

Discovering Church Membership

Devoted
Community



STURGIS MISSIONARY
C H U R C H

Are you committed to the mission of fostering a devoted community of believers rooted, built up, and walking in Christ in their worship of God, making disciples, spreading the gospel so all acquaintances have heard, and no believer is left without a church home? If so, we would value serving alongside you as fellow members. Knowing we can count on each other as we serve the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Three Benefits of Membership

1. You can help preserve the purity of the church through your participation in casting your vote and voicing your thoughts at church business meetings¹, and district and national conferences of the Missionary Church.²
2. You can go deeper in your service for God by allowing your name to be placed on the ballot for an elected office.
3. In making a stronger commitment to the church family than as a regular attendee, your suggestions and opinions will carry greater weight.

UNITY MAKES STURGIS MISSIONARY CHURCH A FAMILY?

United in our common faith

Nature in need of deliverance

Identify as a church organization

Tactics used for effective ministry

Yearning for reaching the lost

¹ Example discussions/votes include yearly budgets, elected positions, pastor placement, bylaw changes, etc.

² You will need to ask to be a delegate at a district or national conferences to have input in those areas

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UNITED IN FAITH

“I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.”

1 Corinthians 1:10

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

“Helping people know, love, and follow Jesus!”

Know

To pass on the intellectual knowledge of who God is and what He has declared.

Love

Stirring people’s passions for who God is, what God has done, what God is doing, and what God will do.

Follow

Fostering a desire to obey God.

Everyone is at a different place in their journey of knowing, loving and following Jesus. Some are looking to learn more about who Jesus is and why Christianity is important to life. Others have personally accepted Jesus’ atoning work of salvation for his/her own sins. Some are further along in the sanctification process, having committed every area of their life to the Lord’s control.

At Sturgis Missionary Church, we desire to help people navigate the Christian walk during each part of the journey. Coming alongside people as they live out the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.

The Great Commandment:

“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.’” -Matthew 22:36–40

The Great Commission:

“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.” -Matthew 28:19-10

OUR STATEMENT OF FAITH

What we believe theologically

The Triune God

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three divine persons, equal in power and glory – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is the creator and sustainer of all things. His divine qualities – including love, holiness, justice, righteousness, faithfulness, infinite knowledge and power, self-existence, and omnipresence – all harmonize perfectly in the unity of his being.³

The Father

We believe in God the Father, begotten of none. Since God is the creator, all things and all people are from him and exist for him. As the author of salvation, he adopts into his family all who are born again by faith. He gloriously upholds and providentially rules over all things, to accomplish the redemption of his people and the restoration of all creation.⁴

Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, the eternally begotten Son of the Father. He is the fully divine, living Word of God who also became fully human – conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. His sinless human life, humble obedience to his Father's will, sacrificial death and bodily resurrection made sufficient provision for the salvation of all people. In his ascension, he returned to his Father, where he reigns as Lord, Advocate, Great High Priest, and Coming Judge.⁵

Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the third person of the triune God, proceeding from and sent by the Father and the Son. He is the personal expression of God's power – instrumental in all his works. He is the author and illuminator of sacred Scripture. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He is the agent of the new birth, the one by whom we are baptized into the Body of Christ. As the spirit of holiness, he indwells every believer and his Church, purifying and empowering his people for holy living. He guides them into truth, comforts and encourages them, and enables them to fulfill the Great Commission. He

³ Gen. 1:1; Ex. 3:14, 34:6; Deut. 6:4, 32:4; 1 Kings 8:27; Neh. 9:6; Ps. 90:2, 103:8, 116:5, 147:5; Isa. 6:3, 40:28, 57:15; Jer. 23:23-24; Mal. 3:6; Matt. 28:19; John 1:1, 4:24, 10:30, 14:16; Acts 5:4-5, 17:28; 1 Cor. 8:4; 2 Cor. 13:14; Col. 1:17; 1 Tim. 1:17; Heb. 1:2, 12 and 11:3; 2 Pet. 3:9; 1 John 4:10-16

⁴ Gen. 1:1; Ps. 90:2; John 13:3, 16:28; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 1:3-4, 4:6; 1 Pet. 1:2-3; 1 John 2:23, 3:1

⁵ Isa. 53:6; Matt. 28:18-20; Luke 1:35; John 1:1, 14, 18; Acts 2:22, 24-32; Rom. 1:3-4, 8:34; 2 Cor. 5:18-19; Eph. 1:19-22; Col. 3:4; Tit. 2:13; Heb. 1:8, 4:15, 7:25; 1 Pet. 2:22, 24, 3:18; 1 John 2:1-2

produces his fruit in the lives of believers and gives them spiritual gifts for the good of the Church.⁶

Bible

We believe that the Bible, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, is the written Word of God, verbally inspired by the Holy Spirit and, therefore, true, reliable, and without error in all it addresses. We believe the Bible has been safeguarded by the Holy Spirit and transmitted to the present day without any doctrinal corruption. The Bible forever remains the unchanging and final authority for faith and living.⁷

Humanity

Gender is divinely designed, part of the goodness of creation. Human sexuality is a gift, intended to be expressed exclusively in a monogamous, lifelong marital union between one man and one woman. The Bible also affirms the sacredness of the single state and that some may have the gift of lifetime celibacy.

We believe in the historicity of the first man, Adam, who along with his wife, Eve, was uniquely created by a direct act of God as recorded in Genesis and not by a process of evolution. Made in his image, they are his crowning achievement. Adam and Eve were created without sin for perfect fellowship with God and were commanded to be fruitful and exercise benevolent dominion over the earth. Humankind was created for love of God and neighbor. That love was intended to find expression in every individual and every human institution.

Through the misuse of their wills, however, our original parents succumbed to Satan's temptation, disobeyed God's command and thus brought sin into the world and became subject to physical and spiritual death. They became corrupt in their nature, and have passed on that nature to all their descendants. As a result, all human beings – while still bearing God's image – are polluted in every aspect of their being. They are estranged from God by their sin and thus deserve God's wrath.

We believe that God desires all human beings to be restored to a right relationship with him. Redemption – the gracious design by which God intends to rescue humanity from the disastrous consequences of sin – has its origin in the love of God and is brought to fruition by his infinite wisdom and might.⁸

Salvation & the Spirit-Filled Life

⁶ Matt. 28:19; John 3:5-6, 14:16-18, 26, 15:26, 16:7-14; Acts 1:8, 2:1-4, 13:2-4, 15:28; Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 2:10-12, 6:19-20, 12:4-11, 13; 2 Cor. 6:16, 13:14; Gal. 5:22-23; Eph. 2:21-22; 2 Thess. 2:13; Tit. 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:2, 1 John 2:20-27

⁷ Ps. 119:9, 89, 105; Matt. 24:35; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Heb. 4:12; 1 Pet. 1:25; 2 Pet. 1:21

⁸ Gen. 1:27, 3:13, 16-17; Ex. 20:11; Isa. 64:6; John 10:17-18; Acts 4:12; Rom. 3:23, 5:12-17, 6:23, 7:7ff; Eph. 1:5-6, 2:1-5; 1 Tim. 1:15, 2:5-6; Tit. 2:11-12; Heb. 2:9; 1 Pet. 3:18; 1 John 1:8

We believe that Jesus Christ is God's only provision for our salvation. He voluntarily offered himself as our representative and substitute, and suffered and died on the cross in our place – taking upon himself God's righteous wrath. We believe in his bodily resurrection on the third day, which powerfully declared him to be the Son of God. By his death and resurrection, Jesus once for all conquered sin, death, hell, and the devil.

We believe that Christ is the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Salvation is a divine gift given to any who repent and believe. Repentance and faith are the divinely-enabled human responses to the grace of God. By the power of the Holy Spirit, a sinner must turn away from sin and embrace God – thus appropriating the benefits of Christ's life, death and resurrection. All who truly believe and receive Christ are fully justified, reconciled to God, born of his Spirit, adopted as his children, and united with Jesus in his death and resurrection. They will one day see him in his glory and be glorified themselves, as God brings his redemptive work to completion.

We believe that God intends to transform his redeemed people by conforming them to the image of his Son through the infilling and sanctifying work of his Holy Spirit. Though this work begins with God's gracious initiative and can only be accomplished by his life-giving power, believers must cooperate and fully yield themselves to the Lordship of Christ. Believers are called to decisively surrender their wills, be renewed in their minds, and have their hearts purified as they continuously offer themselves as living sacrifices to God.

We believe that a living faith must express itself in a life of loving obedience to God and in loving service to others. Genuine faith will inevitably produce good works, which are born out of gratitude for salvation and ultimately done for God's glory. Christians are called to live by the power of the Holy Spirit as citizens of the kingdom, serving as God's agents of transformation for society, culture, and the created world.⁹

Church

We believe that the invisible and universal Church is a spiritual body comprised of all believers, both living and dead— over which Christ himself is Head and Lord.

We believe that the local church is to be a loving community of Christ's followers who gather for worship, prayer, instruction in the Word, mutual encouragement and discipline. As the temple of the Holy Spirit, the Church is to display his holiness, bear his fruit, and be adorned by his gracious gifts. As a people called out of darkness, the Church will embody the pervasive, life-transforming power of God by equipping the saints for the work of ministry –

⁹ Ps. 51:3-4; Prov. 28:13; Isa. 6:1-5, 55:6-7; Matt. 1:21, 3:2, 8, 4:17, 16:24; Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3, 15:18, 18:13, 19:8; John 1:12, 3:3, 5, 14-17, 5:24, 6:44, 16:8-11, 17:17; Acts 11:18, 13:38-39, 15:8-9, 16:31, 20:21, 22:10; Rom. 2:4, 3:10-12, 19, 20, 23, 4:3-5, 5:1, 9, 6:19, 22, 8:16, 33, 37, 10:9-10, 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 15:3-8, 19-23, 55-57; 2 Cor. 3:18, 5:17, 7:1; Gal. 2:20, 6:14; Eph. 2:8-10, 5:26; Phil. 2:12-16, 3:20-21; Col. 2:6, 3:3; 1 Thess. 4:3, 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 2:25; Heb. 11:6, 12:14, 13:12; James 2:17; 1 Pet. 1:2, 15-16; 2 Pet. 1:4-9, 3:18; 1 John 3:2, 5:6

bearing witness to the truth and exerting influence in every realm of the broader culture. The Church is called by Jesus to proclaim the gospel – locally, cross-culturally, and internationally – and to make disciples of everyone everywhere in the power of the Holy Spirit.

We believe that baptism and the Lord's Supper were instituted by the Lord Jesus himself – not as a means of salvation, but as outward signs of the salvation we have by faith. They are the divinely mandated means by which believers publicly affirm their faith in Christ. Water baptism symbolizes the spiritual union that every believer has with Jesus in his death, burial, and resurrection. Therefore, we believe that the biblical pattern is baptism upon profession of faith in Christ, and furthermore, that it should be administered by immersion whenever possible.

The Lord's Supper serves as not only a vivid memorial of Jesus' bodily sacrifice and shed blood, but also as a proclamation of his death until he returns. It symbolizes the believer's union with Christ and the spiritual unity shared by every believer. It provides a powerful inducement to self-examination, should be celebrated joyfully and regularly, and is open to all who are followers of Christ.¹⁰

Last Things

We believe that the final years of human history will be characterized by worldwide persecution and divine judgment.

We believe that the return of Jesus will be personal, bodily, visible, and glorious. His second coming, the blessed hope for which we must be constantly prepared, is a source of encouragement and comfort, a motive for holy living, and an inspiration for ministry and mission.

We believe that when Jesus returns, he will subdue his enemies and establish his kingdom on earth and will reign in perfect righteousness. For those in Christ, death is gain, because to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

At the resurrection, we believe that every person will face one of two eternal destinies. We believe that no condemnation awaits those who are in Christ, because their sins were forgiven at the cross. They will have their lives and works judged only for reward, and will enjoy an eternal, embodied life in the presence of God and his angels, forever. Those who are not in Christ will be raised to appear before God for a final, irrevocable judgment. They will be consigned to a place of eternal, conscious punishment, separated from God in hell, with Satan and his angels.

¹⁰ *Matt. 18:15-17, 16:13-18, 26:26-30, 28:18-20; Luke 22:15-20; John 13:35; Acts 1:8, 2:38-42, 46-47, 8:36-39, 20:7, 28, 32; Rom. 6:3-5; 1 Cor. 5:1-4, 10:16, 11:23-24, 12:12-27, 16:2; Eph. 1:5-6, 22-23, 3:21, 4:11-16; Col. 1:18, 2:12; Heb. 12:23; 1 Pet. 3:21, 4:11; 1 John 3:14, 4:2, 5:1-5; Jude 20-21; compare Mark 16:16*

We believe in the coming restoration of all things, where God – in accordance with his power and promises – will one day bring his purposes for all of creation to their glorious fulfillment. Here, God’s handiwork – though disfigured by sin and subject to decay – will be fully restored in a new heaven and new earth. We believe that all of God’s redemptive purposes will come to fruition, and death will be swallowed up in victory.¹¹

THE ESSENTIALS WE BELIEVE

In essential beliefs... we have unity

“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.” -Ephesians 4:4–6

In non-essential beliefs... we have liberty.

“As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions.” - Romans 14:1

“Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.”-Romans 14:4

“So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.” -Romans 14:12

In all our beliefs... we show love.

“And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.” -1 Corinthians 13:2

¹¹ Ps.2:7-9, 96.13, 98:9; Eccl.12:14; Isa. 9:3-7, 11:6-9, 65:17, 66:22; Dan. 7:13-14, 12:2; Matt. 24:14-31, 36-51, 25:1-46; Mark 9:42-48, 13:10, 32-37; Luke 21:27-28; John 5:24, 28-29, 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; Rom.8:1, 29; 1 Cor. 3:8-15, 4:2-5, 11:32, 15:24-25, 58; 2 Cor. 5:10; Eph. 1:3-14; Phil. 1:21-23, 3:20-21; Col. 3:1-4; 1 Thess. 4:13-5:11; 2 Thess. 1:8-9, 2:1-10; 2 Tim.4:8; Tit. 2:12-13; Heb. 9:27-28, 12:5-8; James 5:7-8; 2 Pet.3:13; 1 John 2:28-3:3; Rev. 1:7, 22:12-13; 6:1-19:21, 20:10-15, 21:1-22:7

OUR CORE VALUES

1. Holy Spirit Led

We discern the will of God by transcending self-effort and human strategizing.

1 Corinthians 1; Galatians 5:25

2. Scripture Driven

We hold the role of the Bible central to our daily operations and decision-making processes. Its teachings guide our values, morals, actions, and choices.

Hebrews 4:12; John 8:31

3. Doctrinally Sound

We seek the pure, acceptable, and perfect will of God to ensure we stay theologically sound. We are culturally relevant while remaining doctrinally pure.

Titus 2:1; 2 Timothy 2:15

4. Pursuing Transformation

We prioritize harmony in the body of Christ, abiding with Jesus, pursuing transformation, glorifying God, and making an impact for the Kingdom. We strive to deepen attendees' understanding of their beliefs and the reasons behind them.

Hebrews 6:1; 2 Peter 1:5-7

5. Ministry Equipping

We play a vital role in preparing and supplying Christians for the work of ministry.

Ephesians 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:16

6. Kingdom Focused

We consider sharing the good news of the kingdom to be a vital part of our ministries and events.

Philippians 3:8; 1 Corinthians 2:2

7. Family Oriented

We aim to keep families together during church activities, enabling them to worship God as one. We recognize all ages are an important part of the church.

Mark 10:14; Acts 16:33

OUR CHURCH CULTURE

Sturgis Missionary Church's focus is on helping people know, love, and follow Jesus. We minister with a habit of excellence in a loving atmosphere where we invest in each other's lives embracing adventure together.

1. Godly

Emulating God's communicable attributes.

2. Joyful

Always mindful of the blessing of being a child of God no matter the circumstances. Making sure we keep from stifling joy by spreading negativity.

3. Unity

Working together engaged in ministry.

4. Hospitable

Blessing people physically, emotionally, and esthetically.

5. Honorable

We aim at what is honorable in the LORD's sight and, when possible, in the sight of humanity.

6. Humble

Considering the well-being, needs, and desires of others before self.

7. Compassionate

An individual's life story has impact on their faith journey. A person's worth is unconditional and outside of time and space because they are an image-bearer of God.

SACRAMENTS

I. Baptism

Baptism is an outward symbol of an inward reality. Baptism does not make a person a believer, it shows that he/she is already believe. Nor does baptism save an individual. Only one's faith in Christ saves. Baptism is like a wedding ring. It is the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart.

A. Why Baptism?

1. Christ's Example

"And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets." -Mark 1:19

2. Commanded of Us

"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." -Matthew 28:19–20

3. Demonstrates Belief

"Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized." - Acts 18:8

"And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments."

-1 John 2:3

B. Meaning of Baptism

1. Illustration (Christ's death, burial and resurrection)

"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," -1 Corinthians 15:3–4

"Having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead." - Colossians 2:12

2. Illustrates (new life)

“And all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,” -1 Corinthians 10:2

“We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.” -Romans 6:4

3. Outward Symbol (commitment)

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,” -Ephesians 2:8

“Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness,”

-Romans 4:4–5

C. Why Immersion?

According to the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, and other Greek Lexicons, the Greek word translated as baptize (βαπτίζω) carries the idea to dip in or under something, to dye something, to immerse, or to sink.¹²

D. Who Should Be Baptized?

Every person who has become a Christ follower.¹³

At Sturgis Missionary Church, baptism is a membership requirement.¹⁴ Although it is not a requirement for membership that this baptism take place by immersion after making a commitment to a relationship with Jesus Christ, in most cases Sturgis Missionary Church performs baptisms this way.

II. Communion

Jesus never asked His disciples to remember His birth, but He did instruct them to remember His death and resurrection. He gave the church two visible symbols (often called “ordinances”) as reminders of His death. Sturgis Missionary Church recognizes the two

¹² Oepke, A. (1964–). βάπτω, βαπτίζω, βαπτισμός, βάπτισμα, βαπτιστής. G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, & G. Friedrich (Eds.), *Theological dictionary of the New Testament (electronic ed., Vol. 1, pp. 529–546)*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

¹³ At Sturgis Missionary Church, we wait until children are old enough to believe and understand the true meaning of baptism before we baptize them.

¹⁴ Baptisms done outside of Sturgis Missionary Church are accepted

symbols of Baptism and Communion. Communion is an object lesson that represents a great spiritual truth for believers.

A. What is Communion?

1. Reminder

“And when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’” -1 Corinthians 11:24

3. Symbol

“In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.’”

-1 Corinthians 11:25

4. Statement of Faith

“For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.” -1 Corinthians 11:26

B. Who Should Take Communion?

Those who acknowledge Jesus as their Savior.

“For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.” -1 Corinthians 11:29

C. Preparation for Communion?

“Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup.” -1 Corinthians 11:27–28

How?

Self-examination	1 Corinthians 11:27
Confessing sin	1 John 1:9
Recommitment/Repentance	Romans 12:1
Restoring relationships	Matthew 5:23-24

NATURE IN NEED OF DELIVERANCE

“For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Galatians 3:26–28

BACKGROUNDS

People who have recognized Jesus as their Lord and Savior come from a multitude of backgrounds. This is what makes the Christian experience so amazing. As Christians, we associate with people, we otherwise, do not have commonalities with.

I. Diversity in the Early Church

A. Diversity of the Disciples

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Fishermen | average Jew |
| 2. Tax collector | despised by most citizens |
| 3. Zealot | hated the government |

B. Diversity in the church in Antioch

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Hellenists | pushed Greek culture |
| 2. Saul | former Pharisee |
| 3. Nigar | probably a black man |
| 4. Cyrene | region of Africa |
| 5. Manaen | brought up with Herod |

C. Diversity within the Biblical Authors

- | | |
|-------------------|----------|
| 1. Shepherd | Moses |
| 2. King | Solomon |
| 3. Musician | Asaph |
| 4. Inventor | David |
| 5. Prophet | Jerimiah |
| 6. Manufacturing | Paul |
| 7. Fisherman | Peter |
| 8. Doctor | Luke |
| 9. Captive | Daniel |
| 10. Broken family | Hosea |
| 11. Agriculture | Amos |
| 12. Government | Nehemiah |
| 13. Priests | Ezra |
| 14. Military | Joshua |

II. Diversity in the Universal Church

1. Diverse Ideologies of Christians
 - a. Political
 - b. Worship
2. Subjective Interests and Passions of Christians
 - a. Occupation
 - b. Hobbies
 - c. Cognitive
 - d. Physical
 - e. Spiritual
3. Diverse Family Backgrounds
 - a. Roots
 - b. Ethnicity
 - c. Race
 - d. Matrix

III. What Unites Us?

It is the worship and service to our great God and Savior. It is not our likes, our personalities, our affiliations, or our achievements that brings us together. It is the fact we all had a nature in need of deliverance and “He [God] has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins”.¹⁵

¹⁵ *Colossians 1:13*

FUNCTION

Why different backgrounds?

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.”

-1 Corinthians 12:12–27

IDENTITY AS AN ORGANIZATION

“For God is not a God of confusion but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints . . . But all things should be done decently and in order.”

1 Corinthians 14:33, 40

HOW OUR CHURCH IS STRUCTURED

Church Board

The business of the church is governed by the church board. The church board is composed of the lead pastor, church board secretary, church treasurer, head deacon, head elder, head trustee, and a members-at-large.

The church board gives prayerful and diligent oversight of the church and its ministries; reviews annually the work of the lead pastor; and makes available to the church a written report of church board decisions.

Lead Pastor

The Pastor's duty is to preach the Word; to exercise prayerful and diligent oversight of the church, watching for the souls, and to seek earnestly the salvation of the lost. The pastor is head of the local church and is responsible for the public services and general promotion of the church activities.

Board of Elders/Deacons

The board of deacons consists of four deacons/deaconesses who serve for three-year terms. All deacons are chosen from among members of the church in good standing, and shall have been members of this church for at least one year.

Deacons/deaconesses assist the lead pastor in the spiritual duties of the church; assist in the preparation and serving of communion; assist with spiritual counseling; assist the lead pastor in a spirit of love and prayer when it is necessary to discipline members; review the membership roll annually; and provide encouragement and support for the lead pastor and staff.

Board of Trustees

The trustees hold in trust the church property; are responsible for the care and maintenance of the church property; are responsible for the safekeeping of all legal papers; have power to mortgage, encumber, sell, and convey any real or personal property of the church, and enter into any lawful contract in the name of and in behalf of the church, when so directed and authorized by the church membership; and anticipate major repairs

Finance Committee

The finance committee prepares a total church budget to be approved by the church board and presented at the first church business meeting; oversee church finances and make recommendations for the operation of the budget; and keep the church board informed of the financial status of the church.

Nominating Committee

The nominating committee shall select nominees for church offices from among members of the church in good standing. The nominating committee is composed of the lead pastor, two deacons, and two additional members.

OUR AFFILIATION

Sturgis Missionary Church is a part of the Missionary Church, and is located in the North Central Region. As of this writing¹⁶, the Missionary Church is almost two million people in more than 20,000 congregations¹⁷ in 110 countries. There are eleven full districts and five mission districts in the U.S.

The Missionary Church is an evangelical denomination committed to church planting and world missions. With its national office in Fort Wayne, Indiana, the Missionary Church communicates the message of Christ with an aggressive strategy.

The Missionary Church, in obedience to Jesus Christ her Lord, is committed to being holy people of God in the world and to building his Church by worldwide evangelism, discipleship and multiplication of growing churches, all to the glory of God.

**We Empower Everyday People to
LOVE LIKE JESUS & LIVE LIKE MISSIONARIES**

Core Values of the Missionary Church

- Biblically Grounded

We are fiercely faithful to core biblical doctrines to ensure that we stay theologically sound. We are not dogmatically exclusive.

- Relationally Connected

We encourage, facilitate, and resource churches rather than direct them. Our goal is to inspire and partner with one another to increase ministry effectiveness.

- Creativity Embracing

We are unique in the fact that we allow local churches freedom to minister effectively in their contexts. This is because we are a permission-giving culture, not a restrictive one.

- Leadership Empowering

We identify, develop, and release leaders. We do not limit God in who he calls to leadership.

- Kingdom Minded

We focus more on the mission than the institution. We share best practices with like-minded organizations and partner with them. And we also encourage and support Kingdom endeavors.

¹⁶ 5/08/2023

¹⁷ 500 in the United States; 63 in our region

TACTICS FOR MINISTRY

*“Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord,
so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and
established in the faith, just as you were taught,
abounding in thanksgiving.*

*See to it that no one takes you captive by
philosophy and empty deceit, according to human
tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the
world, and not according to Christ.”*

Colossians 2:6-8

Walking in Him

Walking carries the idea of movement. As Warren Wiersbe says, “In the Christian life, we never stand still: we either go forward or gradually slip backward.”¹⁸ To walk with someone means you’re in agreement on the destination.¹⁹ Walking with God allows us to know what choices to make in this life because we agree with God’s destination for our lives. At Sturgis Missionary Church, we equip people to implement God as their guide on this journey through life. Allowing them to be complete through submitting to God’s leading.

Rooted

Rooted is a person’s ability to be immovable. Since every word of God is true,²⁰ Sturgis Missionary Church assists people as they take root into this reality. Producing in them the assurance that what they believe is true. Roots also are used by plants to gather nutrients. Being rooted in God, focuses our attention on God, for our sustenance and guidance in life.

Built up

To build something up, a person adds layers upon previously laid layers. Sturgis Missionary Church accomplishes this through three avenues. Heightening the listener’s reflective and critical thinking about a biblical text, guiding the listener through a process of actively thinking about what God is saying and helping the listener relate new facts and concepts learned through Scripture to their own experiences.

Established in the faith

The Greek word being translated as “established” means to receive more inner strength. To accomplish this, one of Sturgis Missionary Church’s focuses is on assisting our people in the process of knowing what they believe and why they believe it. When we know what we believe, we become stronger in our faith and unfearful in our witness. This inner strength also heightens one’s ability to apply biblical principles to his/her life so he/she can grow.

See to it that no one takes you captive

There are many false doctrines the enemy tries to use to bring people back under the bondage of sin and personal works as a means of salvation. Sturgis Missionary Church protects its congregation from these doctrines. Creating an open environment where questions about one’s own faith and the philosophies of the world are encouraged to be asked.

¹⁸ Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 124.

¹⁹ Amos 3:3

²⁰ Pro 30:5

OUR VISION

A devoted community of believers rooted, built up, and walking in Christ in their worship of God, making disciples, spreading the gospel so all acquaintances have heard, and no believer is left without a church home.

Core Measures of Success

Harmony: Attendees are operating as a part of the body of Christ.

Abiding: Attendees are regularly hearing from God.

Transformation: Attendees are working on a righteous change in their life.

Praising God: Attendees are glorifying God.

Kingdom Impact: Attendees are participating in God's work.

Discipling: Attendees are investing spiritually into someone.

The Five-Fold Functions of the Church

Sturgis Missionary Church's objective is to fulfill God's role for the local congregation. We find this role laid out in Ephesians 4:11-16,

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 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, 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. 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.

A. Five Functions

1. Apostles- Help equip people to launch new and needed ministries to impact communities.
2. Prophets- Help equip people to discern the Spirit's leading and line up perfectly with God's Word.
3. Evangelists- Help equip people in expanding God's Kingdom to those without Christ, reaching new families and bringing new believers into the church.

4. Shepherds- Help equip people to have caring hearts, making sure people feel welcomed and no one feels left out.
5. Teachers- Help equip people in transforming mindsets and worldviews from culture to Christ-centered

B. Threefold Purpose

1. The Church equips the saints (all Christian attendees) for ministry through the five functions
2. Having been equipped, the saints are able to do the work of ministry and
3. The saints build up the body of Christ

C. Threefold Goal

1. Attain unity of faith and knowledge of Jesus
2. Attain Christian maturity
3. Attain fullness of Christ

The Role of the Local Church

Worship²¹

Spreading the praise and glory of God, magnifying God, doing good works, bearing fruit, etc.

Equip²²

Equipping God's people for the work of ministry

Teach²³

Promote the will of God and what He has revealed (i.e., the Bible)

Growth²⁴

Growing God's people in the fullness of Christ, doctrine, spiritual growth, etc.

Kingdom Living²⁵

Being a part of Jesus establishing His kingdom and modeling the kingdom of God.

Make Disciples²⁶

Proclaiming the gospel and investing in people.

Unity²⁷

Working together in our unique giftedness from the Holy Spirit.

Commission²⁸

Commissioning God's people who are being sent out.

Anointing & Prayer²⁹

Anointing & praying for the sick, commissioned, etc.

Discipline³⁰

A person must abide by God's rules otherwise they cannot be a part of His church (a reminder of future divine judgement- separation from God).

²¹ 1 Pet. 2:9, 12; Eph. 3:10, 21; 5:19f; Jn. 15:8;

²² Eph. 4:12; 1 The. 2:4

²³ Rev. 2:26; 3:3

²⁴ Eph. 1:18f; 3:19; 4:12-14; 5:9f; Col 1:10; 2:7; Ac 19:31; 1 The. 3:10; 2 Cor. 9:10; Heb. 6:1; Phi. 1:9

²⁵ Gal. 6:10; Lk 6:35; Eph. 5:9f; 1 Tim. 6:18; 2 Thes. 1:3; Col. 1:10; 2 Pet. 2:12

²⁶ 2 Cor. 5:18; Mat. 5:13-16; Mt 28:19f; Mk. 16:15; Lk 24:47f

²⁷ Eph. 4:4f; 1 Cor. 12:4-7, 14-27

²⁸ Ac. 15:3

²⁹ Jas. 5:14

³⁰ Mat. 18:17

YEARNING FOR MINISTRY

“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.’”

Matthew 28:18–20

OUR HEART

William Barclay proclaims, "The missionary task of the Church at home and abroad is not an optional extra; it is a primary and essential obligation".³¹ Here at Sturgis Missionary Church, we are committed to sharing the gospel message throughout the world while discipling those who come to faith.

Erik Raymond in his book *Chasing Contentment*, says, "The church is in the business of taking the ground that the King has won. He has conquered, and his churches, as his ambassadors, come speaking of his victory, bidding others to submit to his rule. The kingdom of Christ is advancing to the edge of the earth through the gospel. And once people come to Christ, they come and join others in the church, where they grow together under the good and sovereign rule of Jesus the King."

Here at Sturgis Missionary Church, we believe Jesus gave us a message to proclaim. The message we share is not on the process of salvation but on who Jesus is and the kingdom he has established. In so doing, we strive to live in such a way that the values of the kingdom of God are evident on earth.

Because we have a divine commission, our inadequacies are irrelevant.

Go & Make

God is a missionary God so we must deploy as missionaries in the environments where God has placed us.

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed (Luke 4:18b).

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father (John 14:12).

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9).

And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts (2 Corinthians 3:3).

³¹ Barclay, William. *Fishers of Men*. The Westminster Press. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. 1966. P3.

Entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us (2 Corinthians 5:19c-20b).

Being Available for Yahweh

“Perhaps God will use me” is an important perspective to have in ministry. In 1 Samuel 14:6-23 we see five key results that can happen when we make ourselves available for God to use.

1. God Empowers You vv. 13-14
2. God Directs the Lost v. 15
3. The Masses Are Emboldened (the Church) vv. 16-20
4. The Deceived Are Enlightened (the lost sheep) v. 21
5. The Weary are Inspired vv. 22-23

The Church

As we gather as a church body we recognize the local church is much like a nation's embassy—an official headquarters for God's representatives serving in a foreign land to advance Yahweh's interests abroad. The church is under the influence of the Kingdom of God and, therefore, operates differently from the culture and values of its host country.

Living as a Community of Believers

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| - Stir one another up to love and good works | - Honoring one another |
| - Encouraging one another | - Forgiving one another |
| - Comforting one another | - Loving one another |
| - Admonishing one another | - Praying for one another |
| - Instructing one another | - Bearing with one another |
| - Teaching one another | - Fellowshiping with one another |
| - Serving one another | - Building one another up |
| | - Showing hospitality to one another |

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Information

Membership Requirements

Members of this church must be born-again believers in Jesus Christ, exhibit genuine evidence of their salvation, and have been baptized by immersion upon their confession of faith. Candidates who have been baptized in another manner subsequent to faith in Christ may be admitted to membership if they are willing to be immersed as the Lord may lead them.

Applicants are required to attend a preparatory course of instruction and complete appropriate application forms. Applicants will be interviewed by a member of the pastoral staff and approved by the church board upon recommendation from the pastor.

Each applicant must affirm a covenant of membership in agreement with the one given in the Constitution of the Missionary Church. For all other issues related to membership, refer to the section on membership in the Constitution of the Missionary Church.

Discipline of Members

All members of Christ's church are expected to conduct their lives according to the standards set forth in Scripture. Such conduct includes moral purity, personal honesty, and biblical fidelity. Members are to be consistent examples of authentic Christianity as they seek to emulate the character of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, members shall promote the unity of the church rather than seeking to divide it.³²

Purpose of Discipline³³

The church is commanded to discipline its members when they continue in open and habitual sin. Church discipline has multiple purposes including the following:

- Encouraging the sinning members to repent, thus restoring him/her to fellowship with Christ and the church.
- Warning other members against such sin.
- Upholding and maintaining moral purity and blameless testimony of the church.

Process of Discipline³⁴

Should any member depart from the standard of Scripture and engage in conduct which conflicts with biblical principles of holiness, the steps of discipline outlined in Scripture shall be

³² Rom 8:28-29, 16:17-18; 1 Cor 6:9-10; Gal 5:22-23; Eph 4:3 and 25, 5:18; 2 Tim 3:4-17; Titus 3:10-11

³³ Matt 18:15-18; 1 Cor 5:1-13; 2 Cor 2:6-11, 7:8-10; 1 Tim 5:19-20; 2 Thess 3:6, 14-15

³⁴ Matt 18:16-18; Rom 16:17; 1 Cor 5:1-13; Gal 6:1; 2 Thess 3:6, 14-15; 1 Tim 6:3-5; Titus 3:10

followed. Hence, some or all of the following steps shall be taken in the process of enforcing church discipline:

- Private reproof of the sinning member.
 - Reproof before two or three witnesses.
 - Public reproof before the church.
 - Termination of membership and possible disassociation and severance of fellowship.
- The entire process of church discipline outlined above shall be carried out and enforced in a spirit of Christian love, care and sensitivity.

Enactment of Discipline

It is hoped that the preliminary steps of discipline outlined above will result in repentance on the part of the sinning member. However, if there is no indication of repentance after these steps are taken, the sinning person's membership shall be terminated in accordance with what is stated above. Such termination of membership shall be decided by the Governing Board after due consideration and prayer. The reason for termination shall be stated in a pastoral letter and delivered to the terminated member.

Agreement of Members to Submit to the Process of Church Discipline

Every person who makes application for membership or who maintains membership in a local Missionary Church explicitly consents to submit to the process of church discipline outlined above.

Inactive Members

A member failing to share in the fellowship and responsibilities of his/her church for a period of one year without just cause shall, after due personal counsel, forfeit his/her membership.

WE WOULD LIKE TO GET TO KNOW YOU!

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone: () _____ E-mail Address: _____

Sex: ☐ M ☐ F Date of Birth: ____/____/____ ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Widowed ☐ Divorced

My occupation is: _____

I have the following gift, talent, or expertise: _____

Prior to attending STURGIS MISSIONARY CHURCH:

- ☐ I came directly from another church, but have not spoken to any of the leadership of the previous church about why I left.
- ☐ I came directly from another church, and I have spoken with the leadership of the previous church about why I left.
- ☐ I had not attended another church before attending Sturgis Missionary (at least six months prior)
- ☐ I had never attended church before attending Sturgis Missionary

Previous Church (if any): _____

I affirm the statement of faith of the Missionary church ☐ Yes ☐ No

How would you describe your relationship to Christ?

- ☐ He is one of many gods ☐ Curious about Him ☐ I am not sure what I believe
- ☐ I'm a New Christian ☐ I'm a Committed Christian ☐ Other

Information on Family Members

Spouse's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Does your spouse attend STURGIS MISSIONARY CHURCH? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Children:

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Birth Date</u>	<u>Lives with you?</u>	<u>Attends</u>
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_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

The Sturgis Missionary Church Membership Commitment

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and having been baptized, and being in agreement with Sturgis Missionary Church's statements, strategy and structure, I choose to unite myself with the Sturgis Missionary Church family. In doing so, I commit myself, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to God and to the other members to do the following:

- 1 To care for one another in brotherly love, to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress, to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech, to be slow to take offense and always ready for reconciliation;
- 2 To maintain private devotions and family devotions where possible, to be an authentic Christian even around unbelievers, to endeavor to bring early to a saving knowledge of Christ all over whom we have the care and influence, to walk circumspectly in the world, to be just in our dealings and faithful in our engagements; To witness faithfully to the saving and keeping power of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ so that in every way we bring lost men and women to a saving knowledge of Him.
- 3 To work together in Christian love; to join in mutual labors for the kingdom of Christ; to strive loyally for the advancement of this church in holiness, knowledge, and love; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines;
- 4 To contribute cheerfully and regularly, as God prospers, to the support of this church and its worldwide ministries; to attend worship services faithfully to worship God, minister to the needs of the attendees, and grow in my Christian walk.

Membership Commitment Before Congregation

Having received Christ as your Lord and Savior and having been baptized, and being in agreement with Sturgis Missionary Church's statements, strategy and structure, do you choose to unite myself with the Sturgis Missionary Church family. In doing so, will you commit yourselves to God and to the other members to do the following:

I. To protect the unity of the church

- ...By acting in love toward other members
- ...By refusing to gossip or slander
- ...By respecting and praying for others

II. To live a godly life

- ...By maintaining private devotions
- ...By having spiritual conversations
- ...By showing grace and mercy

III. To minister alongside others as we take part in God's mission

- ...By developing a servant's heart
- ...By being equipped to serve
- ...By warmly welcoming those who visit

IV. To support the testimony of the church

- ...By attending faithfully
- ...By inviting the unchurched to attend
- ...By giving regularly

If so, will you respond by saying, "I will".

To the Members of Sturgis Missionary Church

Do you welcome them in full membership? Will you encourage them in the things of God and agree to work alongside them in the things of God?

Is so, will you respond by saying, "We will".

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Sturgis Missionary Church Four Requirements

1. Have you committed your life to Jesus Christ and do you trust Him for your salvation?

- ☐ Yes, _____
(When)
- ☐ No

2. Have you received water baptism?

- ☐ Yes, _____
(When)
- ☐ I want to be baptized
- ☐ No

3. Have you read and/or watched Discovering Church Membership?

- ☐ Yes, _____
(Date)
- ☐ No

4. Do you desire to abide by the Sturgis Missionary Church Membership Covenant?

- ☐ Yes, I do!
- ☐ No, I do not

Please sign your name and date

Please print your name