

# BEGINNING

The best place to begin is the beginning, which in this case provides us an opportunity to consider basic concerns, including “What does it mean to be a Christian?” baptism, and the Lord’s Supper. In addition, we will consider an overview of what Discovery Church.

Throughout the following pages, please use the Scripture by each statement/question as a guide to determine your best choice for a word to **fill in the blank**. Also, please give thoughtful consideration to the **questions/statements** which are included throughout the following pages.

## What Does It Mean To Be A Christian?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ that God has not been first place in your life and ask Him to forgive your sins .  
*“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from every wrong.”*  
1 John 1:9
  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ that Jesus died to pay for your sins and that he rose again on Easter, and is alive today.  
*“If you confess that Jesus is your Lord, and you believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”* Romans 10:9
  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ God’s free gift of salvation. Don’t try to earn it.  
*“For it is by grace you are saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast.”* Ephesians 2:8,9
  
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus Christ to come into your life and be the leader (“Lord”) of your life.  
*“To all who receive Him, He gives the right to become children of God. All we need to do is to trust Him to save us. All those who believe this are reborn! - not a physical rebirth...but from the will of God!”*  
John 1:12-13

<b>I already have accepted God as forgiver and leader of my life.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>I am ready to accept God as forgiver and leader of my life.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>

You can become a Christian by praying a simple prayer of commitment to God:  
“Dear Jesus, thank you for making me and loving me, even when I’ve ignored you and gone my own way. I realize I need you in my life and I’m sorry for my sins. I ask you to forgive me. Thank you for dying on the cross for me. Please help me to understand it more. I want to follow you from now on. Please come into my life and make me a new person inside. I accept your gift of salvation. Please help me to grow now as a Christian.”

## Baptism

### I. What is the meaning of baptism?

#### 1. It illustrates Christ's \_\_\_\_\_ and resurrection.

*"For when you are baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ!"*  
Colossians 2:12

#### 2. It illustrates my new \_\_\_\_\_ as a Christian.

*"By our baptism then, we were buried with Him and shared His death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead...so also we may live a new life!"* Romans 6:4

### II. Why Should I Be Baptized?

#### 1. To follow the example set by \_\_\_\_\_.

*"At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river."* Mark 1:9

#### 2. Because Christ \_\_\_\_\_ it.

*"Jesus said, 'Go then, to all people everywhere and make them my disciples, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and then teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.'"*  
Matthew 28:19-20

#### 3. It demonstrates that I really am a \_\_\_\_\_.

*"...many of the people who heard Him believed and were baptized."* Acts 18:8

### III. Why Be Baptized By Immersion?

#### 1. Because \_\_\_\_\_ was baptized that way.

*"As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water."* Matthew 3:16

#### 2. Every baptism in the \_\_\_\_\_ was by immersion.

(Example) *"...then both Philip and the man went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water..."* Acts 8:38-39

#### 3. The word "baptize" means "to dip \_\_\_\_\_ water".

#### 4. It best symbolizes a burial and resurrection!

### IV. Who Should Be Baptized?

#### Every person who has believed in Christ.

*"Those who believed and accepted His message were baptized..."* Acts 2:41

**Some churches practice a "baptism of confirmation" for children.** This ceremony is intended to be a covenant between the parents and God on the behalf of the child. The parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make his own personal confession of Christ. This custom began about 300 years after the Bible was completed. **This is different from the baptism talked about in the Bible** which was only for those old enough to believe. The purpose is to confess publicly your personal commitment to Christ.

Our church practices believer's baptism by immersion. We baptize people who claim to be saved by grace through faith. **We have a special parent-child dedication service for infants and children.** And we baptize by immersion, lowering a person completely under water, because we believe this method portrays best outwardly the inner reality symbolized by baptism.

However, **we recognize the meaning other forms of baptism have for people** who come from other church traditions. So, we do not insist that anyone who already has been baptized must be baptized again in order to

become a member of our church. Nevertheless, we do encourage all people to consider the significance of believer's baptism by immersion.

## V. When Should I Be Baptized?

**As soon as you have believed!**

*"Those who believed...were baptized...that day!" Acts 2:41*

There is no reason to delay. As soon as you have decided to receive Christ into your life, you can and should be baptized. If you wait until you are "perfect", you'll never feel "good enough"!

<b>I already have been baptized</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>I am ready to be baptized</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>I would like to know more about baptism</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>

## The Lord's Supper

### I. What Is The Lord's Supper? (1 Corinthians 11:23-29)

#### Looking backward

*"The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, took bread and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; eat it in remembrance of me.'" (verses 23-24)*

*"In the same way, He took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; drink it to remember me.'" (verse 25)*

#### Looking forward

*"For whenever you eat the bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes back." (verse 26)*

### II. Who Should Take The Lord's Supper?

**Only those who are already are believers.**

*"For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment upon himself." (verse 29)*

### III. How Do I Prepare Myself For The Lord's Supper?

*"Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A person ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup." (verses 27-28)*

We encourage you to read these additional Bible verses on your own.

**Self-Examination** 1 Corinthians 11:27

**Confessing Sins** 1 John 1:9

**Recommitment** Romans 12:1

**Restoring Relationships** Matthew 5:23-24

### IV. When and How Often Should We Observe The Lord's Supper?

How long have you been involved with Discovery Church?

Enjoy a few minutes break before we return to consider the ministry of Discovery Church.

## WHY DISCOVERY CHURCH EXISTS

### Discovery Church Mission Statement

The mission of Discovery Church is to encourage people to become devoted followers of Jesus Christ, which includes discovery of and commitment to:

the great commandment (love God and love people, see Matthew 22:36-40), and  
the great commission (make disciples, see Matthew 28:18-20).

The following 5 purposes are essential to achieve this mission:

#### **GROW:**

to help members develop toward full Christian maturity; to train them for effective ministry; and, to promote spiritual growth and discipleship through Bible teaching.

*"(God has given) . . . some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of ministry, so that the Body of Christ may be built up until we all . . . become mature . . . like Christ."* Ephesians 4:11-13

#### **SERVE:**

to serve unselfishly in Jesus' name meeting the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of people in the church, the community, and the world.

*"...When I was hungry, you gave me something to eat, and when I was thirsty you gave me something to drink..."* Matthew 25:34-40

#### **WORSHIP:**

to provide public worship opportunities and to encourage personal daily devotions.

*"...The Father seeks worshipers. . .and His worshipers must worship Him in spirit and in truth."*  
John 4:23-24

#### **CONNECT:**

to encourage members to support and pray for one another as members of the family of God.

*"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."* Acts 2:42

#### **INVITE:**

to share the good news of Jesus Christ with as many people as possible in the community and throughout the world.

*"And you will be my witnesses..."* Acts 1:8

## WHAT DISCOVERY CHURCH TEACHES

Discovery Church has the following statement of beliefs which is a summary of basic spiritual truths.

### STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

Since the following statement of beliefs is an accurate summary of basic spiritual truths, all members of Discovery Church are to refrain from advocating beliefs which are contrary. In areas where the Bible is silent, each believer is to seek guidance from God, to whom ultimate account must be given.

#### **GOD:**

God is the creator and ruler of the universe. God exists eternally in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God continues to sustain creation and God continues to operate throughout history to fulfill redemptive purposes.

(Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 3:22; Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2)

#### **JESUS CHRIST:**

Jesus Christ is the Son of God, coequal with God. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered himself as the perfect once and for all sacrifice for the sins of people by dying on a cross. Jesus arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate his power over sin and death. Jesus ascended to heaven and will return again to earth to reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

(Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:22-23; John 1:1-5; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Hebrews 4:14-15)

## **HOLY SPIRIT:**

The Holy Spirit is equal with God the Father and God the Son. The Holy Spirit is present in the world to make people aware of their need for Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation, providing the power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. It is the calling of the follower of Jesus Christ to live under the control of the Holy Spirit every day. (John 14:16-17; John 16:7-13; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Galatians 5:25)

## **PEOPLE:**

People are made in the image of God and are the supreme object of God's love. Although people have tremendous potential for good, people also are marred by disobedience toward God, (commonly referred to as "sin"), which causes separation in relationship with God. (Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:23)

## **SALVATION:**

Salvation is a gift from God to people, who can never make up for sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer for forgiveness can people be saved from the penalty of sin. (John 14:6; Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:8-9)

## **ETERNAL DESTINY:**

People will exist eternally in union with God through forgiveness and salvation or eternally separated from God by sin. To be eternally in union with God is eternal life. To be eternally separated from God is hell. Heaven and hell are places of eternal existence.

(Matthew 8:11; Matthew 24:44; John 2:25; John 3:16; Romans 6:23; Revelation 20:15)

## **BIBLE:**

The Bible is God's word to all people, written by human authors under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Bible is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. (Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 30:5; 2 Timothy 3:16)

## **HOW DISCOVERY CHURCH OPERATES**

### **Structure For Ministry**

**The nature of the church should determine its structure.**

#### **I. The church is a fellowship.**

*"They continued steadily learning the teaching of the apostles, and joined in the fellowship..."*

Acts 2:42

**Implication: A good structure promotes unity.**

#### **II. The church is a family.**

*"You should be like one big happy family, full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds." 1 Peter 3:8*

**Implication: We should operate on the basis of relationships.**

#### **III. The church is a body.**

*"Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We each have different gifts according to the grace given us." Romans 12:4-6*

**Implication: We should function primarily on the basis of spiritual gifts.**

#### **IV. The church is a flock of sheep.**

*"Jesus asked Simon Peter, 'Do you really love me?' 'Yes Lord,' said Peter. 'Then take care of my sheep.'"*

John 21:16-17

**Implication: The church should be cared for and led by shepherds (pastors).**

## **Affiliation**

Discovery Church is affiliated with the Zanesville Baptist Association, American Baptist Churches of Ohio, and American Baptist Churches/USA.

## **Why not just be an independent church?**

We are an independent church! Every American Baptist Church (ABC) church is! Every ABC church is completely independent. There is no denominational control or hierarchy, as there is in many other denominations. Each church is self-governed and determines its own affairs. For example:

- Every ABC church chooses its own pastor
- Every ABC church owns its own buildings and assets
- Every ABC church determines its own programs and ministries

## **What are advantages of affiliating with the ABC?**

It allows us to identify with other Christians around the world who are known for their commitment to God and to the authority of the Bible, and it allows us to support missionary activity throughout the world which we would not be able to do on our own.

## **What It Means To Be A Member**

### **Requirements for membership:**

1. personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation,
2. baptism by immersion after becoming a believer,  
*(If someone has been baptized previously, but not by immersion as a believer, the person will be encouraged to do so; however, this decision will be the choice of the individual; membership will not be determined by this decision.)*
3. completion of classes: Beginning, Growing, Serving, Worshiping-Connecting-Inviting  
*(these classes equip people to fulfill God's purposes and to uphold the membership covenant)*
4. commitment to abide by membership covenant.

## **Membership Covenant**

At Discovery Church we never ask our members to do more than the Bible clearly teaches. We only expect our members to do what the Bible expects every Christian to do. These responsibilities are spelled out in the Membership Covenant.

### **I. I will protect the unity of my church**

#### **• By acting in love toward other members**

*"Have a sincere love for your fellow believers, love one another earnestly with all your hearts."*

1 Peter 1:22

#### **•By refusing to gossip**

*"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of our mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs..."* Ephesians 4:29

#### **•By following the leaders**

*"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you."* Hebrews 13:17

### **II. I will share the responsibility of my church**

#### **•By praying for its growth**

*"To the church...we always thank God for you and pray for you constantly."*

1 Thessalonians 1:2

#### **•By inviting unchurched people to attend**

*"Go out into the country...and urge anyone you find to come in, so that My House will be full."*

Luke 14:23

**•By warmly welcoming people who visit**

*“So, warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified.” Romans 15:7*

**III. I will serve the ministry of my church**

**•By discerning my gifts and talents**

*“Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you...” 1 Peter 4:10*

**•By being equipped to serve by my pastors**

*“God gave...some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God’s people for works of ministry, so that the body of Christ may be built up...” Ephesians 4:11-12*

**•By developing a servant’s heart**

*“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ...who took on the very nature of a servant...” Philippians 2:3-4, 7*

**IV. I will support the testimony of my church**

**•By attending faithfully**

*“Let us not give up the habit of meeting together...but let us encourage one another.” Hebrews 10:25*

**•By living a godly life**

*“But whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ.” Philippians 1:27*

**•By giving regularly**

*“Each one of you, on the first day of the week, should set aside a specific sum of money in proportion to what you have earned and use it for the offering.” 1 Corinthians 16:2*

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

You have just completed BEGINNING. We hope you have a clear understanding of what it means to be a Christian and of the purpose and function of Discovery Church.

**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU**

Please let us know your response to the statements below in one of following ways:

**Good:** Bring a hard copy of your responses to us in person on a Sunday morning or mail a hard copy to Discovery Church, P.O. Box 357, Newark, OH 43058.

**Even Better:** Send your responses by email to: [discoverychurch@gmail.com](mailto:discoverychurch@gmail.com)

**Best:** Complete all four of the GROWING DEEPER classes and indicate your responses by filling in the online form: [Click here to link to the online response form](#)

*(Or click on the link for the online response form on the GROWING DEEPER page on the church website.)*

<b>I already have accepted God as forgiver and leader of my life.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>I am ready to accept God as forgiver and leader of my life.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>I already have been baptized</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>I am ready to be baptized</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>I would like to know more about baptism</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>I would like to become a member of Discovery Church</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>

**...AND KEEP GOING!**

We encourage you to participate in three more “classes” which provide the opportunity for you to GROW DEEPER in your relationship with God and with other people:

- GROWING
- SERVING
- WORSHIPING-CONNECTING-INVITING