



House of God

Guide for Members
and Visitors



November 2021

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

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“These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1Tim. 3:14-15)

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.” (The First Amendment to the United States Constitution)

What is Church?

The word *ekklesia*, commonly translated as **church** from Greek, literally means **assembly**. The true Church of God is the Assembly of the people of God, “that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord” (1Cor. 1:2).

The Church is Assembly of God’s Israel, joined by those who believe in Christ from other nations (Gentiles) (Judges 20:2, 1Chr. 28:5-8, Rom. 11:11-24, Eph. 2:11-22, Gal. 6:15-16). It is the temple of God, the house of God, and the dwelling place of God (Eph. 2:11-22, 1Tim. 3:15, 1Pet. 2:4-10). Church of God is a spiritual entity, the Body of Christ, and the Bride of Christ (Eph. 1:19-23, 5:22-32). It is not a legal entity, such as a corporation, an unincorporated association, or a charitable trust. It is not a business or a human organization; it has no constitution or by-laws, other than the Holy Bible. True Church of God always honors the biblical principle of separation of church and state (Matt. 22:21).

The Word of God recognizes only two churches, the universal Church and the local churches. The practical expression of the church is local. It is in the place where the true children of God, the Christians, disciples of Jesus Christ are. The New Testament speaks of the church in Corinth (1Cor. 1:2), the church in Ephesus (Rev. 2:1), and the church in Cenchrea (Rom. 16:1). All these churches may be called local churches. At the end of the New Testament, we have a picture of seven churches in seven cities (Rev. 1:4, 11; 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14).

Nowhere in the New Testament do we read of a national church, or of any other denominational church. In the Word of God, a city is a unit of locality where a particular local church is present.

According to the New Testament, there can only be one church of God in each city, but it can have many gathering places, and many ministers (**Acts 2:42-47, 12:11-17, 13:1, 14:23, 15:6, 20:17, 21:18-22**).

About the Church

1. Its Head and Founder – Christ. He is the Lawgiver; the Church is only the executive. (**Matt. 16:18, 28:18-20; Col. 1:18.**)
2. Its rule of faith and practice – The Holy Bible. (**2Tim. 3:15-17**) (**This Guide is not a replacement for the Bible, nor an addition to the Bible. It is an explanation of Biblical truths in relation to the life of the church*)
3. Its name – Church of God* or Assembly of God* (*in particular city*), Church of Christ*, House of God (**1Cor. 1:2, 2Cor. 1:1, Rev. 2:1; Matt. 16:18, Rom.16:16, Gal.1:22; 1Tim.3:15, Heb.3:6, 10:21-25**) (**Not the name of the denominations!*)
4. Its polity – congregational, – all members equal, but every member has his place and ministry in the Body of Christ, which is the Church. (**Matt.20:24-28; Matt. 23:5-12, Gal.3:26-29**)

5. Its members – only saved, born again people, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ and the faith of Jesus. (John 3:1-18, Eph. 2:4-22; 1Pet. 2:5, Rev. 12:17, 14:12)
6. Its ordinances – believer’s baptism, and the Lord’s Supper. (Matt. 28:19-20, 26:26-29)
7. Its ministers – elders, also called in various parts of the Bible pastors (literally shepherds), and bishops (literally overseers), and their helpers – deacons (literally servants or ministers). (Phil. 1:1, 1Tim. 3:1-16, Titus 1:5-9)
8. Its work – getting people saved, baptizing them (with a baptism that meets all the requirements of God’s Word), teaching them to observe all things whatsoever Jesus commanded, to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. (Matt. 28:16-20, Acts 2:36-42, Col. 1:28)
9. Its independence – separation of Church and State. (Matt. 22:21)
10. Its entity – spiritual, not legal. (Matt. 22:21, Eph. 1:19-23, 5:22-32)

Church Membership

Just as every shepherd should know how many sheep are in his flock, which is entrusted to him for care, so the shepherds of the church should know who is in the flock of the Lord, entrusted to them by the Lord, about whom they are to care, and give an account. For this, there is membership in the church, which is rooted both, in the Old Testament and the New Testament (**Ex.18:19-24, Num.1:1-4, 3:16, Nehem.7:5, Matt.18:12-20, Acts 2:41, 4: 4, 1Pet.5:1-5, 1Cor.5:1-13, 2Thess.3:14-15, Heb.13:17**).

Membership in the local church is a privilege and a duty of every Christian. It gives the believer many advantages, including:

1. The possibility of spiritual pastoral care from the ministers of the church;
2. The opportunity to participate in the Lord's Supper;
3. The ability to serve with your gifts for the church;
4. The opportunity to attend church member meetings, and make important decisions about the life of the church;
5. The ability to elect and be elected to various ministries in the church;
6. The possibility of a Christian marriage in the church with the blessing of the elders of the church;

7. The possibility of spiritual and prayer support from the church;
8. The ability to receive material assistance from the church in case of need;
9. The possibility of receiving letters from the church confirming membership in the church (for citizenship, for employers, etc.);
10. The possibility of representation by the church, and its ministers, if necessary.

Membership in a local church not only gives a person many privileges and advantages, but also imposes certain necessary duties on him. Every person who wishes to be a member of a local church must agree to fulfill church member responsibilities.

Church Members Responsibilities

To be a member of the church, person has to be a born again believer who has accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior, has received water baptism, is in agreement with the teaching and the structure of the church, and is willing to fulfill church member responsibilities:

1. Follow all the teaching of Jesus Christ:

- 1) Have fellowship with God and Christ – **Jn.1:7, 1Cor.1:9, 1Jn.1:3.**
- 2) Be a disciple of Christ – **Lk.14:25-27, 33, Jn.8:31-36, Jn.15:8.**
- 3) Love God – **Deut.6:4-9, Mt.22:36-38, Mk.12:28-33.**
- 4) Love your neighbor – **Lev.19:18, Mt.22:36-40, 1Jn.4:21, Jn.13:34-35, Rom.12:9-10, 13:8, 14:1-13, 14:19, 15:1-7, Eph.5:2.**
- 5) Make others disciples of Christ – **Mt.28:18-20, Jn.8:31-36.**

2. Keep the unity of the church:

- 1) Strive to preserve unity and peace – **Eph.4:1-6, Rom.12:16, 2Cor.13:11, Phil.2:2, 1Pet.3:8.**

- 2) Reject evil speaking and gossip – **Lev.19:16, Pr.6:16-19, 2Cor.12:20, Eph.4:25, 29, 31-32, 5:8-11.**
- 3) Follow the leadership of the church – **Eph.1:22, Heb.13:17, 1Pet.5:5, 1Tim.5:17, 1Thess.4:1-2, 8, 5:12-13.**
- 4) Follow church teachings and beliefs – **Eph.4:1-6, 11-12, 2Tim.3:14, Tit.2:15.**
- 5) Follow church rules, established by leading brothers of the church – **1Cor.14:33, 1Sam.10:25, 1Sam.30:25, 1Chr.27:25-34, Mt.18:18, Acts 15:22-32.**

3. Carry responsibility for the church:

- 1) Attend meetings of the church – **Heb.10:24-25, 1Cor.14:26.**
- 2) Pray for the church and its ministers – **Eph.1:16-19, 3:14:19, 6:18-19.**
- 3) Invite people to church meetings – **Lk.14:23-24.**
- 4) Be friendly to everyone – **Col.3:12-15, Rom.12:10, 15:7.**
- 5) Support the church financially by tithes and offerings – **Lev.27:30, Mal.3:8-10, Mt.23:23, 1Cor.9:1-14, 2Cor. 8 – 9, Gal.6:6-10.**

4. Do ministry in the church:

- 1) Grow spiritually – **Acts 2:42.**
- 2) Serve others with gifts – **Rom.12:1-13.**
- 3) Get training for ministry – **Eph.4:11-16.**
- 4) Imitate Christ in meekness – **Mt.11:28-30, Phil.2:3-8, Jn.13:14.**
- 5) Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts – **1Cor.14:1.**

5. Have a good testimony about God:

- 1) Be a witness of God and Christ – **Is.42:10, 12, Acts 1:8, 1Pet.3:15.**
- 2) Live holy and godly life – **1Pet.3:16, 1:13-19, 2Pet.3:10-12.**
- 3) Do good deeds – **Mt.5:16, Tit.2:14, 3:8.**
- 4) Follow God's requirements for Christian lifestyle and fashion – **Acts.15:19-29, 1Pet. 3:1-5, 1Tim.2:9-12, 1Pet.5:5, Phil.2:12-16, Heb.13:17.**
- 5) Do not speak evil of the church or its members – **Jam.4:11, 1Pet.2:17.**

How to Behave in the House of God

General Rules

1. Treat others with honor, respect, and friendliness. (Rom.12:10, 1Pet.2:17)
2. Be respectful to ushers, and follow their directions. (1Pet.5:5, 1Cor.14:33, 40)
3. Do not possess any kind of weapon, alcoholic beverage, or illegal or recreational drugs or tobacco. (Mark 11:16-17, Ps.101:3)

Church members are not allowed to use alcohol and any kind of drugs or tobacco for recreational purposes anytime. (Is.5:11-12, Prov.23:31-35, 1Cor.3:16-17, 6:12, Eph.5:18)

4. Do not chew gum during church services. (Ps.2:11-12, Mal.1:6-8, Rom.12:10)
5. Turn off or silence your cell phone during services. (Ps.2:11-12, Mal.1:6-8, Ps.101:3, Rom.12:10, 1Cor.7:35)
6. Dress modestly. Do not wear work or unkempt clothing to services. We should show respect to God and His holy days even by our clothing. (Gen.3:21, 35:1-4, Ex.20:8-11, 26, 28:42-43, Prov.7:10, Zeph.1:7-8, 1Tim.2:9-10, 1Pet.3:1-5)
7. Do not wear clothing with words or pictures to services (small brand logos are an exception). Christians should not be advertisers of this world. (Gen.35:1-4, Prov.7:10, Is.43:12, Zeph.1:7-8, 1Tim.2:9-10, 1Pet.3:1-5)

8. Do not dress in clothing of the opposite sex. (Deut.22:5)
9. Do not come to services wearing any kind of jewelry, including rings, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, etc. (Gen.35:2-4, Ex.33:4-6, 1Tim.2:9-10, 1Pet.3:1-5, James 4:4-8, Is.3:16-21, Ezek.7:19-20, Hosea 2:13)
10. Do not change the natural color of your hair by any means. If you did so, return to your natural hair color. God forbids people to change natural appearance of their bodies into unnatural. (Lev.19:1-2, 26-28, Matt.5:17-19, 36, 1Pet.1:14-16, Ps.139:14, Eccl.3:14)
11. Do not come to church services with colored lips, eyes, or nails. Maintain a decent and modest Christian look not only in the church services, but also outside of them. Painting of face and wearing of jewelry were distinct marks of harlots, according to Biblical texts. (Jer.4:30, Ezek.23:40-43, Hosea 2:13, II Kings 9:30)
12. Do not make any kind of tattoos, cuts or piercings (including piercings for earrings) on your body. (Gen.35:1-4, Hosea 2:13, Lev.19:26-28, 1Pet.1:14-16, Matt.5:17-19, 1Cor.6:13, 19-20)

Guidelines for Women and Girls

1. Please come to meetings with your head covered. Please note that a thin strip of fabric on the head is not a head covering. (Gen.20:14-16, 24:63-67, Num.5:14-19, 1Cor.11:1-16)

2. Dress modestly. Clothing must not be transparent or too tight. It must cover your chest, breasts, back, belly, shoulders, and upper arms. Clothing cutouts and necklines must be decent and not reveal the aforementioned body parts. (Gen.3:21, 35:1-4, Ex.20:8-11, 26, 28:42-43, Prov.7:10, Zeph.1:7-8, 1Tim.2:9-10, 1Pet.3:1-5)
3. Do not wear shorts or any kinds of pants but a modest dress or skirt that covers your knees. Leggings can be worn under a skirt or dress. (Deut.22:5, Prov.7:10, Zeph.1:7-8, 1Tim.2:9-10, 1Pet.3:1-5)
4. Women should not cut their hair short but grow it out, as Scripture teaches. (1Cor.11:15-16)
5. Women should not wear fake nails or fake eyelashes. God forbids to change natural appearance of body into unnatural, and do anything to seduce others. (Lev.19:26-28, Matt.5:17-19, 36, Matt.18:6-7, Jer.4:30, Ezek.23:40-43, Hosea 2:13, II Kings 9:30)

Guidelines for Men and Boys

1. Wear modest, preferably formal, pants. Do not come to services in shorts, exercise clothing, sagging pants, pants with holes, etc. (Gen.3:21, 35:1-4, Ex.20:8-11, 26, 28:42-43, Zeph.1:7-8, 1Tim.2:9-10, 1Pet.3:1-5)
2. Do not wear sleeveless clothing. (Gen.3:21, 35:1-4, Ex.20:8-11, 26, 28:42-43, Zeph.1:7-8, 1Tim.2:9-10, 1Pet.3:1-5)

3. Do not wear any kind of hat indoors church building. (1Cor.11:1-7, Jer.14:3-4, II Sam.15:30)
4. Men should not grow their hair long but cut it regularly, as Scripture teaches. Men should not shave or closely cut hair on the temples, or around the head, and leave it just on the top of the head. Such pagan practices are not permitted in the Holy Scriptures. (1Cor.11:14-16, Lev.19:27, Matt.5:17-19)
5. Men should not disfigure the edges of their beards, by shaving out some parts of the beards, and leaving others, or by shaving different patterns out of their beards. Such pagan practices are not permitted in the Holy Scriptures. (Lev.19:27, Matt.5:17-19, II Sam.10:1-5, I Chr.19:1-5)

Statement of Faith

Preamble We recognize that any doctrinal statement is only a fallible human attempt to summarize and systematize the riches of an infallible divine revelation. However, this in no way undermines the importance of such a statement, which helps to keep unity of the church and provides an anchor to protect the church from losing sight of the truths of the Holy Scriptures. Following statements explain our position and teaching about some main basic Biblical doctrines.

1. Holy Scriptures We believe that entire Bible (Holy Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments) is the inerrant, uncorrupted, living, powerfully working and true Word of God. It is forever settled in the Heavens. It is God's message to humanity, although it contains not only the words of God but also the words of humans and spiritual beings. Those words have been written in the Bible by the will and inspiration of God through God's holy men and prophets for our knowledge, salvation, and perfection. All Scripture is divinely inspired and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. The Holy Scriptures are the only true foundation for every Christian belief and practice. Every belief and practice must be checked against the truths revealed in the Holy Scriptures. (Ps. 12:6; 119:89; Is. 8:19-20; 55:11; Deut. 13:1-4, 18:18-22; Jer. 1:12; John 17:17; 2Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 4:12; 1Pet. 1:23-25; 2Pet. 1:19-21)

2. One God, the Father We believe in one God, the Father—eternal I AM THAT I AM, holy,

glorious, almighty Creator, Sustainer, King, and righteous Judge of the universe, including heaven and earth and all that is in them. God is Spirit. He gives life to all and sustains all things in life. He is the King of those who reign and Lord of those who exercise lordship. He is the only immortal one, dwelling in unapproachable light, Whom no human has seen nor is able to see, to Whom belongs glory and power forever. He is God and Father of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and He is Father of spirits. He is the one of Whom are all things; and we are for Him, Who is above all and among all and in all of us. (**Gen. 1:1; 2:25; 17:1; 18:14; 18:25; 21:33; Ps. 96:1-13; Neh. 9:6; Is. 6:1-3; John 3:16; 4:24; 1Cor. 8:4-6; 2Cor. 1:2-3; Eph. 4:4-6; 1Tim. 6:13-16; Heb. 12:9**)

3. One Lord, Jesus Christ We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed King), God's only begotten Son, in Whom we have redemption and the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, because by Him were created all things – both in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, including thrones and lordships and principalities and authorities. Everything was created for Him. He is before all, and all things exist because of Him. He is the head of the Body, the Church (The Assembly of God's People). He is the beginning, firstborn from among the dead, that He may be first in inheriting all things, for in Him all the fullness of the Godhead was pleased to dwell bodily. In Jesus Christ God was manifest in the flesh on this Earth. Jesus was born on Earth through the Virgin Mary, conceived of the Holy Spirit. He was anointed by God with the Holy Spirit and power. He went about doing good, healing those oppressed by the devil, for

God was with Him. He was crucified on the cross, but God raised Him up from the dead on the third day and allowed Him to appear to His apostles and disciples. He died for our sins according to the Scriptures and was buried and raised the third day, according to the Scriptures. He was literally resurrected in a glorified, immortal body and ascended into heaven, where He sits at the right hand of God. He is our High Priest and our Advocate with God the Father. To Him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in Him will receive by His name the remission of sins. He is appointed by God to be the Judge of the living and the dead. (Mt. 1:18-25; Lk. 1:26-38; John 1:1-18; 3:16; Acts 10:34-43; 17:30-31; 1Cor. 15:1-8; Col. 1:14-20; Phil. 2:5-11; 3:21; 1Tim. 2:5; 3:16; Heb. 1:1-14; 2:14)

4. Holy Spirit We believe that the Holy Spirit is the eternal Spirit of God and Spirit of Christ, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, who proceeds from the Father. By His Spirit God is present in the whole universe and in special ways in the bodies of true believers, as in His temple. All true believers, who received the gift of the Holy Spirit, have been baptized by one Spirit into one Body (The Church), and have all been given to drink of the same Spirit. The Holy Spirit reproves the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. The Holy Spirit comforts, teaches, guides believers into all truth, gives power to believers, and announces what is coming in the future. The Holy Spirit bears witness concerning Jesus Christ and glorifies Him. The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to believers, distributing separately to each as He wills. The gifts of the Holy Spirit have not ceased after the time of the Apostles and can be manifested among believers today. (Ps. 139:1-

12; John 14:26; 15:26-27; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 1Cor. 3:16-17; 6:19; 12:1-14:40; Eph. 4:4-6; 1Pet. 1:10-11; Heb. 9:14)

5. Mankind We believe that God created humankind for His glory and for fellowship with Him. The first people, Adam and Eve, sinned against God and lost God's glory and fellowship with God, which they enjoyed before. Since then, all their descendants, that is, all people in their natural state, are sinners, dead, without hope in the world and without God. We believe that man in his wholeness consists of a spirit, soul, and body. Unsaved sinners are dead in their sins and transgressions before God, unable to have fellowship with God, communicate with Him, worship Him in spirit and truth, or fully do as He wills. They are unable to save themselves. (Is. 43:7; 43:21; Gen. 3:1-24; Rom. 3:9-24; Eph. 2:1-3; 2:11-12; 1Thess. 5:23; Heb. 4:12; 1Cor. 6:17; John 4:23-24; Ps. 49:6-9)

6. Salvation We believe that any person receives salvation from his or her sins and from eternal punishment and condemnation in the lake of fire by God's grace, through faith, not of works, that no one should boast. This salvation is received through repentance of sins, living (obedient) faith in Jesus Christ and His Gospel, and confession of Jesus as Lord. Continued living under lordship of Jesus must follow such faith and confession. (Mt. 25:41-46; Rev. 20:10-15; Eph. 2:1-10; John 3:1-18; 3:36; Acts 2:38; 17:30-31; 20:20-21; James 2:14-26; 1Jn. 3:1-10; Rom. 3:21-28; 10:9-13; 1Cor. 15:1-4; 2 Cor. 13:5)

7. Israel We believe, that God did not replace ethnic Israel with the Church (Jews and non-Jews who believed in Jesus). The Jewish people are still elected, loved by God, and ultimately their remnant will be saved by the acceptance of Jesus Christ at His second coming. Jews who believe in Jesus Christ are part of the universal Church, as well as ethnic Israel. The Bible calls them the “remnant” of Israel. The Lord has always kept for Himself a faithful remnant of Israel, and the time will come when all Israel will be saved. Non-Jews believing in Jesus Christ belong to the universal Church and are the spiritual seed of Abraham and, according to the promise, heirs of God's promises, together with the remnant of Israel, faithful to God. All believers should strive to expose and condemn anti-Semitism (hostility and exaltation over the Jewish people), stand in prayer for Israel, and actively promote spiritual unity between believers. (**Zech. 12:10, 8:20-23; Rom. 9:1-5, 11:1-5, 11:11-12, 11:25-32, Gal. 3:29; Eph. 2:11-22, Gen. 12:1-3; Ps. 122:6; Esther 4:13-14; John 4:22; Rom. 9:1-3, 10:1, 11:17-22, 15:8-12**)

8. The Church – God’s Assembly We believe that every person who truly repented of his or her sins, has living faith in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Scripture teaches, and confesses Jesus as Lord, is born again of God by the Spirit of God and the Word of God, and is a child of God. All born-again children of God comprise the Church of God (literally – the Assembly of God, because the word usually translated as “church” literally means “assembly” in the original languages of the Bible) and are spiritually bound together as members of one Body of Jesus Christ. The true Church of God is Israel (also called the Israel of God in the Scripture), which remained faithful

to God, and believes in the Son of God the Lord Jesus Christ, to which, through faith in Christ, joined believers from the Gentiles, becoming joint heirs, comprising one Body, and partakers of the promises of God in Christ Jesus. In the same way that no member of a body can live by itself without connection to the body, no member of the Body of Jesus Christ (His Church or Assembly) can live by itself, without connection to the Body. The true Church of God is the Assembly of God's people, God's children, sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place. The church is the temple of God and the abode of God. The Church of God is a spiritual entity; it is the Body of Christ and the Bride of Christ. This is not a legal entity, not a corporation, not an association, and not a charitable foundation or trust. This is not a business or a human organization. The true Church of God always abides by the biblical principle of separation of church and state. Its Head, Creator, Leader and Legislator is not a state and not a mere human person, but God and the Son of God, Lord Jesus Christ. The Word of God recognize only two churches: the universal church and local churches. The universal Assembly of God consists of local assemblies of God under the leadership of God-appointed apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Deacons are helpers of church leaders. The primary purposes of the Church are preaching the Gospel (the Good News of the Kingdom of God), teaching those who believed to do all God's will and everything Jesus commanded, fellowship of believers, communal prayer and glorifying God, and mutual ministry to each other with material and spiritual gifts. (Mt. 16:13-19; 18:15-20, 22:21; Acts 2:36-47; 1Cor. 1:2, 12:1-31; 14:1-40; Gal.6:16, Rom. 11,

Eph. 1:19-23; 2:11-22; 4:11-16, 5:22-32; 1Pet. 2:4-10, Phil. 1:1; 1Tim. 3:15)

9. Pastors/Elders/Bishops, and Deacons We believe that pastors or elders are people who run the local churches and are the leaders in the churches. They teach, preach, instruct, talk with people, and help to solve various issues and problems. The word pastor means shepherd. Pastors care for God's people, as shepherds care for sheep. Pastors are also called in the Bible by the words elders (presbyters) and bishops (overseers). Pastor, bishop and elder – this was the name of the same minister who performed the same ministry in the early Church. The word presbyter means elder. The word bishop means an overseer, that is, one who watches over people and protects them (overseeing, looking after). Lord Jesus Christ elects people to the ministry of the pastor/presbyter/bishop. He does this by the Holy Spirit (through revelation from the Holy Spirit). This election must be confirmed by the consent of the majority of church male members, and the ordination to the ministry of the elder with laying on of hands. In the first century AD the elders in the churches were ordained by the Apostles. Brothers can now be ordained to this ministry by other brothers, bishops/elders. Each presbyter/bishop (overseer) must meet the requirements given in the Bible. These requirements are recorded in 1 Timothy 3: 1-7 and in Titus 1: 5-9. If a person does not meet these requirements, he cannot be elected and ordained to the ministry of a presbyter. If a pastor/elder/bishop does not meet these requirements anymore, he should step out of this ministry, or be removed from it, and another person should be chosen to replace him. No human authority in the church is greater than the authority of the Word of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, exercising

His authority and lordship over His church through His Word. Elders should be especially honored in the church, and may receive financial support from the church in order to be fully dedicated to their work, and to freely perform their ministry.

Deacons and deaconesses may be chosen by the brothers, members of the church, according to the Holy Scriptures, to help elders. Deacons are ordained by the elders by prayer and laying on of hands (**Rom. 12:8, Acts 20:17-28, 1Pet. 5:1-2, Phil. 1:1, 1Tim. 3:1-7, 5:17, Tit. 1:5-9, Eph. 4: 11. Acts 6:1-6, Rom. 16:1-2, Phil. 1:1, 1Tim. 3:8-15**)

10. Commandments of God We believe that every person saved by God's grace through faith is created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has prepared beforehand so that we should walk in them. Primarily, these good works are obedience to God's will, revealed in His commandments. Every saved person must love the Lord with all their heart, soul, and mind, and love their neighbor as themselves. To love God is to keep His commandments. The Ten Commandments are the main and basic explanation of what it means to love God and your neighbor. They are the revelation of God's will and character. Every disciple of Christ must obey all the commandments of the Bible, applicable to us in the realities of the New Covenant and our circumstances. (**Eph. 2:8-10; Mt. 7:21-27; 19:1-26; 22:34-40; Ex. 20:1-17; 1Cor. 7:19; 1Jn. 5:3**)

11. Clean Food We believe that there is a difference in the Bible between clean and unclean animals, which is present from the book of Genesis

through the book of Revelation. The book of Leviticus teaches us that we must be holy even in what we eat. We believe that God appointed only clean animals as food for His people. We can see from the Bible that Noah, before the flood and long before the giving of the Law to Israel on Mt. Sinai, knew the difference between clean and unclean animals. We can also see that apostle Peter, long after the death and resurrection of Christ, did not eat anything unclean. Therefore, we follow examples of these holy men of God, and obey God's commandments concerning food, not eating anything unclean, and abstaining from things strangled, and from blood. (Gen. 7:1-9, 9:1-4; Rev. 18:2; 1Pet. 1:14-17; Lev. 11:1-47, 17:10-16, 19:26, 20:25-26; Acts 10:1-28, 15:19-21)

12. Sabbath and the Feasts of the LORD

We believe that people of God must keep all of the Ten Commandments, including the Fourth Commandment, to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. We believe that the Sabbath day is the seventh day of the week, which God blessed and sanctified forever at the completion of all creation. God instituted this day as the day of holy convocation and worship of God for all people. Jesus and His apostles kept the Sabbath and set an example for us to follow. The Sabbath is commemoration of creation of the world by God, and the foreshadowing of the future Kingdom of Christ. The Lord has appointed in His Word times of holy convocations for God's people – the feasts of the LORD. They are intended for special meetings and fellowship of God's people with God and with each other, for offering sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to God, for remembering the great saving acts of God in the past, and for reminding of the great actions of God in

the future, to which they point. (Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 16:22-30; Is. 56:1-7; 58:13-14; 66:23; Mt. 5:17-19; 24:20; Lk. 4:16; 23:54-56; Acts 17:1-2; 18:1-4; 25:8; 1Cor. 4:16; 11:1, Col. 2:16-17, Heb. 4:1-11, Ex. 12-13, Lev. 23, Deut. 16, Col.2:16-17, Luke 22:14-20, 1Cor. 5:7-8, 15: 20-23 , Acts 2:1-5, 20:16, 1Cor. 16:7-8, 1Thess. 4:16-17, 1Cor. 15:51-52, Rev.11:15-17, Heb.9:11-14, Acts 27:9-10, Zech.14:16, John 7:14, 37-39, Rev.7:9-10, 21:2-4)

13. Holiness We believe that all God's people must be holy, because God is holy and requires holiness of His people. The word *holy*, when speaking about people, means separated from sin, uncleanness, abomination, and common things, and set apart to serve God. We become holy or sanctified by the blood of Jesus when we are saved. After that, we must continue to be holy by living holy lives. A life of holiness and obedience to God is not optional to Christians but is commanded by Jesus Christ and the apostles as a requirement for those who will enter God's kingdom. Holiness is not a prerequisite to but is evidence and result of salvation, and therefore it must always be present among those who are saved. We must be holy in all our conduct—in how we walk before God, how we treat other people, how we dress, and how we treat our own bodies. The book of Leviticus is the primary book of God's standards of holiness. Members of the Church of God are the salt of the earth and the light of the world, as the Christ teaches. Their light must shine before the people, so that people see their good deeds and glorify the Heavenly Father. The members of God's Church must not love the world, nor that of the world, and should not lead a worldly lifestyle, nor should they do anything that is contrary to the sound teaching of

our Lord Jesus Christ. Believing wives should obey their husbands, and should not decorate themselves with fancy hairstyles, jewelry, or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, as the Scripture teaches. They should dress in decent clothes, with modesty and chastity, keep silent in the church, learn in silence, and not dominate men. Women must cover their heads when praying or prophesying. Believing men should treat their wives wisely with love, and pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. Men should not cover their heads when praying or prophesying. (Mt. 7:21; 16:27; Rom. 12:1-3; 2Cor. 6:17; Gal. 6:14; Eph. 5:11; Col. 3:17; Rev. 14:12; 20:12; 22:11; 1Pet. 1:14-17; 3:1-5; Lev. 11:1-47; 17:1-20:27, Mt. 5:13-16, 1Pet. 2:9-17, 3: 1-9, 1Tim. 2:8-15, 1Cor. 11:1-16)

14. Baptism in Water We believe that every person who has repented of his or her sins and believes in Jesus Christ must be baptized (fully immersed) in water in the name of Jesus Christ, as commanded by Jesus Christ. Water baptism is one of the first acts of obedience to God's will by the repented person. Therefore, water baptism is necessary for salvation, because only those who do the will of God will enter into His Kingdom. We believe that any person who rejects, despises, or ignores water baptism will not be saved. Exceptions are special cases when a person wanted to be baptized but could not do it because of extreme circumstances, illness, or death. (Mt. 3:13-15; 7:21; 28:18-20; Mk.16:15-16; Lk. 7:29-30; Acts 2:38; 8:12; 8:36-39; 9:17-19; 10:44-48; 19:1-6; 22:12-16; 1 Pt. 3:18-22; Rom. 6:1-5)

15. Baptism in the Holy Spirit We believe that every disciple of Jesus Christ must be baptized in and filled with the Holy Spirit. The evidence of receiving baptism in the Holy Spirit is a supernatural ability to speak in other tongues (languages), as the Spirit enables one. The evidence of continued infilling of the Holy Spirit is love. Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the testimony and seal of God, proving that the person who received it is a child of God. The promised Holy Spirit guarantees our inheritance. Through baptism in the Holy Spirit, a person receives power from God and a special ability to be a witness of Jesus Christ. Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the first necessary step toward receiving various gifts of the Holy Spirit. (Lk. 4:1-14; 24:44-49; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; 2:38-39; 8:12-19; 10:42-48; 15:8; 19:1-6; 1Cor. 12:1-31; 14:1-40; Eph. 1:13-14; 1Jn. 3:23-24; 4:12-13)

16. Passover and the Lord's Supper We believe that every Christian who is baptized in water in the name of Jesus Christ must participate in the Lord's Supper, which Jesus Christ instituted at His last Passover supper with His disciples. The Passover lamb, being a type of the Lamb of God Jesus Christ, was killed and prepared in Israel, according to God's command, in the afternoon (literally, in the Scriptures, "between the evenings") on 14th day of the first month Abib (Nisan) according to the Biblical calendar, and eaten "in that night" (Ex. 12:8) . We believe that the paschal Lord's Supper must be held at the time set by the Lord for eating passover, when God's people Israel participates in the Passover Supper. The unleavened bread of the Lord's Supper typifies Christ's body, which was given to death for us. The wine of the Lord's Supper typifies the blood He shed for our sins. By participating in the

Lord's Supper, we remember what Jesus did for our salvation and proclaim His death until He comes. Every person who 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. Members of the church who are baptized in water and who are not subject to church discipline (remark or excommunication) can participate in the Lord's Supper. Every person participating in the Lord's Supper must test (or examine) himself or herself and thus eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone eating and drinking unworthily eats and drinks judgment on himself or herself, not discerning the body of the Lord. For doing this, a person can get weak and sick and may even die. We wash one another's feet before the Lord's Supper, following Jesus' example and obeying His words about this practice. (Mt. 26:17-29; Mk. 14:12-25; Lk. 22:7-27; John 6:27-58; 13:1-17; 1Cor. 5:7-8; 10:16-22; 11:20-34)

17. Marriage We believe that marriage is God-instituted union and covenant between one man and one woman, who have right to be married according to the Word of God. Believers must marry only believers with the same or similar understanding of Biblical truths. The main purposes of marriage include to glorify God, reflect God's image and likeness, reflect the relationships between Christ and the Church, complement one another, protect from temptation, and raise godly children. We believe in the teachings of Jesus Christ and New Testament about marriage, that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery. In addition, whoever divorces his wife for reasons other than sexual immorality and marries another commits adultery. And whoever marries a person who is divorced commits

adultery. A wife must not depart from her husband; however, even if she does depart, she must remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. In the same way, a husband must not divorce his wife. Nevertheless, if an unbelieving spouse wishes to depart, he or she may; the other person is no longer bound (by the law of marriage) in such cases. (Gen. 1:36-21; 2:7-8, 18-25; Lev. 18:1-30; Ps. 150:6; Ezek. 16:8; Pr. 2:16-17; Mal. 2:10-16; Mt. 5:31-32; 19:3-9; 1Cor. 7:1-17; 7:25-40; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Deut. 7:1-4; Eph. 5:22-33; 6:1-4; Col. 3:18-21)

18. Military Service We believe that Christians should not kill people, observing the sixth of the Ten Commandments and the teaching of Jesus and His Apostles. Jesus Christ came to save people and not to destroy them. As His disciples, we are commissioned to continue His work of saving people. We believe in the teaching of Jesus Christ and New Testament that all who take the sword will perish by the sword, that those who lead into captivity will go into captivity, and that those who kill with the sword are to be killed with a sword. Here is the patience and faith of the saints. Therefore, we believe that Christians should not serve in the armed forces or police or work in jobs that require bearing and using weapons against people. When forced to serve, they must conscientiously refuse to bear arms and participate in combat, but they may participate in non-combative service, when they are forced to serve. (Ex. 20:13; Mt. 26:53-54; 28:18-20; Lk. 9:51-56; 19:10; James 2:8-11; Rev. 13:10)

19. Second Coming of Christ We believe that there will be visible, literal, bodily return of Jesus Christ to this earth before Millennial Kingdom, as King

of kings and Lord of lords, to gather His Church (His Bride), to reign on this Earth, and to judge the world. He will return in manner similar to how He ascended to heaven. (Mt. 24:27-31; 25:31-46; Mk. 13:24-27; Lk. 21:30-36; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:4-11; 3:18-21; Zech. 14:1-9; 1Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Thess. 1:6-10; 2:1-12; James 5:8; Rev. 1:7; 11:15; 19:6-20:6)

20. Resurrection of the Dead We believe that all of the dead will be raised, both the righteous and the unrighteous. The dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live again. All who are in the graves will hear His voice and come out – those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation. Saints will be resurrected at the Second Coming of Christ in immortal, spiritual, glorified bodies, like Jesus Christ in His glorified resurrection body. They will be resurrected to reign with Christ. Then after the millennial reign of Christ, the rest of the people will be resurrected and judged before the great white throne according to their works. All those whose names will not be written in the Book of Life will be cast into the lake of fire for eternal condemnation. (Job 19:25; Dan. 12:2-3; John 5:24-29; Acts 23:6; 24:14-16; 1Cor. 15:12-55; 1Thess. 4:13-18; Phil. 3:20-21; 2Tim. 2:11-12; Rev. 5:9-10; 19:11-20:15)

21. God's Judgment We believe that God is the righteous Judge of all people. We believe that those who have obedient (living) faith in Jesus Christ will never come to the judgment of condemnation together with the rest of the world. They will come before the judgment seat of Christ at His Second Coming either to receive a reward or to suffer loss, but their salvation

will not be compromised. At that judgment, Jesus Christ will test the quality of their ministry and service to Him and His Church and not decide their eternal destiny. All unrighteous people, including believers who lived in sin and never truly repented, will be judged before the great white throne according to their works. All those whose names will not be written in the Book of Life will be cast into the lake of fire for eternal condemnation. (Gen. 18:25; Ps. 96:1-13; Heb. 12:22-23; John 3:18; 5:24; Rom. 14:10-12; 1Cor. 3:11-15; 2Cor. 5:10; Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 1:18-32; 2:1-16; 1Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21; Mt. 12:41-42; Rev. 19:11-20:15)

22. New Heaven and Earth We believe in the teaching of God's Word about the new heaven and the new earth. The previous world, having been flooded by water, perished at the time of Noah. But the current heaven and the earth being conserved by the Word of God are being kept for fire, for a day of judgment and destruction of ungodly humans. But according to God's promise, we look forward to a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (Is. 65:17-25; 66:22-24; 11:1-16; 32:1-5; 35:1-10; Mt. 8:11; 13:40-43; 19:28-29; 2 Pet. 3:1-13; Rev. 19:11-22:21)

