

- **Slavic Missionary Church**
- Church Charter
  - Established by the Church Council
    - Approved by Church Members
  - “For God is not a God of disorder but of peace...” 1 Cor. 14:33 (NLT)
- Bethlehem Missionary Church is an evangelical Christian congregation, serving our Lord Jesus Christ, and each member's spiritual needs. This charter is a fundamental document regulating the activities of the church.

### **Appointment of the Church**

- 1) Confess and glorify the triune God; God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; who is the Creator of heaven and earth, the Creator and Master of all mankind, who saved man from eternal perdition through the death of Jesus Christ.
- 2) Fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ, which consists of proclaiming the Gospel of Christ, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, spreading Biblical truth to people living near and far. We believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ is necessary for every person for salvation. Only the saving grace of God, acting through His Word, with the help of the Holy Spirit, can save man from sin and eternal death. To full this task, the church actively participates in the ministry of bringing mankind to Christ; and in the creation of new churches, beginning among the Slavic nationalities, continuing on to all other nationalities and ethnicities. (**Mat. 24:14, Mar. 13:10, Mar. 16:15, Mat. 10:7; 2 Cor. 4:5, 1 Tim. 3:16, 2 Tim 4:2**)
- 3) We seek to fulfill Christ's commandment to make disciples and to educate them in the spirit of Biblical truth, through liturgy and other types of ministries that contribute to the spiritual growth of believers, to prepare believers to serve God and mankind. Particular attention is paid to educate the younger generation of believers, to firmly adhere to Biblical principles in an ever-changing world. (**Acts. 19:9, Acts. 11:26, Acts. 17:11, Col. 3:16**)
- 4) Propagating the influence of the Word of God, which is capable to make the life of every believer complete and blessed. With this purpose, the Church organizes the study, distribution, and popularization of the Bible in understandable forms to all people; Bible studies, Sunday school for children and adults, Christian camps, theological education, the organization of various groups and other ministries that help with the understanding of the Bible and application of its truths in all aspects of life. (**1 Cor. 9:20, Col. 3:16, Acts. 19:9**)
- 5) Provide church members opportunities for fellowship, mutual support, mutual edification, and service to one another. (**Heb. 13:16, 1 Pet. 4:10**)
- 6) Provide spiritual and material support to both internal and external ministries and communities. (**Heb. 13:16; Rom. 12:8**)

## **Ministries**

The church performs the following types of ministries:

- 1) Proclaiming the Gospel.
- 2) Communion with the washing of the feet.
- 3) Prayers for the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in other tongues.
- 4) Studying the Holy Scriptures.
- 5) Blessing of newborn children.
- 6) Betrothal of those entering into marriage.
- 7) Prayer services with and/or without fasting.
- 8) Election and ordination of church leaders.
- 9) Water baptism.
- 10) Prayer for the sick and afflicted with the laying of hands, which can be accompanied by the anointing of oil.
- 11) Marriage ceremonies.
- 12) Funeral services.

## **Creation of Ministries**

- The church has the authority to create Bible schools and Sunday schools, libraries, children's camps, homes for elderly and widows, music and literary groups; and, if necessary, daycares and other groups/departments compatible with tasks and activities of the church.

## **Structure of the Church**

### **● Membership Meetings**

- 1) We believe that church-related questions should be addressed via church members/councils: "Without counsel, plans go awry, But in the multitude of counselors, they are established." Prov. 15:22 (NKJV); "Then the apostles and elders together with the whole church in Jerusalem chose delegates..." Acts 15:22 (NLT); "Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables." Acts 6:2 (NKJV) Every member of the church has the right to voice their opinion in the management of church affairs, This right is realized through participation in the discussion of church issues. When addressing large and complex decisions, we consider it acceptable to hold an open or secret ballot; however, no decisions may contradict Biblical principles.
- 2) Membership meetings include issues of great importance, such as:
  - Adoption and changes in church doctrine.
  - Electing a pastor, ministers, and electing members of the Church Council.
  - Approval of the church budget.
  - Decision-making on the real estate belonging to the church: acquisition, construction, sale, exchange, etc.
  - Other issues that require significant financial costs or entail a change in the life and ministry of the church.

- 3) Issues regarding the functioning of the church are decided by the Church Council with the subsequent informing and of church members.
- 4) Decisions of the membership meeting shall be deemed valid if at least 50% of the members of the church participate in the voting.
- 5) Most of the decisions of the membership meeting are valid if a simple majority voted for them (50% + 1) of those who participated in the voting. Exceptions are:
  - Election of ministers. This requires the consent of at least 3/4 or 75% of the number of voters.
  - Adoption of amendments and additions to this charter. This requires the consent of at least 3/4 or 75% of the number of voters.
- 6) Whenever necessary, the Church Council prepares and holds membership meetings.
- 7) Each member of the church can make a proposal for discussion of an issue at the Church Council Meeting or at the Membership Meeting. To do this, it is necessary to submit a proposal in writing to any member of the Church Council. The proposals submitted should reflect the following points:
  - The essence of the proposal(s) or comment.
  - A Biblical, logical, or practical basis for accepting the proposal(s). (Why should the proposal(s) be accepted by the church? )
  - How the proposal will contribute to the edification of the church.
  - What resources are necessary (finances, time, people) to implement the proposal(s).
  - The applicant must indicate his name and personal phone number.
- 8) Each proposal or comment is registered by the Council secretary and is considered by the Church Council at the earliest opportunity.
- 9) The author of the proposal can be invited to the Church Council meeting, at which time the proposal will be considered.
- 10) When a decision is made for a submitted proposal or comment, results will be communicated to the author, and then, if the Church Council deems it necessary, the question/decision is submitted to the church's members.

- **The Church Council**

1. The Church Council is the main governing body of the church, responsible for all current affairs of the church and its services, such as:
  - Developing the church's developmental strategy.
  - Selection and approval of department heads;
  - Establishing pastoral oversight over each ministry.
  - General organization of church structures.
  - Preparation of the agenda for membership meetings.
  - Managing church discipline.
  - Overseeing church finances and budget.
  - Representing the church in state and administrative functions.
  - Issues of inter-church cooperation.

2. Members of the Church Council are accountable for the pastoral care of the congregation. For this purpose, the church is divided into sectors, the leaders of each sector are chosen from among the members of the Church Council.
  3. The members of the Church Council can be spiritually mature brethren, corresponding to the characteristics of the minister, represented in **1 Tim 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and 1 Peter 5:1.**
  4. The Church Council consists of no less than 7 people, depending on the number of church members and the types of church ministry. The pastor and other ordained ministers, confirmed by the church, are automatically permanent members of the Church Council.
  5. Candidates for ordination to minister in the church are put forward by the Church Council.
  6. The Church Council may include not ordained, spiritually mature brothers who are responsible for the functioning of the church. Each candidate must be approved by a 3/4ths majority of church members at a scheduled Membership Meeting.
  7. A member of the Church Council may be removed from service in the Council due to his physical inability to participate in the work of the Council, loss of spiritual qualifications, and for other reasons making his service inefficacious, such a proposition must be unanimously confirmed by all members of the Council.
  8. The Church Council elects from its membership a committee that provides the church to the state. Also, the Church Council elects a secretary whose duties include the keeping of the minutes of all meetings of the Council. These protocols should reflect the following information: venue, time, list of attendees, agenda, all proposals, as well as decisions taken on each issue under discussion. All protocols are subject to mandatory permanent storage.
- **Pastor of the Church**
    1. The pastor of the church must comply with the Biblical requirements for church ministers: **1 Tim 3:2-7; Titus 1:6-9 and 1 Peter 5:1-3.** In addition, he must be knowledgeable in the Word of God, experience with spiritual guidance, a personal prayer life, and care for church members.
    2. Pastoral responsibilities include:
      - Dedication of most of his ministry to studying and preaching the Word of God, as well as prayer. This includes regular sermons and personal prayer for the members of the church.
      - Personally minister and care for members of the church and/or supporting other ministers/ministries.
      - Providing spiritual guidance to the church.
      - Spiritual care and training of ministers of different levels.
      - Organization of the ministry of preaching and teaching at all church levels.
      - Organization and oversight of church services.

- Coordination of ministries and church departments.
- 3. The pastor has the right to participate on an ongoing basis in the work of all councils, committees, and groups operating in the church.
- 4. The pastor and all his ministries are accountable to the Church Council.
- 5. To carry his pastoral ministry of the church in its various spheres, the pastor can enlist other ministers ordained by the church. Ministers who were ordained earlier in other churches can be enlisted in a ministry, subject to the unanimous approval of their service by the Church Council (100% of votes), and then by a membership meeting (at least 75% of the vote).
- 6. A pastor may be relieved of his duties for the following reasons and following the following procedure:
  - If a pastor requests to resign, the pastor must prove the Church Council three months prior to the date of departure.
  - In the event, a pastor becomes ineligible to be minister for reasons specified in **1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9 and 1 Peter 5:1-3**, the transgression or item for eligibility must be confirmed by at least 75% of the Church Council Ministers. This decision is then approved by a specially convened membership of the church, provided that it is supported by at least 50% of the members of the church.
  - The pastor can be on a full or partial retainer of the church. Specific conditions and the amount of material support are stipulated by a special agreement approved by the Church Council.
  - The selection of a new pastor is made by the Church Council. The elected candidate is presented to the church for approval at a specially convened membership meeting. A pastoral candidate needs the approval of 75% of the casted votes.
  - The election of a new pastor must be supported by a positive revelation from the Holy Spirit.
  - In case of illness or temporary absence of a pastor, his ministry is performed by a deputy pastor or one of the ministers approved by the church.
- **Leaders of Church Sectors and Home Groups**
  1. The church is sectored into divisions and home groups to ensure a more effective pastoral care; they provide opportunities for closer communication about the Word of God and prayer, as well as provide opportunities for socialization between members of the church and contribute to the edification of the church.
  2. Heads of sectors and home groups are elected from among the Church Council by the Church Council. Assistants to these leaders can be elected from among mature brothers who are not members of the Church Council.
  3. Heads of sectors and home groups together with their assistants are responsible for the pastoral care of their sections and groups, which are members of the local church, that are entrusted to them.

4. Heads of sectors and home groups shall serve their sections/groups in accordance with specific needs and conditions pertaining to their group, in order to achieve the goals described above.
  5. Heads of sectors and home groups are accountable to the Head Pastor and the Church Council.
- **The Extended Church Council**
    1. The pastor, members of the Church Council, deacons, deaconesses, leaders of church sectors and home groups and their assistants, heads of choirs, heads of Sunday School and Russian schools, and those responsible for any church departments/ministries constitute the Extended Church Council.
    2. The Extended Church Council is an advisory body that submits its recommendations to the Church Council for approval and decision making.
    3. The extended Church Council is conveyed by the head pastor as needed.
  - **Deacons**
    1. The deacons must correspond to the descriptions given in **1 Tim. 3:8-13**.
    2. The main task of the deacon's ministry is to provide all-round assistance to the pastor and other ministers in the performance of their ministry, as well as assisting various ministries in the church.
    3. It is the responsibility of the deacons to prepare everything needed for the Lord's Supper; organize the material ministry of the church; ensure the registration, storage, and proper exploitation of the material and technical facilities belonging to the church; and arrange a meeting of the guests, and ensure order in the church during worship services.
    4. In the election of deacons, candidates are nominated by the Church Council, and if approved, are submitted for approval for ordination by a simple majority of church members, at an appointed membership meeting.
    5. Deacons can enlist the help of other mature members of the church after preliminary approval by the Church Council.
    6. If necessary, deaconesses are elected in the church, whose tasks include assisting the ministers of the church in matters of ministry among sisters, as well as organizing charities and ministries, supporting the church, missionaries, and other situations.
    7. Deaconesses are elected by the Church Council with subsequent confirmation and prayer of the church
  - **Department Heads**
    1. Various departments responsible for specific areas of ministry can be organized in the church to ensure effective ministry. Among them may be:
      - Youth Ministry
      - Child Ministry
      - Young Families Ministry

- Evangelism
  - Musical/Worship Ministry
  - Missionary Groups
  - Prayer Ministry
  - Women's Ministry
  - Publications
  - Other departments contributing to the overall development and edification of the church.
2. Heads of departments must be spiritually mature members of the church, meeting biblical requirements for deacons **1 Tim. 3:8-10** and the deaconesses of **1 Tim. 3:11**.
  3. In the spheres of ministry, which are based on the teaching of the Word of God, leaders must meet the biblical requirements for servants stated in **1 Tim. 3:2-7**. The leaders of the choirs and orchestras of the church, as well as their assistants, are appointed by the Council of Ministers from among the members of the church, taking into account their practical abilities to carry out a specific ministry for the edification of the church.

- **Church Finances and Property Rights**

1. The church has the right of a legal entity and can acquire movable and immovable property, equipment, vehicles, typographic equipment, inventory, and other necessary means. The church has a signature, stamp, bank account, etc.
2. The church budget is based on voluntary donations of church members, worshipers, individuals, and various organizations wishing to support the ministry of the church. For members of the church, material support for the church is a personal responsibility assumed by each member upon joining the church.
3. The general plan for spending and the church budget is determined by the Church Council approved by a Church Membership Meeting.
4. The Finance Committee must report at least once a year at an appointed Membership Meeting.
5. For the preliminary preparation of the budget and for monitoring the financial state of the church, the Church Council appoints from among its members a Financial Committee, which is responsible for:
  - Regular monitoring of the general state of affairs in the execution of the church budget and informing the Church Ministry in cases requiring their immediate attention.
  - The study of the financial status of each department within the church in order to determine the most effective use of material assets.
  - Preliminary preparation of the budget for its adoption by the Church Council and subsequent approval of the membership meeting.
  - Periodical audit of the financial activities of the church for the correct use of material assets and proper management of financial documentation. Revision should be made at least once a year. Independent professional

auditors (auditors) may be involved in its conduct. The results of the audit are submitted to the Church Council, and then to the Membership Meeting.

- The Finance Committee must report at least once a year to a Membership Meeting.
6. The Finance Committee consists of at least three people and is elected annually.
  7. The revision of the financial documentation is carried out by the Audit Commission elected by the Membership Committee in the number of 3 persons. The duties of the Audit Commission include:
    - Church financial documentation.
    - Accounted for funds, funds "on hand" on behalf of the church and for the needs of the church are accounted for in the hands of responsible persons.
    - The correct records accounting for all church means.

The Audit Commission is accountable in its activities to the Membership of the Church. The Audit Commission is obliged to document the results of the inspections in writing and report them to the Church Council and Church Membership. Verification is carried out at least 2 times a year, at the discretion of the commission. The re-election of the members of the Audit Commission is carried out exclusively by the Membership of the Church.

8. Each member of the Church Council has the right to check any financial documents of the church if there is reasonable doubt in the accuracy of their registration or reasonable suspicion of any financial abuse.
9. The church teller is appointed by the Church Council. Its task is to keep a strict account of the parish and the expenditure of funds.
10. The church accountant is appointed by the Church Council. Its task is to design all the necessary documentation related to the financial activities of the church. The accountant is responsible for the timely and proper payment of taxes and other payments in accordance with state laws.
11. If necessary, special (extrabudgetary) fees for special needs can be conducted in the church, such as supporting missionary service, emergency situations in the life of church members, etc. Such fees can be made only by the decision of the Church Council.
12. The church has the official status of a non-profit organization, and accordingly, enjoys tax benefits provided for by state laws.
13. All donations received by the church from individuals or organizations are registered by name, except for cases of receiving anonymous donations.
14. The Church Council has the right to refuse to accept any gift or donation for the church if it determines that the acceptance of this gift will be contrary to the general welfare of the church or the purposes of the existence of the church expressed in this statute.
15. Each donor has the right to receive an official document confirming the number of his donations, except for those donations that were made anonymously.



16. Official representation of the church in state, administrative, financial, and other organizations, as well as signing any legal or financial documents on behalf of the church, is authorized only by persons authorized by a special decision of the Church Council. This right can be general or related only to certain, single situations. Without a special decision of the Church Council, none of the leaders of the church, its members or representatives has the right to represent the church in any matters related to the state, administrative or financial obligations of the church. The Church does not respond to any obligations taken from its person by representatives who do not have the authority to do so.

### **Resolution of Disputes**

All disputes between members of the church, ministers, or any other members of the church regarding spiritual teaching, church practice, traditions, church finances, or property should be resolved only by the Church Council or at a Membership Service. Decisions must be made after a prayerful study of the case, in a spirit of meekness and humility, each member of the Council respects the position of the other and everyone considers each other in higher esteem. Any opinions or understandings that are not supported by the Scriptures can not be approved by the Council. All other disputable issues are resolved by a simple by Church Members.

### **Government Relations**

1. The church recognizes state and federal structures, observes all legislation in accordance with the Holy Scriptures, and encourages church members to exercise their right to vote and openly advocate for spiritual and moral purity
2. Members of the church for religious reasons can not be enlisted in active military service but can serve in alternative capacities established without carrying arms and taking a full oath.
3. Regarding internal issues, the church is independent of intervention from governmental and political entities.

### **Church Membership**

Procedure for joining the church.

Anyone can become a member of Bethlehem Gospel Church who:

1. Is the child of God, ie. a born again believer expressing personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, obtained water baptism, and living an evident Christian life.
  2. Unconditionally accepts the full authority of Holy Scripture, the Bible, and is willing to obey it and agrees with the doctrinal teaching in the church.
  3. Accepts this charter, expressing the structure of the ministry and teaching of this church, and agrees to obey all its provisions.
  4. Membership in the church is a privilege, not a right. Candidates for church members should be ready to actively participate in the life of the church, support its ministry, investing their time, strength, abilities, and finances.
- **The process for Membership includes:**

1. A personal interview with representatives of the Church Council and get their recommendation for membership.
  2. To get acquainted with the general structure of the church, its doctrines, and regulations. For this purpose, special sessions can be held as needed.
  3. After the approval by the Church Council, all new members are presented to the general assembly of the church for acquaintance and prayer.
  4. Members of other churches can be admitted to the church on the basis of a good testimony from the leadership of the church from where they left.
- **Member Rights and Responsibilities**
    1. Responding to God's great love for people, expressed in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, every member of the church should be aware of the need to regularly remain in prayer and study of the Scriptures, thereby gaining an understanding of God's will and receiving the necessary strength to fulfill His will.
    2. Each member of the church participates in the service of one of the church's home groups/divisions, which in turn is one of the sectors in the church, serving with love to others, contributing to the strengthening of their faith, and bringing unbelievers to Christ.
    3. Each member of the church, as far as their talents are concerned, participates in general church service, which is expressed in various kinds of service to each other and contributes to the overall edification of the church and the proclamation of the gospel to unbelievers.
    4. The most important service members with children are to educate them in accordance with the Biblical teachings of the **Gen. 6: 6-9; Eph. 6:1-4; Prov.13: 24; 23:13-14**, contributing to their regeneration and formation of a Christian character.
    5. Members of the church participate in the formation of the general direction of the church, presenting their suggestions and comments to the Church Council, and also participating in the discussion and adoption of decisions within the competence of the membership.
    6. All members of the church participate in the election of members to the Church Council.
    7. Each member of the church participates in the material ministry of the church in proportion to their income and need of the church. Financial service is an opportunity to serve God by financially supporting ministries in God's church. Those who do not participate in the ministry wholeheartedly and good-will, steal from God and other members of the church. "So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver." **2 Cor. 9:7; Mark 12:17, Eph. 4:28, 1 Cor. 8:3-5**. We believe that tithing 10% is the minimal sum a Christian can offer God. At the same time, we believe that everyone is individually responsible for the distribution of tithes at his discretion: to the church, various funds, missions, charity, etc.
    8. Members of the church can leave the church by their own free will by notifying the Church Council.

- **Church Discipline**

1. If members of the church are acting wrongfully, qualified by the Scripture as sin, and do not repent and leave their sin. They should be subjected to punishment in accordance with the teachings in the New Testament.
2. Church sanction can be expressed in the form of a disfellowshipping or ex-communication from the church **Matt. 18.15-17**. The purpose of church punishment is the correction of the sinner.
3. The imposition of Church punishment is the right and duty of the Church Council. Taking into account each individual case and circumstance, a penalty is then assigned.
4. If the sinner repents of sin and desires correction, the Church Council appoints counselors to provide practical help with correction.
5. Members of the church who are subjected to church punishment are not allowed to participate in church services, participate in greeting each other and can not participate in the Lord's Supper, and are deprived of the right to vote and can not attend and take part in the decision of church issues in the membership meetings.
6. Church members who systematically violate this statute or who do not attend church services for four months, membership meetings, and those not participating in the sacrament without valid reasons can be excluded from membership. Such a decision is made by the Church Council after careful examination of all the facts with subsequent informing of the Church Membership.

### **Amending Church Doctrine**

Amendments and additions to this charter may be adopted at a general or special meeting of the members of the church by a majority (not less than 2/3 of the votes) of those present.

All additions and changes must be communicated to the members of the church no less than 7 days before the planned membership meeting with an agenda including the approval of the decision.

### **Amendments**

1. Upon leaving the membership, previous members are not entitled to the church's building, church property and to make donations to the church.
2. Wedding ceremonies are entitled to church members only.
3. The internal life of the church is regulated on the basis of Holy Scripture.

## **Church Doctrine**

### Summary of the Church's Tenant

#### **God the Father**

We believe:

- In the One True God: Deut. 6:4, Mark 12:29-32, Rom. 3, John 17:18
- God revealed Himself in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. 1 John 5:7, Gen. 1:26, 11-17, Is 6:8
- God the Father is a Spirit: John 4:24
- Creator of heaven and earth, all that is visible and invisible: Is. 45:5, Gen. 1:1
- Eternal and immortal: Jer. 10:10, 1 Tim. 6:16
- Dwells in unapproachable light: 1 Tim 6:16, Is. 40:22
- Wise, Holy, Omnipresent: Rom. 14:26, Is. 28:29, Lev. 11:44, 1 Pet. 1:16, Ps.138:2, 12
- Almighty, All-Seeing, Perfect: Gen. 17:1, 35:11, Jer. 16:17, Mt. 5:48, Deut. 32:4
- Good, Merciful, Long-suffering, and Merciful: Ex. 34:6, Ps. 118:68
- Righteous Judge, who punishes falsehood: Jer. 11:20, Rev. 16:5
- Faithful to fulfill His promises: 1 Cor. 1:9, 2 Cor. 1:20
- God is love: Ex. 34:6, John 3:16

#### **The Son of God, Jesus Christ**

We believe:

- In the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God: John 1:34, 20:31.
- He is the image of the invisible God, Eternal, there from the beginning: John 1:1,18.
- One with the Father. Through Him everything was created: John 10:30, Col. 1:16-17.
- He was conceived through the Holy Spirit and was born of the Virgin Mary. He came to save the world: John 3:16.
- He appeared in the flesh, having the fullness of the Godhead: 1 Tim. 3:16, John 1:14, Col. 2:9.
- He was crucified during the reign of Pontius Pilate, buried and on the third day rose from the dead: 1 Cor. 15:3-4,12.
- He ascended to heaven and sat down at the right hand of the Father: Heb. 1:3.
- Christ was triumphal and is our only Savior: 1 Tim. 2:5, Col. 2:15.
- Mediator, intercessor, High Priest and Advocates the New Testament: Ps. 47:4, 1 Jn. 2:1-3, Heb. 9:11.
- He will come again to earth, judge the living and the dead and establish His eternal kingdom: John 5:28.

#### **The Holy Spirit**

We believe:

- The Holy Spirit is the third being in the Holy Trinity: Matt. 28:19
- He is the eternal God, One with the Father and the Son: Dan. 5:3,4
- Possesses all the Divine properties: John 14:20; Is 48:16

- All is created through the guidance of the Holy Spirit: Gen. 1: 2; Job 26:13 [KJV]
- He came down to earth to edify the Church of Christ: Acts: 9:31
- Represents the fullness of the Deity on earth: John 1:16
- Testifies of Jesus: Luke 3:22
- Regenerates a new life in man: John 3: 3-6
- He comforts, admonishes, and teaches: John 14:24; 15:26; 16:13
- Sanctifies and intercedes: 1 Corinthians 6:11; Rom. 8:26-27
- Confirms adoption: Gal 6:4-7
- Works miracles and proclaims the future: John 16:13; Acts 14:1
- He endows Gifts, gives Strength, and encourages to serve God: Acts 4:31; 1 Corinthians 12: 7-11
- The Holy Spirit convicts man in their transgressions: John 16: 8

### **Holy Scriptures**

We believe:

- The basis of our creed is the Holy Word of God: Psalm 118: 140; John 5:39; 1 Cor 3:10
- We acknowledge that the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments - were inspired by God: 2 Tim 3:16
- The Word of God is the only foundation for faith and salvation in Christ: John 20:31
- Christ put an end to the law, His teaching abolished the old covenant: Rom. 10:14; Eph. 2:15
- The Word of God is eternal and unchanging, it is alive and active: Heb 4:12; Ps 118: 89
- You may not corrupt the Word of God and add or subtract anything: 2 Cor 2:17; Rev 22: 18-19
- Every member of the church must-read, examine and fulfill the Scriptures: John 5:39; Is. Joshua 1: 8
- The Bible is more valuable than all riches and books; Faith comes from hearing the Word of God. A Christian's devotion and love of learning the Word of God display their spiritual condition. The study of the Word of God leads the believer to an exemplary Christian life, to sanctification, and to joy in the Holy Spirit.

### **Mankind**

We believe:

- God created man sinless in the image and likeness of God: Gen. 1: 26-27
- A man was created for eternal life and for communion with God: 1 John 2:25; 6:40; 10:28; Gen. 3: 8-10
- Has a spirit, soul, and body: 1 Thess. 5:23
- Has a free will to think, feel, desire, and reject: Is. 32: 8; Rom. 2:15; Acts 13:46
- Man deliberately being deceived by the devil, broke God's commandment: Gen. 3: 11-13
- All of humanity through Adam inherited sin and death: Rom. 5:12
- All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God and the ability to fellowship with Him: Rom. 3:23
- Christ restored to man the lost glory of God and eternal life: 1 Cor. 15:22; Rom. 5:19

## **Sin**

We believe

- Sin is a violation of the law of God: 1 Sam. 15:23; Is. 24: 5.
- Sin is an abomination to God: Deut 25:15; Ex 3:32; 11: 1.20; 12:22.
- Sin began with the devil, the head of the fallen angels: Rev. 12: 9.
- The devil is the father of lies and all unrighteousness: John 8:44.
- Through pride and disobedience, the devil became an enemy of God and an enemy of the church: Ezekiel 28:14-17.
- The devil was cast out of heaven by God and defeated by Jesus Christ: Luke 10:18.
- The fate of the devil and his angels is in the lake of fire: Rev. 20:10.
- Sin entered the physical world through Adam: Gen. 3: 9-12; Rom. 5:12.
- It comes from the heart of man: Mark 7: 21-23; Is 57:17; Hebrews 3:10.
- Unbelief in God, iniquity, and all unrighteousness is a sin: 1 John 5: 7; 3: 4.
- God sees and punishes sin: Job 11:11; Ps. 93: 4-11; Jer. 16:17; Numbers 14:34; Hos. 9: 9; Amos 3: 2.
- The wages of sin is death: James 1:15; Romans 6:23.
- Everyone is in need of God's forgiveness through Jesus Christ: Acts 4: 11-12.
- Christ came to destroy sin through his death and resurrection: Isa 53:15; Heb 9:26.
- Christ returned to man the lost glory of God and eternal life: 1Cor 15:22; Rom. 5:19.

## **The salvation of Man by Faith in God through Grace**

We believe

- Man can not be saved by good works and his righteousness: Romans 3: 22-25.
- He can not be saved by his own efforts, nor through other people: Jer. 17: 5; Acts 4:12; Mt. 16:26.
- There is one mediator between God and man - the Savior Jesus Christ: John 12: 46-47; Eph. 2: 8.
- Salvation is founded on God's love: John 3:16; Rom. 8:29; Acts 18: 9-10.
- God wants people to be saved and come to the understanding of the truth: 1 Tim 2: 2.
- Man has a free will to accept or reject God's salvation: Romans 2: 4-5.
- Man can be saved only by the grace of God through faith: John 3: 15-18; Acts 2:28.
- Every man must be born again from the Word of God and the Holy Spirit: John 1:18; 3:5.
- To believe in Jesus Christ as a personal Savior: John 20:31.
- Repent of all sin: Mark 1:15.
- Produce fruit worthy of repentance: Luke 3:8.
- Take water baptism and, as it is written: Receive the gift of the Holy Spirit: Acts 2:38.
- The Holy Spirit witnesses within each person of their salvation: 1 John 5:10; Romans 8:16.
- A witness to others is a holy, righteous, and undefiled life: Eph 4:24.

## **Water Baptism**

We believe

- Water baptism is a promise of good conscience to God: 1 Pet 3:21.
- Water baptism is a command of Jesus Christ: Mark 16:13.
- Given
  - In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: Mt 28:19; Col 2:12; Romans 6: 3-6.
  - (Through a full immersion in water: John 3:23; Acts 8: 35-38.
  - Is given by ministers of the Church, to people reborn from above and reached adulthood: Eph 4: 11-13.
  - At the discretion of the church (as an exception) can be given to those who have not reached the age of majority, subject to the personal responsibility of the baptized, and with the proper evidence from the parents: Acts 10: 34-43.
- The baptism of infants in the church is not perpetrated: 1 Corinthians 10:12.

## **Baptism of the Holy Spirit**

We believe

- Baptism with the Holy Spirit is a gift of God, promised by the Father and the Son in the Old and New Testaments: Isaiah 44: 3; John 16: 3.
- The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son and is given in the name of Jesus Christ: Acts 2:39.
- Baptism of the Holy Spirit is always accompanied by the fulfillment of power from Above and the sign of speaking in other tongues, physically seen and heard: Acts 19: 6.
- The gift of the Holy Spirit belongs to all believers:
  - Those who believe, repent, and accept water baptism by faith, must necessarily be zealous of the baptism of the Holy Spirit: John 7: 37-39.
  - The gift of the Holy Spirit can be given before and after water baptism: Acts 10: 44-47.
  - Through the laying on of hands and without the laying on of hands: Acts 2: 3-4; 19: 1-6.
  - During prayer, preaching, and in other circumstances: Acts 10: 44-47.
- The human body is a temple for the acceptance of the Holy Spirit: 1 Corinthians 6:19)
- Man must be fulfilled by the power of the Holy Spirit before all service to God: Jude 1:20.
- Do not quench or offend the Holy Spirit: 1 Thes. 5:19-20, Eph. 4:30.
- Baptism with the Holy Spirit is a promise for us and for our children: Joel 2:28; Acts 2:39.

## **Period of Temptation**

We believe

- On the path of following Christ, passing through the valley of derogations, Christians are subjected to various trials and temptations: from the flesh, from the surrounding people, and from the demonic spirits.
- Everyone must stand guard to not be seduced by human philosophy, occultism, satanic powers, and demonic spirits under the guise of an angel of light, so as not to fall into the web of deceit: Luke 4: 1-13; 2 Cor 11:14; Mt 3:11; 20:22; Luke 3:16; 12:50.
- Everyone must take his cross, follow Christ, and be faithful until death: Rev 2:10.

## **The Lord's Supper**

We believe

- The Lord's Supper is a command of Jesus Christ: Mt 26: 26-28
- Is for members of the church who have accepted water baptism, who are assured in their faith and walking in holiness, have peace with God, the church and each other: 1 Cor.11: 23-32
- Bread indicates the holy and broken body of Jesus Christ: Luke 22:19
- The cup indicates the shed blood of Jesus Christ: Luke 22:20
- Through participation in the Lord's Supper, members of the church are connected to Christ and unite in one body as the church of Christ, remembering the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus Christ, to declare the Lord's death until He comes: 1 Cor 11:26
- The Lord's Supper can be performed at any time scheduled by the church, along with the washing of the feet: 1 Cor 11; John 13: 1-15
- Negligent participation entails condemnation. Members of the church who are being disciplined can not participate in the Lord's Supper: 1 Cor. 11:30

## **The Church of Christ**

We believe

- The Church is the Bride and Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ (Rev. 21: 9; Eph. 5: 25-30)
- Jesus Christ founded the Church and is its Head: Matt. 16:18; Col 1:18.
- She was born through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, through the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost: Acts 1: 4-8.
- The church is the house and temple of God, it is established on the basis of the teachings of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the cornerstone: Eph. 2: 20-22; 1 Tim 3:15.
- It is a collection of the children of God, saved and redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, from all the nations and the languages on the earth (Rev 5: 9-11; John 10:16; Acts 20:28.
- It is the embodiment of New Heavenly Jerusalem: Heb 12: 22-23; Rev. 21: 2.
- The main tasks of the church are: To appreciate God's love and to glorify Him for salvation given in Jesus Christ. Through aid and charity, preaching the Gospel to announce to people far and near, the salvation of Christ. At the same time, upkeeping our holiness in Christ, living an unblemished life.



## **Prayer**

We believe

- Through prayer, a person communicates with God.
- Christ showed a pattern of prayer-filled life: Luke 6:12; 8:18; Hebrews 5: 7; Mt. 26:39.
- In prayer, the believer turns to God with his needs and desires: Phil 4: 6.
- Through prayer, there are pleadings to God, supplications, thanksgiving, and glorification: Phil 4: 6; Eph. 5:20; 6:18; Hebrew 11:15.
- **Types of Prayers**
  - Solitary - Alone with God: Mt 6: 6; 1 Sam. 1: 10-12.
  - Two or more people: 1 Peter 3: 7; Mt 18: 19-20.
  - Communal-One in Spirit - : Acts 1:14; 4:24.
- Prayers can be performed: Within the mind or spirit, on your knees or standing: 1 Cor 14:14; Acts 25: 5; Nehem 9: 5.
- In prayer, you should strive to attain the filling of the Holy Spirit: Jude 1:20; Eph 6:18; Romans 8: 26-27.
- One must always turn to God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ: John 16:23; 1 Tim 2: 5.
- To pray at all times, in every place and constantly: Eph 6:18; 1 Tim. 2: 8.
- Spiritual gifts become attainable in the presence of faith and undefiled walk in Christ: Matthew 7:15-18.
- Unceasing prayer is strengthened by fasting: Acts 9: 6; Luke 18: 1-7.
- God warns not to be hypocritical when praying: Luke 18: 9-14; Mt 6: 5; Ex 21:27.
- "The Lord's Prayer" is said at the beginning or end of a service as agreed upon by the church.
- For the best spiritual edification of the church, a prayer group may be created. It may include those who live in the fear of God, having faith, filled with the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit, and zealous for prayer.

## **Confession**

- We believe that sin is confessed:
  - During the repentance of new believers and before water baptism: Acts 19: 18-19; Luke 3: 8; Mt 3: 6.
  - To sanctify those who have sinned within the church: 1 Kings 2: 22-25; Isa. 7: 19-20; 1 John 1: 9; Ex 28:13. 1 Kings 2: 22-25; Isa. 7: 19-20; 1 John 1: 9; Ex 28:13.
- In all cases, confession is committed before God in the name of Jesus Christ: Dan 9:20; Psalm 31: 5.
- In most cases, one must confess to God, in the name of Jesus Christ, in the presence of a minister of the Lord, who, having heard a confession, can give instruction or advice, and pray for sanctification: 1 Sam 12:23; Leo 5: 4-10; Psalm 31: 3-6.
- It is also necessary to confess to those people against whom one sinned: James 5:16.
- All servants of the church in all cases are obliged to keep a confession secret, except when the sinner has to impose a church penalty 1 Tim 3: 9.

## **Fasting**

We believe

- By fasting, a man expresses his humility before God: Matthew 6:16.
- The fast is preceded by a heartfelt preparation and sanctification: Is 58: 3, 6-7.
- During fasting, a person voluntarily refrains from food and marital relations for a certain time: Luke 4: 2; 1 Corinthians 7: 5.
- Fasting must express a specific need: Mt 17:21; Luke 2:37; Ezra 8:23; Acts 13: 1-2.
- A fast is accompanied by reading the Word of God and praying: Acts 14:23; 13: 2.
- Fasting is performed individually, in groups, or throughout the Church: Jer. 36: 6.
- The church fast is established by an individual Church or by the general consent of the surrounding churches: Joel 1:14; 2:15.

## **Food**

We believe

- All food is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer: 1 Tim 4: 4-5.
- The teaching of Jesus Christ does not divide the food into pure and unclean food: Rom 14:14; Matthew 15:11; Acts 10:15.
- Everyone can determine by their conscience what they can eat and what they can not: 1 Corinthians 10: 25-27; Rom 14: 20-21.
- God's commandment forbids eating blood, strangled, and idolatrous: Acts 15:29.

## **Marriage and Family**

We believe

- Marriage is established by God: 1 Corinthians 7: 2.
- Marriage has two goals:
  - For the welfare of man: Gen 2:18.
  - Continuation of the human race: Gen 1:28.
- Marriage is established by God between one husband and one wife: Matthew 19: 4; Hebrews 5:31.
- Marriage is based on free choice, on mutual love and mutual faith in God: Numbers 36: 6.
- Those who enter into marriage must be chaste: Heb 13: 4.
- Marriage - is an example, portraying the marriage of Christ with the Church: Is 62: 5.
- The marriage is commenced by a minister of the Church through instruction in the Word of God and prayer with the laying on of the hands by parents and the minister, as well as the church. Marriage is formalized by a civil act under the laws of the country. Married life must take place in the fear of God, in purity, with both spouses living within mutual understanding: Heb 13:14; 1 Corinthians 7: 3-5; Gal 5:13.
- Those who are married should be pure and monogamous: Proverbs 6:24; 2 Peter 2:14.
- You can not dissolve a marriage and even think about divorce: 1 Corinthians 7:10; Mt 19: 4-6.

- In the event of the death of one of the spouses, the Word of God does not prohibit a widow from remarrying: 1 Corinthians 7:39; Romans 7: 2-3.
- Children are God's blessing. Parents bear full responsibility for the procreation and upbringing of children in accordance with Biblical teaching: Gen 1:28; Heb 6: 4; Ps 140: 4; 100: 2; 126: 3.
- It is necessary to instill in children love and respect for people, towards work, and for society.
- Labor is a basic necessity for existence, therefore all those who are able to work must work: Gen. 3:19; 2 Thess 3: 8-10.
- Based on Scripture, marriage can not be entered into by:
  - Minors: Ecl. 3: 1.
  - Those with a very big difference in age: Gen 2:18.
  - Close relatives: Lev 18: 5-7.
  - The incapable, the eunuchs unless agreement fr the bride: Mt 19: 9.
  - Mentally sick, who due to illness will not be able to provide for the family.
- On the basis of Scripture, our church does not recognize and can not teach same-sex marriage - it's an abomination to God: Rom 1:27.

### **Sacredness of Life**

We believe:

- We believe that only God gives life to man: Gen 1:27; Dan 17:25; Ps 138: 13-16.
- Every Christian, being in charge of this precious gift, is obliged to show concern for his neighbor and with a great sense of responsibility to take care of his own existence: 1 Cor 3:17.
- No one has the right to encroach on his own life and on the life of another person. Only one God has the exclusive right to give or take life. The conscious interruption of pregnancy is murder: Gen. 9: 6; Mt 5: 21-22; 26:52.

### **Relations with Other Confessions**

- We believe that in a relationship with believers in other confessions should be guided by a feeling of brotherly love, Christian respect, and peace: Rome 12:10; 14:19; Eph 4: 3,32.
- To love all born again believers, and to regard them as children of God: John 13:35.
- In all circumstances, seek peace and mutual edification: Rom 14:19.
- You can not show any enmity, condemnation, or slander to other Christian denominations, but to strive for spiritual cooperation with like-minded doctrines, except in participation in the ecumenical situations: 1 Pet 2:17; John 17:21.
- In relation to various false heretical teachings and errors, one should be guided only by Holy Scripture: Gal 1: 8; 2: 4-5; Jude 1: 17-23; 2 John 1: 9-11.

### **Relations with the Government**

- We believe that, on the basis of the Word of God, existing authorities are established by God: Romans 13: 1-2.
- You can not despise your superiors and be unruly towards state authorities: 2 Pet 2:10.
- The Church of Christ must honor the authorities and submit to the higher authorities in any matter that does not contradict the Word of God: Rom. 13: 4.
- The head of the Church is Jesus Christ and, according to His Word, the Church gives to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's: Mark 17:12.
- It is the duty of every Christian to pray for all people, for kings, and rulers: 1 Tim 2: 1-3.

### **Military Service**

- We believe that every person who swears or learns to kill another person sins against the commandments of God, so using weapons to destroy the lives of others is a violation of the will of God. But wherever there is an opportunity, a Christian can perform alternative nonviolent services: Ex. 20:13; Is 2: 4; Mt 5: 34-36, 44; 26:52.

### **Second Coming of Jesus Christ, Resurrection from the Dead and Ascension of the Church**

- We believe in the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: Acts 1:11.
- No one is allowed to know either the day or the hour, but only the signs of the last time indicate his imminent coming: Mt 24:36.
- At the coming of Christ for the Church, the dead in Christ will rise first, and the living in the twinkling of an eye will transform: 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18.
- The church will meet with Christ in Power and Glory in the clouds: Luke 21:27; Matthew 24:30.
- Everyone must stand before the judgment seat of Christ to receive according to what they did when living in the body, whether they did good or bad: 2 Cor 5:10.
- To establish the millennial Kingdom on earth, Christ will appear with the Church, appearing before all nations. The earth, purified by the judgments of God, will enter the millennial kingdom, where all nations will serve God: Rev 20: 1-10; Micah 4: 1.
- We acknowledge that after the millennial kingdom there will be a second resurrection of all the dead, and Christ and the Church before the white throne will judge righteously the living and the dead according to their deeds: Mt 25:31.
- Satan and his angels, as well as people whose names are not recorded in the book of life, will be condemned at the last judgment of God and will suffer the second death - the lake of fire, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth: 1 Corinthians 6: 2; Rev. 20: 11-17; 20: 14-15.
- **Revelations 20:6** Blessed and holy is he who has a part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with Him a thousand years.