



**PORTICO**  
**CHURCH** ARLINGTON  
**FOUNDATIONS**

Uniting People to Life in Christ

---

Uniting People To Life In Christ

---

## Leaders and Staff

### Elders/Pastors

Pat Collins (Non-staff Pastor) | [pcollins@porticoarlington.org](mailto:pcollins@porticoarlington.org)

Chris Cupit (Non-staff Pastor) | [ccupit@porticoarlington.org](mailto:ccupit@porticoarlington.org)

Andrew Owen (Non-staff Pastor) | [aowen@porticoarlington.org](mailto:aowen@porticoarlington.org)

Jonny Reeve (Pastor of Worship + Leadership) | [jreeve@porticoarlington.org](mailto:jreeve@porticoarlington.org)

Nate Wagner (Lead Pastor) | [nwagner@porticoarlington.org](mailto:nwagner@porticoarlington.org)

### Deacons

Susanna Eisenrauch | [seisenrauch@porticoarlington.org](mailto:seisenrauch@porticoarlington.org)

Heidi Hall | [hhall@porticoarlington.org](mailto:hhall@porticoarlington.org)

Justin Hall | [jhall@porticoarlington.org](mailto:jhall@porticoarlington.org)

Kate Jarvi | [kjarvi@porticoarlington.org](mailto:kjarvi@porticoarlington.org)

Sheamus Larkin | [slarkin@porticoarlington.org](mailto:slarkin@porticoarlington.org)

Karina Luthra | [kluthra@porticoarlington.org](mailto:kluthra@porticoarlington.org)

### Staff

Joye Allison (Ministry Director) | [jallison@porticoarlington.org](mailto:jallison@porticoarlington.org)

Jackie Black (Director of Biblical Counseling) | [jblack@porticoarlington.org](mailto:jblack@porticoarlington.org)

Starr Parnell (Director of Connection + Administration) | [sparnell@porticoarlington.org](mailto:sparnell@porticoarlington.org)

## Overview of Foundations and Membership

### What is Foundations?

Foundations is an introduction to the **theology**, **community**, and **mission** of Portico Church Arlington. It's a snapshot of what it means live as a member of Portico and is the membership class. If you are new, Foundations is a great place to connect with others.

### Becoming a Member of Portico Church Arlington

As Christians, we are members of God's household (Ephesians 2:19) called to love, serve, and minister in a particular place within the body of Christ. A healthy body requires that each member do its part well. A healthy church requires the same: people that are sacrificially committed and well-equipped to do the works of service that God has prepared in advance for us to do (Ephesians 2:10, 4:12). At Portico, we view membership as *the way* of publicly identifying as part of God's household and committing to love, serve, and build up the body of Christ in our context.

**Ephesians 4:12-16** ...to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,<sup>13</sup> until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,<sup>14</sup> so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. <sup>15</sup> Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Portico Church Arlington is committed to creating a model that reflects God's heart for His children — an organic composition of minds, hearts, and hands living out the gospel together. Membership in the church is not a status symbol or social club. A Member who acknowledges they are part of the body of Christ and enters into a covenant with their local church is called to a higher degree of responsibility. Conversely, the Elders and Deacons covenant to assist their Members first and foremost, providing counsel, service, and aid, as well as supporting the membership through prayer, teaching, and guiding as necessary.

**I Peter 4:8-10** Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.

## **Requirements for becoming a Covenant Member of Portico Church Arlington**

The following items need to be completed, in the following order, to become a Covenant Member of Portico Church Arlington:

1. Attend Foundations
2. Complete required e-paperwork: Membership Questionnaire + Review statement of belief and practice
3. Complete your Member Interview + Sign Statement of Belief and Practice

## **The Portico Member Interview**

At the Member Interview, you will receive information to help you thrive as a member:

- Review Portico's stance on controversial topics
- Engaging community
- Living faithfully in your church through serving, leading, and stewardship
- Initiating the process for baptism (if needed). Note: baptism is required prior to becoming a Member.

**FOUNDATIONS Objective:** to establish a foundation for becoming mature, multiplying disciples of Jesus.

## THEOLOGY

**Question to consider:** How does Portico Church Arlington view the Bible?

**Answer:** The Bible is the authoritative Word of God.

### I. **Bible Basics**

- a. Written in 3 languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek)
- b. Over 40 authors (Kings, Peasants, Philosophers, Fishermen, Poets, Statesman, Scholars) Young/old, rich/poor
- c. Over 1000 years
- d. 3 Continents: Asia, Africa, Europe
- e. 66 Books
- f. 39 Old Testament
  - i. Law (5), History (12), Poetry (5), Prophets (17)
  - ii. The 5 books of Law (Pentateuch) can be combined with 12 historical books to trace the entire history of Israel from inception to the time of final Judgment for Israel (DAY OF THE LORD). Acts 2:16-22 w/ Joel 2:28-32
  - iii. In the Pentateuch (first 5 books of Old Testament) Israel is chosen, instructed, disciplined and then redeemed. The remaining 12 books record the conquest of the land, period of Judges, formation of a united kingdom (and king) the failure and division of the nation to keep God's covenant (Northern Israel and Southern Judea) until the temple is destroyed and both divisions are taken out of the land (to wait for God to return to His temple – e.g. Jn. 2:19-22)
  - iv. The 17 prophetic books are inter-dispersed throughout the 12 history books and are indictments of curses brought by God's covenant attorneys (prophets) for failure to live faithfully under God's rule. The New Testament begins the RESTORATION of God's Elect
- g. **27 New Testament:**
  - i. Historical Narrative (5), Pauline Epistles (13), General Epistles (8), Revelation (1)

- ii. **Historical Narrative** (Gospels, Acts) key events of the life of Jesus. Eyewitness accounts of the ministry of Jesus. An account of the early Church (origin through 65 A.D).
  - iii. **Pauline Epistles** – development of the seed doctrine of the gospel and how it should transform lives.
  - iv. **General Epistles *Non-Pauline*** (Peter, John, Jude, others) – practical and firm exhortations to a multitude of problems and sins that beset the church.
  - v. **Revelation** – final battle and triumph of Christ and His Bride over all the earth. Revelation is meant to encourage the Saints by showing them the final scene in history.
- h. Understood by **common rules** of language
  - i. Applied by the **Holy Spirit**
  - j. **Self-authenticating**
    - i. **Hebrews 4:12** For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
  - k. Unique in **preservation**
  - l. Unique in **efficacy**
  - m. Contains a unified **worldview** and story of **redemption**:
    - i. Provides an objective means of understanding the purpose of life and significance of human history

## II. **Nature** of Scripture

- a. **Inspired**: Scripture comes from the inspiration of one Divine author and is transcribed through various human authors.
  - i. **2 Timothy 3:16** All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
- b. **Infallible**: Whatever Scripture affirms is true
- c. **Inerrant**: The original autographs are without error and does not contradict itself

- d. **Authoritative:** As the word of God, Scripture commands our submission. To disbelieve or disobey Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God

III. **Attributes** of Scripture

- a. **Necessity:** Scripture is **Special Revelation**. It is needed to know how to live and how to be saved. Human **reason** and **experience** alone cannot attain a personal relationship with God.
- b. **Sufficiency:** Scripture tells us all that we need to know for life and godliness.
- c. **Clarity (perspicuity):** Scripture can be understood by all
- d. **Authority:** Scripture stands above all authority

IV. The **metanarrative** of Scripture chronicles the redemption of mankind and all of creation through the person and work of Jesus Christ

Creation → Fall → Redemption → New Creation

**Question to Consider:** What is our relationship to truth?

**Answer:** We are to receive the truth, obey truth, and be transformed by the truth. We do not create truth.

- a. **Genesis 1:28** And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”
- b. **Matthew 4:4** But he answered, “It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”
- c. **Transformative:** Scripture is not meant to simply inform but to **transform**
  - i. **Romans 12:2** Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.
- d. **Revelation:** not speculation but a **Divine Conversation** where God reveals himself to us.
- e. **Hermeneutics:** drawing out the meaning that Scripture intends

- i. What does the text teach me about **God** (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
- ii. What does the text teach me about **myself** in relation to God?
- iii. Understanding all of Scripture through the lens of Covenants.

## V. Scripture and Covenant

“The whole Bible, diverse in content as it may appear at first sight, can be seen as a story of God making covenants and man responding to them. The books of law show what God expects of his covenant people. The books of history indicate man’s actual response. The Psalms contain the praise, the laments, the questionings, the blessings and cursings which should be on the lips of a covenant people. The wisdom books contain applications of the covenant law to human problems. The prophets bring God’s covenant lawsuit against the covenant breakers while at the same time promising covenant renewal. The Gospels and Acts present the history of the New Covenant, which is applied to believers and to world history in the epistles and Revelation.”<sup>1</sup>

1. **Covenant** is a formal promise that involves the nature of God’s relationship to his creation.
2. **Scripture** provides the details, history, experience, and fulfillment of covenant promises. This works itself out throughout the history of God’s revealing himself to his people, and is expressed through the metanarrative of creation→fall→redemption→new creation.
3. “The distance between God and the creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience to Him as their Creator, yet they could never have any fruition of Him, as their blessedness and reward, but by some voluntary condescension on God’s part, which He has been pleased to express by way of covenant.”<sup>2</sup>
4. “Covenant is the word God uses to describe his relationship with his people. At each stage of the Bible’s story, including our own, God relates to his people through a series of these interlinked covenants.”<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> John Frame. *Covenant and the Unity of Scripture*. <https://frame-poythress.org/covenant-and-the-unity-of-scripture/>

<sup>2</sup> Westminster Confession of Faith, 7.1.

<sup>3</sup> *Covenants Made Simple* by Jonty Rhodes, pp. 13.



## God of the Covenants

**Question to consider:** What does Portico believe the Bible says about who God is?

**Answer:** God is the holy, eternal, infinite, personal Creator and Redeemer of all things.

- I. “What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.” - A.W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*
- II. True **worship** depends on a true **knowledge** of God
  - a. A weak understanding of God leads to disaster
  - b. All have an “**inner sense**” of God
    - i. **Ecclesiastes 3:11** “...put eternity into man’s heart”
    - ii. **Romans 1:18-20** “God has shown it to them”
- III. Can God Be Known?
  - a. God is known only through self-disclosure, which is called **revelation**. God reveals Himself by what He has created (**General Revelation**). He also reveals Himself by the deeds performed by Him alone and the employment of language (**Special Revelation**).
  - b. Jesus is the perfect, personal **image** of Father.
    - i. **John 14:6-7** Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”
  - c. The **Incomprehensibility** of God
    - i. God is **infinite**: He can never be **fully** known or understood
    - ii. God **can** be known **truly**, but not **exhaustively**. We will spend an eternity searching the riches of God’s beauty and never exhaust His greatness.
      1. **Psalm 147:5** Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.

- iii. “Because of this intimate relationship, God can be named in terms of His creatures, and He can be spoken of anthropomorphically. The same Scripture which speaks in the most exalted way of God’s incomparable greatness and majesty, at the same time speaks of Him in figures and images which sparkle with life. It speaks of His eyes and ears, His hands and feet, His mouth and lips, His heart and bowels. It ascribes all kinds of attributes to him—of wisdom and knowledge, will and power, righteousness and mercy, and it ascribes to Him also such emotions as joy and grief, fear and vexation, zeal and envy, remorse and wrath, hatred and anger.”<sup>4</sup>

- IV. **The Attributes of God:** the perfections, which are predicated of the Divine Being in Scripture, or are visibly exercised by Him in His works of creation, providence and redemption.

“A human being can lose his arm or his leg, or, in a state of sleep or illness, lose consciousness without ceasing to be human. But in God this is impossible. His attributes coincide with His being. Every attribute is His being. He is wise and true, not merely, good and holy, just and merciful, but He *is* also wisdom, truth, goodness, holiness, justice, and mercy. Hence He is also the source and fount of all the attributes of man. He *is* everything that He *possesses* and is the source of everything that creatures possess. He is the abundant source of all goods.”<sup>5</sup>

a. **Incommunicable (Unshared)**

- i. **Omnipresence** — God is everywhere at all times (Psalm 139:7-12; Jeremiah 23:24; Proverbs 15:3; Deuteronomy 31:6; Colossians 1:17).
- ii. **Omniscience** — God has complete and perfect knowledge of all things, including the past, present, and future, and of everything actual or potential (Psalm 147:5; Isaiah 40:12-14, 46:10; Psalm 139:1-6; Job 42:2; Hebrews 4:13).
- iii. **Omnipotence** — God is all-powerful and able to do all that He wills (Job 42:2; Psalm 147:5; Matthew 19:26; Ephesians 3:20).
- iv. **Immutability** — God does not change (Malachi 3:6; Numbers 23:19; Psalm 102:27; Romans 11:29; Hebrews 13:8; James 1:17).

---

<sup>4</sup> *The Wonderful Works of God* by Herman Bavinck, pp. 118.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 118.

- v. **Eternality** — God has no beginning or end and is not bound by time, though He is conscious of time and does work in time (Psalm 90:2, 93:2, 102:12; Ephesians 3:21).
- vi. **Sovereignty** — God is supreme in rule and authority over all things (Psalm 103:19; II Samuel 7:28; I Chronicles 29:10-13), however He does allow human freedom (Genesis 50:21, 22).

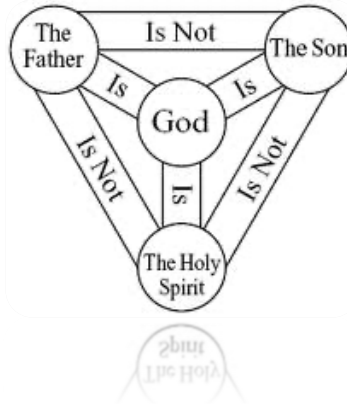
b. **Communicable (Shared)**

- i. **Spirit** — God is invisible and immaterial (John 4:19-24, 1:18, 3:1-10, 14:16-17, 16:12-16; II Corinthians 3:15-17; I Timothy 6:15-16). A spirit is personal, possessing a mind (Psalm 139:1-4), emotions (Ephesians 4:30), and a will (John 6:40).
- ii. **Holiness** — God is absolutely separate from any evil (I Peter 1:16; Exodus 3:5; Leviticus 19:2; Psalm 5:4-6, 99:5; Isaiah 6:3, 8:13, 57:15; Habakkuk 1:12-13; I John 1:5, I Peter 1:14-19).
- iii. **Love/Goodness** — God alone is perfectly good and loving, and He alone is the source for all goodness and love (I John 4:8-16; Exodus 34:7; Psalm 84:11; John 3:16; Ephesians 2:4-7; Galatians 5:22).
- iv. **Truth** — God is the source of all truth. He is the embodiment of truth (John 17:17, 14:6; Titus 1:2; Numbers 23:19; II Corinthians 1:20).
- v. **Justice/Righteousness** — God does not conform to a standard of right and wrong, but right and wrong flow out of His character (Exodus 34:7; see also Genesis 18:25; Deuteronomy 32:4; Acts 17:31; Romans 2:11).
- vi. **Mercy** — God does not give some people what they deserve because He is loving and gracious (Titus 3:5; Ephesians 2:4-7; Exodus 34:6-7; Matthew 18:23-35; Romans 12:8).
- vii. **Beauty** — God is beautiful and His creation reflects His beauty. God made men and women in His image and likeness to also create works of beauty (Psalm 27:4, 50:2; Isaiah 33:17; Ecclesiastes 3:11).

V. **The Trinity**

- a. God eternally exists as three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each person is fully God and there is one God: equal in attributes, different in relationships.

- b. **Westminster Confession of Faith:** “In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one **substance, power,** and **eternity:** *God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.*”



- c. The **Father** planned redemption (John 3:16)  
d. The **Son** accomplished redemption (John 6:38)  
e. The **Spirit** applies redemption (John 14:26)

## VI. Trinity Fail

- a. **Modalism:** God is **successively** Father, Son, and Holy Spirit not **simultaneously** the Trinity  
b. **Arianism:** Jesus is the highest created being but not God  
c. **Tritheism:** Three equal, independent, and autonomous beings

**Question to Consider:** For what purpose did God create us? (Why is there something rather than nothing)?

**Answer:** God created us to **know, love, serve** and **enjoy** him eternally.

- a. God created with relationship in mind. God reveals himself to creation in a **covenantal context** (formal promises), creating security and richness for God to bless and love his creation.

- b. **John 17:3** “And this is eternal life, that they **know** you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.
- c. **Mark 12:30–31** “And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”
- d. **Galatians 4:8–9** Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more?

## The Covenants of God: Creation, Fall, Redemption, New Creation

**Question to consider:** What is the grand theme of Scripture?

**Answer:** The grand theme of Scripture is God displaying his glory through creating, redeeming, and making new all of creation. This theme is developed in a covenantal structure that helps us understand all of Scripture.

### I. Creation and the Covenant of Works

#### a. Genesis 1 + 2

- i. God created the entire universe out of **nothing**; it was originally very **good**; and He created it to **glorify** Himself
- ii. “He is not a human being, who at the cost of great difficulty and exertion, makes something else out of the materials he has at hand. Instead, simply by the act of speaking, He calls everything into being out of nothing.”<sup>6</sup>
- iii. Both **meaning** and **purpose** are intrinsic in creation because God brought it forth to glorify himself
- iv. God created the spiritual universe; The sum of creation is the **seen** and the **unseen**
- v. Creation is **distinct** from but **dependent** on God
- vi. God is **transcendent** – above and independent of creation
- vii. God is **immanent** - personally present and involved in His creation. Creation is continually dependent on God for its existence
- viii. **Hebrews 1:3** He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.

b. Man and woman are the pinnacle of creation - created in the **image** of God.

- i. God enters into a formal relationship with his image bearers (**Covenant partners**)

---

<sup>6</sup> *Wonderful Works of God*, pp. 130.

1. **Gen 1:26** Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.
  - ii. Mankind is appointed to rule over creation as God’s vice-regents, reflecting his glory to all of creation. (**Covenant conditions**)
    1. **Gen 1:28**
    2. **Gen 2:5-9, 15-17**
  - iii. Adam is the representative of all humanity in the garden (**Covenantal Representative**)
- b. In the Covenant of Works we can know that God desires to share in and of himself with his creation, specifically with the man and the woman. His purpose is to create a human project in which all of creation knows of God’s goodness as it is imaged by humans in keeping the covenant. The reward of covenantal faithfulness was a sharing of the eternal life that exists in God. This is represented by the tree of life. (**Covenantal sign and seal**).

**Question to Consider:** What is the chief end of man?

**Answer:** “Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.” (Westminster Shorter Catechism)

- c. God created us to bring glory to Him
  - i. **Romans 11:36** “For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen”
  - ii. **Isaiah 43:6-7**...bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth, everyone who is called by my name, whom I created *for my glory*, whom I formed and made.”
- e. What does it mean to live for God’s glory?

- i. Glorifying God means to **acknowledge** His glory, to **value** it above all things, and to make it **known**<sup>7</sup>
- ii. We glorify our Maker by **thanking** Him for all we have, **trusting** Him for all we need, and **obeying** all His revealed will

---

<sup>7</sup> Piper, John (2011-01-18). Desiring God, Revised Edition: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist (Kindle Location 829). The Doubleday Religious Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.



**Question to consider:** what is sin?

**Answer:** Sin is any deficiency to conform completely to the law of God.

I. **The Fall (Covenant betrayal)**

a. The **deceitful** pattern of **sin (Gen 3:1-6)**

- i. Temptation challenges your source of **revelation** (verse 1)
- ii. Temptation appeals to your **appetite** (verse 6)
- iii. Temptation appeals to your **eyes** It is beautiful (verse 6)
- iv. Temptation appeals to your **pride**, promising to make you wise (verse 6)

II. **Sin** is any failure to conform to the moral law of God in **act, attitude, or nature**

- a. **Sin** is personal rebellion against God by making ourselves the ultimate **authority** in our life
- b. **Sin** is a holistic disregard for the Lordship of God in our lives
- c. **Sin** is cosmic treason
- d. **Sin** is killing us
  - i. **Romans 6:23** For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

III. **Inherited Guilt**

- a. We are counted **guilty** because of Adam's sin (**Covenantal Representation**)
- b. As the head of creation, Adam's sin caused a **cataclysmic fall** and brought about the **pollution** of all things, including humanity
  - i. **Romans 5:18-19** Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.
  - ii. **AND**, we also **personally** sin bringing destruction and guilt
- c. "The human race constitutes an organism. Just as the act of one bodily member – say, the hand – is considered as an act of the person, so the sin of one

member of the organism of humanity is imputed to the entire organism.” -  
**Thomas Aquinas**

#### IV. Sin Nature [inherited corruption]

- a. Also called “**Original Sin**”
- b. In addition to inheriting the guilt of Adam, we are born with a nature that is **unresponsive** to God
- c. It is **natural** for us to sin and completely resist glad submission to God
- d. We lack the ability to do anything that pleases God. We are **totally depraved** [moral inability]
  - i. **Psalm 51:5** ‘Surely I was **sinful at birth**, sinful from the time my mother conceived me’

#### V. The Alienation of Sin

- a. **Genesis 3:7**
  - a. **Theological:** Separated from God. The presence of God now produces fear and trauma
  - b. **Psychological** Separation from self. Because we don’t know God, we don’t know our purpose or who we truly are
  - c. **Social** Separation from others. Relationship issues are the result of sin
  - d. **Nature.** The natural world is cursed because of us and not a willing friend anymore

#### VI. The Cure for Sin—THE COVENANT OF GRACE

- a. **Genesis 3:15, 20-24**

**Question to consider:** Do we have the ability to repair what sin has destroyed?

**Answer:** Because sin is primarily against an eternal God, only the eternal God has any ability to repair what sin has destroyed. This is known as **REDEMPTION**.

1. The Covenant of Grace

- a. Noah: God's gracious preservation of creation
- b. Abraham: God's gracious promise to re-establish the garden
- c. Moses: God's gracious revelation and preservation of redemption
- d. David: God's gracious forerunner of the redeemer
- e. Jesus (New Covenant): God's gracious fulfillment of all covenantal promises and blessings.

**Question to Consider:** What is the Gospel?

**Answer:** The Gospel is the GOOD NEWS of Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and ascension on behalf of his people and to redeem them.

I. **Salvation Accomplished (God's Covenantal faithfulness)**

- a. Jesus lived, suffered, and died a horrific death on a Roman cross to pay the penalty of our sin
  - i. Jesus identifies himself as the "new Adam" who represents humanity
  - ii. Jesus' life fulfills the requirements of the Covenant of works (he is the faithful covenant partner).
- b. On the cross, Jesus actually received the **wrath** and **punishment** due to sinful people
  - i. **1 Corinthians 15:3-4** For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures...
  - ii. We are completely **atoned for** (reconciled to God) through Jesus on the Cross

iii. Penal **Substitutionary** Atonement

iv. Jesus was a “**propitiation**” for us

1. **Romans 3:23-24** For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sin

v. There is no **future** punishment for sin

1. **Romans 8:1** There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

## II. **Salvation Applied (Our participation in the Covenant of Grace)**

a. **2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

b. We must **hear** and **believe** the Gospel

- i. **Romans 10:9-10** because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

c. **Salvation** is a work of God's free **grace** – and all people are called to RECEIVE the good news of Jesus' work on our behalf and to REST in his promises to us.

- i. **Ephesians 2:8-10** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

d. **Repentance** is an initial and on-going act of turning away from sin as we seek intimacy and richness in our relationship with God through Jesus.

e. **Faith** is the free gift of believing that God accomplishes what he promises

- i. **Romans 4:20-22** No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.”

III. The **unbreakable chain** of Salvation

- a. **Romans 8:28-30:** And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God **foreknew** he also **predestined** to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also **called**; those he called, he also **justified**; those he justified, he also **glorified**.
- b. All of Jesus' people persevere in faith by the means of grace made effective by the Spirit. (John 6:39)

IV. **New Creation: Covenant Fulfillment**

- a. The Return of Christ
  - i. First coming: to serve
  - ii. Second coming: to judge
- b. After the final judgment and banishment of the wicked there follows the renewal of the world... And in this new creation God will then establish His kingdom... That kingdom comprises heaven and earth, and brings a bounty of spiritual and physical blessings with it... In that kingdom too there will be variation and change with the oneness of the fellowship. Small and great will be there (Rev. 22:12), and the first and the last (Matt. 20:16). Each person will receive his own name and his own place (Rev. 2:17) in accordance with the works of faith and love which he has done on earth... By this difference of rank and place and task the communion of the saints is enriched. Just as the harmony of a hymn is enhanced by the equality of the voices, and the beauty of light is multiplied in the richness of its colors and tints, so Christ will one time be glorified by multitude of His saints, and He will become wonderful in the thousands time a thousand who believe in his name.”<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Herman Bavinck, *Wonderful Works of God*, pp. 549.

## COMMUNITY

**Question to consider:** What is the Church?

**Answer:** The Church is God's covenant community.

- I. The **Gospel creates a family—the Church**
  - a. A people not a **place**
    - i. Not a **building**
    - ii. Not just **Sunday** mornings
  - b. The **center** of God's Plan:
    - i. *"The church lies at the very center of the eternal purpose of God. It is not a divine afterthought. It is not an accident of history. On the contrary, the church is God's new community. For his purpose, conceived in a past eternity, being worked out in history, and to be perfected in a future eternity, is not just to save isolated individuals and so perpetuate our loneliness, but rather to build his church, that is, to call out of the world a people for his own glory."* (John Stott)
  - c. The ordered **family** of God.
    - i. We are **saved** to a family, not just "me and Jesus". *Personal spirituality* is the predominant view of Christianity in Western Culture.
    - ii. **Spiritual family** that provides encouragement and support
    - iii. **Spiritual authority** that provides teaching and instruction
    - iv. **Committed relationships** where we are accountable to one another
- II. Portico is a **local expression** of the Universal Church:
  - a. What is **membership** at a church?
    - i. A **weighty** but wonderful **commitment** to a local body of believers
    - ii. An aggressive act of **discipleship**
  - b. Why is **membership** important?
    - i. Membership is the **family** of God or the body of Christ *expressed*

ii. **Accountability** as followers of Jesus – commitment to holiness

1. Commitment to each other and to love, growth, and mission

c. Biblical Basis for **Membership**

i. Commitment to **be present** with the church family

1. **Numerical records** were kept of followers and of widows (Acts 2:37-47; 1 Timothy 5:3-16)
2. There was an **awareness** of who was a member of the local church family (Romans 16:1-16)

ii. Commitment to **serve** and **build up** the church body

1. Different **gifts** are specified for different **members** of the body (Romans 12:1-7; Ephesians 4; 1 Corinthians 12)
2. **Leadership roles** were created to be able to care for those members of the early church family (Acts 4:32-37; Acts 6:1-7)
3. Members serve the church not to fulfill a role but to see the church and its members spiritually healthy, **cared for** and growing

iii. Commitment to **submit** to local church authority

1. Elders are **held accountable** for the people given to their care (Hebrews 13:7)
2. **Discipline** is carried out among the church family (Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5; Galatians 6:1)
3. Discipline with truth and love cannot exist outside of a **mutual commitment** to one another

III. Through Scripture, God has established an order to his family

**Questions to Consider:** How does Scripture inform how the church is organized?

**Answer:** The church is organized according to the word, deriving all authority from the word alone. Any deviation from the Word is illegitimate authority and a pollution of the church.

a. Jesus is the **Chief Shepherd**

- i. **Jesus** owns, sustains, preserves, guides, and rules the church. He loves it more than any one person, as He gave His life for her
    - 1. **1 Peter 5:4** And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory
  - ii. The family is not the family without **leadership, role** and **distinction**. The same is true for the body of Christ – the church
- b. The church is made up of **professing believers and their children**
- i. Members of Portico Church Arlington are professing trust in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Unbelievers join us for worship and in our communities every week, but are not members of the covenant community.
  - ii. Members of Portico must make a credible **profession of faith** in Christ
  - iii. The Church is like an **Embassy** – representing the rule of Christ and heaven on earth. Members are the ambassadors of Christ. (2 Cor 5:20)
- c. The Church has **qualified leaders**:
- i. **Elders**: Elders serve as the “dads” of the church
  - ii. Qualifications of an **Elder**:
    - 1. **1 Timothy 3:1-7** The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. (See also Titus 1:5-9)
  - iii. Authority of an **Elder**:
    - 1. *“The elder executes the authority that Jesus has given to the church.”* (John Owen)
    - 2. **Members** are called to respect the leaders God has put in place by: praying for them, encouraging them and submitting to them as they submit in everything to Christ



3. **1 Thessalonians 5:12-13** We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work.

iv. Roles and responsibilities of **Elders**:

1. **Word** and **prayer** based ministry
2. Teach, Lead, Protect
3. **Protect** the Church by holding to **true doctrine**
4. **Serve** the Church by holding to **true practice**
5. Portico is led by a **plurality of elders**, with one elder serving as the first among equals
  - a. In scripture, there are no “lone wolf” elders. For the protection and support of the church, God intends the church to be led by a plurality of elders

v. **Deacons**: servants of the church

1. **1 Timothy 3:8-13** - Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

vi. Responsibilities of **deacons**:

1. Mobilizing **ministry, mercy** and **mission**
2. Deacons leverage their gifts for the benefit of the entire church

d. The Church **gathers regularly** for **preaching, worship, and sacraments**:

- i. **Ekklesia**: compound noun of “ek” – out of and “kaleo” – I call. Seen here there is meaning for being “called together” as well as “called out”
- ii. We **gather** for:
  1. **Edification**:  
*Encouragement, prayer, sharing life together*
  2. **Experience**:  
*Preaching and teaching centered on God’s Word, worship, prayer, sacraments*
  3. **Evangelism**:  
*Knowledge of God’s Word, training, preparation to scatter and tell the story through in word and deed ministry.*
    - a. **Hebrews 10:24-25** Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some.
- iii. **Weekly worship** gatherings at Portico Church Arlington include:
  1. **Preaching** from the **Word**
    - a. **Colossians 3:16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.
  2. **Worship** through music and song that follows the pattern of the Gospel
  3. **Sacraments**: “Signs and seals of the Covenant of Grace”
    - a. **Communion** [the many become part of the one]  
Communion feeds God’s people by communicating Jesus and all the benefits received by faith
    - b. **Baptism** [the one becomes part of the many]  
Baptism is a **sign** and **seal** of our **union** with Christ. It communicates the fullness of his saving benefits to the believer. Baptism points to and conveys all that Jesus has done to save us

e. The Church is **Unified**:

- i. We grow as a family when we pursue and guard **unity**:
- ii. **Ephesians 4:1-6** I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.
- iii. Protect the unity made possible by the gospel: The reason we are all together is because of Jesus. There is no church or family without Jesus
  1. *“The church is to go into the world, but it is to go as a united and distinct people, a people who are marked off by God’s name.”*  
(Jonathan Leeman)
- iv. There will be opportunities for **forgiveness** and **grace** in relationships:

f. The Church is **Disciplined**:

- i. The church has a unique authority and responsibility to protect the integrity of its members and the name of Christ.
- ii. The elders and leaders of the church covenant to protect members both from outsiders and from themselves – from false teachers/teachings and from living out of step with the Gospel
- iii. The outline for scriptural church discipline is laid out in Matthew 18:15-20
- iv. Church discipline begins with an individual’s own **spiritual disciplines** (prayer, reading of scripture, fasting, giving, fellowship). As these disciplines begin to break down, the members of the church step in to see the individual restored to **walking in step with the Gospel**. The elders of the church are the last line in this process as the authority in the Church.
- v. The goal of spiritual discipline is always the **repentance** and **restoration** of the individual, as well as the health of the church, and ultimately the glory of God (Galatians 6:1).

g. The Church scatters to fulfill the **Great Commandment** and **Great Commission**

i. **Great Commandment**:

1. **Matthew 22:36–40** “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

ii. **Great Commission**

1. **Matthew 28:18–20** “And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.””

IV. We grow as a family through Gospel **maturity**:

- i. **Ephesians 4:15-16** Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.
  - ii. The church **loves** one another and strives to “stir one another up to love and good works”. **Hebrews 10:24**
  - iii. The church as the family **supports** one another to fight sin and pursue Godliness – not just trying to get into each other’s “business”
  - iv. The church family is a real means of **encouragement**, support, and joy
- b. We grow as a family by learning to **love one another**:
- i. **Ephesians 4:7, 16** But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift...from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.
  - ii. We strive for love and grace just like we would in any other relationship

## MISSION

**Question to consider:** Why does God give us spiritual gifts?

**Answer:** God gives us spiritual gifts to serve and edify the church.

- I. We glorify and enjoy God by doing good works that Jesus has prepared for us.
  - a. **Ephesians 2:10** For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
    - i. “As Christians we are stewards of the resources God gives us for serving the human community” – Tim Keller
    - ii. Jesus came to serve, not to be served:
- II. We are **stewards**, not owners
  - a. The priority of **others** and the **mindset of Christ**:
    - i. **Philippians 2:3** Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. <sup>4</sup> Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. <sup>5</sup> Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
      1. In the Gospel, we are free to consider others because we have all we need in Jesus
      2. The family cares for you just as you, in turn, care for the family
  - b. **Freedom** in Christ
    - i. **Galatians 6:13-15** For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve

one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

1. We are free to **sacrificially** serve
  - ii. Opportunities to **love**:
    1. Freedom is an opportunity to love others with the same love that Christ has shown to you. In this we honor God and give Him glory.
- III. Use your gifts to God's glory
- a. **1 Peter 4:10-11** As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.
  - b. Do **good works in all contexts**: gifts are not just to be used in the context of church or Sunday mornings. Gifts are for both those within and outside of the church.
    - i. **Home/Family**: in the lives of your family and of those you are close to.
    - ii. **Church**: serving on teams, leading ministries, being love and caring members, committed to the church and community.
    - iii. **Vocation**: working hard as unto the Lord, being a Godly leader or follower, submitting well.
  - c. **Gifts**:
    - i. **Time**: this is a commodity that is valued in our culture but is not just for you.
    - ii. **Talent**: gifts, skills, abilities, knowledge, experience that blesses others and the church.
    - iii. **Treasure**: financial blessings or even the things that we have that God can use (our home, our cars, etc.) – 2 Corinthians 9:11; 1 Timothy 6:6-21
    1. How should we **give**?
      - a. **Sacrificially** – your standard of giving should impact your standard of living.

- b. **Joyfully** – giving to the mission of God is the best way to enjoy all that God has given you.
- c. **Consistently** – generous giving should be an ongoing discipline of a follower of Jesus
- d. **Practically** – anyone can give to Portico Church Arlington’s general, mercy, or building fund either on Sunday mornings, by mail, or online at [www.porticoarlington.org](http://www.porticoarlington.org)

#### IV. **Connecting to the Mission of Portico**

##### a. Teams

- i. Production
- ii. Hospitality
- iii. Prayer
- iv. Portico Kids
- v. Worship

##### b. Groups

- i. Community Groups
  - 1. Discipleship Groups

##### c. Classes

- i. Portico U: Teaching Ministry of Portico Church Arlington

##### d. Leadership

- i. Developing and deploying leaders is part of the culture of Portico Church. If you are interested in having a leadership role, contact Pastor Jonny Reeve at [jreeve@porticoarlington.org](mailto:jreeve@porticoarlington.org)

## Partnerships

- V. Serve Arlington
  - i. Assist Crisis Pregnancy Center
  - ii. Arlington Bridge Builders
  - iii. Project Belong
  
- VI. **Church Planting**
  - a. Acts 29
  - b. Reformed Theological Seminary
  - c. Doxology Church
  - d. Portico Church Charlottesville
  
- VII. **Global Outreach**
  - a. Commitment to supporting global church planting through Acts 29 network
  - b. Reformed Theological Seminary focuses on training and equipping pastors and church leaders globally, equipping them to serve in their home countries.



## Appendix A: Portico Church Arlington Bylaws

# Bylaws

PORTICO CHURCH ARLINGTON

*September 1, 2021*

### ARTICLE I – Name

The name of this church, a non-profit corporation, shall be Portico Church Arlington. This church will be further referred to in these Bylaws as the “Church” and also may be referred to in these Bylaws by and may do business as “Portico Church Arlington”.

### ARTICLE II – Mission Statement

*Uniting people to life in Christ.* This mission is exercised in the Church through: God-centered worship – loving one another like family – serving others and sharing Jesus.

### ARTICLE III – Purpose

The purpose of this church is to be a worthy vessel which God uses to bring glory to Himself. Portico Church Arlington is a community of Christ-followers who embrace the Church as an embassy of God’s Kingdom. We believe that all of life is mission field where our highest calling is to live as ambassadors of Jesus Christ. As such, we strive to train and equip the entire Church to live out this calling as faithful disciples of Jesus.

### ARTICLE IV – Standing

Under the headship of Jesus Christ, the Church shall remain free and independent, its own highest authority being led and cared for by the Elders. The Church may cooperate with the Acts 29 Network by sending delegates to conferences, by supporting church planting and foreign missions, and by uniting in any mutual efforts for the furtherance of the Gospel as the Elders may officially decide.

If irreconcilable conflict or division occurs within the Elder body, they will consult the Acts 29 Network for assistance, guidance, and conflict resolution.

## ARTICLE V – Articles of Faith

### A. **Statement on Biblical Authority**

The Bible is the inspired, inerrant, and sufficient Word of God and is thus the ultimate authority for life, faith and all practiced ethics. Though the various theological statements of the Church and these Bylaws reflect succinct summaries of biblical boundaries, it is the Bible itself to which we are in ultimate submission.

### B. **Statement of Faith**

#### 1. ***God***

We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.

#### 2. ***The Bible***

We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

#### 3. ***Anthropology***

We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled, and renewed.

#### 4. ***Jesus Christ***

We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus—Israel's promised Messiah—was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.

#### 5. ***The Work of Jesus Christ***

We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.

6. ***The Holy Spirit***

We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips, and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

7. ***The Church***

We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two sacraments, baptism, and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these sacraments confirm and nourish the believer.

8. ***Living as Disciples of Jesus***

We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.

9. ***The Return of Jesus Christ***

We believe in the personal, bodily, and glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service, and energetic mission.

10. ***Personal Response and Eternal Destiny***

We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace. Amen.

## ARTICLE VI – Membership

### A. **Requirements**

The Membership of Portico Church Arlington shall consist of persons who profess faith in Jesus Christ as their sole Savior and Lord. Although never perfectly, their lives should give evidence of

repentance and regeneration consistent with their profession and with the doctrine and practice of this Church.

Members must be committed to unity and harmony within the church. An important expression of unity is embracing the doctrinal convictions outlined in the *Membership Statement of Belief and Practice* which is found in [§Appendix I](#) of these Bylaws.

Those seeking membership must:

1. Attend the membership class taught by an elder.
2. Complete and submit the membership questionnaire.
3. Be interviewed by an elder.
4. Sign the Membership Statement of Belief and Practice.
5. Be approved for membership by motion and passing vote of the Elders.
6. Be presented to and prayed for by the Members at a public worship service.

## B. Responsibilities

Membership within a local church carries both privileges and responsibilities. Members comprise the Body of Christ meaning they are called to carry out its mission. Members are held accountable to the responsibilities of general Christian belief and obligations as outlined in the *Membership Statement of Belief and Practice* ([§Appendix I](#)).

## C. Voting by Members

The Members are responsible to vote on the following matters:

1. Affirmation of Elders.
2. Affirmation of Deacons.
3. Affirmation of the Lead Pastor.
4. Removal of the Lead Pastor
5. The purchase of real property.
6. Any other actions deemed necessary, major, and extraordinary by the Elders.

The time, place and nature of upcoming votes will be communicated to the Church at least twenty-one (21) days in advance. Members shall have an opportunity to submit questions, comments and concerns, which will be considered by the Elders on a case-by-case basis. Voting shall take place during public worship services, a Member Gathering, or a special business meeting, which may be convened in person or held by means of a suitable electronic communications system, including but not limited to conference telephone, videoconferencing technology, or the Internet; or by mail, or electronic message; or by any combination of these methods. A quorum for such meeting shall be understood to be met by those Members present in person and by such electronic means as is approved by the Elders. Only Church Members shall be permitted to vote on any matter. A simple majority, defined as a result greater than 50% when the number of affirmative votes are divided by the number of total votes cast, shall constitute a passing vote, unless specified otherwise in these

Bylaws ([§IX.C](#) – elders), ([§X.E](#) – lead pastor), ([§XI.C](#) – deacons). Voting results shall be communicated to Church Members not later than thirty (30) days following such vote.

#### **D. Church Discipline**

God builds up his Church through the ordinary means of grace which include: the preaching of the word of God and the administration of the sacraments. Even so, church discipline is a necessary mark of a healthy church and shall be applied in cases of sexual misconduct, gossip, divisiveness, dishonesty, false teaching, and various other expressions of sin. In accordance with the biblical pattern generally outlined in Matthew 18:15-17, a person or who evidences such sin will be confronted in an initial one-on-one meeting, followed by escalating engagement by leaders, elders, and pastoral staff as the situation warrants. The nature of the offense and the degree of the person's culpability will inform the discipline that the Church applies to any given situation.

The threefold purpose of church discipline is to: (a) glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Corinthians 5:6), (b) edify believers by deterring sin (1 Corinthians 5), (c) and promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Galatians 6:1).

Members are not guaranteed confidentiality regarding issues of church discipline and understand that in submitting themselves to the authority of the Church, issues of a sensitive or personal nature may become known to others. This includes, but is not limited to, notification of the authorities if a crime has been committed or if a real threat of someone being endangered exists (Romans 13:1-7), as well as other violations of Scripture that may not result in physical danger.

Any member under discipline may be suspended from the Church by the agreement of the Elders and dismissed by motion and passing vote of the Elders. The full dismissal of a Member may be made known to all Members. If the offense is not a publicly known matter, the Elders have the discretion to determine if the Member's discipline should be made known to the entire Church (1 Corinthians 5:1-5).

A person dismissed from the Church for disciplinary reasons may be reinstated to full membership if the person's repentance is accepted as genuine by the Elders. The Elders may present the person for reinstatement to the Members at any meeting.

#### **E. Termination of Membership**

Members who wish to resign membership for any reason should make a written submission to an elder, deacon, or staff member of the Church. Membership is considered officially terminated only by motion and passing vote of the Elders.

### **ARTICLE VII – Meetings**

Public worship services shall be held at such times and places as determined by the Elders.

A Member Gathering will be held annually for the purpose of accomplishing necessary Church business. Additional meetings will be scheduled as need arises. Notice will be given to Members at least twenty-one (21) days in advance of a meeting.

## ARTICLE VIII – Officers

The oversight of the Church shall be vested in the Elders, who will serve as the Board of Directors. The procedure for appointing Elders, Deacons, and other officers of this Church shall be specified in these Bylaws. The qualifications, terms of office, authority, and duties of Elders, Deacons, and other officers shall be set forth in these Bylaws. Only Members of this Church are eligible to serve as an Elder, Deacon, officer, or leader of any organization created within this Church.

### A. Officers

The Officers shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and such other officers as deemed necessary by the Elders. The Officers of the Church shall be Elders, except for the Treasurer which at the discretion of the Elders may be assigned to a deacon.

Officers of the Church shall be elected by a passing vote of the Elders and shall serve perpetually until removed by the Elders, death, or resignation. Officers may be re-elected and any two or more may be held by the same person except for the President and Vice-President. It is expected that the Lead Pastor will be elected to serve in the capacity of President unless circumstances require otherwise.

Any Officer may be removed from office by motion and passing vote of the Elders. Vacancies in the Officers of the Church by reason of death, resignation or otherwise, shall be filled by election of the Elders as soon as is reasonably possible. Until such time, an Elder may be appointed by the remaining Elders to serve in such a vacancy.

### B. Duties of Officers

#### (a) President

The President shall perform such duties as are incumbent upon such Officer, including making certain that all orders and resolutions of the Elders are carried into effect. The President shall have oversight of the Elder meetings. The President's duties shall include, without limitation: establishing meetings, setting the agenda and presiding over the meetings.

#### (b) Vice President

The Vice President shall, in the absence of a duly-appointed President, or in the event of the President's inability or refusal to act, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the President and shall perform such other duties as the Elders shall from time to time prescribe.

#### (c) Secretary

The Secretary shall record or cause to be recorded in a minute book of the Church minutes of all meetings of the Elders and all votes taken at such meetings. He shall have charge of the official

records and seal of the Church, and he shall perform such other duties as are incident to the office of Secretary and as may be assigned by the Elders or the President, under whose supervision the Secretary shall be.

(d) Treasurer

The Treasurer shall serve as the overseer of the financial operations of the Church. Paid Church staff members shall be accountable to the Treasurer for management of the financial aspects of the Church. The Treasurer shall perform such other duties and have other responsibilities as may be assigned to them from time to time by the Elders.

## ARTICLE IX – Elders

### A. Overview

As established by Scripture, the Elders are responsible for seeing the Church thrive in her mission of making disciples and serving as a public witness for Christ in the world. The Elders serve as senior leadership at the Church, being assisted by the Deacons.

The Elder’s oversight includes but is not limited to: teaching, protecting, leading, disciplining, equipping, and caring for the corporate Church body and its individual Members, as well as the oversight of all ministry, operations, and finances of the Church. The Elders are to remain obedient to the Scriptures, protect orthodox doctrine and practice within the Church, and establish the overall vision and direction of the Church.

The Elders shall be comprised of both vocational-elders and lay-elders. Vocational-elders are defined as those Elders who are employed and compensated by the Church as regular, part-time or full-time staff members. Lay-elders are defined as those Elders who are not employed or compensated by the Church as regular, part-time or full-time staff members.

In all cases, Elders must submit to Jesus as the Senior Pastor (1 Peter 5:1–4). For the sake of clarity, vocational-elders shall be called “pastors” while lay-elders shall be called “elders”.

### B. Qualifications

The minimum qualifications for Elders shall not be less than those listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. This includes the requirement that an Elder is a man. In addition to the minimum qualifications given in Scripture, Elders must be Members who fully subscribe to the Church’s Articles of Faith ([SV](#)) and are actively involved in the life of the Church. They must subscribe to the Acts 29 Theological Distinctives, as well. The Elders may at any time create, alter, amend, repeal, or restate resolutions establishing additional qualifications outside of those listed in the above Scriptures.

### C. Installation

To be eligible for ordination as an Elder at Portico Church Arlington, a man must:

1. Have demonstrated character in accordance with the qualifications of Scripture.
2. Be called by God into leadership at Portico Church Arlington (Acts 20:28).
3. Be invited by the Elders to pursue the office of elder and enter into said training as an elder candidate.
4. Complete elder training as determined by the Elders.
5. Be presented to the Members as an elder candidate no less than twenty-one (21) days prior to the required Member vote. The purpose of this probation period is to allow the Members time to consider the candidate's calling, character, and qualifications so that any concerns or charges may be brought to the Elders prior to ordination.
6. Be unanimously approved by motion and passing vote of the Elders.
7. Be affirmed by 75% of the Members by vote at a Member Gathering, worship service, or special business meeting.

After a successful Member affirmation vote, the Elder will be ordained and installed by the laying on of hands and prayer in a public service.

#### **D. Organization**

Regular meetings of the Elders shall be held as needed. Any meeting may be held by conference telephone or similar communication medium, as long as all of the Elders participating in the meeting can hear one another. All Elders participating telephonically shall be deemed present at such meetings.

The Elders may delegate authority and responsibility as deemed appropriate. This shall include appointing deacons, officers, and all committees (along with their respective chairs) as needed.

The number of Elders will be determined by the Elders themselves as qualified men are available and needed for church leadership.

A proper quorum is defined as at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the Elders. A quorum is required for voting matters. A passing vote must be equal to or greater than fifty percent (50%) of the Elders present. Voting by proxy is prohibited.

#### **E. Responsibilities**

The Elders are responsible for leading the Church in fulfilling its purposes. They exercise final and spiritual authority in the Church.

The Elders shall make the final determination in regards to any ecclesiastical questions. The Elders shall be the express and final arbiter of ecclesiastical polity, religious doctrine, and questions of Church property, and shall make the final decision with respect to any other matter that shall arise concerning the Church, its internal workings, and its governance in every respect, consistent with these Bylaws. In deciding such matters, the Elders shall use the standards of: (a) the best spiritual, financial, and operating interests of the Church in light of the Bible and the tenets of faith of the Church; and (b) the furtherance of the religious purposes of the Church as discerned by the Elders according to the teachings of the Bible.



The Elders will seek to consistently accomplish the biblical duties of an elder/pastor which include:

1. Prayer and study of Scripture (Acts 6:4).
2. Ruling and leading the church (1 Timothy 5:17).
3. Managing the church (1 Timothy 3:4-5).
4. Caring for people in the church (1 Peter 5:2-5).
5. Giving account to God for the church (Hebrews 13:17).
6. Living exemplary lives (Hebrews 13:7).
7. Rightly using the authority God has given them (Acts 20:28).
8. Teaching the Bible correctly (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:2).
9. Preaching (1 Timothy 5:17).
10. Praying for the sick (James 5:13-15).
11. Teaching sound doctrine and refuting false teachings (Titus 1:9).
12. Working hard (1 Thessalonians 5:12).
13. Rightly using money and power (1 Peter 5:1-3).
14. Protecting the church from false teachers (Acts 20:17-31).
15. Disciplining unrepentant Christians (Matthew 18:15-17).

## F. Term of Office

All pastors (vocational-elders) shall report directly to the Lead Pastor. The Lead Pastor will review all pastors annually.

All lay-elders are expected to serve a term of no less than three-years (3) and no more than six-years (6). After serving for six (6) consecutive years, lay-elders must take a one-year (1) sabbatical from active service on the elder body. Lay-elders are eligible to be re-appointed by the Elders after a one-year sabbatical.

## G. Discipline and Removal

Any Elder may be removed from office for valid cause by a majority vote of the Elders. An accusation against an Elder will only be considered if it is based on the written testimony of at least two witnesses and involves actual sin (1Tim. 5:19-21).

If an Elder is charged with failure to uphold appropriate standards, an investigation will be pursued. Depending on the outcome of the investigation, the Elder may be admonished by the Elders, which could include suspension and/or dismissal by a majority vote of the Elders. Discipline of Elders must be consistent with the standards set forth in [§VI.D](#) of these Bylaws. However, dismissal of the Lead Pastor shall proceed according to [§X.F](#)

## ARTICLE X – Lead Pastor

### A. Overview

The Lead Pastor shall function as the first among equals on the Elder body by providing leadership, vision, and direction. Additionally, It is the responsibility of the Lead Pastor to provide leadership to the Church in effectively obeying God’s will as revealed in Scripture.

### B. Qualifications

The minimum qualifications for Lead Pastor shall be the Biblical standards for elders as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Additionally, Lead Pastors must have a clear calling, gifting, and desire to serve in said capacity.

### C. Responsibilities

In addition to the responsibilities outlined for the Elders in ([§IX](#)), the Lead Pastor shall:

1. Have the authority to schedule guest preachers, speakers, or other events.
2. Have the authority to approve the use of church property, consulting as appropriate with the Deacons and Elders.
3. Be the principal spokesman for the Church in the community.
4. Participate with the Elders in exercising Church oversight. All references in these Bylaws that establish the Elders as overseers of the Church shall be understood to include the Lead Pastor.
5. Have the authority to invoke emergency powers as defined in ([§XIII](#)).
6. Have the authority to call meetings of the Members or of the Elders and to propose action to be taken at such meetings (whether or not called by him).
7. Be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees and shall have the authority to call meetings of any such board or committee and to propose action to be taken at such meetings (whether or not called by him).

### D. Organizational Authority

The Lead Pastor is responsible for leading the organizational life of the Church. As such, he is responsible for staffing the Church to meet its mission. This includes employing and dismissing staff members as needed. All pastors and staff shall be accountable to the Lead Pastor. The Lead Pastor shall be accountable to the Elders.

## E. Installation

In the event that the Lead Pastor position is unfilled, the Elders may form a team for the purpose of finding a suitable candidate. The Elders will present only one Lead Pastor candidate to the Members at a time. Additional candidates shall not be officially considered by the Members until a decision has been made concerning the previous candidate.

The Lead Pastor must be affirmed by 75% of the Members by vote at a Member Gathering, worship service, or special business meeting. After a successful member affirmation vote, the Lead Pastor will be ordained and installed by the laying on of hands and prayer in a public service.

## F. Discipline and Removal

An accusation against the Lead Pastor will only be considered if it is based on the written testimony of at least two witnesses and involves actual sin. If the Elders determine that he has erred in doctrine or conduct, they shall admonish him. If the error continues or is of a grievous nature, the Elders shall present the matter to the Members (I Timothy 5:19-21).

The Lead Pastor may be suspended from all active ministry duties at any time by a vote of 75% of the Elders. If it is deemed necessary to remove the Lead Pastor, the Elders may bring a recommendation to the Members for which at least twenty-one (21) days prior notice of its object has been given. A quorum at such a meeting will be considered 50% of the Membership. Affirmation of the Elders' motion by vote of 75% of the Members present will remove the Lead Pastor.

If the Lead Pastor desires to resign, he should make every effort to give written notice at least three months in advance of his separation date, unless waived by mutual consent of the Elders.

## ARTICLE XI – Deacons

### A. Overview

Deacons are officially commissioned servants that assist the Elders in accomplishing the mission of the Church. In general, the Elders focus on the ministry of God's word and prayer, while the Deacons focus on meeting needs within the Church.

The Deacons; (a) oversee the material care of the Church, (b) mobilize ministry through leadership and direct service, (c) assist the elders in managing the physical and financial resources of the Church. Their first focus is carrying out the ministry of mercy within the Church and local community. The Elders may appoint men and women as needed to serve as deacons.

### B. Qualifications

The minimum qualifications for deacons shall not be less than those listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. In addition to the minimum qualifications given in Scripture, deacons must be Members who fully

subscribe to the Church's Articles of Faith ([SV](#)) and are actively involved in the life of the Church. They must subscribe to the Acts 29 Theological Distinctives, as well. The Elders may at any time create, alter, amend, repeal or restate resolutions establishing additional qualifications outside of those listed in the above Scriptures.

### C. **Installation**

To be eligible for ordination as a deacon at Portico Church Arlington, a man or woman must:

1. Have demonstrated character in accordance with the qualifications of Scripture.
2. Be invited by the Elders to pursue the office of deacon and enter into said training as a deacon candidate.
3. Complete deacon training as determined by the Elders.
4. Be presented to the Members as a deacon candidate no less than twenty-one (21) days prior to the required Member vote. The purpose of this probation period is to allow the Members time to consider the candidate's calling, character, and qualifications so that they may bring any concerns or charges to the Elders prior to ordination.
5. Be unanimously approved by motion and passing vote of the Elders.
6. Be affirmed by at least 75% of the Members by vote at a Member Gathering, worship service, or special business meeting.

After a successful member affirmation vote, the deacon will be ordained and installed by the laying on of hands and prayer in a public service.

### D. **Organization**

Regular meetings of the Deacons shall be held as needed. Any meeting may be held by conference telephone or similar communication medium, as long as all of the Deacons participating in the meeting can hear one another. All Deacons participating telephonically shall be deemed present at such meetings.

The Deacons shall report on ministry activities and outcomes to the Elders as requested. Deacons shall be available to give ministry reports to the Members at Member Gatherings, worship services, or special business meetings as requested by the Elders.

The Deacons shall elect a deacon to serve as the Lead Deacon annually. The Lead Deacon will serve to coordinate the activities of the Deacon body and coordinate ministry with the Elders.

The number of deacons will be determined by the Elders as qualified men and women are available and needed to assist in church leadership.

### E. **Responsibilities**

Deacons shall be assigned responsibility and authority for specific interests of the Church as deemed appropriate by the Elders. The Elders, at their discretion may assign a deacon to fulfill the office of Treasurer, providing oversight to the finances of the church.

The Deacons should seek to consistently accomplish the biblical duties of a Deacon as assigned by the Elders which include:

1. Overseeing mercy ministries and meeting the material needs of the church body (Acts 6:3).
2. Managing the Mercy Fund (Acts 6:3)
3. Serving the church body by leading various operational ministries as assigned by the Elders.
4. Overseeing the physical resources of the Church.

## F. Term of Office

All deacons are expected to serve a term of no less than two-years (2) and no more than six-years (6). After serving for six (6) consecutive years, deacons must take a one-year (1) sabbatical from active service on the Deacon body. Deacons are eligible to be re-appointed by the Elders after a one-year sabbatical.

## G. Discipline and Removal

Deacons will be directly accountable to the Elders who shall oversee them. Any deacon may be removed from office for valid cause. Discipline of deacons must be consistent with the standards set forth in [§VI.D](#) of these Bylaws.

## ARTICLE XII – Church Staff

The Church reserves employment for men and women who believe, confess, and act in accordance with essential biblical convictions. Additionally, the Church reserves the right to terminate the employment of any existing employee who fails to meet this general standard of faith and practice.

All personnel employed by the Church shall act in accordance with the Elder-approved Employee Handbook document, as it may be revised, amended, or restated from time to time.

## ARTICLE XIII – Emergency Powers

For the purposes of this section, an “emergency” exists when a quorum of the Elders cannot be readily gathered due to catastrophic events or circumstances. In the event of an emergency, the Elder board may:

1. Modify lines of succession to accommodate the incapacity of any Elder board member, officer, deacon, employee, or agent.
2. Relocate the principal office, designate alternative principal offices or regional offices, or authorize employees to do so.
3. Designate an alternative location for worship services, Church meetings, or operations. Notice for such action may include notice by publication, media, or radio.
4. Adopt emergency bylaws, subject to amendments or repeal by the full Elder board, which may include provisions necessary for managing the Church during an emergency including:
  1. Procedures for calling a meeting of the Elders.
  2. Quorum requirements for an Elder meeting.

3. Designation of additional or substitute Elder board members.

Emergency bylaws shall remain in effect only during the emergency and not after the emergency ends. Corporate action taken in good faith during an emergency binds the Church and may not be the basis for imposing liability on any Elder board member, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the Church on grounds that the action was not authorized.

## ARTICLE XIV – Property and Dissolution

If irreconcilable division occurs within the church (which God forbid), the name of the Church and all property are retained by those adhering to these Bylaws.

If the Church ceases to function and its organization is officially dissolved by motion and passing vote of the Elders, the property shall be given to Doxology Church (Arlington, Virginia) for the express purpose of furthering gospel ministry.

## ARTICLE XV – Amendments

These Bylaws or any provision contained herein may be altered, amended, repealed, or restated, and a new Bylaws adopted, by motion and a passing vote of the Elders. Such vote shall take place at any Elder meeting duly noticed. “Duly noticed” is defined as a twenty-four (24) hour pre-notification via email or other communication means.

Any significant revision or amendment to the Articles of Faith ([§V](#)) or Membership Statement of Belief and Practice ([§Appendix I](#)) such that it alters, amends, or repeals core doctrines and beliefs shall be communicated to the Members of the Church.



## APPENDIX I - Membership Statement of Belief and Practice

### Statement of Belief

The following Statement of Belief represents the core orthodox beliefs of the historic Church as presented by Scripture. Members of Portico Church Arlington must embrace this Statement of Belief in its entirety.

#### *I believe...*

- The Scriptures are true, authoritative, and sufficient (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21).
- There is only one true God, Creator of heaven and earth, who eternally exists in three distinct Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-6, John 17:3; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6; 1 Timothy 2:5; Genesis 1:26; Matthew 3:13-17, 28:17-20).
- All things exist for the glory of God (Proverbs 16:4; Isaiah 61:3; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 2 Corinthians 5:15; Ephesians 1:3-14).
- After the fall of Adam, all humanity—Christ excluded—is sinful both in birth and by choice (Genesis 6:5; Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:23, 5:8, 5:12-21, 7:18; Ephesians 2:1-3).
- The just penalty for sin is physical and spiritual death (Genesis 2:15-17, 3:19; Romans 5:12, 6:23; James 1:14-15).
- Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, was born of a virgin, and is both fully God and fully human (Matthew 1:20; John 1:1-4, John 1:14; Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 1:1-3).
- Jesus Christ died as the sacrificial substitute to pay the penalty for sin (John 1:29; Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 1:4; 1 Peter 3:18).
- Jesus Christ physically rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and will one day physically return to remove all trace of evil and fully re-create the world (Matthew 28:1-20; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-53; 1 Corinthians 15:12-34; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Hebrews 9:28; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 1:7).
- There will be a future physical resurrection of the dead. Only those who turn from sin and to Jesus in faith and repentance will be raised to eternal reward. Those who do not turn from sin and to Jesus will be raised to eternal punishment (Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15).
- Only through faith in the Person and work of Jesus Christ, with repentance from sin can one be reconciled to God and experience true life and joy (John 3:18; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:21-26; 1 Timothy 2:5-6)

#### *Believing this, I affirm...*

- I have renounced my old way of life, repented of my sins, asked God to forgive me and to cleanse me and make me a new creation. (1 John 1:9; 2 Corinthians 5:17)
- I am a Christian who has been saved from my sins by the grace of Jesus Christ. I have accepted His gift of salvation bought by His death on the cross and His resurrection, by which I am assured of eternal life. (John 3:16-18; Romans 3:23-26)
- Jesus Christ is the Lord, King, and Ruler of my life. (Romans 10:9)

## Statement of Practice for Elders

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

### *The Elders agree...*

- To appoint for the church elders and deacons (including staff members and leaders who serve the church) according to the criteria assigned to them in the Scriptures (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- To prayerfully seek God's will for our church 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 Peter 5:1-4).
- To lovingly care for you, seeking your growth as a disciple of Christ. (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12)
- To help equip you to serve Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-13)
- To provide teaching and counsel from the entire counsel of Scripture. (Galatians 6:6; 1 Timothy 5:17-18)
- To help you in times of need. (Acts 2:42-47; James 2:14-17)
- To pray for you regularly, particularly when you are sick. (James 5:14)
- To be on guard against false teachers and false teachings. (Acts 20:28-31)
- 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. (Matthew 18:15-20; Galatians 6:1)
- To set an example and join the members in fulfilling the duties of church membership. (1 Corinthians 11:1; Philippians 3:17; 1 Timothy 4:12)

## Statement of Practice for Members

As those who have experienced the grace of a life changed by the gospel of Jesus Christ, we have the call to reflect the character of Christ through the pursuit of certain attitudes and actions and the rejection of others. Scripture refers to this as "living by the Spirit" ([Romans 8](#)). The requirements of this *Member Statement of Belief and Practice* 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.

### *As a Member, I agree...*

- To submit to the authority of Scripture as the final arbiter on all issues. (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
- That I have read, understood and agree with the Statement of Belief contained in this document.
- To maintain unity and peace in regard to theological beliefs. In the event of a theological disagreement, I commit not to teach contrary to the core doctrines of the church. (Ephesians 4:1-3; Hebrews 13:7, 17)



- To pursue the Lord Jesus Christ through regular Bible reading, prayer, fellowship and practice of spiritual disciplines (Luke 18:1; Acts 17:11; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Ephesians 5:1-21; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22).
- To follow the command and example of Jesus by participating in the sacraments prescribed to His Church:
  1. Baptism.
  2. Regularly remembering and celebrating the person and work of Christ through communion.
- To regularly participate in the life of Portico Church Arlington by attending weekly services, engaging in gospel-community, attending member gatherings and serving those within and outside of this church (Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:23-25; Titus 3:14).
- To steward the resources God has given me, including my time, talents, spiritual gifts, finances, and possessions. (Proverbs 3:9-10; Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 4:1-16, 5:15-18; Gal 5:22-26) This includes regular giving, service, and participation at Portico Church Arlington that is sacrificial, cheerful, active, and voluntary. (Romans 12:1-8; II Corinthians 8 & 9, 12:7-31; I Peter 4:10-11)
- By God's grace through the power of the Holy Spirit, to walk in holiness in all areas of life as an act of worship to Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:13-16. 1 Peter 4:1-3). Believers should strive to put certain attitudes and actions to death while stirring and stimulating love and good deeds through the Spirit.
- To refrain from such activities that the Scriptures would deem foolish (Romans 14:14-23).
- To take seriously the responsibility of Christian freedom, and to consider actions or situations that could present a stumbling block to another (1 Corinthians 8:1-13).
- To submit to the elders and other appointed leaders of the church and diligently strive for unity and peace within the church (Ephesians 4:1-3; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:5).
- To submit to the discipline of God through His Holy Spirit by:
  1. Following the biblical procedures for church discipline where sin is evident in another – the hope of such discipline being repentance and restoration.
  2. Receiving righteous and loving discipline when approached biblically by fellow believers (Psalm 141:5; Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; Hebrews 12:5-11).
- To do the following when I sin:
  1. Confess my sin to God and to fellow believers.
  2. Repent and seek help to put my sin to death (Romans 8:13; Colossians 3:5; James 5:16; 1 John 1:6-10).
- To do the following should I leave the church for righteous reasons
  1. Notify the elders as well as the appropriate church leaders.
  2. Seek another church with which I can carry out my biblical responsibilities as a believer.

Signature of Member Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Elder Conducting Interview: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX II – Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Sexuality

Scripture teaches that God immutably creates each person as male or female. Together, these two distinct, complementary genders reflect the image of God (Gen 1:26-27). As image-bearers of God, men and women are equal in worth, dignity, and value. Therefore, the Church regards volitional gender reassignment through personal claims of identity, medical process, surgical procedure, or any other means as sinful before God and harmful to the person.

Marriage, as defined by Scripture has one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, covenant-union (Gen 2:18-25).

Sexual intimacy is a celebration of the marriage covenant and designated by God to occur exclusively between one man and one woman who are legally married (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4). Therefore, sexual intimacy is only properly exercised and enjoyed exclusively within the boundaries of a marital relationship.

Scripture defines sexual immorality as any sexual activity outside of the boundaries of the marital relationship between one man and one woman (Matthew 15:19, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 1 Thessalonians 4:3, Hebrews 13:4). Consequently, the Church regards any and all forms of sexual immorality, including; adultery, fornication (sex outside of marriage), homosexual conduct, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or even lustful intent toward such, as sinful and ultimately unsatisfying. Even so, God offers redemption and restoration to everyone who comes to Him, confessing and forsaking their sin, seeking forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11).

Furthermore, there is a distinction between temptation and unrepentant sin. A genuinely repentant Christian may have intense, ongoing desires and temptations for sexual activity outside the boundaries of Scripture. Jesus was tempted in every way, yet without sin (Heb 4:15). Members, employees, and attendees of the Church wrestling with all manner of sexual temptation will find the Church ready to partner with them in their fight for obedience to Christ. Jesus called the weary and heavy-laden to Himself (Matt 11:28). As a church committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we are a safe place for men and women fighting sexual temptations of all kinds. For those fighting temptation and repenting of sin, the Church will provide love, care and direction.

This “Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Sexuality” ([§V.C](#)) provides no grounds for bigotry or bullying behavior. Every person will be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual will be repudiated as not in accordance with Scripture nor the doctrines of the Church.

The Pastors, Elders, Deacons, and staff of Portico Church Arlington shall only officiate weddings that align with the above “Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Sexuality” ([§V.C](#)). Any facilities and/or property of Portico Church Arlington shall only be used to host weddings that align with the above statement ([§V.C](#)), as well.

## Appendix B: How did we get the Bible?

### How did we get our English Bible?

The existence of the Bible is a fascinating and miraculous process about which many volumes have been written to explain. To help us understand the process, we can examine the five-fold sequence that makes it possible for us to read the Bible.

**God** → Revelation/Inspiration → Transmission → Translation → Interpretation  
→ Application → **Your Life**

**Step #1 – Revelation** is the miraculous event whereby God reveals Himself and His truth to someone. He inspires them through the power of the Holy Spirit to write down what He has to say perfectly in the original copy, which is called the *autographa*.

**Step #2 – Transmission** is the process by which the *autographa* has been carefully copied throughout the centuries so they could be made available for people to read. While the original handwritten copies may have contained occasional minor errors (i.e. spelling or punctuation), they were accepted as accurate and authoritative by God's people (Deuteronomy 17:18 cf. 1 Kings 2:3; Ezra 7:14; Nehemiah 8:8). Likewise, Jesus taught from copies of the books, not the original versions, and treated them as authoritative (Matthew 12:3-5, 21:16, 21:42; Luke 4:16-21, 10:26). Lastly, the Apostles, who were the senior leaders in the early church, taught from copies of the books of the Bible (Acts 17:2, 18:8) and the early church tested all their teachings against the existing scrolls (Acts 17:11). Since God's people have always relied on copies, we can conclude they are accurate and trustworthy.

**Step #3 – Translation** occurs when people desire to read the books of the Bible but are not familiar with the original languages in which they were written (Hebrew, Greek, or Aramaic). Teams of scholars in language theory carefully undertake the painstaking process of translating the original languages into the languages of other people groups. Today, the Bible has been translated into nearly 3,000 languages. While the thought of using a translation of the Bible may concern some people, the fact remains that most of the canon of western literature is also based on translations because we do not use the original languages in which many of the great works were written. The first translation of the English Bible was initiated by John Wycliffe and completed by John Purvey in AD 1388.

**Step #4 – Interpretation** occurs when someone reads the Bible in a language they can understand and determines the meaning of the verses. Each text of the Bible has only one true interpretation so we must be careful to read the truth out of the Bible rather than reading our beliefs and desires into it.

**Step #5 – Application** is the result of taking what we learn from the principles in the Bible and making changes in our thoughts and actions so that our life is congruent with the Bible. There

are an infinite number of applications for a text of the Bible. For example, when the Bible says we should love people, the applications for that principle are seemingly endless.

In this five-step process, we see how God speaks to us and cares deeply about our lives. We also see how the chasm between God and mankind is graciously filled by God's revelation, which is more accurate and true than our human speculation through religion and philosophy. Lastly, while step #1 is the only one that is guaranteed to be perfect, the other steps in the process are indeed accurate. We must, however, be increasingly careful as we move through them because the opportunity for error increases at each step.

### **Why should I trust the Bible to be accurate?**

Some people struggle to believe the early copies of each original book of the Bible are trustworthy. To help bolster our confidence in the early copies, we can compare the New Testament books with various other books that are widely read and accepted in Western literature (see the following chart). In so doing, we can see the trustworthiness of the earliest copies of the Bible because of the substantial number of manuscripts, and the dating of those manuscripts being so close to the original writings of the New Testament. To help explain this more fully, we will examine three forms of evidence for the trustworthiness of the copies of the New Testament books.

Three general tests exist for determining the historicity of any ancient text: the bibliographical test (the number and quality of manuscripts), the internal test (the consistency of the text to not contradict itself), and the external test (the accuracy of the text in relation to other works of history from that period).

## Test #1 – The Bibliographical Test

AUTHOR	DATE WRITTEN	EARLIEST COPY	TIME SPAN	NUMBER OF COPIES	ACCURACY
Homer	ca. 850 BC	-	-	643	95%
Herodotus	ca. 450 BC	ca. AD 900	About 1,350 years	8	
Euripides	ca. 440 BC	ca. AD 1100	About 1,500 years	9	
Thucydides	ca. 420 BC	ca. AD 900	About 1,300 years	8	
Plato	ca. 380 BC	ca. AD 900	About 1,300 years	7	
Aristotle	ca. 350 BC	ca. AD 1100	About 1,400 years	5	
Caesar	ca. 60 BC	ca. AD 900	About 950 years	10	
Catullus	ca. 50 BC	ca. AD 1500	About 1,600 years	3	
Livy	ca. 10 BC	-	-	20	
Tacitus	ca. AD 100	ca. AD 1100	About 1,000 years	20	
New Testament	ca. AD 60	ca. AD 130	About 100 years	14,000	

*\*Ken Boa's "I'm Glad You Asked" page 78*

The bibliographical test seeks to determine the quantity and quality of documents, as well as how far removed they are from the time of the originals. The quantity of New Testament manuscripts is unparalleled in ancient literature. There are over 5,000 Greek manuscripts, about 8,000 Latin manuscripts, and another 1,000 manuscripts in other languages (Syriac, Coptic, etc.).

The age of the New Testament manuscripts is also excellent. Possibly the oldest manuscript is a scrap of papyrus containing John 18:31-33, 37-38, dating from AD 125-130, which is no more than 40 years after John's gospel was likely written (Boa, page 52). A non-Christian scholar, Carsten Peter Thiede even claims that he has dated a fragment of Matthew to about AD 60. By comparing the ancient manuscripts, we find the vast majority of textual variations are minor elements of spelling, grammar, and style, or accidental omissions or duplications of words or phrases. Only about 400 textual variants (less than one page of an English translation) have any significant bearing on the meaning of a passage and most are footnoted in modern English translations. Overall, 99 percent of the New Testament can be reconstructed beyond any reasonable doubt and no Christian doctrine is founded solely or even primarily on textually disputed passages.

The Scriptures quoted in the works of the early Christian writers (most between AD 95-150) are so extensive that virtually the entire New Testament can be reconstructed except for 11 verses, which are mostly from II and III John.

In previous centuries, critics of the accuracy of the Bible routinely claimed it was a series of fables and legends which developed over hundreds of years because there were not enough copies of ancient manuscripts to alleviate their skepticism. A simple shepherd boy dealt a deathblow to their criticisms in 1947 when he wandered into a cave in the Middle East and discovered large pottery jars filled with leather scrolls wrapped in linen cloth. Amazingly, the ancient copies of the books of the Bible were in good condition despite their age and harsh climate because they had been well-sealed for nearly 1,900 years. The Dead Sea Scrolls, the name now given to these copies, are made up of almost 40,000 inscribed ancient fragments. From these fragments, more than 500 books have been reconstructed, including some Old Testament books such as a complete copy of Isaiah.

In conclusion, if someone seeks to deny the trustworthiness of the New Testament then to be consistent they would also have to dismiss virtually the entire canon of western literature and pull Homer, Plato and Aristotle off of bookstore shelves and out of classroom discussions.

## Test #2 – The Internal Test

This test of the Bible's accuracy is indeed important because each book is a witness to a body of truth. Much like a legal case in our day, if a witness were to contradict themselves their testimony would not be deemed trustworthy. While there is not sufficient time in such a brief overview to thoroughly defend the internal consistency of the Bible, following are a few simple examples that illustrate the amazing internal unity of the Scriptures.

Neither Islam nor any other world religion or cult can present any specific prophecies concerning the coming of their prophets. However, in the Bible, we see hundreds of fulfilled prophecies extending hundreds of years, and sometimes over a thousand years, into the future. Consider the following prophecies and their fulfillment in Jesus Christ:

1. Born of a woman (Genesis 3:15 cf. Matthew 1:20; Galatians 4:4)
2. Descendant of Abraham (Genesis 22:18 cf. Matthew 1:1; Galatians 3:16)
3. Born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14 cf. Matthew 1:18)
4. Born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2 cf. Luke 2:1-7)
5. Prophesied by the forerunner, John the Baptist (Isaiah 40; Malachi 3:1 cf. John 1:19-52)
6. Rejected by His own people (Isaiah 53 cf. John 1)
7. Presented as a king riding a donkey (Zechariah 9:9 cf. Luke 19:35-37)
8. Betrayed by a friend (Psalm 41:9 cf. Matthew 26:50)
9. Betrayed for 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12 cf. 26:15)
10. Blood money thrown on the temple floor and used to buy a potter's field (Zechariah 11:13 cf. Matthew 27:5-7) *Note: the temple was destroyed in AD 70 so the Messiah must have come prior to then.*
11. Crucified (Psalm 22:16 cf. Luke 23:33) *Note: crucifixion did not exist until hundreds of years after the Psalms were written.*

12. Crucified with thieves (Isaiah 53:12 cf. Matthew 27:38)
13. Forsaken by God (Psalm 22:1 cf. Matthew 27:46)
14. Lots cast for His clothing (Psalm 22:18 cf. John 19:23)
15. Buried in a rich man's tomb (Isaiah 53:9 cf. Matthew 27:57)
16. Resurrected and exalted (Psalm 16:10; Isaiah 52:13, 53:10-12 cf. Acts 2:25-32)
17. Ascended into Heaven (Psalm 68:18 cf. Acts 1:8; Ephesians 4:8).

The Bible is clearly a book of history, not just philosophy, because it continually foretells concrete historical events, which in time have come to pass exactly as promised. These promises show the divine inspiration of the Bible and their fulfillment proves there is a God who rules over human history and brings events to pass just as He ordains them. Based on these facts, we can trust the internal consistency of the Bible.

### **Test #3 – The Historical Test**

The historicity of Jesus and events surrounding the time of His life has been well established by early Roman, Greek, and Jewish sources. Such ancient historians and sources include Flavius Josephus, Mara Bar Serapion, Cornelius Tacitus, Suetonius, Pliny the Younger, Lucian, and the Jewish Talmud. These non-Christian historical sources confirm the accuracy of the New Testament accounts of actual rulers, nations, people groups and political events.

### **Why are there different translations of the Bible?**

In translating the Bible into English, three general categories of translation are most common: Word for Word Translations, Thought for Thought Translations, and Paraphrased Translations. The same three categories are also used in the translation of other ancient books into English.

#### **Word for Word Translations**

Word for word translations make a special effort to carefully interpret each word from the original Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic into English. Word for word translations tend to be the best for studying because of their accuracy, though they sometimes lose the poetic nuances of the original languages. The best word for word translations are the New American Standard Bible (NASB), English Standard Version (ESV), and the New King James Version (NKJV). The original King James Version (KJV) is also a word for word translation but its use of old English makes it very difficult for some people to read.

#### **Thought for Thought Translations**

Thought for thought translations attempt to convey the full nuances of a passage by interpreting its entire meaning and not just the individual words. Thought for thought translations may include words that were not included in the originals in an effort to give the same meaning the

reader of the original languages would have had. The best and most widely read thought for thought English translation is the New International Version (NIV).

### **Paraphrased Translations**

Paraphrased translations, in an effort to give the poetic or narrative essence of a passage, pay even less attention to specific word meanings than thought for thought translations. For this reason, many paraphrased translations do not even have verses in them. Examples of paraphrased translations include The Message, The New Living Bible, and The Amplified Bible. Some translations are very poor and we would not recommend that they be used as credible translations for study. These include the Jehovah's Witness translation called the New World Translation, which was written by editors with no working knowledge of the original languages. We would also not recommend current politically correct attempts to remove the masculine names for God in translations like the New Revised Standard Version.

### **Which version should I read?**

Since each style of translation has different strengths and weaknesses, it is best for students of the Bible to use multiple translations which include word for word, thought for thought, and paraphrase versions to gain a fuller insight into the Scriptures. Portico Church uses the English Standard Version (ESV) as the primary translation in all preaching and teaching.



## Appendix C: Acts 29 Distinctives

### ACTS 29 DISTINCTIVES

#### PREAMBLE

Acts 29 is a family of church-planting churches that stands in the tradition of historic evangelical confessionalism. While we believe it is vital that the Elders of each of our local churches determine where they stand on doctrines of second importance, we do wish to make known our convictions on the following five distinctive theological foundations.

#### 1. WE ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT GOSPEL CENTRALITY.

We believe the gospel is the good news of what God has graciously accomplished for sinners through the sinless life, sacrificial death, and bodily resurrection of his Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, namely our forgiveness from sin and complete justification before God; this gospel is also the foundation for our confidence in the ultimate triumph of God's kingdom, and the consummation of his purpose for all creation in the new heavens and new earth.

This gospel is centered in Christ, is the foundation for the life of the Church, and is our only hope for eternal life; this gospel is not proclaimed if Christ's penal substitutionary death and bodily resurrection are not central to our message.

This Gospel is not only the means by which people are saved, but also the truth and power by which people are sanctified; it is the truth of the Gospel that enables us to genuinely and joyfully do what is pleasing to God and to grow in progressive conformity to the image of Christ.

The salvation offered in this gospel message is received by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone; no ordinance, ritual, work, or any other activity on the part of man is required in order to be saved.

(Mark 1:1; Luke 24:46-47; John 3:16-18; Romans 1:16-17; Romans 1:18-25; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; 2:2; 15:1-4; 2 Corinthians 4:1-6; 9:13; Galatians 1:6-9; Ephesians 1:7-10; Colossians 1:19-20; 2 Timothy 1:8-14; 2 Peter 3:11-13; Jude 3-4; Revelation 21:1-22:21)

#### 2. WE ENTHUSIASTICALLY EMBRACE THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD'S GRACE IN SAVING SINNERS.

We affirm that God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, not on the basis of foreseen faith but unconditionally, according to his sovereign good pleasure and will.

We believe that through the work of the Holy Spirit, God will draw the elect to faith in his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, graciously and effectually overcoming their stubborn resistance to the gospel so that they will most assuredly and willingly believe.

We also believe that these, the elect of God whom he gave to the Son, will persevere in belief and godly behavior and be kept secure in their salvation by grace through faith.

We believe that God's sovereignty in this salvation neither diminishes the responsibility of people to believe in Christ nor marginalizes the necessity and power of prayer and evangelism, but rather reinforces and establishes them as the ordained means by which God accomplishes his ordained ends.

[\(John 1:12-13; 6:37-44; 10:25-30; Acts 13:48; 16:30-31; Romans 3:1-4:25; 8:1-17,31-39; 9:1-23; 10:8-10; Ephesians 1:4-5; 2:8-10; Philippians 2:12-13; Titus 3:3-7; 1 John 1:7,9\)](#)

### **3. WE RECOGNIZE AND REST UPON THE NECESSITY OF THE EMPOWERING PRESENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT FOR ALL OF LIFE AND MINISTRY.**

The Holy Spirit is fully God, equal with the Father and Son, whose primary ministry is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ; he also convicts unbelievers of their need for Christ and imparts spiritual life through regeneration (the new birth).

The Spirit permanently indwells, graciously sanctifies, lovingly leads, and empowers all who are brought to faith in Christ so that they might live in obedience to the inerrant Scriptures.

The model for our reliance upon the Spirit and our experience of his indwelling and empowering presence is the Lord Jesus Christ himself who was filled with the Spirit and entirely dependent upon his power for the performance of miracles, the preaching of the kingdom of God, and all other dimensions of his earthly ministry.

The Holy Spirit who indwelt and empowered Christ in like manner indwells and empowers us through spiritual gifts he has bestowed for the work of ministry and the building up of the body of Christ. Although there are different understandings in our network of the nature and function of these gifts, we all recognize that they are divine provisions central to spiritual growth and effective ministry and are to be eagerly desired, faithfully developed, and lovingly exercised according to biblical guidelines.

[\(Matthew 3:11; 12:28; Luke 4:1, 14; 5:17; 10:21; John 1:12-13; 3:1-15, 34; 14:12; 15:26-27; 16:7-15; Acts 2:14-21; 4:29-30; 10:38; Romans 8:9; 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-13; 12:28-31; 14:1-33; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Galatians 3:1-5; Ephesians 1:13-14; 5:18\)](#)

**4. WE ARE DEEPLY COMMITTED TO THE FUNDAMENTAL SPIRITUAL AND MORAL EQUALITY OF MALE AND FEMALE AND TO MEN AS RESPONSIBLE SERVANT-LEADERS IN THE HOME AND CHURCH.**

Both men and women are together created in the divine image and are therefore equal before God as persons, possessing the same moral dignity and value, and have equal access to God through faith in Christ. 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 utilise their gifting in ministry, in service to the body of Christ, and through teaching in ways that are consistent with the Word of God.

Both husbands and wives are responsible to God for spiritual nurture and vitality in the home, but God has given to the man primary responsibility to lead his wife and family in accordance with the servant-leadership and sacrificial love characterised by Jesus Christ. This principle of male headship should not be confused with, nor give any hint of, domineering control. Rather, it is to be the loving, tender and nurturing care of a godly man who is himself under the kind and gentle authority of Jesus Christ.

The Elders/Pastors of each local church have been granted authority under the headship of Jesus Christ to provide oversight and to teach/preach the Word of God in corporate assembly for the building up of the body. The office of Elder/Pastor is restricted to men.

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

**5. WE EMBRACE A MISSIONARY UNDERSTANDING OF THE LOCAL CHURCH AND ITS ROLE AS THE PRIMARY MEANS BY WHICH GOD CHOOSES TO ESTABLISH HIS KINGDOM ON EARTH.**

The church has a clear biblical mandate to look beyond its own community to the neighborhood, the nation, and the world as a whole; thus mission is not an optional program in the church but an essential element in the identity of the church.

We are called to make Christ known through the gospel and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to bring his lordship to bear on every dimension of life.

The primary way we fulfill this mission is through the planting of churches that plant churches and the training of their leaders. Our aim is that Jesus Christ would be more fully formed in each person through the ministry of those churches God enables us to plant around the world.

We also believe we are responsible neither to retreat from our culture nor to conform to it, but with humility, through the Spirit and the truth of the gospel, to engage it boldly as we seek its transformation and submission to the lordship of Christ.

([Isaiah 52:7](#); [Matthew 10:5-25](#); [28:18-20](#); [Luke 4:18-19](#); [24:46-47](#); [Acts 28:31](#); [Romans 10:14-15](#); [2 Corinthians 10:4-5](#); [Galatians 2:10](#); [Ephesians 3:10](#); [4:11-16](#); [2 Timothy 4:1-5](#); [Hebrews 10:23-25](#); [1 Peter 2:4-5](#), [9-10](#))