

# REMEMBERING TEN BASIC PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH LIFE

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**Principle 2:** The church is people alive in Christ.

**Principle 3:** Jesus Christ is present Head of the church.

**Principle 4:** The ministry of the church is by its royal priesthood which includes all believers.

**Principle 1:** The church is dependent on the Holy Spirit for the ability to do and to be all God has called it to.

**Principle 6:** The regular meetings of the church are for the maturing of believers.

**Principle 7:** Church fellowship and discipline are facilitated by the development of loving relationships.

**Principle 1: The church is dependent on the Holy Spirit for the ability to do and be all God has called it to.**

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. . . . All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. (*1 Corinthians 12:4-7,11*)

**Principle 2: The church is people alive in Christ.**

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ. (*Ephesians 2:4-5*)

**Principle 3: Jesus Christ is present Head of the church.**

And he [Jesus] is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. (*Colossians 1:18*)

**Principle 4: The ministry of the church is by its royal priesthood which includes all believers.**

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. (*1 Peter 2:9*)

**Principle 5: Pastoral leadership is by a team of men chosen from among the local congregation for their spiritual maturity, giftedness for ministry, and the exemplary quality of their lives.**

When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed. (*Acts 14:21-23*)

**Principle 6: The regular meetings of the church are for the maturing of believers.**

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (*Ephesians 4:11-13*)

**Principle 7: Church fellowship and discipline are facilitated by the development of loving relationships.**

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (*Hebrews 10:23-25*)

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. (*Galatians 6:1-2*)

**Principle 8: Evangelism takes place, as a matter of course, when the church is healthy.**

And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. (*Acts 2:47*)

**Principle 9: The spiritual nurture of children is primarily the responsibility of their parents.**

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. (*Ephesians 6:1-4*)

**Principle 10: The local church is part of the greater body of Christ, which includes all true believers.**

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Taken from *Brethren, Hang Together*, by Robert C. Girard

# Remembering Ten Basic Principles of Church Life

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March 6, 2022

**Open:** How did you start coming to Neighborhood Church of Anderson/Cottonwood (NCAC)?

**Discussion:** In the formative years of Neighborhood Church, the “Ten Basic Principles of Church Life” listed on the back were helpful in guiding and sustaining our effort to follow the New Testament pattern for the church. Following are a few questions based on some of these principles. Before answering each set of questions, be sure to read the corresponding Bible verse(s) on the back.

1. **(Principle 2.)** The life of the church is rooted in its union with Jesus. How would you explain to a new believer what it means to be “alive in Christ?” How does this principle encourage you to give more attention to your relationship with Jesus? How can we better foster this as a church?
2. **(Principle 3.)** What does it mean practically for the church to remember that Christ is its head? What happens when we lose sight of this truth? What helps a church remember this principle?
3. **(Principle 4.)** All believers have full and free access to God through Jesus, and no other priest or mediator should determine their relationship with God. All believers are also privileged to come before God and serve His people. What does this mean for the right relationship between members of our church and how we should view our place in the church?
4. **(Principle 1.)** Every believer has gifts and empowerment from the Holy Spirit to serve Christ. What does this mean for us individually? What does this mean for us corporately? How do we ensure that our church is dependent on and being empowered by the Holy Spirit?
5. **(Principle 7.)** A church will experience increased health when its members, out of love, encourage, exhort and admonish one another. In what way have you seen or experienced this activity practiced in the church? How might this aid in preventing more severe matters of church discipline? What will help us fulfill this principle well in our current culture?
6. **(Principle 6.)** God intends the ministry of a church to produce increasing unity, knowledge and Christlikeness in the members of its congregation. How should this purpose shape the design of a church’s weekly worship services? If worship services are to primarily meet the needs of believers, how can we ensure we’re also welcoming to those who are not yet believers?

**Apply:** What is one way you personally could help Neighborhood Church better fulfill God’s design and intention for our church?

**Pray:** Thank God for His great faithfulness to NCAC over these past 50 years. Pray for His continued guidance and empowerment, that we might even better fulfill His purpose in the next 50 years.

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