on why and how to organize ministries and events, or much more create and maintain a successful budget. Productive planning can happen when there is a clear purpose and an understanding that others will participate. Ministries run by a select few are dangerously unbiblical and not very effective. The idea of partnership and investment are missed in meaningless membership.

We must consider that Christians are called to be fully devoted to Jesus and one another in biblical community (Acts 2:42-47).

Christianity & SPBC

Believers in Jesus Christ

Ephesians 2:1-10 “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

Salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone. The gospel is not religious performance (going to church, tithe, serve, etc.). Nor is it spiritual license of reckless freedom. It is the good news of a Person – Jesus Christ – whom God sent into the world to reveal God and righteousness and to become humanity’s replacement for the consequences of sin, being death. By God’s grace, through turning away from sin (repentance) and turning toward God in faith, a person is marvelously transformed to new life in Christ.

Read also: John 3:16-17; Acts 2:14-41; 1Corinthians 15:3-5; 1John 1:1-10.

Resources: What Is The Gospel (Greg Gilbert); The Cross Centered Life (C.J. Mahaney); Stop Asking Jesus Into Your Heart (J.D. Greear)

Notes/Questions:

Bible

Psalm 19 1 The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. 2 Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. 3 There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. 4 Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tent for the sun, 5 which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy. 6 Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them, and there is nothing hidden from its heat. 7 The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; 8 the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; 9 the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. 11 Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward. 12 Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults. 13 Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me! Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression. 14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

SPBC View of Scripture:

- Inspired: God is revealed and knowable through the words of Scripture. (2Timothy 3:16)
- Inerrancy: God's word is perfect and without error, and is trustworthy. (2Peter 1:16-21)
- Infallible: God's word is true to all that it speaks in the world and to life. (Matthew 5:17-18; John 17:17)
- Intimate: God's word is a treasure for our life and living. (Psalm 1; 119:105; James 1:22)

S.O.A.P.S. Acronym: Scripture, Observations, Application, Prayer, Share.

Resources: Multiply (Francis Chan); The God Who Is There (D.A. Carson); Bible Doctrine (Wayne Grudem)

Notes/Questions:

Body of Christ (Family of Faith)

Ephesians 4:11-16 **11** And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, **12** to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, **13** 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, **14** 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. **15** Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, **16** from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

SPBC Leadership Structure

- Christ as Head of the Church / Chief Shepherd-Pastor
- Congregation: We are an autonomous congregation where members vote.
- Church Leadership Council
 - o Love God:
 - Worship
 - o Love Others:
 - Building & Grounds,
 - Personnel,
 - Stewardship,
 - Trustee
 - Fellowship (Deacons)
 - o Lead Generations:
 - Great Commission
 - Children/Youth
 - Adult
- Church Deacon Ministry
- Church Ministry Staff
 - o Ministry Assistant:
 - o Children's Ministry Coordinator: April Montagne
- Church Pastor(s)
 - o Dave Brown (Lead Pastor)
 - o Bill Bloomquist (Pastor of Worship & Connections)

Transitioning Structure

As of 2021, we are transitioning our structure under this phrasing:

Jesus-ruled, congregational-accountable, deacon-served, pastor-led church.

We believe this structure will enable greater effectiveness in our shepherding members and facilitating our ministry to accomplish our mission – the Great Commission.

- ◇ Jesus-ruled implies our submission to Christ and God’s word.
- ◇ Congregational-accountable implies our local body of believers is autonomous and maintains accountability for itself in doctrine and discipline.
- ◇ Deacon-served implies the initiative and installation of members who serve the unity and ministry of the church.
- ◇ Pastor-led implies the church installs and entrusts the ministry leadership to a plurality of pastors (vocational and non-vocational).

Read: Matthew 16:15-19; Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 2:19-20; Hebrews 10:19-25

Resources: Nine Marks Of A Healthy Church (Mark Dever); What Is A Healthy Church Member (Thabiti Anyabwile); Thirty Years That Changed The World (Michael Green)

Notes/Questions:

HOW TO MAKE DISCIPLES



Baptist

Matthew 28:18-20 **18** And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** 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, **20** teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

- Baptism by immersion
 - o Obedience to Jesus; picture of the gospel
 - o Required by all seeking membership.
 - o See: Matthew 3:15-16; Acts 2:41, 8:26-39, 9:18, 10:47
 - o Note: SPBC view of infant baptism is not wrong per se, just incomplete. Essentially, infant baptism was a parent's decision whereas immersion baptism is not only the biblical mode picturing Christ's death and resurrection, but an individual's choice by personal faith.

- Southern Baptist Convention Baptist Faith Message 2000
 - o Doctrinal statements of belief. See Appendix or found at website: <http://sbc.net/translate/basicEnglish/TheBaptistFaithAndMessage.pdf> (See page 14 and ff. of the appendix)

 - o Cooperative Program missions giving with ABN, BCMD, NAMB, IMB
 - SPBC gives 5+% (~\$10+K) to the CP, 1% to IMB and ___% to ABN. CP monies are distributed to BCMD and then onward to the NAMB/IMB, etc.

Read: Matthew 3:13-17; Acts 2:41-42; 8:26-39; 9:18; 10:47-48; 16:15; 16:33; 18:8; 19:4-5

Notes/Questions:

Bylaws & Budget

Romans 12:1-13 **1** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. **2** Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. **3** For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. **4** For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, **5** so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. **6** Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; **7** if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; **8** the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. **9** Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. **10** Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. **11** Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. **12** Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. **13** Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

- Copies of current Bylaws & Budget are available by contacting church office.
- Vision: Growing Godly Generations
- Mission: SPBC exists to equip people to Love God (gospel), Live Jesus (family) and Lead Generations (mission).
- Values: G.O.S.P.E.L.



**SPBC exists to equip people to
Love God, Live Jesus, and Lead Generations**

GOD: We are worshipers.

- Romans 11:33-36; Matthew 6:33
- God made us for worship; therefore, we exist for God.
- God's Word is the means which we are given to know, love, and follow God in faith.

Meaningful Membership: I will honor God through faithful personal and corporate worship with my church.

OTHERS: We are family and friends.

- Romans 12:9-21; 1John 4:7-21
- God called us to love each other; therefore, we belong to one another through the local church.

Meaningful Membership: I will honor God through faithful friendships, protecting unity in my church and participate in a small group Bible fellowship (Sunday or other).

SPIRITUAL GROWTH: We are thermostats impacting communities and culture.

- Romans 12:1-8; Acts 2:42-47; 1Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:1-16; 1Peter 2:9-12; 4:8-11
- Spiritual maturity and discipleship is for every believer; therefore, we are to grow in faith and service.

Meaningful Membership: I will honor God through faithful discipleship growth and service with my time, talents (spiritual gifts) and treasure (tithes and offerings).

PRAYER: We are spiritual warriors.

- Romans 12:12; Philippians 4:4-8; Colossians 4:2-6; 1Thessalonians 5:16-22; Hebrews 4:14-16
- Life can be war and our greatest weapons are faith, hope, love, and prayer.
- Prayer confesses our dependence upon God; therefore, our prayer life reflects God's means to develop our character and impact life circumstances.

Meaningful Membership: I will honor God through faithful prayer for myself and the world around me.

EVANGELISM: We are sent to share the gospel of Jesus with neighbors and across the nations.

- Romans 10:15; 15:20; Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 10:25-37; Acts 1:8
- Glocal (local & global) evangelism and missions are a priority; therefore, we aim to cultivate intentional relationships and strategic partners to spread the truth and love of Jesus Christ.

Meaningful Membership: I will honor God through faithfully promoting the gospel with my life and proclaiming the gospel with my lips to others.

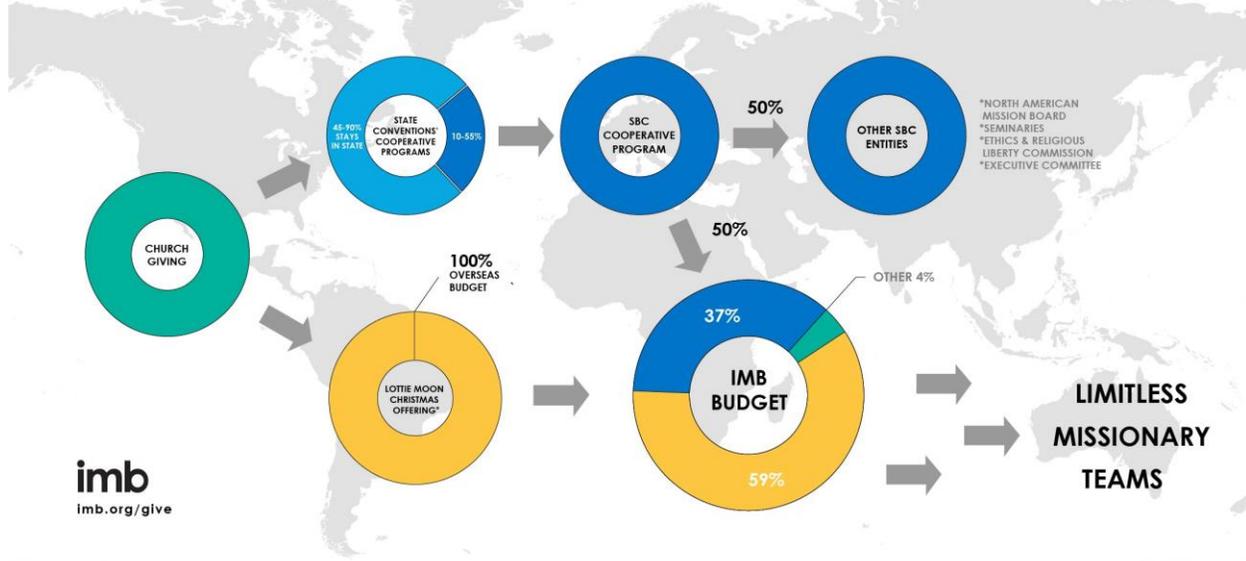
LEADING GENERATIONS: We are leaving a legacy of growing godly generations.

- Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Exodus 20:5-6; Psalm 78:1-8; 145:4; Ephesians 3:20-21
- Godly leaders in the home, church and community are essential to a future spiritual legacy; therefore, developing leaders in each of these areas is our heartbeat.

Meaningful Membership: I will honor God through faithful investment of growing godly generations in my home, church, and community.

APPENDIX

GIVING TO SEND MISSIONARIES



- 1 Your church decides how much of the money members give will be sent to your state convention for use through the SBC's Cooperative Program.
- 2 State convention messengers vote on what percentage of these funds stay in the state and what percentage is forwarded to the Cooperative Program.
- 3 Slightly more than half of these Cooperative Program funds go to the IMB (comprising 37% of IMB's total budget) and the remainder to other SBC entities.
- 4 Every penny your church gives to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering directly funds your IMB missionaries as they work to bring unreached peoples to Christ.
- 5 Over 59% of the IMB's total budget comes from Lottie Moon gifts.

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering® is a registered trademark of IMB®

*Compiled as of January 2012 from Baptist Press research on behalf of the SBC Executive Committee. All other percentages include shared ministry expenses. **Percentages as of February 2012.

BAPTIST FAITH & MESSAGE 2000

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. 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. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Psalm 19:7-10; Matthew 5:17-18; 2Timothy 3:15-17; 2Peter 1:19-21

II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

Genesis 1:1-2, 26; Exodus 20:1-3; Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 42:8; John 1:1-2, 14; 10:30; Matthew 28:19; Romans 8:14-16; Galatians 4:4-7; Philippians 4:4-7; Colossians 1:15, 19; Revelation 22:13

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet

without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-27, 3:15-16, 9:6; Psalm 8:3-6, 139; Romans 5:19;

V. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

Genesis 3:15, 15:6; John 3:16-17; Acts 4:12; 2Corinthians 5:17-21; Romans 3:21-25, 8:1-39; Ephesians 2:1-10;

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility. All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the

cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

John 6:36-40; Romans 8:29-39, 9:19-24; Ephesians 1:3-14; Philippians 1:6, 2:12-13; Jude 1:24

VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1Timothy 3:15; Hebrews 10:19-25; 1Peter 5:1-4

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 14:22-25; Acts 2:41-42; 1Corinthians 11:23-29

VIII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Mark 2:27-28; Colossians 2:16-17

IX. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Mark 1:14-15; Matthew 6:10, 33; Colossians 1:13; Titus 2:14; Revelation 21:1-2

X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Matthew 16:27, 24:29-31; Acts 17:30-31; 1Corinthians 15:23-26, 50-57; Philippians 3:20-21; 1Thessalonians 4:13-17; 2Peter 3:7-13; Revelation 1:7; 22:12-13; 21:1-8

XI. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It

is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Matthew 9:37-38; Matthew 28:19-20; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; Romans 10:13-15

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Genesis 1:28; Deuteronomy 6:7-9; Proverbs 3:13-15; Luke 2:40; 2Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17

XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Deuteronomy 8:18; Psalm 24:1; Malachi 3:8-10; Matthew 6:1-4, 19-21; 25:14-29; 2Corinthians 8:9; 9:6-8; 1Peter 4:10

XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Matthew 10:11; Mark 9:39-40; Philippians 1:18

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Micah 6:8; Amos 5:14-15; Matthew 5:13-16; Luke 4:16-21; 10:25-37; James 1:27

XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9, 43-45; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-4

XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Romans 13:1-7; 1Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1Peter 2:11-17

XVIII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 2:18-25; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Psalm 127 & 139; and Ephesians 5:21-6:4

SPBC AS MISSIONAL

When people are looking for a church they typically look for one that can meet and serve all their individual or family needs. This is not necessarily a negative approach. People do have legitimate needs and God's people are certainly created to serve and care for others. However, if the church takes this approach to the fullest extreme in attempting to meet all the needs it becomes what is known as an "Attractional" model of ministry.

Attractional ministry creates numerous programs at the church for people to attend. At first glance this seems great, but after long it becomes a juggling act. The church is seldom able to keep the frantic pace of resourcing with staff or volunteers, financial support, physical space and the multiple other elements. In addition, the people are taught to be consumers, picking and choosing to their wants and at times even expecting or demanding their needs be met... or they will take their toys and go home! Such churches launch with high hopes but fall flat in a short span.

Another approach is a house-church model of ministry. This approach seeks to be incarnational, with very few church programs, for the purpose of having its believing members sent out to be among the unbelieving world. The church exists outside the walls of a building and reaches out to friends, neighbors, co-workers, school peers and all the like. Again, this approach resonates with many, especially the contemporary generation suspicious of organization and institutions. An emphasis is on being/doing church rather than going to church. Yet, ultimately this approach is incomplete in that it does not provide a clearly biblical disciple-making strategy. People are not connected to God's body and much more taught biblical truths and beliefs.

These approaches must be blended. We must be a church that attracts people to the gospel, the church body and caring for one another, and also equipping disciples to be sent on mission with God into the world. This is a beginning understanding of what it means to be a "Missional" church. The unbelieving world must be engaged with more than just good works but also good beliefs. Christians are to embody both grace and truth as reflections of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

In all, Severna Park Baptist Church is envisioning being a church that is

- is **united** in membership and **urgent** in Jesus' mission.
- **impacts the spiritually lost** through truthfully and lovingly proclaiming the gospel of Jesus with our lips and promoting the gospel with our lives.
- **impacts the spiritually disconnected** through church strengthening and church starting among our neighborhoods and among the nations.
- **impacts the fragmented family** through enriching marriages, encouraging parents, and equipping families for relational unity and spiritual mission.
- **impacts the generationally segmented** through intergenerational worship and ministry experiences.
- **impacts the racially divided** through a hospitable church culture and through multi-ethnic ministry & church partnerships.
- **impacts the disinterested community** through tangible acts of love & service in Jesus' name.

MEMBERSHIP WITH SPBC

We are thankful for your interest in becoming a member at SPBC. After reviewing and affirming the Meaningful Membership Orientation with a Pastor or church leader, you can officially become a member by one of three ways:

1. Salvation & Baptism.

Upon your faith in Christ, a Pastor will schedule a Sunday for your public baptism with our church body.

2. SBC Church Letter.

Many Southern Baptist Churches organize membership in a like-minded manner. You can provide us the contact information from the previous church where you were a member and we can notify them for your new membership with our church family.

3. Statement.

If you are a Christian and already experienced believer's baptism, but do not have formal membership at another church, we will receive you upon your salvation statement of Jesus Christ.



**Severna Park Baptist Church
Member Information**

		DOB:			
Last Name:				Maiden Name:	
First Name:				Middle Initial:	
Street Address:					
City:		State:		Zip Code:	
Home Phone:				Mobile Phone:	
Email Address:					
Employer:				Occupation:	

Under 18
 Single
 Married
 Divorced
 Widow(er)

Spouse Name:				Anniversary:	
Name & DOB of minor children living at home					

Membership Information

Baptism <input type="checkbox"/>	Date:	Name/Address of Previous Church:
Letter <input type="checkbox"/>	Date:	
Statement <input type="checkbox"/>	Date:	

To be Completed by Church Office Only

Completed Meaningful Membership <input type="checkbox"/>	Date:	
New Member Letter Sent <input type="checkbox"/>	Date:	
Voted in by Church Membership <input type="checkbox"/>	Date:	
Assigned Deacon:		
Small Group:		
Background Check for Volunteers <input type="checkbox"/>	Date:	