

Fundamentals of Our Faith from the Beginning
Understanding the Church: The Four Things

Our Covenant Agreement

I understand that by becoming a member of Cornerstone I am committing, by God's grace and to the best of my ability, to the faithful practice of the 4 things such that I can gladly agree to the following statements:

- Gathering: I will regularly gather in corporate worship with my CBC family.
- Connecting: I will connect with the CBC community by seeking to involve myself in relationships that are aimed at discipleship and that are gospel-shaped.
- Serving: I will find ways to serve within the CBC community.
- Sharing: I will seek to grow in my desire and ability to share the gospel with the lost in my circles of influence, and I will strive to openly share my life with my CBC family, inviting and giving prayer and support in times of need.

Warm up:

- I. Why would a willingness to embrace and practice these four things (as one is able) be a part of our membership process and even a pre-requisite for membership?
- II. What might it say if someone refused to embrace or practice these things?
- III. What are some of the common challenges/obstacles we face as we seek to grow in and practice these things?

1. Gathering

- a. The description and assumption of gathering (Acts 2:42-46, Acts 20:7, 1 Cor 5:4, 11:18, 14:26, James 2:2)
 - i. Reminder: we are not saved as individuals but as a people (1 Peter 2:9-10)
 - ii. The natural and practical implication of being God's covenant people is to assemble and worship Him.
- b. The mandate of attendance (Hebrews 10:23-25)
 - i. Gathering corporately is not only assumed – it is commanded.
 - ii. The church is more than the Sunday gathering, but it is not less than this.
- c. The ministry of attendance (Hebrews 10:23-25)
 - i. Spurring one-another on toward love and good deeds
 - ii. A means of grace for you, and a means of grace for others
- d. The militant assembly
 - i. Declaring the victory, supremacy, and Lordship of Christ by gathering for worship (Eph 1:20-23, 4:8)
 - ii. Forming and mobilizing reinforcements, who go make more reinforcements (Matthew 28:18-20)

The Christian faith is marked by regularly gathering with God's people in obedience to His commands, for personal transformation, for the encouragement and building up of others, and for the militant advance of His mission. At CBC

the primary gathering is the Sunday morning worship service.

2. Connecting

- a. Taking responsibility for one another (Hebrews 3:12-14)
 - i. Seeing to others
 - ii. Encouraging others

- b. Cultivating a culture of discipleship (Titus 2:1-8)
 - i. Seeking discipleship/mentoring
 - ii. Being a mentor/ training others

- c. Knowing well enough to help (1 Thess 5:14)
 - i. The disposition of the disciple is a diagnostic for how to help
 - ii. This requires us to invest time and seek for understanding

The Christian faith is marked by cultivating and maintaining connections that provide opportunities for mutual discipleship. At CBC, this takes shape formally (small groups, focused discipleship relationships, events, etc.) and informally (in various ways that we invest time with one another).

3. Serving

- a. All parts of the body are equally important (1 Cor 12:12-27)
 - i. We are interconnected and interdependent.
 - ii. This implies our need for one another

- b. A dedication to serve one another (Romans 12:3-8)
 - i. We have differing gifts by design
 - ii. The gifts are not ours – they belong to Christ for His church (1 Peter 4:10)

The Christian faith is marked by service-minded orientation that displays the love of Christ for one another. Since we are an interdependent body, no part is excluded, but rather, has it's assigned purpose by God. At CBC, service happens formally in regular, scheduled opportunities, but much more frequently in informal context in which church members seek to help and serve one another in various ways.

4. Sharing

- a. Sharing (declaring) the gospel
 - i. If you're a Christian, you're on a mission (2 Cor 5:17-20)
 - ii. Not everyone is an evangelist, but everyone should evangelize as they are able (Acts 8:1-4)

- b. Fellowship/ Koinonia
 - i. A joint participation in the faith and in each other's lives (Acts 2:42)
 - ii. Sharing resources (time, finances, etc) (Acts 2:44-45)
 - iii. Sharing yourself (using your gifts for the good of others)
 - iv. Sharing your needs (1 Thess 5:11-14, Gal 6:10, 2 Cor 1:11)

The Christian faith is marked by a shared mission as we declare the gospel together, and by a shared participation in each other's lives as we humbly share our needs and as we give of ourselves and our resources for one another. Like

other aspects of the Christian life, these too have both formal and informal opportunities to be practiced.