

Northshore Christian Church

Addendum I

Statement of Beliefs and Practices

What we're about:

"Where there is no vision the people perish." (Proverbs 29:18 KJV)

Our Goal:

To know and glorify Jesus Christ our Lord! (Philippians 3:7-11)

Our Mission:

- I. The Great Commandment. (Mark 12:29-31) Love God, Love people.
- II. The Great commission. (Matthew 28:19-20)

Discipleship:

To train believers in prayer, service, and obedience to God.

Evangelism:

To reach out to those who do not know Christ as Savior and Lord by sharing Biblical truths about salvation; starting in our own homes, then in our community, and ultimately around the world.

Fellowship:

To encourage these disciples in their growth through relationship and examples of Christian living.

Our strategies:

Teaching, fellowship, and prayer. (Acts 2:42)

- I. We offer a Sunday morning church meeting, weekly prayer meetings, weekly Bible studies, and praise team. We also offer a variety of activities, such as family oriented youth activities, and a home school support group, each designed to encourage and equip families to live out the Great Commission. We also desire to reach out to the community by meeting needs whenever possible in order to demonstrate the love of Christ (e.g., prison ministry, crisis pregnancy).
- II. We desire to be a church that truly focuses our attention outward (toward helping others) rather than inward (building a big organization and amassing large amounts of property). Our goal is to give away more than we keep for ourselves (James 2:15, 16).

Our foundation:

What we believe based on the Word of God. (Colossians 2:8)

- I. The Bible is "God-breathed" and is the "inspired" Word of God – A lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. (2 Timothy 3:16)
- II. Jesus Christ is the one and only Son of God who died for our sins and rose from the dead. (1 Corinthians 15:1-8)
- III. Every person has worth as a creation of God, but that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)
- IV. Forgiveness of sins and the promise of eternal life are available to those who trust Christ as Lord and Savior. (John 3:16)
- V. Those accepting Christ must repent of sin, confess their faith, be baptized into Him, and strive to live an obedient life. (Acts 3:19, Romans 10:9, Acts 2:38, Hebrews 5:9) The leaders of this church believe and teach that a person must have faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior prior to their Baptism and that the Biblical mode of baptism is immersion.

- VI. Jesus will one day return to earth and reign forever as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
- VII. The church is the body of Christ on earth, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and exists to save the lost and edify the saved. The church should empower the development of individual gifts and equip believers to use those gifts to further God's kingdom here on earth (Ephesians 4:1-16 and 1 Corinthians 12)
- VIII. Jesus Christ is the Head of His church, having purchased it with His own blood and having instructed it through His Word in order to make known the manifold wisdom of God and bring glory to Himself (Colossians 1:18).

Our fellowship:

What we believe about "church".

- I. Organization:
 - a. God's revealed pattern in Scripture is that the local church is God's instrument for impacting our culture. The Bible teaches that the local church be led and fed by a plurality of biblically qualified elders (1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9). The Holy Spirit raises these men up from within the local church. The church body formally affirms them. They equip the saints to do the work of ministry. Each local church is independent and self-governing. There is no higher authority in the local church than the elders. (Acts 14:23; 20:28; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
 - b. God designed His church to be a spiritual "family of families" where members know one another intimately. The elders (shepherds or pastors) strive to understand the members of local church effectively. The various members or parts of the body (the local church) function interactively (1 Timothy 3:15, 1 Corinthians 12: 12-26). We reject one of the current trends to value numbers and size more than intimacy and vitality. We desire a family-like congregation.
- II. Family:
 - a. God intends his followers to carry out evangelism and discipleship first and foremost in the home through multiple generations, "so that you and your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands". It is not the church's responsibility to raise children. Rather, we believe that the church should encourage and equip parents to raise their own children toward spiritual maturity (Deuteronomy 6:7, Ephesians 6:1-4, Proverbs 22:6).
 - b. Our focus as a church is overwhelmingly on encouraging healthy Christian homes. Of course, there will be exceptions when the church will need to be sensitive to non-traditional homes with only one parent or parents that don't support Christian values. Members of this church should be eager and willing to assist and encourage children whose parent or parents are not active or supportive. We also want to be sensitive to the needs and potential of young adults, mature singles, mid-life couples, seniors, widows, widowers, and shut-ins. They are an important and necessary part of this church.
 - c. Followers of Christ grow spiritually primarily through practical discipleship in all aspects of everyday life. Therefore, fathers and mothers will best train their families by living out the gospel in everyday life situations, not just Sunday morning for an hour and a half. Followers of Christ are to be equipped for spiritual maturity and ministry primarily through family-based, one-on-one, heart-level relationships, and especially by preparing fathers to be servant-leaders in family and church. A dominant clergy should never supplant a father's involvement, which sadly happens in many churches.
 - d. We encourage families to stay together during our Sunday morning gatherings. Our culture seems to aggressively promote the disintegration of the family. We believe church should be

a place where families are encouraged to stay together and learn together. Rather than separate the children from the parents with “children’s church”, we want the children to know that they are an important part of our local body of believers. It’s a bit more noisy and lively, but we believe children can offer a lot to the church and can begin understanding spiritual truths at a young age. Therefore, we offer a special children’s time during our Sunday morning gathering.

III. Community of “believers”

- a. We believe that church is a gathering of believers for teaching, fellowship, communion, and prayer (Acts 2:42). It is our conviction that church should be a time when Christians gather together to challenge and encourage one- another so that we can go out into the world and make disciples. Man’s way is to bring the world into the church...God’s way is to send the church into the world. Church should be a place where non-Christians are welcome, but are also lovingly convicted of sin and challenged toward repentance. Rather than evangelizing the world within our church walls, we believe that Christians should “go” and make disciples. (Matthew 28:19)
- b. God has declared "judgment begins with the household of God" and thus, we Christians are to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, looking to judge ourselves so that God is pleased by all we do and we avoid his condemnation and reproof. (1 Peter 4:17; 5:6). We acknowledge that the world, the flesh, and the devil are primarily to blame for the disintegration and destruction of the family and society’s morals, though in reality the modern church has done little to prevent or combat that disintegration and destruction, and therefore is much at fault.

IV. Committed to God’s best:

There will always be some differences in beliefs, views, and doctrines. Obviously, in essential issues it is important that we agree. However, well-meaning Christians do have differences. When it comes to sorting through those differences we should always consider one important question: “Am I committed to God’s very best?” If we as Christians are committed to God’s best in our hearts and we allow His word to be the final authority for all matters of faith and practice, then we will be open to God’s leading and direction. There is unity among hearts that are ultimately committed to God’s best and a spirit of love that softens our differences.

Fellowship covenant

My Commitment.

- I. Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior, I willingly commit myself to God and to this fellowship by doing the following:
 - a. I will protect the unity of my fellowship.
 - i. By acting in love toward other members.
 - ii. By refusing to gossip.
 - iii. By respecting the decisions of the leaders (elders) and conveying any disagreement in a loving way “Let us make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.” (Romans 14:19) “Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.” (1 Peter 1:22) “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs.” (Ephesians 4:29) “Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you.” (Hebrews 13:17) “To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers--

not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.” (1 Peter 5: 1-3)

- b. I will share the responsibility of my fellowship.
 - i. By praying for its spiritual growth and protection.
 - ii. By inviting my friends and neighbors to attend.
 - iii. By warmly welcoming those who visit. “We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers.” (1 Thessalonians 1:2) “And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.” (Ephesians 6:18) "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." (Matthew 4:19) “Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.” (Romans 15:7)
- c. I will serve the ministry of my fellowship.
 - i. By discovering and using my gifts and talents.
 - ii. By being equipped and prepared to serve.
 - iii. By developing a servant’s heart. “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) “[God] 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) “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: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant.” (Philippians 2:4-7)
- d. I will support the testimony of my fellowship.
 - i. By attending faithfully.
 - ii. By living a Godly life.
 - iii. By giving of my time, talents and treasures regularly “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) “Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.” (Philippians 1:27) “On the first day of every week, each of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income.” (1 Corinthians 16:2) “Offer your bodies as living sacrifices” (Romans 12:1) “For God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:7)