

*Foundation*  
CHURCH • FREDERICKSBURG

**2016 Membership Course**



# Foundation Church Membership Course

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# Introduction to Church Membership

## What is Church Membership?

“Membership is the church’s affirmation that you are a citizen of Christ’s kingdom and therefore a card-carrying Jesus Representative before the nations...[it] is a public testimony that your highest allegiance belongs to Jesus... Membership puts the alternative rule of Christ on display for the watching universe (see Matt. 5:13; John 13:34-35; Eph. 3:10; 1 Peter 2:9-12). The very boundaries which are drawn around the membership of a church yields a society of people which invites the nations to something better.”

*Jonathan Leeman*

Membership at Foundation Church means joining together with like-minded Christians in order to advance the proclamation of the gospel and the kingdom of God through faithful preaching, sound doctrine, disciple-making, and community service, so that the glory of God would become visible to those whose lives we touch.

## Is Church Membership Biblical?

If Christians are commanded to submit to an elder body (see 1 Timothy 5:17, Hebrews 13:7), how are they to know to which elder body to submit? If elders are charged to guard the flock and will be accountable for every soul under their charge (Hebrews 13:7, 1 Peter 5:1-5), how are they to know who is part of their specific flock, or for whom they must give an account? The implication is church membership.

Recognized membership in a local church is implied in many New Testaments passages and is generally assumed to be a common practice in the New Testament Church, regardless of how different the membership processes may be today. The Apostle Paul used the analogy of membership in a body to describe the way a church should function — “For just as the body is one and has many *members*, and all the *members* of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:12-13). Plenty more passages point to the reality of local church membership. To read further on this matter, see Appendix F for suggested resources.

## Why Is Church Membership Important?

Membership exists for the benefit and protection of your soul and for the display of God’s glory to the world (Ephesians 3:10). It is a means by which God sanctifies and grows his people and by which God keeps the local church pure. The process and function of church membership has a natural filtering and purifying effect on the local body. Current members are asked to examine and affirm prospective members’ testimony. All members are expected to live out their covenant with one another in internal and proactive ways. Health church membership is the functional foundation of discipleship, counseling, and all other forms of sanctification in the life of a church body.

But must membership be formal? We think so. In so far as the covenant vows of marriage are more meaningful when entered into formally, so too are the covenant vows of membership. Membership is nothing, if not a formal allegiance to a body and to a cause.

## How Do I Become a Church Member?

1. Take this course
2. Read and Affirm Foundation’s Governing Documents
  - The Membership Covenant ties the documents together, it is the capstone of our life together. The Statement of Beliefs informs our practices and ultimately our covenant. The constitution simply outlines our governing procedures.
  - On affirming the governing documents, see essay in Appendix D.
3. Participate in a membership interview
  - This is where the elders can hear from you — your story, your testimony, and your profession.

4. Affirmation of profession by the current membership
  - After the membership interview, the elders will recommend you for membership to the church. Then at a Members' Meeting, a vote will be taken to affirm your profession.
5. Covenant with Foundation

### **What Are the Roles and Commitments of a Church Member?**

“In accord with the duties enumerated in the Membership Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of this church consistent with God’s leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Further, members are privileged and expected to regularly attend its Lord’s Day meetings, faithfully observe the ordinances of baptism and communion, and submit to the church’s discipline and instruction.

Only those who are members of this congregation shall serve in positions of leadership within the church. Notwithstanding, non-members may serve the church for purposes of administration and professional consultation. Under the oversight of the elders, someone from outside of the church may give instruction from the Scriptures for worship services, conferences, and other specifically determined occasions.

Under Christ, the members of this congregation shall have the final word in matters of doctrine, membership, discipline, and direction. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all Members’ Meetings and participate in the affirmation of officers (thereby affirming doctrine), decisions regarding membership status (thereby affirming membership), the discipline of unrepentant members (thereby upholding discipline), the annual church budget (thereby affirming direction), and in other such matters that may be submitted by the elders to the congregation.”

*Constitution, §5.3, Duties and Privileges*

#### *Congregational Authority*

Ultimate authority rests not with one individual or a small group of people, but with the collective voice of the church as a whole. This means that all major decisions affecting matters of doctrine, membership, discipline, and direction are considered and approved by the congregation, including the election of officers (elders and deacons), affirmation of new members, and the approving the church budget. This authority has been granted to the church in order to promote and secure the unity of the body, and to acknowledge the ultimate headship of Christ over the church.

#### *Congregational Commitment*

1. Attend
  - Strive to be present at as much as you can be, both for your own instruction and for the benefit of others
  - Come early, stay late
2. Pray
  - Pray regularly for the other members of the church.
3. Give
  - There is no percentage commanded in the New Testament, but all members are expected to contribute generously to the needs and ministries of the church.
  - Be generous with all of your gifts and resources, especially toward other members, including your time and your dinner table.
4. Serve
  - Every Christian is sovereignly bestowed by the Holy Spirit with a gift meant to be exercised for the building up and edification of the church. Each member is expected to serve the church with his or her gifts.
  - Service also includes discipleship toward those in the church. Each member is encouraged to have at least one significant discipling relationship with another member in the church, either as a mentor or pupil, or for mutual edification.

5. Pursue Holiness

- Holiness is the mark of Christ's Church, and thus every member is expected to maintain a Christ-like conduct in the community, in the workplace, and in the home.
- This especially include the use of the tongue. Gossip, slander, deceit, crude humor, or defamation should not be named among the saints. This equally relevant to our online presence, as well.

6. Evangelize

- Every Christian is a missionary, sent by Christ to be ambassadors for the gospel. As missionaries, we represent the Kingdom of God as expressed through the local church. It is the duty of member to aid in the advancement of the gospel and the expansion of the Kingdom.

Membership in a church plant, however, can be more demanding than in a traditional church setting. The normal amount of resources and conveniences afforded to larger churches may not be available to small church plants. Additionally, a greater amount of involvement by members of church plant is required to overcome simple, and sometimes more complex, ministry challenges. Members of Foundation will have a unique opportunity to help shape and establish a healthy gospel-culture in Fredericksburg, but must be willing work toward that goal. Consider some of challenges of membership in a church plant, and then decide if you and your family are up for the task.

**What Do I Do After this Course?**

Read and pray over the Governing Documents. Bring any questions or concerns to the attention of the elders. Schedule a membership interview with the elders.

See Appendix A-C for our Governing Documents



## Mission and Vision of Foundation Church

The gospel and the exposition of God's word serve as the foundation and supreme principle from which we operate. It directs our actions in life, community, and ministry.

### Our Mission

Foundation Church exists so that, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God might be made known throughout the campus of Mary Washington, the city of Fredericksburg, and all nations, by the making of disciples, baptizing, and the preaching of God's word.

### Our Purpose

Our purpose is to know Jesus and make him known. In knowing him, we delight in his affections for us, and so we seek to display that love to the world. Our chief end is to be a vessel by which others may glorify God, gather as a community, and go forth to the nations.

### Our Heart

Our heart is to see a gospel-centered, multi-ethnic, and culturally diverse church in Fredericksburg serving as a foundation and catalyst for gospel growth, committed to reaching the community, engaging culture, making disciples, training leaders, and planting churches.

Our mission and vision is grounded in a high view of the local church, especially gathered (Eph. 3:10). We believe that the local church is the primary and normative means God uses in the world to spread the gospel and make disciples. We also firmly believe that the foundation of the church should be the word of God, since faith comes through hearing the word of Christ. Therefore, in our services and other corporate activities, we are intentional to do the following five things:

1. Read the Word
  - The public reading of God's word expresses a reverence, confidence, and submission to its authority and inspiration.
2. Pray the Word
  - Corporate prayer is vital to the life of the church. It communicates our dependence on God and his power to enact his will in our lives.
3. Sing the Word
  - Singing "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" has been a tradition of God's people since the very beginning. The songs we sing aim to teach and reinforce sound doctrine, as well as aid in the participation of corporate worship.
4. Hear the Word
  - The preaching and teaching of God's word is the central way God's people are instructed on a corporate level. He has given preachers and teachers to the Church in order to equip the saints for the work of the ministry.
5. See the Word
  - The Word becomes visible in the corporate participation of the Lord's Supper, which we practice weekly during our worship service.

### Theological and Philosophical Distinctives

The following are specific areas of ministry-philosophy or theology that would set Foundation apart from other Protestant denominations, and even other Baptist churches. We feel that it is important to communicate these distinctives because they play a significant role in informing what our church does and how it behaves. We believe each of these distinctives can be strongly supported by Scripture.

#### *We Have A Reformed Soteriology*

Soteriology is the study of salvation. What we believe about how people are ultimately saved plays a fundamental role in the way we share the gospel and conduct ministry. "Reformed soteriology" is a view of salvation reflective of that of the reformers during the Protestant Reformation of the 16th Century. It emphasizes that God alone sovereignly provides the final, decisive action of believing faith in the heart of the believer.

### *We Are Complementarian*

Complementarians believe that God created male and female as complementary expressions of the image of God—male and female are counterparts in reflecting his glory. Having two sexes expands the view. Though both sexes bear God's image fully on their own, each does so in a unique and distinct way. Male and female in relationship reflects truths about Jesus that aren't reflected by male alone or female alone.

### *We Practice Regenerative Church Membership*

Because the God's church is so important, membership in God's church is also important. Regenerative church membership means that membership is confined to only those that profess saving faith in Christ. In other words, conversion is a requirement of membership (along with baptism). This protects God's flock from potential wolves, and helps to guard the gospel and the name of Christ.

### *We Believe in Believer's Baptism*

This means that the church will only recognize baptisms legitimate if they were performed *after* conversion, not before (such as infant baptism or false conversions), and that baptism must follow the New Testament pattern of immersion (as opposed to sprinkling). Baptism is a requirement for membership.

### *We Are Elder Led, Deacon Served, and Congregational Ruled*

Foundation recognizes the ruling authority of the congregation in matters pertaining to doctrine, membership, discipline, and direction, including electing elders and deacons. Since the members of the congregation have final say in these matters, it is not the role of the elders to make decisions concerning them, but rather to lead the members in faithful preaching and sound doctrine. Likewise, deacons have no authority to exercise over the church, but instead are elected to meet the physical and fiscal needs of the church as they may arise.

### *We Preach Expositionally*

Because all of Scripture is inspired, relevant, and authoritative, the normative style of preaching at Foundation will be expositional, meaning that the Bible will be taught passage by passage, verse by verse, and the point of the text will be the point of the sermon. "Expositional preaching is empowered preaching that rightfully submits the shape and emphasis of the sermon to the shape and emphasis of a biblical text. In that way it brings out of the text what the Holy Spirit put there... and does not put into the text what the preacher thinks might be there." — David Helm

### *We Prioritize Church Planting*

We believe that obedience to the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20) necessarily involves a commitment to planting and establishing new churches, both locally and globally. Thus, an emphasis is placed on the work of starting new congregations and devoting resources to that end.

### *We Are Guided by the Regulative Principle of Worship*

The regulative principle of worship, in its broader sense, states that Scripture *alone* must regulate not only our theology, but our methodology as well. In other words, we should desire to do only that which is *warranted* in Scripture. Again, put negatively, *unless* there is a command or principle in scripture that warrants a specific practice, the church should not do such a thing.

## **Denominational Associations and Affiliations**

Foundation Church is a recognized church in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). The SBC is a network of over 40,000 Baptist churches that affirm a common theological position voluntarily banded together to engage in missions and ministry activities designed to fulfill the Great Commission. It is supported by the Cooperative Program, which supports new churches, missionaries, church planters, and theological training. The SBC sends more missionaries than any other denomination, and supports six theological seminaries. The resources and help the SBC provides for local churches is invaluable.

*What this does not mean*

Each local church within the SBC is autonomous, meaning that the SBC has no authority over Foundation or its practices. Any money contributed the SBC’s Cooperative Program is completely voluntary.

We are also affiliated with the New City Network, a new church planting network from Mclean Bible Church. This network provides resources to its churches to support the multiplication process of church planting.

We have a familial relationship to the Pillar Churches that comprise the Praetorian Project network of churches committed to plant new like-minded churches in military communities around the world. Currently, there are eight Pillar Church plants. Stafford Baptist Church (see history section below) is also tied relationally to the network. This family of churches, of we consider ourselves, shares a similar philosophy of ministry and values as Foundation, and continues to support us in numerous ways.

**History**

**Foundation Family Tree**



Foundation Church began gathering in the Summer of 2014 in the home of a Mission Team member. We started Sunday evening services at Dorothy Hart Community Center in January 2015. On September 13, 2015, Foundation covenanted and began Sunday morning services at the concert hall above Picker’s Supply.

**Leadership**

Bobby Oliveri, lead planter and vocational elder                      540.841.5900    bobby@foundationfxbg.com

Auxiliary oversight provided by Pillar Church of Stafford, Foundation’s sending church

Roy Garza, lead pastor and vocational elder                      703.786.8150    roy@pillarchurchsbc.com

Darren King, lay elder                                                      816.550.5228    bsuking@yahoo.com

Issac Farley, lay elder                                                      703.732.1060    iadlfarley@gmail.com

Benjamin Cartwright, staff and lay elder                      540.385.9501    ben@pillarchurchsbc.com

**Current Church Planting & Missionary Partnerships**

Because church planting is important to the mission of Foundation, we are continuing to seek opportunities to support and send church planters and missionaries around the world to advance the gospel and God’s kingdom.

Gunnar Ingi Gunnarsson, Loftstofan Baptist Church — Reyjavik, Iceland



## **Appendix**

Appendix A:  
Membership Covenant

Appendix B:  
Statement of Beliefs

Appendix C:  
Constitution

Appendix D:  
Affirming the Governing Documents

Appendix E:  
Spiritual Gift Chart

Appendix F:  
Resources for Further Reading

## Appendix A

### Membership Covenant of Foundation Church Fredericksburg

*Adopted September 13, 2015*

Having been called and empowered by the Spirit of God to receive Jesus Christ as the Lord, Savior, and supreme Treasure of our lives, and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ (1 Cor. 12:4-20).

We commit, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this Church in knowledge, holiness and peace; to promote its maturity and fruitfulness; to sustain its corporate worship, ordinances, and discipline; to regularly assemble together to worship God and mutually build each other up in Christ; to welcome, and test, instruction from the Scriptures by the elders of the church which accords with the Statement of Beliefs, seeking to grow toward unity in the truth of the Gospel; to maintain our commitment to the Statement of Beliefs; to faithfully attend the Members' Meetings; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations (Acts 4:32-37; Eph. 1:15-23; 3:14-21; 4:1-3, 11-32; Tit. 2:1-15).

We also commit to maintain family and personal devotions; to disciple our children in the Christian faith; to seek the salvation of our relatives, acquaintances, and enemies; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our conduct; to avoid all gossiping, slandering, backbiting, and unrighteous anger; to seek God's help in abstaining from all practices that bring unwarranted harm to the body or jeopardize our own or another's faith (Deut. 6:1-9; Eph. 4:17-32; 5:22-6:9; 1 Cor. 10:23-33; 1 Pet. 2:9-12).

We further commit to watch over one another in brotherly love; to speak the truth in love to one another; to remember one another in prayer; to work for the unity of the Holy Spirit in the bond of peace with one another; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always willing to forgive, ready for reconciliation, and to be mindful of the words of our Savior to obtain it without delay (Matt. 18:1-35; Gal. 5:1-6:10; Eph. 4:11-5:21; Col. 3:16; Heb. 3:12-13; 10:19-25).

Finally, we commit that when we remove from this body of Christ, we will unite with a church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant. Moreover, as a result of this covenant relationship, to these and all other scriptural duties we do humbly, voluntarily, and joyfully submit ourselves, promising and purposing to perform them, not in our own strength, but by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit (Heb. 10:24-25).

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen (2 Cor. 13:14).

## **Appendix B**

### **Statement of Beliefs of Foundation Church Fredericksburg**

*Adopted September 13th, 2015*

*Amended December 6th, 2015*

Together with the Church in all ages, we believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who, for us humans and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

And we believe in one Holy, Universal, and Apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and we anticipate the return of our Lord, the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Furthermore,

#### **The Holy Scriptures**

We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God. Therefore, all Scripture is authoritative, infallible, and inerrant. The Word of God is the only sufficient rule for faith and practice, life and godliness. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is the focus of divine revelation.

*Ps. 19:7; Jn. 5:39; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21*

#### **God**

We believe that there is but one true and glorious God, the Maker, Preserver and Ruler of all things, having in and of Himself, all perfections, and being holy and infinite in them all; and to Him all creatures owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience that springs from faith.

*Deut. 6:4; Ps. 145:3; 1 Cor. 8:4-6; 1 Tim. 1:17*

#### **The Trinity**

We believe that the Scriptures reveal that the one God eternally exists in three persons: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each person has distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence or being.

*Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14*

#### **Providence**

We believe that God, from eternity, ordains all things that come to pass, and perpetually upholds, directs and governs all creatures and all events; yet so as not in any way to be the author or approver of sin, nor to destroy the agency, responsibility, or culpability of intelligent creatures.

*Isa. 46:9-11; Prov. 16:33; Eph. 1:11-12; Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3; Jas. 1:13-15*

### **Election**

We believe that election is God's eternal choice of some persons unto everlasting life -- not conditioned on any foreseen merit or goodness in them, but of His mercy in Christ -- in consequence of which choice they are called, justified, and glorified.

*Rom. 8:28-30; 1 Cor. 1:27-29; Eph. 1:4, 11*

### **The Fall of Mankind**

We believe that God has created mankind to glorify Him and enjoy Him forever. God originally created Mankind in His own image, and free from sin, but, through the temptation of Satan, Adam transgressed the command of God in unbelief, and fell from his original holiness and righteousness; whereby his posterity inherit a sinful nature, corrupt and wholly opposed to God and His law. As a result they are under condemnation, and as soon as they are capable of moral action, become actual transgressors. All people are sinners by nature and by choice.

*Gen. 1:26-27; 3:1-7; Isa. 43:6-7; Ps. 16:11; Rom. 3:9-18; 5:12-19; Eph. 2:1-3*

### **Christ the Mediator**

We believe that Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is fully God and fully man; He is the divinely appointed mediator between God and man. Having taken upon Himself human nature, yet without sin, He perfectly fulfilled the law, suffered and died upon the cross as a substitute for the salvation of sinners. By His death and resurrection, Jesus satisfied the wrath of God for all of those who would trust in Him. He was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended to His Father, at whose right hand He ever lives to make intercession for His people. As the Good Shepherd who has laid His life down for the sheep, He will return again visibly and bodily to receive them unto Himself. He is the only Mediator, the Prophet, Priest and King of the Church, and Sovereign of the Universe.

*Isa. 53:10-12; John 1:1, 14; 6:37; 10:11, 16; 14:3; Acts 1:9-11; Rom. 3:21-26; 8:34; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; Gal. 3:13; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 1:1-3*

### **The Holy Spirit**

We believe that God the Holy Spirit brings glory to the Father and the Son. He applies the life, death, and resurrection of Christ to the elect; distributes ministry gifts to every believer, according to His sovereign good pleasure, for the purpose of building up the body of Christ; and He gives understanding to believers concerning the Word of God. He is the Comforter, the Spirit of Adoption, the Seal of our Salvation, and the Guarantor of our inheritance in Christ.

*John 14:16-17; 16:14; Acts 5:3; Rom. 8:14-17; 1 Cor. 2:6-16; Eph. 1:13-14*

### **Regeneration**

We believe that regeneration is a change of heart, wrought by the Holy Spirit, who gives life to those dead in trespasses and sins, enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the Word of God, and renewing their whole nature, so that they love and practice holiness. Regeneration is a work of God's free and special grace alone.

*Eph. 2:1-6; Tit. 3:5; 1 John 5:1*

### **Repentance**

We believe that repentance is a gift of God's grace, wherein a person is made sensible of the manifold evil of his sin, humbles himself for it, possesses godly sorrow for, and detestation of it, and with purpose, endeavors to walk before God so as to please Him in all things

*Acts 2:37-38; 11:18; 2 Cor. 7:10-11*

### **Faith**

We believe that saving faith is the belief, on God's authority, of whatever is revealed in His Word concerning Christ, receiving, treasuring, and resting upon Him alone for justification and eternal life. Faith is the gift of God, wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, is accompanied by all other saving graces, and leads to a life of holiness.

*Rom. 3:27-28; 4:1-5; 4:17-25; 10:14, 17; Phil. 1:29; Eph. 2:8; Jas. 2:14-26*

### **Justification**

We believe that justification is both God's gracious and full acquittal of sinners from all sin, and the imputation of Christ's perfect righteousness through faith alone. Justification is accomplished for believers through the satisfaction that Christ has made; not for anything wrought in them or done by them; but on account of the obedience and satisfaction of Christ. By faith alone the Christian receives and rests on Christ and His righteousness.

*Gen. 15:6; Acts 13:38-39; Rom. 3:21-26; 8:34; 10:3-4; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:9*

### **Sanctification**

We believe that those who have been regenerated are also sanctified by God's Word and indwelling Holy Spirit through faith. This sanctification is progressive through the supply of Divine strength, which all saints seek to obtain, pressing after a holy life in faithful obedience to all of Christ's commands.

*Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:25-27; Rom. 8:1-17; Gal. 5:13-24; 2 Pet. 1:3-21*

### **Perseverance of the Saints**

We believe that all those whom God has regenerated will never totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere to the end; and though they may stumble through neglect and temptation, into sin, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the church, and temporal discipline on themselves, yet they shall be renewed again unto repentance, and be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

*John 6:37-40; 10:28-29; Rom. 8:28-39; 1 Cor. 1:8-9; Phil. 1:6*

### **The Church**

We believe that the church exists for the glory of God and the joy of His people. The Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the church, which is composed of all His true disciples, and that in Him is invested supreme power for its government. According to His commandment, Christians are to associate themselves into particular churches; and to each of these churches He has given needful authority for administering that order, discipline and worship which He has appointed. The regular officers of a church are Elder and Deacon.

*Matt. 16:13-20; 18:15-20; John 10:16; Acts 20:17, 28; Eph. 1:22; 2:19-22; 3:21; 5:23; 1 Tim. 3:1-15; 5:17-18; Tit. 1:5-9; Heb. 10:25*

### **Baptism**

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience and a profession of faith in Christ, symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. Baptism is the believer's entrance into the body of Christ, and is a testimony to faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

*Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-5; 1 Cor. 12:13*

### **The Lord's Supper**

We believe that the Lord's Supper is a sign to be received by faith and obedience, whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, celebrate the New Covenant in Christ's blood, memorialize the death of the Redeemer, profess and signify their persevering faith in Christ, display their communion with Christ's body in church membership, and anticipate His second coming. Self-examination and reflection upon the death and resurrection of Jesus for one's sins should always precede and accompany this solemn and celebratory observance.

*Matt. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 10:16-17; 11:23-34*

### **The Lord's Day**

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead, salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone, and looks forward to the rest that still remains for the people of God. The Lord's Day should include expressions of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be regulated and guided by the Word of God, and commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

*Ex. 20:8-11; Matt. 12:1-14; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3, 33-36; John 4:21-24, 20:1, 19-28; Acts 20:7; Rom. 14:5-10; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Col. 2:16, 3:16; Heb. 4:1-10; Rev. 1:10*

### **Disciple-Making**

We believe that it is the joyful privilege and responsibility of every Christian to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the glory of God. This includes spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ to unbelievers, and teaching, admonishing, counseling, warning, encouraging, and correcting one another in love, for the building up of the body in Christ-likeness. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded His Church to make disciples in the power of the Holy Spirit, by baptizing professing believers and teaching them to observe all that our Lord Jesus has commanded. The verbal witness of the gospel is to always be undergirded by a Christian lifestyle and prayer.

*Matt. 28:18-20; Eph. 4:11-16; Col. 3:16; 4:2-6; Heb. 3:12-13*

### **Liberty of Conscience**

We believe that God alone is Lord of the conscience; and He has left it free from bowing to the doctrines and commandments of men, which are contrary to His Word, or not contained in it. Though both entities are under the sovereign authority of God, church and state are to be separate, with no power being given to the state concerning the worship of God. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends.

*Matt. 15:9; Rom. 13:1-7; 14:4; Acts 5:29; Col. 2:20-23; 1 Pet. 2:13-17*

### **Gender Identity and Marriage**

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female and that these two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God; marriage was created and instituted by God for the good of his creatures and creation in order to display his gracious love and to teach the world about how he would unite himself to his redeemed people through Jesus Christ; marriage is a single, exclusive, covenant union entered into by one man and one woman which God bears witness to; only within such union does God intend sexual intimacy to occur; any form of sexual immorality is sinful and offensive to God.

*Gen. 1:26-28, 2:4-25, 19:1-29; Exo. 20:14; Lev. 18:1-30, 20:10-21; Deut. 5:18; 1 Kgs. 15:21; 2 Kgs. 23:7; Job 31:1; Prov. 5:8, 5:19-20; Prov. 2:16-20, 7:5, 10, 13, 21-22; Amos 2:7; Mal. 2:14-15; Matt. 5:28, 5:31-32, 15:18-20; 19:3-12, Mark 10:2-12; Rom. 1:21-31, 7:2-3, 1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-9, 39; Eph. 4:24, 5:25, 31-32; Col. 3:10; Heb. 13:4; 1 Thess. 4:3-7; 1 Tim. 1:9-10; 2 Peter 2:14; Jude 6-7; Rev. 19:7-9*

### **Consummation**

We believe that God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in power and glory to the earth, the dead will be raised, and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting, conscious punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in the New Heavens and New Earth with the Lord.

*Isa. 2:4; 11:9; Matt. 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27, 30, 36, 44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40, 48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 4:5; 15:24-28, 35-58; 2 Cor. 5:10; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thes. 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thes. 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 4:1,8; Tit. 2:13; Heb. 9:27-28; Jas. 5:8; 2 Pet. 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Rev. 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13*

## Appendix C

### Constitution of Foundation Church Fredericksburg

*Adopted September 13, 2015*

#### Preamble:

This Constitution has been created in order to:

1. preserve and secure the principles of our faith,
2. preserve the liberties of each individual member of this church,
3. ensure freedom of action and independence from any religious body or organization, and
4. provide for orderly conduct of internal affairs, in dealing with others, and of governing church members.

#### Article 1 – Name:

The name of this church shall be Foundation Church Fredericksburg.

#### Article 2 – Purpose:

This church exists to bring glory to God and display His character by knowing Jesus and making Him known. This church shall endeavor to accomplish this purpose by:

1. loving God and obeying His commandments,
2. equipping the saints through biblical preaching, instruction, and study,
3. proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching, personal evangelism, and any other means consistent with the teachings of Scripture,
4. encouraging, supporting, and participating in missions work and the establishment of new churches – local, domestic, and international,
5. administering the ordinances of baptism and communion,
6. encouraging biblical fellowship among believers, and
7. serving other individuals, families, and churches by providing for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, in the name of Jesus Christ.

#### Article 3 – Governing Documents:

The governing documents of this church shall be the Statement of Beliefs, Membership Covenant, and this Constitution.

#### Article 4 – Affiliations:

This church shall be affiliated with the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia (SBCV), and the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

#### Article 5 – Membership:

##### *Section 1 – Qualifications:*

To qualify for membership in this church, a person must be:

1. a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration,
2. baptized by immersion, in obedience to Christ, following his or her regeneration, and
3. willing to commit themselves to serve Jesus Christ through the ministry and vision of this church.

The elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's profession of faith, or such other evidence as the elders deem appropriate.

### *Section 2 – Admission:*

To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall:

1. attend a membership class,
2. interview with at least two elders to give credible evidence of repentance of sin, faith in Christ, and understanding of the gospel,
3. commit to uphold, be governed by, and submit to the governing documents of this church, and
4. be recommended by the elders for admission and accepted by a three-quarters vote of the members, and shall at that point relinquish their membership in other churches.

### *Section 3 – Duties and Privileges:*

In accord with the duties enumerated in the Membership Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of this church consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Further, members are privileged and expected to regularly attend its Lord's Day meetings, faithfully observe the ordinances of baptism and communion, and submit to the church's discipline and instruction.

Only those who are members of this congregation shall serve in positions of leadership within the church. Notwithstanding, non-members may serve the church for purposes of administration and professional consultation. Under the oversight of the elders, someone from outside of the church may give instruction from the Scriptures for worship services, conferences, and other specifically determined occasions.

Under Christ, the members of this congregation shall have the final word in matters of doctrine, membership, discipline, and direction. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all Members' Meetings and participate in the affirmation of officers (thereby affirming doctrine), decisions regarding membership status (thereby affirming membership), the discipline of unrepentant members (thereby upholding discipline), the annual church budget (thereby affirming direction), and in other such matters that may be submitted by the elders to the congregation.

### *Section 4 – Associate Membership:*

Students and others temporarily residing in the area may apply for associate membership. Qualifications and admission procedures are identical to those for full membership as set out above, except that any prior church membership shall be retained. Duties and privileges of associate members are the same as for other members except that associate members shall not be eligible to vote or stand for any office.

### *Section 5 – Discipline:*

Any member consistently neglectful of his or her scriptural duties as specified in the governing documents of this church, or who is otherwise guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of the church. Any such action shall be done in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5; 2 Corinthians 2:6-8; and any other pertinent Scriptures.

Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or congregation, suspension from participation in communion for a definite period, removal from office, and/or removal from membership. See Matthew 18:15-17; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; 1 Timothy 5:19-20; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5.

If private efforts to bring about the member's repentance and reconciliation are unsuccessful, one or more members shall bring the matter to the attention of the elders. The elders shall review and investigate the matter. After prayer and deliberation, the elders may:

1. dismiss the matter,
2. take disciplinary action, or
3. submit the matter to the members at a duly convened members' meeting for a decision.

If the members vote to discipline the member, it shall be announced to the members to carry out the biblical admonition to bring about repentance and restoration of the disciplined member. Members who have been removed from membership by the church shall be restored to full membership privileges according to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8 when their conduct is judged by the elders and the members to be in accordance with the governing documents and biblical repentance.

*Section 6 – Removal:*

This church shall recognize the removal of a person's membership:

1. upon the voluntary resignation of a member,
2. upon the death of the member, or
3. as an act of church discipline, upon the recommendation of the elders, when three-quarters of the members vote to terminate membership.

This church shall have authority to refuse a member's voluntary resignation from membership for the purpose of:

1. proceeding with a process of church discipline,
2. to protect that member from following false teaching, or
3. for any other reason the church deems necessary or prudent.

In these instances, this church has the right and responsibility to bring any disciplinary process to an orderly conclusion, and to make final determination as to the person's membership status in connection with that process.

If a member departs from this church while under church discipline and thereafter attends another church, the elders shall inform that church of the pending discipline along with the grounds for that action, seeking to encourage the brother or sister to repent and be restored to the Lord and to any people he or she has offended.

*Article 6 – Offices and Staff:*

The biblical offices in this church shall be elder and deacon. All officers shall be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

*Section 1 – Elders:*

The leadership of this church shall be vested in the elders who are responsible to govern the church, giving themselves to the ministry of the Word and prayer, thereby tending the flock of God in this church. The purpose of this office is to lovingly guide, give oversight to, care for, and equip the membership to do the work of the ministry. The elders shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in function. This church shall endeavor to maintain a plurality of elders, exemplifying the biblical model for church leadership as described in Acts 15:4; Acts 14:3; Acts 20:17; Philippians 1:1; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1; James 5:14.

Since the office of an elder is a biblical one, certain qualifications of spiritual maturity shall be met. Qualifications for elders are described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4. The Bible indicates that only men shall hold the office of elder; therefore, only male members shall be considered for this position.

The responsibilities of the elders shall include:

1. examination and instruction of prospective members,
2. examination and recommendation of all prospective candidates for offices and positions,
3. overseeing the work of the deacons,
4. conducting worship services,
5. overseeing the administration of the ordinances of baptism and communion,
6. equipping the membership for the work of the ministry,
7. encouraging sound doctrine and practice,
8. admonishing and correcting error,
9. overseeing the process of church discipline,

10. overseeing the ministries of this church,
11. mobilizing this church for world missions and the establishment of new churches, and
12. ensuring that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share this church's fundamental convictions as expressed in the Statement of Beliefs.

*Section 2 – Deacons:*

This church shall recognize men and women who are giving of themselves in service to this church, and who possess particular gifts of service. Qualifications for deacons are described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-7.

The responsibilities of the deacons shall include:

1. freeing the elders to provide spiritual oversight to the congregation,
2. assisting the elders by performing services of administration, and
3. attending to the physical needs of the congregation.

*Section 3 – Appointment:*

The election of officers shall be held at a members' meeting.

Names of nominees to serve as officers shall be presented by the elders at the previous members' meeting provided the previous meeting occurred at least four weeks prior, and the election shall proceed as directed by the moderator.

The moderator shall declare elected all officers receiving a three-quarters vote of the members.

The persons elected shall assume their respective offices upon election, unless another date has been specifically designated.

*Section 4 – Removal:*

An officer's term may be terminated by resignation or dismissal by a three-quarters vote of the members.

*Article 7 – Pastoral Staff:*

*Section 1 – Pastor:*

Primary responsibility for preaching and teaching the Scriptures in public meetings of the church shall be vested in the pastors. The pastors shall be elders. They shall perform the duties of an elder described above and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching, teaching, and equipping. They shall preach on the Lord's Day, oversee the administration of the ordinances of baptism and communion, and perform such other duties, any of which may be delegated to the other elders.

*Section 2 – Support Staff:*

The elders may create or dissolve paid support staff positions. Support staff shall serve under the supervision of the pastors and the other elders. Support staff shall affirm and support the governing documents of this church, and shall exemplify godly character.

*Article 8 – Meetings and Voting:*

*Section 1 – Worship Meetings:*

This church shall meet every Sunday (the Lord's Day) and may schedule any other meetings deemed necessary by the elders.

*Section 2 – Members' Meetings:*

There shall be a regular members' meeting at least once a quarter, at some time apart from a public worship service. The date, time, and location of regular members' meetings shall be announced at the public service of the church within two weeks preceding the meeting.

Special members' meetings shall be called as required by the elders. The date, time, and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced at the public service of the church within two weeks preceding the meeting.

An elder designated by the elders shall preside as moderator at all members' meetings of this church. The elders shall see that the stated meetings are regularly held and that required reports are submitted to the church by the responsible members.

A budget shall be approved by the congregation at a members' meeting not less than one month before the start of the fiscal year. Prior to this approval and subject to the elders' discretion, expenditures shall continue at the prior year's level. A fiscal year of the church shall be from January 1 to December 31.

*Section 3 – Voting:*

A three-quarters vote is necessary on all matters. All votes shall be cast at a regular or special members' meeting. Votes shall be tallied based on the number of votes cast by members present. Upon the discretion of the moderator, a members' meeting shall be postponed if a sufficient representation of the congregation is not in attendance. Some matters presented to the congregation may require a period of consideration before voting. The elders shall determine the instances where this is the case.

Article 9 – Non-Profit Status And Disposition Of Church Property:

This church is not organized for profit.

*Section 1 – Division:*

In the case of organic division of this church, all assets shall belong to those members who abide by this document as determined by Pillar Church of Stafford.

*Section 2 – Dissolution:*

Should conditions arise when, for any reason, this church's work cannot continue, all assets shall be transferred to Pillar Church of Stafford for redistribution.

*Section 3 – Consolidation:*

Should the conditions arise where a consolidation with another church of similar biblical faith is advisable, the elders shall be authorized by a three-quarters vote of the congregation to negotiate the terms of such a consolidation. Should the terms of said negotiation be acceptable, the congregation shall approve the consolidation by a three-quarters vote.

Article 10 – Revisions and Amendments:

Revisions or amendments to the Statement of Beliefs, Membership Covenant, or this Constitution shall be made only in the following manner:

1. Any member of the church can provide a suggested revision or amendment to the Statement of Beliefs, Membership Covenant, or this Constitution in writing to the elders of this church.
2. For a revision or amendment to the Statement of Beliefs, Membership Covenant, or this Constitution to be effected, the elders shall confirm its consistency with Scripture and unanimously affirm the revision or amendment.
3. After approval from the elders, the revision or amendment to the Statement of Beliefs, Membership Covenant, or this Constitution of this church shall be presented at a members' meeting for affirmation.
4. Any revision or amendment to the Statement of Beliefs, Membership Covenant, or this Constitution shall be approved by a three-quarters vote.

## Appendix D

### Affirming the Governing Documents

by Bobby Oliveri

Covenants are all over the Bible. The clearest way to read and interpret the Bible is to see what we may normally call the Old and New Testaments as the Old and New *Covenants*. God interacts with his people covenantally. What is a covenant, you ask? A covenant is simply an agreement — a promise or a contract, if you will — made between two parties; only one of these parties is God, and he will always uphold his covenantal oath (and he always initiates the covenant). So God is a God of promise-keeping, covenant-upholding faithfulness. Covenant is important to God's people because it is through God's faithful upholding of his covenant with us, in Christ, that we are able to secure salvation.

Becoming a member of a church means that we join in covenant with one another, as well as affirm the doctrinal truths upon which we stand and the protocol for upholding, defending, protecting, and declaring those truths. But a covenant is what truly makes us a church because it is what binds us to one another. It is what takes a group sinners from all walks of life who have been redeemed and transformed by the Holy Spirit through the work of Jesus, and unites us all together. It is what connects the hand and the foot and the eye and the other various members to one another in the body. This document, along with the other Governing Documents, or, in reality, the spirit of these document, is the most important foundation from which we operate, apart from the Bible.

#### Grace-Dependent Affirmation

But there's a potential for misunderstanding what it really means to *affirm* something. Whether we're downloading a new app, updating software, or buying a house, we've all come across the infamous "Terms and Conditions." However, instead of reading them in their entirety, and endeavoring to make sense of all of the legal ramifications implicit therein, we just simply "accept" or sign on the dotted line. Terms and conditions are rarely ever read, but are almost always accepted. Why? Usually they're long, with very small or fine print, and they contain legal and obscure language that most of us don't understand, or are equally as vague and therefore equally as confusing. It's easier then to just accept these terms even though we do not actually affirm them. In recent years, much attention has been brought to this matter because some companies decided to take advantage of the fact that we accept blindly their terms and conditions, resulting in the legal and willful handing over of our personal information, photos, and privacy. While the importance of understanding what we accept is a discussion to have at another time, the point here is made — we are quick to accept what we don't clearly understand to get to something that we want.

You may feel this way about the Governing Documents you are asked to affirm. The constitution may very well contain the secret location of Atlantis or the real cure for cancer and you would never know it because you have no intention of understanding it. You are prepared to accept the terms and conditions of Foundation Church.

But these documents — the Statement of Beliefs, Membership Covenant, and Church Constitution — are not like the terms and conditions Google or Facebook requires you to accept before the use of their services. No, these documents require more than acceptance. *They require affirmation.* To affirm something is not necessarily to say that it is right or perfect. It is to support, defend, and uphold that which you have affirmed. In the case of these documents, to affirm them means to recognize and confirm the goodness of their meaning, to consent to submit and be governed by their principles, and to defend and uphold their authority as a foundation from which the church can operate.

So while the terms and conditions of Google or Facebook want you to accept the fact that they may have access to whatever they wish, but have no reason to be clear, or even fair, these documents of the church are put in place not to take advantage of your trust, but in order to protect the church and keep her pure. Since we are all sinners, and from time to time, allow our sinfulness to influence the way we live with one another and participate in community with one another, we need these documents — documents firmly built upon the word of God — to keep Satan out of the work of the church and to guide us as we endeavor to display the character of God through our coming together and forming communities. We need these documents — especially the covenant — to remind us that we are sinners in need of God's grace to help us live faithfully with one another.

So let me briefly explain what each of these three documents are, their purposes, and why you should affirm them if you plan to be a member at Foundation Church.

1. **Statement of Beliefs:** These are the truths of Scripture that define who we are and what we believe about God, his people, and his word. This is the backbone of the church. It says to the world that we stand upon the foundation of Scripture, and uphold the doctrines therein to be consistent with truth and fact. This ought to be the document that hardest for us change or amend, because they are the simple truths and realities of our faith. From these beliefs, we extrapolate everything else we do as a people and a church.
2. **Membership Covenant:** This is how we promise to live with one another in community in light of the things we believe. In essence, it says, “we who believe and affirm the doctrines of the Bible as outlined in the Statement of Beliefs promise to live and serve along side one another in a way that demonstrates and upholds those same truths.” We affirm this because we believe that this how God intends for us to behave, and we unite with one another in this same promise.
3. **Constitution:** This is simply how the ins-and-outs of the church are described. It is a plan, or set of procedures, that allow the church to organize itself and function in such a way as to best uphold what we believe and how we promised to live together. It also protects us from doing something in a way that is not prescribed in the Bible or goes against what we believe the Bible teaches. We affirm this because we know we need it, because it is helpful to us as a congregation, and because it honors Christ.

With all of this in mind, know that these documents are meant to liberate the church to live in such a way that exemplifies the character of God best, not to restrict or bind us from doing what we might enjoy. As you read these documents, consider their importance and necessity, and know that as you affirm them, you do so before God — not a giant corporation. Join together in both solemnity and joy as we unite with one another in the bond of peace and the spirit of Christ.

## Appendix E

### Spiritual Gift Chart

#### Discover Your Spiritual Gifts!

by Gene Wilkes\*

Ken Hemphill defines a spiritual gift as “an individual manifestation of grace from the Father that enables you to serve Him and thus play a vital role in His plan for the redemption of the world.” Peter Wagner defines a spiritual gift as “a special attribute given by the Holy Spirit to every member of the Body of Christ according to God’s grace for use within the context of the Body.” I like to use this definition:

*A spiritual gift is an expression of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers which empowers them to serve the body of Christ, the church.*

Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28-30; Ephesians 4:11; and 1 Peter 4:9-11 contain representative lists of gifts and roles God has given to the church. A definition of these gifts follows.

- Leadership—Leadership aids the body by leading and directing members to accomplish the goals and purposes of the church. Leadership motivates people to work together in unity toward common goals (Rom. 12:8).
- Administration—Persons with the gift of administration lead the body by steering others to remain on task. Administration enables the body to organize according to God-given purposes and long-term goals (1 Cor. 12:28).
- Teaching—Teaching is instructing members in the truths and doctrines of God’s Word for the purposes of building up, unifying, and maturing the body (1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:7; Eph. 4:11).
- Knowledge—The gift of knowledge manifests itself in teaching and training in discipleship. It is the God-given ability to learn, know, and explain the precious truths of God’s Word. A word of knowledge is a Spirit-revealed truth (1 Cor. 12:28).
- Wisdom—Wisdom is the gift that discerns the work of the Holy Spirit in the body and applies His teachings and actions to the needs of the body (1 Cor. 12:28).
- Prophecy—The gift of prophecy is proclaiming the Word of God boldly. This builds up the body and leads to conviction of sin. Prophecy manifests itself in preaching and teaching (1 Cor. 12:10; Rom. 12:6).
- Discernment—Discernment aids the body by recognizing the true intentions of those within or related to the body. Discernment tests the message and actions of others for the protection and well-being of the body (1 Cor. 12:10).
- Exhortation—Possessors of this gift encourage members to be involved in and enthusiastic about the work of the Lord. Members with this gift are good counselors and motivate others to service. Exhortation exhibits itself in preaching, teaching, and ministry (Rom. 12:8).
- Shepherding—The gift of shepherding is manifested in persons who look out for the spiritual welfare of others. Although pastors, like shepherds, do care for members of the church, this gift is not limited to a pastor or staff member (Eph. 4:11).
- Faith—Faith trusts God to work beyond the human capabilities of the people. Believers with this gift encourage others to trust in God in the face of apparently insurmountable odds (1 Cor. 12:9).

- Evangelism—God gifts his church with evangelists to lead others to Christ effectively and enthusiastically. This gift builds up the body by adding new members to its fellowship (Eph. 4:11).
- Apostleship—The church sends apostles from the body to plant churches or be missionaries. Apostles motivate the body to look beyond its walls in order to carry out the Great Commission (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11).
- Service/Helps—Those with the gift of service/helps recognize practical needs in the body and joyfully give assistance to meeting those needs. Christians with this gift do not mind working behind the scenes (1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:7).
- Mercy—Cheerful acts of compassion characterize those with the gift of mercy. Persons with this gift aid the body by empathizing with hurting members. They keep the body healthy and unified by keeping others aware of the needs within the church (Rom. 12:8).
- Giving—Members with the gift of giving give freely and joyfully to the work and mission of the body. Cheerfulness and liberality are characteristics of individuals with this gift (Rom. 12:8).
- Hospitality—Those with this gift have the ability to make visitors, guests, and strangers feel at ease. They often use their home to entertain guests. Persons with this gift integrate new members into the body (1 Pet. 4:9).

God has gifted you with an expression of His Holy Spirit to support His vision and mission of the church. It is a worldwide vision to reach all people with the gospel of Christ. As a servant leader, God desires that you know how He has gifted you. This will lead you to where He would have you serve as part of His vision and mission for the church.

*\*Gene Wilkes is pastor of the Legacy Drive Baptist Church, Plano, Texas. This article was adapted from Jesus on Leadership by Gene Wilkes (LifeWay Christian Resources 1998).*

## Appendix F

### Resources for For Further Reading

#### **Christian Beliefs**

- Bible Doctrine, Wayne Grudem
- Mere Christianity, C.S. Lewis
- What is Reformed Theology?, R.C. Sproul

#### **Church Membership & Congregationalism**

- A Display of God's Glory, Mark Dever
- The Church and the Surprising Offense of God's Love, Jonathan Leeman

#### **Christian Discipline**

- Habits of Grace, David Mathis
- Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life, Donald Whitney

#### **Healthy Church Practices**

- Nine Marks of a Healthy Church, Mark Dever
- Church Membership, Jonathan Leeman
- Expository Preaching, David Helm
- Church Elders, Jeramie Rinne