



Providence
BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP

ENCOURAGED • EQUIPPED • ENGAGED



**starting
point**

Introduction

Welcome to Providence Baptist Fellowship. We are glad you are interested in finding out more about us as a community of Christ followers. In the pages to come, you will find more information than you probably ever wanted to know about our young church. We want you to know what makes us tick as a church. We want to be upfront about whom we are, who we want to be and where we believe God is leading us. This will help you discern whether or not Providence is the right place for you and your family.

Specifically, we want to help you understand what the Gospel is, what the church is and what that means for us at Providence Baptist Fellowship. You will also find in this guide an overview of our theological beliefs and why is it important for our church to clarify those points from the outset in our membership process. In addition, we will introduce you to a few of our leaders and how decisions are made at Providence Baptist Fellowship. Our leadership model is made up of a Pastoral Leadership Team supported and empowered by an Advisory Council and served by a body of deacons. Our strategy of Encouraged, Equipped and Engaged will show you how we desire to minister to you and our community.

Finally, we want to share with you how you can become a member of this church and what is expected of our members. There will be no sales pitch at the end of this seminar. In other words, you will not be expected to join upon completion of our membership processes. We want you and your family to make a prayerful and informed decision about your future with Providence. So sit back and relax and enjoy the ride. It is our prayer that you will find us to be a warm and welcoming fellowship focused on displaying the Glory of God throughout our community and world!

A Brief History

In order to understand where we are headed, it is important for you to know where we have been. For years, many believed that a church was needed in the fast growing Nolensville area of Williamson County. Little did some of the people of Tusculum Hills Baptist Church imagine that one day they would be called to a journey for just such a purpose.

On July 20th 2008, around 250 people gathered at O' Charley's Corporate Head Quarters in Nashville and formed what is now called Providence Baptist Fellowship. From the beginning, our leadership knew that God wanted us in Nolensville. Since that time, Providence Baptist Fellowship has been meeting for worship and Bible study at Sunset Middle School off Sunset Road and has steadily been taking root in the Nolensville community.

Our beginning was forged with both joy and sorrow. We have seen the pain of broken relationships as well as the joy of reconciliation among some of those relationships. We have felt the sting of sin and brokenness as well as the sweetness of God's grace and mercy along the way. However, we have seen the Gospel transform us from top to bottom. That has led us to our vision at Providence... "to see the Gospel transform everything; ourselves, our families, our church, our world." Our prayer is that this will be the guiding pursuit of our lives for years and years to come.

Chapter 1

Some Important Questions

What is the Gospel?

The most important question we could ever ask or hope to answer is “what is the Gospel?” The reality is that there are many different answers posed to this question in our world today. Most of them do not do justice to the question itself. So answering this question is vitally important because at the root of who the church *is* lies in the foundations of what the Gospel really *is*. Without the true Gospel, the church ceases to exist.

The Gospel is the story of the Bible; the good news of Jesus Christ. At its core, the Bible is the revealing of God to the world. The center of that revelation is found in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. To best understand this “great revelation,” let’s imagine the revelation of God as a four act play. These four acts are Creation, Fall, Redemption and Restoration. Behind every great play also stands the playwright, the director and the stage hands.

The same is true of the story of human history. Behind the play of life stands the God of the universe. The Bible tells us that God is a Trinitarian God; that is He is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. There are not three Gods but one God in three persons. Before history began, God lived in perfect happiness and joy within Himself. The Father loved the Son, the Son submitted to the Father, and the Spirit magnifies and does the will of the Father and Son...the perfect relationship! God lived in perfect delight in and of Himself.

God desired to share Himself and created the world and universe we know, except it was perfect. God did not need the world, but desired to display His

eternal excellencies with creation. This helps us understand God's purposes in creation. He desires creation to enjoy the love and joy that exists in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He also desires creation, specifically people (Genesis 1:26) to reflect His glory to the world. This is the story of the first act of the Gospel.

The second act takes a tragic turn. Instead of creation, namely people, embracing this invitation to relationship with God reflecting His glory, Adam (people) declared war against the Almighty. This is what we call the "Fall." People now believe the lie that we can be God and be sovereign over our own affairs (Genesis 3). This ushered in devastating affects for the world. We are determined to run things on our own. Our pride and heart are hopelessly corrupted by sin and our actions and behavior are nothing but self serving. From this point forward all would be bound to this curse of sin (Romans 6:26). All people and the world, though created good, were and are corrupted and stained by sin.

But there is hope! In spite of our intensions, God determines to save (redeem) a people for Himself. This is a people who are marked for His glory, set aside for His Kingdom, and who live to display the fame and greatness of God. These people are called the church. God reconciles us to Himself and ushers us into eternal relationship. He gives us true meaning, joy, and mission. No longer are we to live for our own ends, but for God's kingdom purposes. How does God do this? He sent His Son, Jesus, to come to earth to accomplish what Adam could not, perfect obedience. His sinless life was laid down on the cross where Christ made Himself a ransom for many paying the penalty for sin. He died, was buried, and three days later, He rose again, overcoming death and hell. Anyone who calls upon the name of Jesus can have their relationship with God restored.

The fourth act is the most glorious. God in His infinite wisdom is moving in such a way to restore all things to their right place. There will be a day when God will return and right the wrongs as well as establish His heavenly kingdom forever and ever. This will be a new city...a heavenly city. We live to seek people who will inhabit such a kingdom.

This is the Gospel. It is the heartbeat of the church. So what is the church?

What is the Church?

Now that we have dealt with the question, “what is the Gospel,” we can now turn to “what is the church?” Sometimes people think of the church as a group of people who have high morals. This may be true to a certain extent, but it certainly is not what defines the church. Sometimes people think the church is group of “do-gooders.” In other words, they exist to do social justice and other nice things. This is also true but only to a certain extent.

The church is a body of Gospel transformed people who have been called out of sin and redeemed for the purpose of once again displaying God’s glory for all people of all times and all places. The word used for Church in Greek is “Ecclesia.” This literally means “to be called out.” What does it mean to be “called out?”

There are at least three aspects of “being called out” that will be helpful in understanding the nature of the church. First, *we are a forgiven people*. We are “called” out of sin. 1 John 1:7 says that “the blood of Jesus the Son cleanses us from all sin.” In other words, God through Christ’s atoning work on the cross, breaks down the dividing wall between Himself and people by becoming the only sufficient sacrifice for our sin debt. Second, *we are a relational (communal) people*. We are “called” into community. God is not calling out individuals for His glory. He is creating a people for Himself. This community of people is one body, the church. They are to walk in love, submission, encouragement, and edification with one another (Hebrews 10:19-25). Lastly, *we are a missional people*. We are “called” into mission. God’s new people are not to retreat from the world or hide from the dangers of this life. We are to advance God’s Kingdom interests. Jesus promises that His new people who are built on the Gospel will never be pushed back by the gates of hell (Matthew 16:13-20).

Chapter 2

What We Believe

A word about doctrine (beliefs)

Everybody has a theology whether they realize it or not. Sometimes when people hear the word doctrine or theology, they automatically check out, thinking that such discussions are for high-minded people or are irrelevant. Nothing could be further from the truth. Theology is simply the study and understanding of who God is and what He is doing. This means that theology is vitally important to every person. Doctrine is nothing more than the organization of our theological convictions. A.W. Tozer wrote most vividly, "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us."

Baptists are a confessional and convictional people. This means that we make no creed supreme to the Bible. This does not mean, of course, that confessions are of no use to us, rather they are never to be held with equal affection and authority as the Bible. At Providence, our basic statement of faith is the Baptist Faith and Message, 2000. This document does not say everything that can be said about our beliefs at Providence but it certainly give us the fundamentals of Biblical Christianity.

Let us encourage you to read through the Baptist Faith and Message if you have not done so previously.

Baptist Faith and Message, 2000

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He

calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39–12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

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 symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his 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.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

VIII. The Lord's Day

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 and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 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; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

IX. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

X. Last Things

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 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 punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 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; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

XI. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the

duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are

therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12:16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ,

Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. 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. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

XVIII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them,

through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

Chapter 3

Who Are Our Leaders?

Meet the Pastors

Joseph Stegall, *Lead Pastor*

After 5 years of competition for the Yellow Jacket Track and Cross Country teams, Joseph graduated from Georgia Tech in 2002 with a Bachelor of Science in Management. Upon graduation, he married his beautiful wife and best friend Sara. After 3 years in corporate America, he was called into ministry, and moved his family to Wake Forest, NC in order to become better equipped for the work of the ministry. In May of 2008 he graduated from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary with the Master of Divinity degree. Joseph is passionate for the church to understand what it believes, why it believes it, and the difference that should make in our lives. Then from that, we are to share the hope of Christ with the world around it. Joseph and Sara have three precious little girls Hayley (5) and Claire (2), and Keira (7 months).

Tom Agnew, *Pastor (Students)*

Tom came to us from the great state of North Carolina where he served as a church planter for 2 years. During those 2 years God revealed to him and Amanda that they were not done with student ministry yet! Prior to church planting, Tom spent 8 years serving in student ministry. During that time, God had been creating an intense desire in his heart to share the importance of the family in church life. To that end, Tom endeavors to pour his heart into the lives of both parents and students in order to raise a generation of lovers of God. During his free time, Tom spends time with his beautiful wife Amanda and his sons Caleb (3)

and Asher (10 months). Tom also loves the outdoors, reading and playing golf when time and money allow!

John Whitenack, *Pastor (Children)*

John grew up in Denver, Colorado and was called to ministry during his freshman year of high school. Throughout college he began to receive a passion for preaching and teaching to children a Biblical understanding of the church. He moved to Texas to attend Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary He served for 6 years as Children's Minister in a suburb of Dallas where he began his Ph.D. in Leadership and Pastoral Ministry at Dallas Baptist University. On a hospital visit to a preschooler he was blessed beyond understanding to meet Raluca who was helping friends care for their daughter. They fell in love despite several times apart as Raluca returned to her native Romania. After their marriage, they have been blessed to be a couple and best friends who enjoy working on their home, being creative, and just being together. John loves getting to serve as a pastor to children by equipping parents to bring their children up in the ways of the Lord. John and Raluca are expecting their first child in October 2010.

How is Providence led?

Pastoral Leadership Team

The Pastoral Leadership Team is a plurality of pastors serving in various ministries of the church and working together. By consensus they set forth and carry out the vision of the Church, meet the needs of the congregation, and jointly fulfill the biblical responsibilities of the pastors. Our Pastors jointly serve as the under-shepherds of the flock, as Jesus Christ is the Shepherd. Our Pastors jointly have reasonable charge of the Church, along with the Advisory Council, of which each Pastor is a voting member. One member of the Pastoral Leadership Team is designated as the Lead Pastor by vote of the Church upon recommendation of the Advisory Council. The Lead Pastor's duties include serving as the primary pulpit preacher and as the first among equals. If during the labors of the Pastoral Leadership Team a consensus is not met, a decision is tabled for more prayer. In the event that a decision must be made, the majority consensus stands. Should there be no majority, the Lead Pastor is empowered to make the decision. The full

duties, assignments, and responsibilities of the Pastoral Leadership Team shall be determined as necessary by the Church Leadership.

Advisory Council

This philosophy of pastoral leadership is supported by the Advisory Council which aids in maintaining oversight for the ministries and vision of the Church. The Advisory Council helps multiply the leadership of the members of the pastoral and ministerial staff by allowing them to focus more on preaching, teaching, and building relationships with the people. The Advisory Council also offer the pastor(s) and ministers a personal accountability group to foster their own spiritual growth and help prevent unwise decisions that might negatively affect the Church. This affords the Church consistent and able pastoral leadership. The advisory team is made up at both the pastoral leadership team as well as lay men of the congregation as the Church selects to represent them.

Deacon Body

In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice of the New Testament, Deacons are to be servants of the Church. The task of the Deacon is to see that the physical and spiritual needs of the church members are met, and seek resolution of conflict within the congregation. The Deacon Body serve alongside and support the Pastor(s) and Church Leadership. The Deacons shall allocate the needs of the church membership among themselves as they deem appropriate. They serve to assist the pastors in the servant needs of the church.

Chapter 4

What Is Our Strategy?

ACTS 2:40-47

“And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation.’ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

PURPOSE:

to worship and enjoy God, and lead others to do the same

MISSION:

to see the Gospel transform everything; ourselves, our church, our community,
our world

PROVIDENCE VALUES:

Truth
The Gospel
Discipleship
Christian Spirituality
God Centered Worship
Marriage
Family
Christ Centered Community
Servant Leadership
Missional Living
Biblical Hospitality
Church Planting
A Global Perspective

ENCOURAGED

- Preaching and teaching with a Gospel focus
- Engaging in Authentic Christ-centered worship
- Cultivating Christian community
- Praying passionately

EQUIPPED

- Preaching the whole counsel of God's Word
- Fostering Bible study personally and corporately
- Developing the next generation of Christian leaders
- Discipling cross generationally

ENGAGED

- Living Missionally
- Practicing Biblical Hospitality
- Building our community
- Going "Glocal"

Conclusion...

PBF offers a Gospel centered alternative to Bible belt religion. Our strategy revolves around our members seeing themselves as missionaries placed by God in their particular workplace, neighborhood, and home to make much of Him to those with whom they come in contact. We seek to serve our church **and** community through living missionally and being hospitable to all people, at all times and in all places. We live with a global perspective and intense commitment to missions. Our strategy also includes our members participating in corporate worship, Sunday Morning Bible study, home/midweek fellowships, Sunday night gatherings, and biblical counseling. These gatherings include environments necessary for spiritual growth for preschoolers, children, students, adults and senior adults. As well, our members are expected to participate in discipleship seminars and church wide fellowships.

Chapter 5

Who can be a member?

How do I become a member?

The question now is “who can be a member of Providence Baptist Fellowship?” A prospective member must confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and have been baptized by immersion as a believer. At the point a person becomes a Christian, they are welcome and encouraged to join our fellowship. Upon being baptized by immersion, one is set to finish the process of joining Providence. If you are a member of another Baptist church or a church of like faith and order, we would ask for a letter of good standing from that church.

We also welcome believers from other denominations to join our fellowship but they must have been baptized by immersion as a believer. If your previous tradition did not practice believer’s baptism, we will be glad to baptize you as entrance to church membership.

The process of becoming a member of Providence Baptist Fellowship starts with our Starting Point Luncheon. These lunches are usually held monthly and give prospective members insight into who Providence Baptist Fellowship is and who we want to be. Upon completing this seminar, you will be presented to the church and voted in as a member. At this point, you will be asked to sign the membership covenant for formal entrance as a member of Providence Baptist Fellowship.

CHAPTER 6

What is expected of a member?

PROVIDENCE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP

Membership Covenant

“For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.”

2 Corinthians 4:15

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and followed in believer’s baptism, and being in agreement with Providence Baptist Fellowship’s statements, strategy and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the PBF family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

1. I WILL PROTECT THE UNITY OF OUR CHURCH

- By acting in love toward other members
- By refusing to gossip
- By following the leadership

“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the

unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

Ephesians 4:1-6

2. I WILL SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF OUR CHURCH

- By praying for it's growth
- By inviting the unchurched to attend
- By warmly welcoming those who visit
- By living missionally

“to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with you.”

1 Corinthians 9:22-23

3. I WILL SERVE IN THE MINISTRY OF OUR CHURCH

- By discovering my gifts and talents
- By serving on a ministry team
- By being equipped to serve alongside my pastors
- By developing a servant's heart

“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

1 Peter 4:10

4. I WILL SUPPORT THE TESTIMONY OF OUR CHURCH

- By attending worship and small groups faithfully
- By living a godly life
- By giving regularly to the financial needs of the church

“let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together,”

Heb 10:24-25

Membership requirements are completed upon confession in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, having been baptized in believer's baptism, and agreeing to and signing our membership covenant.