



***STARTING
POINT***



**Port City Church is a family that
empowers believers to live transformed
by Jesus.**

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I. A LETTER FROM OUR ELDERS

Dear Port City friend,

We are so pumped that you are meeting with us at a Starting Point and are getting to know Port City in an official way. We know that this was a big step of faith. Getting around a church and taking steps towards going all-in with them through covenant is a big deal and can be a bit intimidating. So we don't take your presence for granted. As you are getting to know us please know that we are praying for you. Specifically we are praying that during this season you would feel known, seen, and loved by God Himself and by our local family of believers here at Port City. We truly believe that life with God as a covenant family-team called the church is what God had in mind in the New Testament, and that the best gift we can give you is clarity around who we are, what our vision is, what we're aiming for, and how we do things.

As you begin to get a clearer picture we want to be honest on the front end; we are going to let you down. We are not a perfect group of people, and we are not perfect Pastors of this church. We are following Jesus, and we talk a lot about stumbling together. Even on our best day, full of the Spirit, reading the Bible, and doing our best to live with one another and love people in our community, we are still just stumbling along with Jesus. We aren't perfect at it, and we will never be independent and weaned off of our need for Jesus. We will always need Jesus. But the good news of the gospel is that weakness is the way. God uses broken and flimsy vessels to demonstrate his perfect power. He is faithful to know us and love us as we submit ourselves to him. So we invite you into a family-team here at Port City Church that is committed to stumbling with and after Jesus together. We can't wait to get to know your story better and we pray that your love for Jesus, his church, and the great city of Norfolk would grow exponentially in the process.

Grace and peace,

The Elders of Port City Church



II. BELIEFS

PORT CITY AT A DISTANCE

Here are a few plumb lines that shape who we are and where we are headed as a church. We call this teaching “at a distance” because there are the things that you will notice about Port City right away. These shape some of the intangibles of what we believe that we want to be honest with you about on the front end. We view our plumb lines as statements that capture who we are while also serving as guardrails to keep us there over the long haul.

1 - The gospel changes _____.

Notes:

2 - The church is God’s _____.

Notes:

3 - Jesus commanded us to make _____, not _____.

Notes:

4 - Messy is _____. Unity takes _____.

Notes:

III. CULTURE

PORT CITY IN THE FLESH

We call this teaching "in the flesh" because there are things that you will notice about Port City the more you are around. These shape the way we think and we want you to know upfront.

1 - We want to _____ as disciples in this city, not just _____.

Notes:

2 - We should talk about hard things _____, not _____.

Notes:

3 - Class time is _____ time.

Notes:

4 - Healthy things _____ and growing things _____.

Notes:

5 - We need a _____ to run, not a _____ to choose from.

Notes:

6 - In light of global _____, excellence must be _____ by good enough.

Notes:

VI. EXPECTATIONS

PORT CITY IN THE DETAILS

What you can expect from Port City

1. Port City and the _____
Apart from the Spirit of God giving us a hunger to be hearers and doers of God's Word, we have no hope of living up, in, and out together.
2. Port City and _____
God wants us to be transformed from the inside out in our heads, hearts, and into our hands. What we do or don't know about the key doctrines of the Christian life have massive implications.

Our love for God is informed by our knowledge of God.

Grace is not opposed to effort, just to earning.
3. Port City and church _____
The New Testament provides our view of church membership which is all about clarity and care. We can't care for our family or call our family to care for one another if there is no clarity around who is in it.

What Port City expects from you

1. What can be seen
Become a _____
Gather, Group, Team, Play
Sabbath and Give
2. What cannot be seen
We care most of all about your _____
We want you to view yourself as a branch in the vine united to many other branches in that same vine.
3. Our hope for you through our ministry
You are living _____, _____, and _____ with the family of God as you are empowered to live transformed lives.

VII. WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

1. Process what you've heard
2. _____ more about us
 - Read our Port City DNA document to get a more full picture of our mission, vision,
 - values, and strategy as a church.
 - Listen to the Port City Church "Who is Port City" series on spotify which is 7 episodes long.
 - Read through the Port City Confession of Faith
 - Read through the Port City Member Covenant
3. Count the _____
 - Write down any _____ that came to your mind during Starting Point, reading the Port City DNA, listening to the "Who is Port City" series, and reading through the Port City Confession of Faith that you would like to discuss with a Pastor.
4. _____ for membership
 - You can apply for membership by following this link: portcitynfk.com/membership
 - Wait for an interview with an elder
 - What does this look like? This is where we get to know you better and you get to know us better. The interview time allows us to hear your testimony, give you time to ask any questions you had, for us to emphasize who we are, hear more of one another's stories, and pray for you. We take the church as God's family seriously here, and we want to get to know our family from the moment you jump in. Imagine a conversational environment over coffee where we get to know one another better, and you leave with encouragement, clarity, and next steps.
 - If approved, membership is extended. If the decision is to hold off for now, you'll be contacted by an elder with next steps.
5. Once accepted
 - Attend a _____ meeting where you will be onboarded.
 - Join a _____
 - Begin _____
 - Living the rhythm of up, in, and out with us

VIII. OUR DNA

1. MISSION — WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO DO

Port City Church is a family that empowers believers to live transformed by Jesus.

Family: It is the collective discipleship ministry of every single member that is going to result in a unified and mobilized body of believers changing our city. (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Empowers believers: We know that God wants to unleash every member into their fullest kingdom potential, and so do we (John 20:21).

To Live Transformed: The goal is for every aspect of our lives to come under the Lordship of Jesus and for every sphere of influence we have to be impacted by it (Matthew 4:19).

By Jesus: Jesus is the Lord of His Church and the King of His people; we are His servants (Matthew 16:13-20)

2. STRATEGY — HOW WE ARE DOING IT

The core of how we intend to accomplish our mission is by becoming friends with sinners like Jesus.

The best gift Port City Church can give to the city of Norfolk is to get really good at being friends with sinners just like Jesus. Our mission to empower believers to live transformed by Jesus has as its goal to see the gospel saturate our city as our members are becoming friends with sinners where they live, work, and play.



1. Gospel: We make the gospel visible

- The Gospel changes everything. Through reading God’s Word and other spiritual disciplines, we allow this truth to become functionally true for us. The Gospel changes how a believer sees and thinks about every aspect of their life.



2. Family: We support each other like family

- We believe that God saves us into his family. The church should feel like a family. As we see in the book of Acts, regular life amongst the community of faith and living intentional lives with people far from God are holistic and intertwined.



3. City: We seek to know our neighbors

- The city is the people. We believe that to reach a city we must be connected to the people of the city, our neighbors. We want our church family to be involved in every aspect of our city and seek its welfare.



4. Movement: We take responsibility for lostness

- We believe that Gospel ministry is for every member. We want to develop innovative believers in order to see a movement of the Gospel throughout the city, the country, and the world. Movements are bigger than any one church therefore we will work and pray alongside other churches in our city.

IX. CONFESSION OF FAITH

Revelation

God has made Himself known in three primary ways: in creation, in Jesus, and in the Bible. God has revealed himself in and through creation. While what can be known about God can be seen in what he has made, leaving all without an excuse to know and submit to him, humanity constantly chooses to suppress the truth about God leaving everyone to pursue unrighteousness.

God has revealed himself most fully in Jesus. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the perfect revelation of who God is. Jesus Christ is the "image of the invisible God", "the exact imprint of his nature" and is a perfect reflection of God the Father.

Romans 1-3; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3; John 5:19

God has revealed himself in the Bible. The Bible, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, is God's own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit. Therefore, it is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches and without error in the original writings. These writings alone constitute the verbally inspired Word of God. The whole of the Bible and all its parts, down to the very words of the original, were given by divine inspiration. The Bible is sufficient for all that God requires for us to believe and do and is therefore to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it teaches; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; and trusted, as God's pledge, in all that it promises. As God's people hear, believe and obey the Word, they are equipped as disciples of Christ and witnesses to the gospel.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21

God

There is 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. 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.

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 to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all humanity.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7

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, temptations, and necessities and identifying Himself completely with humanity 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 people 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 human, in whose Person has effected the reconciliation between God and humanity. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:1-12; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired men throughout the ages to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables humanity to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts humanity of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls humanity 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.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

Creation and Providence

God created the whole world from nothing, he spoke everything into existence. Creation, according to the design of God, was good. God doesn't let the world exist, He makes the world exist. He upholds the universe by the word of His power, and He holds the world together in himself.

Genesis 1:1ff Psalms 33:6; Psalms 148:5; John 1:3 ;Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 11:3

Humanity

God made humanity—male and female—in His own image. Set apart as His image bearers, every human being has dignity, value, and worth. All men and all women, bearing the image of God, are meant to represent God in His creation. God declares the created order to be very good, distinguishing men and women as His agents to care for, manage and govern over it. Adam and Eve, the first humans, were made to complement each other in a one-flesh union in the covenant of marriage that establishes the only God-ordained pattern of sexual relations for men and women. In God's wise purposes, men and women are not simply interchangeable, but rather they complement each other in mutually enriching ways. All humanity originates from Adam and Eve.

Genesis 2; Ephesians 5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Timothy 2:11-13; 1 Peter 3

Distinctive: Complementarianism

Men and women are absolutely equal in essence, dignity and value but are distinct by divine design. As part of God's good created order, men and women are to have different yet complementary roles and responsibilities in the home and church. As it relates to the church, men and women are both expected to lead; however, the office of elder is reserved for qualified men. Men and women are together the recipients of spiritual gifts designed to empower them for ministry in the local church and beyond. Therefore, women are to be encouraged, equipped, and empowered to utilize their gifting in ministry, in service to the body of Christ, and through teaching in ways that are consistent with the Bible.

Genesis 1:26-27; 2:18; Acts 18:24-26; 1 Corinthians 11:2-16; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Timothy 2:11-15; 3:1-7; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Peter 3:1-7

Distinctive: Life as Worship

God created humanity as worshipers. Humanity was created to do all things to the honor and fame of God. Worship is not only singing praises to God, worship involves showing God's worth in all aspects of life. Whether people eat, drink, or anything they do can and should be done in a way that brings praise to the triune God. Therefore, all of life is worship. As worshipers, the question is not are you worshipping, but are you worshipping well.

Genesis 1, 4:3-4; Psalm 1, 99, 148; Isaiah 6; Luke 19:28-40; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Ephesians 1; Colossians 3:23-24

Fall of Humanity

Humanity's first parents, Adam and Eve, being tempted by Satan, sinned, in eating the forbidden fruit in the garden. By this sin, they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly fallen in body and soul. Adam and Eve being the root of all mankind, the guilt of their sin was imputed; and the same death in sin, and corrupted nature, transferred to all their offspring descending from them. From this original corruption comes all actual transgressions. Humanity is made utterly reluctant, impaired, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all kinds of evil. Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary to his own nature, brings guilt upon sinners, leaving all humanity under the wrath of God and the curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal. This corruption of nature, during this life, remains in those that are regenerated (made new by Jesus), although they are pardoned and their sin put to death, believers still sin.

Genesis 3; Genesis 6; Romans 1-3; Romans 5-7; Ephesians 2

Distinctive: Sovereignty of God in Salvation

The salvation of humanity is fundamentally the work of God. Before the foundation of the world, God elected His people, setting His affection and grace upon them. In love, God predestined His people for adoption. Faith is a gift of grace that is given by the mercy and pleasure of God, so that no one may boast. Apart from the intervention of God, humanity cannot choose of their own accord to worship God and pursue righteousness. God's sovereignty in salvation is comprehensive: from first to last, all of salvation is the work of God.

John 1, 6:22-40, 17; Romans 3, 8:29-30; Ephesians 1:4-6, 2:1-10

The Way of Salvation

The only way humanity can be saved from their sins and the penalty of sin, the wrath of God, is through Jesus Christ. Apart from Jesus there is no salvation from sin. Salvation is through Christ alone. It is the perfect, sinless life lived by Jesus, the substitutionary death of Jesus, and the resurrection of Jesus that saves people from their sins. The salvific work of Jesus only comes to people by grace. Salvation is entirely by grace alone. Grace is God giving people what they do not deserve. This means that salvation is a gift and cannot be a product of human effort or willful choice.

John 1:12-13, 14:6; Acts 2:38, 4:12, Romans 3:23-26; Ephesians 2:1-10; Philippians 3:4-11; Titus 3:3-7

Justification

The salvation of God that is in Christ alone and by grace alone, gets applied to people through faith alone. People are only justified before God by faith. Justified means to be declared righteous before God. Through faith in Jesus, God no longer holds sinners guilty for their sin, but counts them as righteous. A great exchange has occurred. Jesus has given his people his righteousness in exchange for their sinfulness. Jesus' life now counts for his people. Jesus' death was in the place of his people. Jesus' resurrection was the first among his people. Through faith in Jesus, there is now no condemnation.

Genesis 15:6; Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17, 3:28, 4:4-5, 10:9; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 2:16, 5:6; Ephesians 2:1-10

Adoption

Salvation is not only about a just standing before God; salvation is relational. Jesus stood in the place of sinners to redeem (buy back) a people for himself. Jesus took our place, but we joined him in his place. Those who have faith in Jesus are adopted as sons in God's family just like Jesus. Sonship is a historical title of position and privilege in the family and is irrespective of gender. God now loves those in Christ (those who have faith) with the same love he has for his Son. In Jesus, Christians are fully known as justified sinners and fully loved as beloved sons.

John 1:12-13; Romans 8:15-23; Galatians 4:5-7; Ephesians 1:15

Sanctification

Having been justified and adopted into the family of God, every believer in Christ is indwelt with the Holy Spirit and empowered to become in practice what they have been declared to be in truth. The Holy Spirit sets the believer free from the power of sin and empowers the believer to produce righteousness in their life. The Spirit changes believers from the inside out, believers begin to want what God wants and dislike what God dislikes. The Holy Spirit makes Christ's people desire obedience. This process is called Sanctification. While the Holy Spirit empowers sanctification, that power is unleashed in the believers life through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is through the Gospel that the Holy Spirit motivates believers to live transformed lives by seeing the love of God for sinners. The ordinary means by which this happens is through the Word of God (the Bible), self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer. Sanctification requires grace-driven effort on the part of a believer; this is why the New Testament has various commands that believers are to live out. What believers do in the body may not save them, but their actions will sanctify them by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 6 & 8; Galatians 3:1-14, 5:1-6:10; Ephesians 1:11-14, 4:1-5:21; Philippians 2:1-18, 3:12-4:1; Colossians 3:1-17

Church

The church is the body of Christ, those forgiven of their sin by faith in Jesus throughout all the ages. The church is the Gospel made visible. The church is a family that is bound together by the grace and leadership of Jesus. The church globally is made up of people from many tribes, languages, and nations. The church finds visible expression in local congregations. A local church is a congregation of baptized believers, who have covenanted together in the faith and fellowship in the gospel; observing the ordinances of baptism and communion; governed by Jesus; and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his word; it's only scriptural officers are elders and deacons whose qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus. The roles of the officers of the church do not negate the necessity of the members, as a whole, to care for one another physically, emotionally, and spiritually. The officers of the church are to equip the members for the work of Gospel ministry which involves building up the membership into maturity like Jesus.

John 13:31-35, 14:12-31; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31; Ephesians 4; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 3:1-15; Titus 1:5-9; Hebrews 13:1-19

Distinctive: Believers Baptism

Those who have placed faith in the finished work of Jesus have spiritually gone from death to life by the power of the Holy Spirit, they have been born again or regenerated. Baptism is an outward expression of this inward reality. When believers are baptized, they declare that Jesus has saved them by his grace alone and through faith alone and for God's glory alone. Baptism is a declaration that the person's life will be centered around Jesus and go where he says go and do what he says to do.

Mark 1:4; Acts 2:37-39, 8:34-40, 9:17-19 Acts 10:44-48, 16:14-15, 16:31-34; Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12

Distinctive: Baptism by Immersion

Based on the examples in the New Testament (John the Baptist, Jesus, and others) and the meaning of the Greek word, baptism should be by full immersion of candidates in water. The mode is tied to the meaning. Believers go down under the water to symbolize death and they come back out of the water symbolizing resurrection and new life.

Romans 6:1-6, Acts 8:38-39, Colossians 2:11-12

Communion

Since the Last Supper, believers in Jesus have joined together to remember the death of Jesus and the new covenant through his shed blood. The bread represents the body of Jesus and the cup of wine represents the blood of Jesus. When believers share the bread and the cup, they declare the Lord's death until he returns. This act unites believers throughout all the ages. Taking the bread and cup remind and declare that Jesus has put himself in the place of sinners and brought believers into the people of God. Communion declares that believers are now under a New Covenant through Jesus' death. Communion means an exchange has been made and we are now the people of Jesus. While communion is largely symbolic it is not only symbolic. Communion is a powerful picture and reminder that believers belong to Jesus. This act spiritually unifies believers around the grace of Jesus when done regularly.

Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-23; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

Sunday Gatherings

After being in the grave three days, Jesus arose from the dead and is alive at the right-hand of God the Father interceding for his people. This profound reality changes everything. So much so, that the earliest of Christians started gathering on the same day that Jesus rose from the dead, Sunday. Christians gather together on Sundays to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, Jesus lives and so shall his people! Sundays are concerned with the celebration of what God has done through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Sundays shape believers by reminding them of the character and nature of God, and our need for repentance from sin and faith in Jesus continually. Sundays help form believers into the likeness of Jesus through the proclamation of the word of God, the Bible, through sermon, song, and prayer.

Matthew 28:1, Hebrews 10:24-25, Colossians 3:16-17

Civil Government

The civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society and the magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed; except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Because of Jesus, no nation is privileged or chosen, but rather God is making for himself a people from all nations on the earth, therefore no patriotic allegiance should divide Christians from one another.

Christians are to be model citizens and promote the love and welfare of their neighbors and live quiet and peaceful lives within their communities. Christians should participate in political processes and vocations as good citizens, but in that endeavor they should treat all people with dignity, value, and worth as deserving of those who bear the image of God. Christians should champion the cause of the weak and vulnerable in all societies. When Christians disagree with others, Christian or not, they are to do so with humility, respect, and gentleness.

Romans 13:1-7, Revelation 7:9-10, 1 Thessalonians 4:11, Ephesians 4:3, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Romans 15:7, Mark 12:30-31

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 and laid down his life for her. He has the God-given responsibility to put his family above himself by providing for, protecting, and leading them. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband just as both men and women in the church willingly submit 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.

Children are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle examples and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:27, Genesis 2:20-25, Ephesians 5:21-33, Colossians 3:18-20, Psalm 127:3-5

Sexuality

Sex is God's idea, it is foundationally good. Sex was created by God for human enjoyment and procreation in the context of marriage. Due to the Fall, sexuality is often twisted and distorted inside and outside of marriage. Because of the Fall, sexual desires are not always as intended when God created the world. Just as the Fall affects human bodies, human desires are no different. However, due to the Fall, these experiences are very real and powerful. But due to the Fall, something that feels natural does not necessarily make it good or what God intended.

Christians are called to lead the way in sexuality as God designed. Christians are to oppose any sexual abuse to men, women, and children. Sexual impropriety is never inline with holiness and should be openly opposed by all Christians. Christians should stand up for those victimized by sexual harassment, and sexual exploitation of any kind.

1 Thessalonians 4:3, 1 Corinthians 5:9-11, 1 Corinthians 6:12, 1 Corinthians 6:18-20, Mark 12:30-31, Psalm 82:3-4

Mission

God is a missionary God. When humanity rebelled against God and disrupted the relationship between God and humanity, he enacted a rescue plan. God came for humanity. God sent Jesus to do what fallen humanity could not. Jesus, after accomplishing the redemption of his people, then gave the command for the Church to join him in his mission to make disciples of every nation. The Church, while going about ordinary life, is to make disciples and baptize them in the name of the Triune God and teach them everything that Jesus taught. This command is called the great commission.

There are many things that Jesus taught, but the foundation of his teachings was to love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength and to love your neighbor as yourself. These are called the great commandments. The mission Jesus sent the church carries with it the call of all peoples to love the Triune God by the grace and mercy of Jesus alone and to love your neighbor as yourself through the power of the Holy Spirit. The mission that Jesus gave the church is both proclamation of good news, the Gospel, and being a people that live out love of neighbor, that is, good deeds.

Romans 8:1-4, John 3:16, Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 12:30-31, Titus 2:11-14

Resurrection from the Dead and the Final Judgment

At the end of time, Jesus Christ will return in the clouds to judge the living and the dead. The dead will rise from the grave. Those in Christ will receive new, glorified bodies just like Jesus. Those outside of Christ will finally be separated from the benevolent presence of God, enduring eternal and just punishment for their sins.

Acts 1:10-11, 1 Corinthians 15:12-57, Revelation 1:7, Matthew 24:30, 1 Thessalonians 4:17, Matthew 10:28, Matthew 25:41, Revelation 20:15, 2 Thessalonians 1:9, Matthew 5:29

New Heavens and New Earth

Once the final judgment is complete, God will bring about the New Heavens and the New Earth. All the broken things of this world will be wiped away. All the sad things will come untrue, the effects of sin and death will be no more. There will be a city where the dwelling place of God will be among his people once more. God and humanity will dwell together forever.

2 Peter 3:10-13, Revelation 21:1-5, Isaiah 66:22

X. MEMBER COVENANT

Elders to the Port City Church body:

As shepherds and overseers of a local church, elders are entrusted with knowing, protecting, leading, equipping and caring for the corporate church body and her individual members. The following is a rather extensive overview of the requirements for elders as spelled out within the Scriptures.

The Elders Covenant:

- I. to appoint elders and deacons (including staff members who serve in these offices) according to the criteria assigned to them in the Scriptures (1 Tim. 3:1–13; Titus 1:5–9; 1 Pet. 5:1–4).
- II. to prayerfully seek God’s will for our church community and steward her resources to the best of our ability based on our study of the Scriptures and following of the Spirit (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1–4).
- III. to care for the church and seek her growth in grace, truth and love (Matt. 28:16–20; Eph. 4:15–16; Col. 1:28; James 5:14; 1 Pet. 5:1–4).
- IV. to provide teaching and counsel from the whole of Scripture (Acts 20:27–28; 1 Tim. 4:16; 2 Tim. 4:1–5; Titus 2:1).
- V. to equip the members of the church for the work of ministry (Eph. 4:11–16).
- VI. to be on guard against false teachers and teachings (Matt. 7:15; Acts 20:28–31; 1 Tim. 1:3–7; 1 John 4:1).
- VII. to lovingly exercise discipline when necessary, for the glory of God, the good of the one disciplined and the health of the church as a whole (Matt. 18:15–20; 1 Cor. 5; Gal. 6:1; James 5:19–20)
- VIII. to set an example and join members in fulfilling the obligations of church membership stated below (Phil. 3:17; 1 Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:7–8; 1 Pet. 5:3).

Members to the Port City Church body:

The requirements of this membership covenant are in no way intended as an addition to the biblical obligations of a believer. Rather, this document functions primarily as an accessible yet non-exhaustive explanation of what the Scriptures teach about the obedience that faith produces. Having, as we trust, been brought by Divine Grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to give up ourselves to Him, and having been baptized upon our profession of faith, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, relying on His gracious aid, solemnly and joyfully covenant together.

I Covenant:

- I. to seek the unity of the Spirit with my brothers and sisters in Christ.
- II. to walk together in familial love as described in the New Testament commands; when needed this will be looking out for one another, praying for one another, and encouraging and exhorting one another when the situations arise.
- III. to commit to assembling with my Church family in weekly corporate worship, to attend groups on a weekly basis, and team meetings monthly, nor neglect to pray for ourselves and others.
- IV. to seek to bring up anyone who might find themselves under our care in our household either temporarily or permanently, within our power to love God and learn what it means to follow him, and with love in our hearts to seek the salvation of our family and friends.
- V. to rejoice at each other's happiness and seek to bear each other's burdens and sorrows in a spirit of love and patience.
- VI. to seek to live wisely in the world remembering that we are in it but not of it; with God's help we will remember that our true self is in Christ and is not our old self, and in our baptism we have a great picture of how the newness of life means putting on the new self in the pursuit of holiness.
- VII. to work with our church family to pursue a faithful evangelical ministry, as we uphold the worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines of the church.
- VIII. to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.
- IX. to pursue the Lord Jesus Christ through regular Bible reading, prayer, fellowship and practice of spiritual disciplines.
- X. to regularly serve with my brothers and sisters on a serve team and do my best to help with Port City events outside of Sunday's.
- XI. to submit to the discipline of God through the Holy Spirit by:
 - following the biblical procedures for church discipline where sin is evident in another - the hope of such discipline being repentance and restoration
 - receiving righteous and loving discipline when approached biblically by fellow believers.
- XII. to submit to the discipline of God through his Holy Spirit by doing the following when I sin:
 - confessing my sin to God and to fellow believers
 - repent and seek help to put my sin to death.
- XIII. to submit to the elders and other appointed leaders of the church and diligently strive for unity and peace within the church.
- XIV. to adhere to and uphold the Port City Confession of Faith.
- XV. to do the following should I leave the church for righteous reasons:
 - notify the appropriate staff member
 - to seek another church with which I can carry out my biblical responsibilities as a believer.

