

DISCOVERING CHURCH MEMBERSHIP
LHB C.L.A.S.S. 101
Christian Life And Service Seminars

Written by Pastor Rick Warren
And
Revised (with permission) by T. L. Shaw, Ph.D.
For: Liberty Hill Baptist Church

Discovering Church Membership
LHB C.L.A.S.S. 101

WELCOME TO DISCOVERING CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

We're glad you've chosen to find out more about Liberty Hill Baptist Church (LHB). This class is the basic introduction to our church family. Since we have members from many different church backgrounds, this class was designed to clearly explain who and what our church is. Discovering Church Membership is divided in seven sessions of an hour each and is taught by our English Discipleship teachers.

THE BASICS FOR THIS CLASS

"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named" (Eph. 3:14-15 KJV)

"...You are a member of God's very own family...and you belong in God's household with every other Christian." (Eph. 2:19 LB) (Rom. 12:4-5; Eph. 4:25 KJV)

Key Truths:

1. The church is _____.
2. God expects you to be _____ of a church family.
3. A Christian without a church family is _____.

THE GOAL OF THIS CLASS

...That I will commit myself to _____ and to the _____.

WHAT MAKES LHB A FAMILY?

Four things unite us:

- **Our S** _____ - What God has done for us
- **Our S** _____ - Why we exist as a church
- **Our S** _____ - How we fulfill our purpose
- **Our S** _____ - When and where we fulfill our purpose

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SEMINAR OUTLINE

SESSION ONE: OUR SALVATION

- What it means to be a Christian

SESSION TWO: OUR SYMBOLS

- The Symbols of Salvation: Baptism and Communion

SESSION THREE: OUR STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE

- The LHB Mission Statement – Why we exist as a church

SESSION FOUR: OUR STATEMENTS OF VISION & VALUES

- The LHB Vision Statement
- The LHB Values/Lifestyle Statement – What we practice

SESSION FIVE: OUR STATEMENTS OF FAITH

- Doctrinal Foundation

SESSION SIX: OUR STRATEGY

- Who are we trying to reach
- The Five Circles of Commitment / Four Covenants
- The A.R.C.A.D.I.A. Strategy

SESSION SEVEN: OUR STRUCTURE

- How LHB is structured
- What it means to be a member
- Membership Covenant
- Our affiliation – Who are Baptists? What do Baptists believe?
- What now? The C.L.A.S.S. Program

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Session One

Our Salvation

“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3:26-28

I. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

Most people live their entire lives without ever knowing “*WHY?*” They exist year after year with no idea of why they live or God’s purpose for their lives. The most basic question a person can ask is, “*What is the meaning of life?*” Everyone wants to be happy. People try many ways:
...Some look for happiness by **acquiring possessions.**
...Some look for happiness by **experiencing pleasure.**
...Some look for happiness by **gaining prestige & power.**
But real happiness comes from understanding my_____.

II. Why Am I Here?

1. GOD MADE ME TO _____ ME!

God says, “*I have loved you with an everlasting love!*” Jer. 31:3
“*According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.*” Eph. 1:4-5

**2. WE WERE CREATED TO _____ A PERSONAL
RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST! THIS MAKES US SPECIAL!

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them and God said unto them, Be

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fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over. . .” Gen. 1:27-28

“That I may know him (Christ), and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.” Phil. 3:10

*“For through him (Christ) we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father”
Eph. 2:18*

**3. WHEN WE KNOW AND LOVE GOD, AND LIVE IN HARMONY WITH HIS
PURPOSE FOR OUR LIVES, IT PRODUCES TREMENDOUS BENEFITS IN
OUR LIVES:**

Clear Conscience

Rom. 8:1

Life & Peace

Rom. 8:6

Help with Weakness

Rom. 8:26

Purpose

Rom. 8:28

Confidence

Rom. 8:31

Security

Rom. 8:39

Power & Strength

Phil. 4:13

Fulfillment

Phil. 4:19

Freedom

John 8:32,36

III. WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Man has a natural desire to _____ and to ignore God's principles for living.

"Look out for #1. Do your own thing."

"If it feels good, do it - regardless of what God says about it."

"It's my life and I'll do what I please!"

THE BIBLE DESCRIBES THIS AS: _____.

*"All we like sheep have **gone astray**; we have turned every one **to his own way**."*
Isaiah 53:6

*"If we say that we have no sin, we **deceive ourselves**, and the truth is not in us."*
1 John 1:8

Sin breaks our close relationship with God. It causes us to fear God and try to live our lives outside of His will.

"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." Isaiah 59:2

"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23

When our relationship to God is not right, it causes PROBLEMS in every area of our lives — marriage, career, relationships, finances, etc.

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WHEN PEOPLE HAVE PROBLEMS, THEY OFTEN TRY MANY DIFFERENT WAYS OF COPING BEFORE TURNING TO GOD.

“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” Proverbs 16:25

Even when we know that our deepest need is God, we often try wrong ways of getting to know Him:

- “My mother was a Christian so...”
- “It doesn’t matter what you believe, just be sincere.”
- “I’ll give up all my bad habits.”
- “I’ll work real hard and earn it.”
- “I’ll be religious and go to church.”

IV. WHAT’S THE SOLUTION?

Jesus Christ said, “I AM THE WAY, the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” John 14:6

God Himself came to earth as a human being to bring us back to Himself. If any other way would have worked, Jesus Christ would not have had to come. The Way is a Person!

JESUS HAS ALREADY TAKEN CARE OF YOUR SIN PROBLEM!

“The wages of sin is death; BUT the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Rom. 6:23

God did this for us because He loves us and wants us to know Him.

“...God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Rom. 5:8

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” 1 Tim. 2:5

God has already done His part to restore our relationship to Him. He took the initiative. Now He waits for each of us to individually accept what He has done for us.

V. WHAT DOES GOD WANT ME TO DO?

- 1. _____ THAT GOD HAS NOT BEEN FIRST PLACE IN YOUR LIFE AND ASK HIM TO FORGIVE YOUR SINS.**

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9

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2. _____ THAT JESUS DIED TO PAY FOR YOUR SINS AND THAT HE ROSE AGAIN ON EASTER, AND IS ALIVE TODAY.

*“... If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt **believe in thine heart** that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” Romans 10:9*

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

3. _____ GOD’S FREE GIFT OF SALVATION. DON’T TRY TO EARN IT.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.” Ephesians 2:8, 9

Our relationship to God is not restored by anything we do, but on the basis of what Jesus already did for us!

3. _____ JESUS CHRIST TO COME INTO YOUR LIFE AND BE THE DIRECTOR (“LORD”) OF YOUR LIFE.

4.

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” John 1:12-13

“Jesus says, ‘Behold! I stand at the door and knock: If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him....’” Rev. 3:20

YOU CAN TAKE THESE STEPS BY PRAYING A SIMPLE PRAYER OF COMMITMENT TO GOD:

“Dear God, thank you for making me and loving me, even when I’ve ignored you and gone my own way. I know now that I need you in my life. I repent of all my sins. I ask you to forgive me. Thank you for sending your Son – Jesus to die on the cross for me. Please help me to understand it more. As much as I know how, I want to follow you from now on. Please come into my life and make me a new person through the power of your Holy Spirit. I accept your gift of salvation. I will read and study your Word every day so I can grow as a Christian.” *“Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:13*

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Session One – Our Salvation**

Small Group Discussion:

1. What are some of the things that the scriptures teach to do in order to experience God's love? (If you need help, please see John 14:21-23; I Cor. 13)
2. Why is sin such a big problem in everyone's life? Why is repentance so important as a condition of salvation? (If you need help, please see II Cor. 7:9-11)
3. What does it mean to call upon the name of the Lord to be saved?
*Leave time to pray for one another.

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Session Two

Our Symbols

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING BAPTIZED

A. WHY SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

1. To follow the example set by _____.

*“And it came to pass in those days, that **Jesus** came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.” Mark 1:9*

2. Because Christ _____ it.

“Jesus said, ‘Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you’” Matt. 28:19-20

3. It demonstrates that I really am a _____.

“... many of the Corinthians hearing believed and were baptized.” Acts 18:8

“And hereby we do know that we know him if we keep his commandments.”

1 John 2:3

B. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BAPTISM?

1. It illustrates Christ’s _____ and resurrection.

“Christ died for our sins ...He was buried ... and He rose again.” 1 Cor. 15:3-4

“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of

the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. Col. 2:12

2. It illustrates my _____ as a Christian.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” 2 Cor. 5:17

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“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Rom. 6:4

Baptism doesn't make you a believer — it shows that **you already believe**. Baptism does not “save” you, only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring — it's the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart. *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9*

C. WHY BE BAPTIZED BY IMMERSION?

1. Because _____ was baptized that way.

*“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water”
Matthew 3:16*

2. Every baptism in the _____ was by immersion.

(Example) “and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.” Acts 8:38-39

**3. The word “Baptize” means to _____
water.**

The Greek word *baptizo* means “to immerse or dip under water”.

4. It best symbolizes a burial and resurrection!

The founders of denominations agree:

Martin Luther (Lutheran)...“I would have those who are to be baptized to be entirely immersed, as the word imports and the mystery signifies.”

John Calvin (Presbyterian)...“The word ‘baptize’ signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church.”

John Wesley (Methodist)...“Buried with Him, alludes to baptizing by immersion according to the custom of the first church.”

D. WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED? Every person who has _____ .

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“From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent. . .” Matthew 4:17; 3:2

“If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest {be baptized}. . .” Acts 8:37; 8:13

*“But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women”
Acts 8:12*

Some churches practice a “*baptism of confirmation*” for children. This ceremony is intended to be a covenant between the parents and God on the behalf of the child. The parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make his own personal confession of Christ. This custom began about 300 years after the Bible was completed. **This is different from the baptism talked about in the Bible** which was only for those old enough to believe. The purpose is to publicly confess your personal commitment to Christ. At LHB, we wait until the children are old enough to **believe** and understand the true meaning of baptism before we baptize them. As a Baptist church, we also ask all our members to be baptized the way Jesus demonstrated in the Bible.

E. WHEN SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

AS SOON AS YOU HAVE TRULY REPENTED OF YOUR SINS AND BELIEVED IN JESUS CHRIST!

“They that gladly received his word were baptized. . .” Acts 2:41

“Then Philip began with the same scripture {Isa. 53} and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?’ Philip said, ‘If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.’ And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. . . and he baptized him.” Acts 8:35-38

There is no reason to delay. As soon as you have decided to repent of your sins and receive Christ into your heart, you should begin preparing to be baptized. If you wait until you are “perfect”, you’ll never feel “good enough”!

F. OTHER FAQ:

1. CAN MY FAMILY BE BAPTIZED TOGETHER?

Yes! If each family member understands fully the meaning of baptism, and each one has personally repented of their sins and placed his/her trust in Christ for salvation, we encourage families to be baptized at the same time. It is a wonderful expression of commitment. Young children who wish to be baptized are asked to meet with one of our Ministers with the children for a pre-baptism study. **However**, it is important to remember that baptism is a *personal* statement of faith, not a family tradition. It is usually not wise to delay your baptism while waiting on other family members to accept Christ, particularly children. This puts an undue pressure on them, and delays *your* obedience.

2. WHAT SHOULD I WEAR WHEN I AM BAPTIZED?

Women should wear light shorts and a top or a swimsuit. Men may wear a light colored swimsuit or shorts with T shirt. Bring a change of clothes, a towel, and a plastic bag for your wet clothes. We provide changing rooms. We will also provide you with a white linen baptism robe.

3. WILL I HAVE TO SAY ANYTHING?

Yes. You will share your testimony of how Jesus saved you and what He is doing in your life today. At the beginning of the service, Pastor Shaw will briefly explain the meaning of baptism. You will wait at the edge of the baptistery for your turn to be baptized. Pastor Shaw will introduce you, briefly lower you just under the water, and then you can leave the pool, dry off, and come back out into the sanctuary to join the congregation in worship. We encourage you to invite all your relatives and friends to attend your baptism.

II. THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Jesus never asked His disciples to remember His birth. But He did instruct them to remember His death and resurrection. He gave the church two visible symbols (called "*ordinances*") as reminders of His death. These two ordinances are: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is an object lesson that represents a great spiritual truth for believers.

A. WHAT IS THE LORD'S SUPPER? (1 COR. 11:23-26)

1. It is a _____ .

"... That the Lord Jesus, the same night He in which he was betrayed, took bread..." 1 Cor. 11:23

“... The bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ?” 1 Cor.10:16

2. It is a _____ .

“...and when He had given thanks, He brake it and said, ‘Take eat: this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me.’” 1 Cor. 11:24

3. It is a _____ .

“In the same way, He took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood; drink it to remember me.’” 1 Cor. 11:25

“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?” 1 Cor.10:16

4. It shows _____ .

“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he comes.” 1 Cor. 11:26

B. WHO SHOULD TAKE THE LORD’S SUPPER?

Only those who are _____ .

“Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.” 1 Cor.11:27-32

*Baptism comes before the Lord’s Supper, both in the life of Jesus and every believer.

C. HOW DO I PREPARE MYSELF FOR THE LORD’S SUPPER?

*“For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would **judge ourselves**, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world” 1 Cor. 11:30-32*

We judge ourselves by:

1. Self-Examination - 1 Cor. 11:28

2. Confessing My Sins - 1 John 1:9

3. Recommitment - Rom. 12:1

4. Restoring Relationships - Matt. 5:23-24

D. WHEN AND HOW OFTEN SHOULD WE OBSERVE THE LORD'S SUPPER?

Jesus never said when or how often believers should observe the Lord's Supper. He instituted it on a Thursday night. At LHB, we usually observe the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday of the month during our morning service.

Small Group Discussion:

1. Why is maintaining the scriptural symbolism in baptism by immersion so important? (If you need help, please see Romans 6:1-6)

2. Why is it important to be baptized first before we take the Lord's Supper? (If you need help, please see John 14:21; I Cor. 11:26, 27)

*Leave time to pray for one another.

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Session Three

Our Statements - Mission

“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”
1 Corinthians 1:10

OUR PURPOSE STATEMENT - *Why We Exist As a Church*

The purpose of our church is summarized in a single sentence based on two key scriptures:

**“WE BELIEVE A GREAT COMMITMENT TO THE GREAT
_____ AND THE GREAT
_____ WILL GROW A GREAT CHURCH!”**

The Great Commandment: *“Jesus said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”*
Matt. 22:36-40

The Great Commission: *Jesus said, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”* *Matt. 28:19-20*

- To “Love God with all your heart” is **“WORSHIP”**.
- To “Love your neighbor as yourself” is **“MINISTRY”**.
- To “Go...make disciples” is **“EVANGELISM”**.
- To “Baptizing them...” is to incorporate into **“FELLOWSHIP” (membership)**.
- To “Teach them...all things” is **“DISCIPLESHIP”**.

LHB EXISTS:

1. To _____ **God’s Presence (Worship)**
2. To _____ **God’s Love (Ministry)**
3. To _____ **God’s Word (Evangelism)**
4. To _____ **God’s People into His Family (Fellowship)**
5. To _____ **God’s People (Discipleship)**

I. WE EXIST TO CELEBRATE GOD'S PRESENCE

A. WORSHIP: *"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Matt. 4:10*

"...the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." John 4:23-24

B. EXPRESSIONS OF WORSHIP

1. Singing

"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;" Eph. 5:19

2. Commitment

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Romans 12:1-2

3. Praying

"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker." Ps. 95:6

4. Hearing the Word

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. John 17:17

5. Giving

"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." 1 Cor. 16:1-2

6. Baptism

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Romans 6:3-4

7. Meditating

"But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him." Hab. 2:20

8. Lord's Supper

"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. 1 Cor. 11:23-26

C. LHB WORSHIP STYLE

1. Celebration

*"Serve the LORD with fear, and **rejoice** with trembling." Psalm 2:11
"I was **glad** when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD." Psalm 122:1*

2. Inspiration

"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Isaiah 40:31

3. Edification

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:" Eph. 4:11-12

II. WE EXIST TO COMMUNICATE GOD'S WORD

A. EVANGELISM:

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" Rom. 10:13-14

B. WHY OUR CHURCH MUST NEVER STOP GROWING:

1. Because _____.

*"The Lord...is longsuffering to us-ward, **not willing that any should perish**, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Pet. 3:9, 2Cor.5:14, Luke 15:3-10, Matt. 9:12-13*

2. Because _____.

"And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." Luke 14:23

"...you shall be my witnesses...unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8

3. Because _____ .

"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up unto him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Ephesians 4:15-16

"(Jesus) I will build my church." Matt. 16:18

C. UNBIBLICAL EXCUSES FOR NOT GROWING:

- *"God isn't interested in numbers."*
- *"Our church wants quality not quantity."*
- *"Large churches are impersonal."*

We believe our church must grow _____ on Sunday mornings

and _____ at the same time by being in a small group.

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto

all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24:14

III. WE EXIST TO EDUCATE GOD'S PEOPLE

DISCIPLESHIP: Helping believers grow spiritually.

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection..." Heb. 6:1

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ..." 2 Peter 3:18

God "gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and o the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Eph. 4:11-13

IV. WE EXIST TO DEMONSTRATE GOD'S LOVE

MINISTRY:

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 13:35, 1 John 3:16-17, Matt. 25:34-40, Heb. 13:16, Rom. 12:13

A definition of Ministry is meeting _____ with _____ .

We want people in this area to know LHB as a place of love, a place where you will be loved, a place where you can express love, a place where you can meet needs and a place where you can have your needs met.

V. WE EXIST TO INCORPORATE GOD’S PEOPLE INTO HIS FAMILY FELLOWSHIP:

The heartbeat of a loving church is _____. This is the place where you need to get involved and get to know each other and care for each other.

“Now there are diversities of gifts {charismaton}, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations {diakonia}, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations {energema}, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” 1 Cor. 12:4-6, 27

At LHB...

- Every member is a _____ .
- Every task is _____ .
- Every member is a “10” in _____ .

Liberty Hill Baptist Church Congregation
MISSION STATEMENT

ALMIGHTY GOD HAS INDIVIDUALLY CREATED AND REDEEMED US, AND FORMED US INTO A LOCAL CHURCH BODY OF BELIEVERS TO FULFILL THE GREAT COMMANDMENT AND THE GREAT COMMISSION.

Small Group Discussion:

1. What are some practical ways for God’s people to prepare themselves for worship on Sunday? (If you need help, please see Psalm 139:23,24; Psalm 100:1-4; Psalm 122:1)

2. What are your spiritual goals that will make you a true disciple of Christ?

*Leave time for prayer. Especially pray for someone you are trying to lead to salvation in Christ.

Discovering Church Membership

LHB C.L.A.S.S. 101

Session Four

Our Statements of Vision & Values

I. VISION STATEMENT

A vision statement is a portrait of a preferable future, imparted by God to His chosen servants, based upon an accurate understanding of God, our church family, our community, and our circumstances.

- ***We are*** the Liberty Hill Baptist Church (LHB), affiliated with Missionary Baptists.

- ***We are called of God*** to disciple Christians to reach those who are outside the fellowship of the Church and without a salvation experience with Jesus Christ.

- ***We will do this*** by giving all who come to our Church:

A F _____ for living, which is God's P _____ to ***Live For.***

Task: E _____.

A F _____ for living, which is God's P _____ to ***Live On.***

Task: E _____.

A F _____ for living, which is God's P _____ to ***Live With.***

Task: E _____.

A F _____ for living, which is God's P _____ to ***Live By.***

Task: E _____.

A F _____ for living, which is God's P _____ to ***Live Out.***

Task: E _____.

II. OUR LIFESTYLE STATEMENT

- *Our Values and What We Practice That Guide Us to Fulfill Our Vision*

Beliefs are not worth much unless they are translated into actions. Based on what the Bible teaches, we feel very strongly about living out our values through the following seven practices:

1. BIBLE AS OUR SOLE AUTHORITY

“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” 2 Tim. 3:15-17

Since God’s Word is the only completely reliable and truthful authority, we accept the Bible as our manual for living. Our first question when faced with a decision is “What does the Bible say?”

WE VALUE GOD’S WORD: Thus we practice daily Bible reading, Bible study, and Bible memorization. The Bible is the basis for all we believe.

2. AUTONOMY OF EACH LOCAL CHURCH

“And he {Christ} is the head of the Body, the church..” Col. 1:18

Christ is the recognized head of our church, not any person, group, or religious organization. While recognizing the value of associating and cooperating with other groups of Christians, we believe every local church should be self-governing and independent from any denominational control.

WE VALUE THE CHURCH: Thus we make a commitment to the LORD’s church (God’s Family).

3. PRIESTHOOD OF EVERY BELIEVER

“Uhto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And made us kings and priests unto God and his Father...” Rev. 1:6.

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood... that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” 1 Pet. 2:9

The Bible teaches that every Christian is called to “full time” Christian service, regardless of his or her vocation. We practice the truth that every believer is a minister by encouraging every member to find a place of service and ministry. Every believer has direct access to God through prayer Bible reading.

WE VALUE EACH MEMBER’S PRIESTHOOD: Which means we all have the same responsibility of telling people about Christ, of worshiping Him.

4. STEWARDSHIP

“The earth is the LORD’S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.” Psa. 24:1

“A tithe of everything you produce belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the

Lord.” Lev. 26:30

“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. ...In tithes and offerings. ...Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” Mal. 3:8-10

“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.” Lk. 6:38

“But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.” 2 Cor. 9:6,7

It is the responsibility and the privilege of the members here to give their time, their talents and their finance to support the work of the church.

5. IMMERSION AS THE SCRIPTURAL MEANS OF BAPTISM

“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” Col. 2:12

We practice baptism by immersion under water — the way Jesus was baptized, and the way the Bible commands.

LHB C.L.A.S.S. 101 - Discovering Church Membership
Session Four – Our Vision & Values Statement

6. SPIRIT-LED LIVING

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”
Ephesians 5:18-21

“I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.”
John 15:5

We believe the only way possible to live the Christian life is by God’s power within us. So we seek to practice a daily dependence on God’s Spirit to enable us to do what is right. (Phil. 2:13, Eph. 5:18).

WE VALUE CHARACTER: Therefore we make a commitment to grow in our Christian life.

7. TELLING OTHERS ABOUT CHRIST

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man, that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.” 1 Peter 3:15

It is the responsibility of every Christian to share the Good News with those with whom God brings us into contact. We practice personal sharing about Christ and inviting friends to church.

Small Group Discussion:

1. Which of these values do you feel most strongly about and why?

2. What do you plan to do to help God’s church fulfill His purpose and mission?

*Please leave time for prayer.

LHB C.L.A.S.S. 101 - Discovering Church Membership Session Five

Our Statements – Faith

OUR STATEMENT OF FAITH - *What We Believe*

- **In essential beliefs — we have unity.**

“There is one Body and one Spirit even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” Eph. 4:4-6

- **In all our beliefs — we show charity.**

If I “have not charity {love}, I am nothing.” 1 Cor. 13:2

OUR ESSENTIALS BELIEFS:

1. About God

God is the Creator and Sovereign Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three personalities: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. These three are coequal and are one God. Genesis 1:1, 26, 27, 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14

2. About Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven’s glory and will return again someday to earth to reign as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. (Rev. 19:1-16) Matthew 1:22, 23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5; 14:10-30; Hebrews 4:14, 15; 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4; Romans 1:3,4; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Timothy 6:14, 15; Titus 2:13

3. About the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with God the Father and God the Son. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer a spiritual gift when they are saved. As Christians, we seek to live under His control daily. 2 Corinthians 3:17; John 16:7-13, 14:16, 17; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16; Ephesians 1:13; Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 5:18

4. About the Bible

The Bible is God’s Word to us. It was written by human authors, under the supernatural

guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because it is inspired by God, it is the truth without any mixture of error.

2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20, 21; 2 Timothy 1:13; Psalm 119:105,160, 12:6; Proverbs 30:5

5. About Human Beings

People are made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. People are the supreme object of God's creation. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called "sin". This attitude separates people from God and causes many problems in life.

Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6a; Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:1, 2

6. About Salvation

Salvation is God's free gift to us but we must accept it by Faith. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith. Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8, 9; John 14:6, 1:12; Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:26; Romans 5:17

7. About Eternal Security

Because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the true believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. If you have been genuinely saved, you cannot "lose" it. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and keeping power of God that gives us this security. The entire book of *I John* is written to tell us what we can know for sure about the Christian life. John 10:29; Rom. 8:31-39; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25, 10:10, 14; 1 Peter 1:3-5

8. About Eternity

People were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence. John 3:16; John 14:17; Romans 6:23; Romans 8:17-18; Revelation 20:14-15; 1 Cor. 2:7-9

The King James Bible translates the Greek words Hades and Gehenna as hell.

King James Version translates "*Hades*" as hell. (Mt 11:23; 16:18; Lk 10:15; 16:23; Acts 2:27, 31; Rev 1:18; 6:8; 20:13, 14). Described as a prison: 1 Pet. 3:19; Eternal bonds under darkness: Jude 6; Some angels are kept in chains in "hell" (Greek "*tartarus*") 2 Pet. 2:4; Thus it would seem Hades has at least 3 separate compartments (see Lk 8:31); A place of punishment until judgment day: 2 Pet. 2:9; "torment" Lk 16:23; place of Fire: Lk 16:24; Deut 32:22; Rev 9:1-2; Bottomless pit (Abyss) Rev 20:1-2.

1. *Hades* will be thrown into the lake of fire (*Gehenna* - which is sometimes translated hell). Though they are distinct (Rev 20:14), for all practical purposes, as far as the lost are concerned, there is little difference between being in *Hades* or *Gehenna*. Both can be described as "hell."

2. Technically *Hades* is a temporary receptacle for the dead awaiting resurrection and judgment (Rev 20:13-15). 3. *Gehenna* (Rev. 20:14) as hell is eternal.

Small Group Discussion:

1. Which one of these doctrines is unfamiliar to you and you need to learn more about?

2. What questions came to your mind as the instructor/teacher went through the lesson?

3. Why is it important that we have the unity of understanding of these foundational doctrines?

*Leave time to pray for one another.

LHB C.L.A.S.S. 101 - Discovering Church Membership - Session Six

Our Strategy

(Paul) "To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you."

1 Corinthians 9:22-23

I. WHO ARE WE TRYING TO REACH?

At LHB, we actually have five different types of targets.

5-CIRCLES OF COMMITMENT

LHB's objective is to keep moving people toward the center by encouraging personal spiritual commitments. Specifically, we call people to four basic commitments.

THE FOUR LHB COVENANTS:

1. THE MEMBERSHIP COVENANT is a commitment to _____ and the LHB

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. . ." Eph. 2:19

"For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."
Rom. 12:4-5

2. THE MATURITY COVENANT is a commitment to the _____ necessary for spiritual growth.

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."
2 Pet. 3:18

"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity {love}.” 2 Pet. 1:5-7

3. THE MINISTRY COVENANT is a commitment to _____ and _____ my God-given gifts and abilities in serving God and others.

“As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” 1 Pet. 4:10

“And there are differences of administrations {ministries = diakonia}, but the same Lord.” 1 Cor. 12:5

“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” 1 Cor. 12: 27

5. **THE MISSIONS COVENANT** is a commitment to _____
Good News with others.

6.

“...you will be my witnesses for me...to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8 (GN)

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do it with gentleness and respect...” 1 Pet. 3:15

WHY DO WE HAVE THESE COVENANTS?

WE BECOME WHAT WE ARE _____.

II. THE LHB'S A.R.C.A.D.I.A. STRATEGY

A _____ : **LEARNING how to love one another as Christ first loved us.**
We don't expect people to be perfect in LHB. This is a church for real people with real problems. We don't expect unbelievers to act like believers until they are. (p. 22)

R _____ **Out – to the un-churched locally and globally.**
Why must God's church never stop growing? (p. 21)
What does the phrase, "grow larger and smaller at the same time" mean?

C _____ **to maturity: help members become all God wants us to be.**
So, one day when (not if) we stand before God, He'll say, " _____
thou _____ and _____ servant." (Mat. 25:14-30; 1 Cor. 3:11-15)

A _____ **God – in spirit and in truth, with sensitivity to the seekers.**
In our worship service we will carry out **C** _____, **I** _____, and
E _____, with sensitivity to the seekers. (pp.19, 20)

D _____ **by Purpose – as a church and in our own life.** (p. 18)
Name the five purposes: **W** _____, **F** _____,

D _____, **M** _____, and **E** _____.

I _____ **our target, so we can focus our effort in reaching them.**
We will provide resources to implement activities and programs to meeting the needs of our target.

A _____ **members are ministers.** (p. 27)
Not every member needs to be a pastor, **but every member must have a ministry.**
Ministry is serving God through serving others with the spiritual gifts God has given to each and everyone of us.

Small Group Discussions:

1. Do you think it's a good idea to identify Christians into different levels? Why or why not?

2. Do you agree that, "we become what we are committed to"? Why or why not?

*Leave time to pray for each other before you leave.

Discovering Church Membership - LHB C.L.A.S.S. 101 - Session Seven

Our Structure

“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace...”

“Let all things be done decently and in order.”

1 Cor. 14:33, 40

I. HOW OUR CHURCH IS STRUCTURED

Church structure should *not* be determined by culture, business practices, or even denominational traditions. **It is the nature of the church determines its structure.**

1. The Church Is a _____.

*“They continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and **fellowship**, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers...” Acts 2:42*

A top priority in a fellowship is _____ and _____.

You can have _____ without having _____.

“Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” Eph. 4:3

“Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith on may edify another.” Rom. 14:19

The Bible teaches that anything that causes disunity of the church is _____.

Col. 3:15; 1 Cor. 1:10; 2 Tim. 2:14; Prov. 17:14; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 1:27, 2:1-3; Col. 2:2; Phil. 4:2; 1 Pet. 3:8; 1 Cor. 14:33; John 13:34-35; 2 Tim. 2:23; Rom. 15:5-6, 12:16-18; Col. 3:13-14; Ps. 133:1;

Implication: A good church structure promotes unity and downplays

_____.

“Voting” tends to creating _____ in the church.

“Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that you come together not for the better, but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.”

1 Cor. 11:17-19

At LHB, we vote on:

- Annual budget and legal trustees, church councils members

- Purchase of land or buildings
- Calling paid pastoral staff
- Changes in the church constitution and bylaws
- And other important decisions as required by the bylaws

2. The Church Is a _____.

*“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of **the household of faith**.” Gal. 6:10*

*“Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, **love as brethren**, be pitiful, be courteous.” 1 Peter 3:8*

So we operate on the basis of _____ not _____.

“Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity...” 1 Tim. 5:1-2

The Bible says we’re to value those who have been Christian longer than us and who are spiritually mature.

(A Pastor) must “...ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity...For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?” 1 Tim. 3:4-5

3. The Church Is a _____.

“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” 1 Cor. 12:27

“For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.” Eph. 5:23

“And he is the head of the body, the church...” Col. 1:18a

We are a **body** (of Christ) - not a business! We are an **organism** - not an organization!
Therefore, we function on the basis of _____ not elected offices.

“For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us...”

Rom. 12:4-6

In an organization, “**meeting**” becomes the focus. But in an organism, “**ministry**” is the focus. A **committee** _____ what they want other people to do, a **ministry** just _____ it. It is LHB English Ministry’s goal to have a simple structure so we can maximize _____ and minimize _____.

“{God} gave some apostles; & some, prophets; & some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting {equipping} of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...” Eph. 4:11-12

OUR STRUCTURE

- THE PEOPLE ARE THE “_____”.
- THE PASTORS ARE THE “_____”.

4. THE CHURCH IS A _____. (JESUS’ FAVORITE DESCRIPTION OF THE CHURCH)

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. John 10:1-4 Matt. 26:31, Matt. 25:33

THEREFORE, IT IS CARED FOR AND LED BY _____.

“Jesus asked Simon Peter, ‘Do you really love me?’ ‘Yes Lord,’ said Peter. ‘Then feed of my sheep.’” Joh. 21:16-17

Three different terms are used in the New Testament to refer to the *same* church leaders:

- “POIMEN”
- “PRESBUTEROS”
- “EPISCOPOS”

Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church (Acts 20:17). When they arrived he said to them... “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” Acts 20:17-18, 28 (see also Titus 1:5-7; I Tim. 5:17; I Pet. 5:1-2)

The Greek word “feed” is the same verb root used for “pastor” or “shepherd”

II. WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MEMBER

The difference between “*attenders*” and “*members*” can be summed up in one word: _____.

At LHB we recognize the need for a formal membership. We ask you to commit to membership for four reasons:

1. A Biblical Reason: Christ is committed to the church.

“...Christ loved the church, and he gave himself for it.” Eph. 5:25

2. A Cultural Reason: It is an antidote to our society.

We live in an age where very few want to be committed to anything...a job...a marriage...our country. This attitude has even produced a generation of “church shoppers and hoppers”. Membership swims against the current of America’s “consumer religion.” It is an unselfish decision. Commitment always builds character.

3. A Practical Reason: It defines who can be counted on.

Every team must have a roster. Every school must have an enrollment. Every business has a payroll. Every army has an enlistment. Even our country takes a census and requires voter registration. Membership identifies our family.

4. A Personal Reason: It produces spiritual growth.

The New Testament places a major emphasis on the need for Christians to be accountable to each other for spiritual growth. You cannot be accountable when you’re not committed to any specific church family.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME AS A MEMBER?

At LHB we never ask our members to do more than the Bible clearly teaches. We only expect our members to do what the Bible expects every Christian to do. These responsibilities are spelled out in the Membership Covenant.

THE LHB MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

“Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and been baptized, and being in agreement with LHB’s statements, strategy and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the LHB church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

I. I WILL PROTECT THE UNITY OF MY CHURCH

- ...By acting in love toward other members**
- ...By refusing to gossip**
- ...By following the leaders**

“Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.” Rom. 14:19

“Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus.” Rom 15:5

“..see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently. ..” 1 Peter 1:22

“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers...” Eph. 4:29

“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief....” Heb. 13:17

II. I WILL SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MY CHURCH

- ...By praying for its growth**
- ...By inviting the un-churched to attend**
- ...By warmly welcoming those who visit**

“We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers.” 1 Thess. 1:2

“Go out into the highways...and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.” Luke 14:23

“Wherefore receive ye one another as Christ also received us to the glory of God.” Rom. 15:7

III. I WILL SERVE THE MINISTRY OF MY CHURCH

- ...By discovering my gifts and talents**
- ...By being equipped to serve by my pastors**
- ...By developing a servant’s heart**

“As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another...” 1 Peter 4:10

God gave...some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God’s people for works of ministry, Eph. 4:11-12

*“Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others”.
Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ...who took on the very nature of
a
servant...” Phil 2:3-4, 7*

IV. I WILL SUPPORT THE TESTIMONY OF MY CHURCH

...By attending faithfully

...By living a godly life

...By giving regularly

*“Let us not give up the habit of meeting together...but let us encourage one another.”
Heb. 10:25*

*“But whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of
Christ.” Phil. 1:27 (Ph)*

*“Each one of you, on the first day of each week, should set aside a specific sum of money
in proportion to what you have earned and use it for the offering.” 1 Cor. 16:2; Lev.
27:30*

*Questions for small groups:

1. Which of the reasons for making a commitment to the church really spoke to you heart? Why?
2. Is there any part of this membership covenant you find hard to make a commitment to. If you share it with the group maybe some one else can share from their experience some insights to help you.

*Leave time to pray for each other before you leave.

LHB C.L.A.S.S. 101 - Discovering Church Membership - Session 7 – Our Structure

LHB CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ 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 Ghost, we do now in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotion; to religiously educate our children; to seek to salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our department; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drink as a beverage, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Saviour, to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that, when we remove from this place, 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. And now unto Him, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, be Power and Glory forever - Amen.

I have read the church covenant and I am in agreement *with this commitment to church unity to serve the Lord (“Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Ephesians 4:3-6).*

Signature _____ Date _____

LHB C.L.A.S.S. 101 - Discovering Church Membership - Session 7 – Our Structure

OUR AFFILIATION

We are affiliated with

- ***Local Baptist Association(under transition)***

Many churches that fellowship together and work together to reach Columbus and Central Ohio.

- ***State Baptist Association(under transition)*** churches that fellowship together with the goal of evangelizing our state

- ***National Baptist Convention(under transition)***

churches that cooperate together in a world-wide effort of missions.

These three groups offer our church and many others all kinds of materials and training and helps. We wholeheartedly support these three groups in helping start many *other* new churches.

WHAT IS THE ASSOCIATION / CONVENTION?

- ***It is the association of Christian churches in Columbus, Ohio, and in America***

More than one out of every 10 churches in America is affiliated with the a Baptist Convention.

WHY NOT JUST BE AN INDEPENDENT CHURCH?

We *are* an independent church! Every Baptist church is completely independent. There is no denominational control or hierarchy, as there are in most other denominations. Each church is self-governed.

- *Every Baptist church chooses its own pastor*
- *Every Baptist church owns its own buildings and assets*
- *Every Baptist church determines its own programs*

LHB C.L.A.S.S. 101 - Discovering Church Membership - Session 7 – Our Structure

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF AFFILIATING WITH THE BAPTIST CONVENTION?

1. It allows us to **identify with other Christians** around the world who are known for their commitment to the Bible. Unlike other groups, the Baptist Convention has no man-made “creed”. The Bible is our only authority.
2. It allows our church to **participate in the largest missionary organization in the world**. The Baptist Convention helps support missionaries in many countries around the world.

WHAT DO “BAPTISTS” BELIEVE?

1. THE BIBLE IS OUR FINAL AUTHORITY IN ALL MATTERS OF FAITH AND PRACTICE.

We believe the Word of God, the Bible is complete and is solely, "...given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished (equipped) unto all good works." (II Timothy 3:16-17) The Bible declares Jesus to be the sole head of the church (Ephesians 1:20-23)

2. WE BELIEVE THE CHURCH IS TO BE MADE UP OF SAVED BAPTIZED BELIEVERS.

Baptists reject the baptism of infants as being unscriptural! The church is made up of Baptized believers only. (Acts 2:41-42) An infant is not capable of believing, and is protected by the Grace of God until the age of accountability. Further, only those who have made a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ can become members of the local New Testament church. (Romans 10:9-10)

3. WE BELIEVE IN STRICT SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE.

Jesus said to ""render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's." Further the Scripture says "what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion that light with darkness?" No power on earth is higher than God's Word, and the church should not be in any way yoked with the state, or

controlled by it. We support the rightly appointed authority of government over us and pray for them so we may live our lives in peace. (Romans 13:1-7)

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4. WE BELIEVE IN THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE BELIEVER.

The Bible teaches that Jesus has made every Believer is a Priest and King (Rev. 1:6; I Pet. 2:9). Every believer can, without the aid of priests, go "boldly unto the throne of grace, obtain mercy, and find grace in the time of need". (Heb. 4:16) The believer does not need a priest or a church to intercede on their behalf to God. The believer can boldly, by the fact of being washed in the blood of Christ, instantly be in contact with God by simple prayer, and further can bring his prayers for forgiveness of sins directly to God himself. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." (Heb. 10:19; I John 1:19) No church has the authority to forgive sins or grant intercession to God. In a Baptist church you will learn how to grow in an intimate, personal, life changing relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ.

5. WE BELIEVE IN THE AUTONOMY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH.

We believe that the local church is to be governed by the Word of God, and the local church does not need, or does the Scripture teach, that the local body rests under the authority of any earthy group. It is a group unto itself, under the authority of God, and solely responsible unto Him for its conduct, direction and affairs. A church which does not fulfill these 5 conditions can not historically call itself a Baptist church. These are the distinctives which separate Baptists from Protestants, or any other organized church or "Christian" cult. A person can rightly be honored to bear the name Baptist. Many men have suffered greatly and given their fortunes and their lives to hold the name in truth. It stands for devotion and an uncompromising obedience to God and his commandments. It holds high the saving Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, as revealed in the New Testament with an unwavering commitment to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) Any church which founds itself strictly on the New Testament teachings, is a true and Biblical church. It is not the name or the organization that makes a Biblical church, but its practice of the faith as revealed in the New Testament. A church that is truly Biblical patterns its self after the example in the New Testament. It is made up of baptized believers organized in a local congregation for Worship, Fellowship, Discipleship, Service and Evangelism. (Acts 2:41-42)

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WHAT NOW?

LHB'S PROGRAM TO HELP YOU GROW CHRISTIAN LIFE AND SERVICE SEMINARS

GO ON TO SECOND BASE! AN OVERVIEW OF C.L.A.S.S.

100 Level Seminars:

To lead people to Christ and **membership** at LHB

200 Level Seminars:

To grow people to spiritual maturity by committing to a daily quiet time, tithing, and small group

300 Level Seminars:

To equip people with the skills they need for ministry by discovering their spiritual gifts and serving others within the church community

400 Level Seminars:

To enlist people to the worldwide mission of Sharing Christ by equipping members to share their faith and take part in various mission opportunities.

THE LHB MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

“Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and been baptized, and being in agreement with LHB’s statements, strategy and structure, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

I. I WILL PROTECT THE UNITY OF MY CHURCH

- ...By acting in love toward other members**
- ...By refusing to gossip**
- ...By following the leaders**

II. I WILL SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MY CHURCH

- ...By praying for its growth**
- ...By inviting the un-churched to attend**
- ...By warmly welcoming those who visit**

III. I WILL SERVE THE MINISTRY OF MY CHURCH

- ...By discovering my gifts and talents**
- ...By being equipped to serve by my pastors**
- ...By developing a servant’s heart**

IV. I WILL SUPPORT THE TESTIMONY OF MY CHURCH

- ...By attending faithfully**
- ...By living a godly life**
- ...By giving regularly**