



themeadowschurch.ca

Loving
Our Neighbours

Because Jesus Loved Us

Sundays at 10:00 AM
Churchill Meadows Community Centre
5320 Ninth Line, Mississauga

Updated: Summer 2025

MeadowsCentral

Name: _____

Date: _____

 themeadowschurch
Abundant life because of Jesus

Joining The Meadows Family

We love to see our family grow and our family members thrive!

In the weeks following MeadowsCentral, we would love for you to sit down with two of our elders to go over three key areas.

1. We want to Hear Your Story!

We would love to hear how God has worked in your life and how He has brought you to The Meadows Church. Everyone has a unique story, but as we have seen on Page 3, if we are a disciple of Jesus, we all have the same gospel running through each of our stories.

2. We want to Answer any of your Questions!

Usually there are a few questions that come up after going through MeadowsCentral. Sometimes we do not even think of them until days after we go through it! This is your chance to ask for clarification, especially if there is something that is specific to you and your story.

3. We want to Commit to be a Family Together!

Now that we have gone through MeadowsCentral, we hope you have a good idea of what it means to be a part of The Meadows Family. **We are committed to continually point you to Jesus in all that we do.** We want you to grow as a disciple who learns and imitates Jesus in community and on mission in everyday life.

If you would like to grow with us and be a disciple who makes more disciples, we would love for you to verbally commit to join our family. That commitment must be a genuine conviction to follow **Jesus** with our church **community** as we live out His **mission** together. In addition, you will be faithful to live out the mission by doing your best to **Gather, Go, Grow, and Give.**

After you make this commitment and it is affirmed by the leadership, we would love to give you a gift and officially welcome you into The Meadows Family at the next suitable Sunday Gathering.

It is all about Jesus!

Giving: Yourself and Your Family

Time

*“The Son of Man came eating and drinking...
- Matthew 11:19*

God calls us to give of our time to spend with others. This involves talking over food, hosting each other in our homes, and breaking bread together. As a member of the family of God, we want to sacrifice to be in communion with others.

Talent

*“The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve...”
- Matthew 20:28*

We are servants of the King. He has given us skills, spiritual gifts and abilities to bless others at each of our gatherings. As a member of a family, each one is called to be involved to serve others.

Treasure

*“The Son of Man came... to give his life as a ransom for many.”
- Matthew 20:28*

God has given us dominion over His world and asks us to be good stewards over His gifts. Therefore, He calls us to give to His Church and the growth of the gospel. We give as we each have means, but we also give with great faith as we aim to please God. (Hebrews 11:6)

Percentage

If we ask, God will lead us to give a certain amount of our money that will stretch our faith. We all have different amounts, but we are all called to give with great faith.

Persistent

Giving often helps keep us humble before God. We are not only called to give, but to give often. There are many ways to give to your church, but whatever the way, give in a consistent manner.

Progressive

Growth is good. We always want to be growing our faith, so every 6 months to a year, ask God again if He would have you change your amount. Faith is a muscle that needs exercising.

Welcome!

The purpose of MeadowsCentral is to give newcomers an overarching picture of The Meadows Church. We will explain the big questions like why we exist and how we function.

MeadowsCentral is divided into three sessions. **Session 1** starts us off by confirming our identity by explaining who we are and what defines us. **Session 2** shares the beliefs that shape our community. Lastly, we will conclude with **Session 3** as we describe how we strive to live. We call this our mission.

It is our hope that by going through MeadowsCentral, you will get excited about what God is doing through our church and join in by becoming a part of The Meadows Family.

The Meadows Family

God calls the Church His family. Therefore, so do we. Over the weeks following MeadowsCentral, we would ask you to consider taking the next step in joining our family.

As we will see in the pages to come, we believe a church consists of local disciples of **Jesus** who are committed to love **one another** and to live out **God’ mission** together. If you would like to make that genuine commitment, we would be excited to welcome you into our family to love and build you up as our brother or sister in Christ.

Session 1: Our Identity

Our identity is shaped by God’s identity

We believe that Jesus and His message, the Gospel, must be central to everything we do. In fact, it is what shapes our very identity! Therefore, before we know who we are and how we ought to live as a church, we must first know the Gospel Story.



The Gospel Story

Creation

“He is GREAT”

1

God created everything. Everything He created was good and full of life. The pinnacle of His creation was humanity who He chose to make in His own image and likeness. This unique gift meant that humankind had an intimate relationship with God and would be His imitators within creation. Everything was perfect and was the way it was suppose to be. No pain, no death, just unceasing communion with God the Giver of Life.

Curse

“He is GLORIOUS”

2

However, something changed all that. The world we live in today is no longer perfect. We face death, sickness, and broken relationships on a daily basis. This is because the intimate relationship with God was broken. Humans lost their trust in God and chose to live according to their own ways. This act of rebellion is called sin which marred the image of God within humans distorting His original design for relationship and life.

Cross

“He is GRACIOUS”

3

God did not leave His creation to their own destruction. He had a plan that was put in place before He first created everything. God would overcome sin and restore humans back to that perfect image with God. However, this would come at a great price. After thousands of years of calling people back to Him, God finally sent His own Son to die the death humans deserve, so they might have the restored life only God deserves. His Son's name is Jesus, the King who laid down his life for his people.

Kingdom

“He is GOOD”

4

The story does not end there for Jesus did not stay dead! He rose back to life proving he is greater than death. Jesus now rules and reigns as a loving King over his people. He then sent his Spirit to guide his people to take hold of this gift of abundant life. Jesus set the example of how we are to imitate and love God, and His Holy Spirit gives us the power to live that out. God's mission is to see every nation on earth experience this renewed life as image-bears of God. This is the time in which we are witnessing today.

We Are All Included in God's Story

Everyone who has lived on this earth is included in God's Story. God has made a way through Jesus to overcome death and live in abundant life. Jesus has died the death we should have died, so that we can share in the eternal life he should have lived. Everyone responds to the story by either accepting Jesus' gift and following him, or rejecting it and continuing on their same path.

Growing:



We grow by **partnering** together with others from our MC to intentionally speak the **gospel** into our lives

A DNA Group ideally consists two or three people—men with men, women with women— from the same Missional Community, who meet together once a week to disciple one another. The goal is to help one another to **DISCOVER** Jesus in the Scriptures, **NURTURE** the truths of the gospel in our hearts, and faithfully **ACT** on what the Spirit calls us to do.

Discover
Teach the Head

Read a passage of the Scriptures as laid out by subheadings in your Bible. Be students of the Word, not experts. Make basic observations as you slowly piece together the main point of the biblical author. Before we apply, we must know why. Be a detective gathering all the evidence before concluding who is the suspect.

What is the ONE main point the original author is making to the original audience?

Act
Empower the Hands

Let the passage speak to your everyday life. Everyone share how God wants you to live differently and how the gospel will help you to change. Be clear, be genuine, be specific!

What is the ONE way I will live differently this week because of God's Word?

End in prayer to commit these actions to God and ask the Spirit to work in you this week. Come back next week ready to share how God worked in you and carry on with the next passage in the Bible

Nurture
Shepherd the Heart

Take God's Word and compare it to the way we have been living recently. Ask good questions of each other to get at the root of our sin. Behind all of our sin is an unbelief in who God is. Once a struggle or sin is shared, dig deep to understand the belief that motivates that action or behavior.

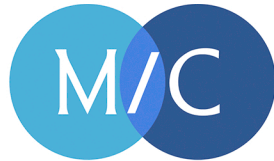
1. How have I not been living inline with this main point?
2. What does my sin reveal about my beliefs about God?
3. What has Jesus done in his life, death, or resurrection to deal with this sin?

Speak the truth in love as the Spirit leads you, reminding each other of what Christ has done for us. Repent of our unbelief.

What is the ONE thing I need to repent of and accept Jesus' forgiveness for?



Going:



MISSIONAL COMMUNITIES

We go as a family of disciples on mission

A Missional Community (MC) is a family of families who have **covenanted together** promising to **care for one another** and fulfill a **common mission**.

FAMILY

Through Jesus, the Father adopts us into His family. MCs take seriously the idea that we ought to love each other like family. We celebrate together, laugh together, mourn together and set our schedules together.

Therefore, members commit to care for, pray for, serve, and eat with one another on a regular basis.

DISCIPLE

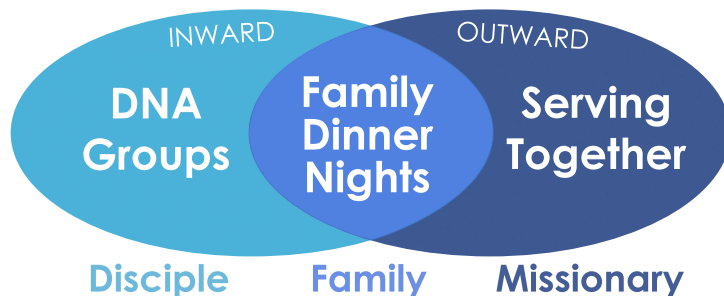
Every follower of Jesus is called to be an imitator of Jesus. This takes God's power and the church's help. MCs provide both formal and informal times to encourage one another with the gospel to walk with Jesus.

Therefore, members commit to study God's Word together in DNA's and use this time to encourage, build up, and correct one another.

MISSIONARY

Some of Jesus' last words were a commission directing his followers to go out into the world to spread the good news about God's saving grace. Jesus sent them out in communities and with the power of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, members commit to share the Gospel to a focused group of local people through word and deed as a team.



The Gospel Transforms Us

Anyone who believes in the Gospel, Jesus gives them His identity. This is not an identity that we can achieve, but one that we are given and are to live out of.

| WHO IS GOD? | WHAT HAS HE DONE? | WHO ARE WE? | WHAT DO WE DO? |
|-------------|----------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Father | Substituted His Son for Us | Loved Child in the Family of God | Love One Another |
| Son | Saved Us into His Likeness | Disciples remade in His image | Grow One Another |
| Holy Spirit | Sent the Son and Us | Missionaries sent by the Spirit | Proclaim Jesus to Others |

How the Gospel Reshapes Our Story

Creation

What shaped your identity?

1

Everyone has a beginning. The start to everyone's life has a deep impact on their understanding of who they are and what is their purpose in life. Factors such as our upbringing, major childhood events, and the values of our parents often shape the person we become. *Who or what shaped you the most? Where did you get your real value and identity from?*

Curse

What was broken?

2

We are all broken whether we admit it or not. Life has not gone our way. Whether sickness, death, abuse, addictions, or bad choices, we all respond to these in ways to "fix" our situations. We do this in a variety of ways that are contrary to God's Story and His ways for us. *Why was your relationship with God and others not the way it should have been?*

Cross

How did Jesus rescue you?

3

Just like God's Story, this is the climax of our story. Explain how you came to be rescued and redeemed by Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. The good news of Jesus is always personal and unique. Maybe it involved a key event, a special person; maybe it took a moment, maybe a year. *How did Jesus give you life?*

Kingdom

How are you being transformed?

4

Your story is not done yet. Jesus is still changing you, using you, speaking to you, and sharing His story through you. When Jesus saves us, he also begins to transform us through his Holy Spirit. Make sure Jesus is the hero of your story. *What is happening in your life now? How has Jesus transformed your life so far?*

How Gospel Reshapes Our Daily Lives

Jesus' death and resurrection proves that there is a solution to death, sickness, weakness, brokenness, and sin. It is the only solution that can! Therefore, not only are our life stories changed by the gospel, but our daily lives and actions must also be changed by the gospel.



The Gospel Defines Our Church's Identity

What God does to us, He will also do through us. Therefore, who we are and what we do as a church is based on who God is and what He has done for us.

We are a **Family** of **Missionary Disciples**

The Gospel Defines Our Identity

The church is commissioned by Jesus to go and make more disciples of all nations. Therefore, it is critical that we understand what a disciple is.

A disciple is a **learner and imitator** of Jesus in God's **family** on God's **mission** in everyday life

Contexts of Discipleship



We are deeply convicted that for disciples of Jesus to flourish at The Meadows Church, they must be actively involved in **Gathering, Going, Growing and Giving**.

Gather: Sunday Reunions

We gather as a larger community to **worship** Jesus and to **prepare** for his mission.

By **worshipping**, we both **proclaim** God's character and **respond** to His glory. Worship is the natural response to witnessing the greatness of God. (Isaiah 6)

| Proclaim | Respond |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| God's character in Song | Sing in adoration and prepare for God's Word |
| God's Word in Reading | Listen and allow Scripture to shape us |
| God's love in Prayer | Communicate with God |
| God's truth in Preaching | Listen to and apply God's teaching |
| God's direction in Announcements | Participate in various activities |
| God's heart in Generosity | Give financial offerings |
| God's community in Fellowship | Share with the Meadows family and visitors |
| God's kindness in Service | Serve the family in various roles |
| God's gospel in Baptism and Communion | Be baptized and take part in the Lord's Supper |

The gathering also **prepares** us for mission. This is the equipping of the church to live out our missional calling throughout the rest of the week. (Ephesians 4:11-14)

Session 3: Our Mission

To join Jesus on His mission to see the gospel transform lives in Churchill Meadows to live like Him

Because of the gospel, we are commissioned by Jesus to join him on his mission. His mission defines how we are to live out our identity in everyday life.

Our Values

In every family or community, there are unspoken rules that shape their culture. It is our goal to make those ambitions clearly communicated so that our community will continue to embody them for decades to come.

Gospel Centred

Jesus' life, death, and resurrection is the power for our salvation and sanctification. Everything we do must be shaped, motivated, and propelled forward by the gospel. Therefore, we will not use selfishness, guilt or shame, but the gospel to create lasting transformation.

Family Discipleship

God has designed His Church to function as His family. Therefore, we seek to grow in our faith by honouring God's design for family and hospitality. We prioritize our gathering times to include all generations while also equipping family shepherds to lead their families at home.

Simple Structures

Our priorities are on people, not programs. Yet people still need simple structures that foster relationships with one another and with God. Therefore, we will work hard on keeping things simple so we can focus our resources on relationship.

Neighbourhood Focused

Everyone is called to love their neighbours as Jesus loved them. Collectively, God has called our church to reach those immediately around us. When we identify who we are called to serve, we will be more effective at reaching them. Therefore we prioritize loving our neighbourhood of Churchill Meadows with the gospel of Jesus.

Our Pathway

By Gathering, Going, Growing, and Giving
(Acts 1-3)

Session 2: Our Beliefs

Our beliefs about God shape our identity and our purpose. Therefore, as we learn about our beliefs, we will also realize who we are as a community.

Please read through our Statement of Faith in the following pages for further explanations and implications.

Our God:

He is Above All

Our God is all Present, Purposeful, Powerful, Perfect, and Personal.

He is In Community

Our God is Triune and He welcomes us to become one as He is one.

He is On Mission

Our God seeks and saves His creation by restoring all through Himself.

Our Guide:

We have God's Truth

God inspired 40 authors over 1500 years to write 66 books that make up what we call the Bible. This is God's perfect, unaltered, free from error revelation to our world. It is our final authority for how to live life. **This is why we are both students and teachers of the Bible.**

We have God's Spirit

God sent His Spirit to guide, convict, speak to, remind, and give peace to us as He empowers us to live like Jesus and give Him glory. **This is why we are both a people who pray and listen to God.**

We have God's People

God saved us into His body, called the Church, and we are to love and disciple one another by pointing each other back to Jesus. God has called specific qualified people to serve as leaders within each church. **This is why we live in community and serve one another.**

Our Group:

We are Committed

Disciples believe, are baptized, and belong to the family of God.

We are Called to Gather

Disciples come together often to celebrate God together as a family.

We are Called to Scatter

Disciples are sent together to join God on His mission

Statement of Faith

The statements below are in alignment with the **Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches of Canada**. Additional information has been added to explain how certain beliefs are applied to The Meadows Church. For all additional policies and practices that are not included, please refer to FEB Central at febcentral.ca

Bible:

We believe the Bible to be the complete Word of God; that the sixty-six books, as originally written, comprising the Old and New Testaments were verbally inspired by the Spirit of God and were entirely free from error; that the Bible is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice and the true basis of Christian union. (Matthew 5:17-18; John 16:12-15; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

Trinity:

There is one, and only one, God, who is the creator of this universe. God, who is a God of love and justice, has always existed and will always exist. He is the ultimate authority over all persons and things, and he answers to no higher being or principle. In biblical terms we affirm that he is “holy,” which means that he is in every way unique and in a category all his own, free from all the limits and imperfections experienced by creatures. In both the majesty of his being and the moral purity of his nature and action, he is uniquely perfect. Although God is one in his being, he exists eternally in three divine persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The idea of the Trinity is a mystery beyond our full comprehension, but we are compelled by the witness of the Bible to affirm it. (Genesis 1-2; Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Corinthians 13:14)

Father:

We believe God the Father created all things in six days for his glory according to his own will (Revelation 4:11), through his Son, Jesus Christ. He upholds all things by the Word of his power and grace, exercising sovereign headship over all creation, providence, and redemption (Colossians 1:17, Hebrews 1:3).

Son:

The supreme revelation of God is found in Jesus Christ, the God-Man. The Son of God is a fully divine person of the Trinity who has existed

We believe that Jesus has given this specific calling to qualified men only. Just as God made Adam first to be the head of his household, he has also made a few men the leaders of his church (1 Corinthians. 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:12-13, Titus 2:1-15). These men must be above reproach, able to teach, husband to one wife, not addicted to wine, temperate, not antagonistic, prudent, uncontentious, respectable, free from the love of money, hospitable, manages his own household well, and not a new convert (Titus 1:6-9).

2. Deacons/Ministry Directors lead by serving. Jesus calls qualified men and women to lead his church as deacons, a word that is literally translated as “servants.” As the burden of ministry grew for the early church, elders appointed deacons to serve the needs of the church and handle the administrative functions of the church (Acts 6). Therefore, deacons serve the elders and The Meadows Church by leading various ministries of the church.

Those who serve as deacons must be characterized as having integrity, generosity, soberness, a clear understanding of the Bible, a well-ordered home, and a good reputation both in the church and outside the church. These would be positions such as Children’s Ministry Director, Church Treasurer, and Set Up Coordinator.

Male and Female Roles:

The Bible teaches firmly that there is no partiality or discrimination in the body of Christ. Galatians 3:28 says, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” This means that everyone who is a believer in Christ is of equal value.

We also believe that God has given people different callings and different roles to play. This does not change anyone’s value, but does change how they are to live within the family of God.

This is why God has called husbands to be the head of their household and qualified men to be elders. This does not mean women cannot lead; qualified women should serve in any leadership position that God has not designated solely for men (1 Timothy 2:12). Jesus calls every man and woman to minister and lead in a variety of ways for his mission. Titus 2 illustrates this well by instructing older men to teach younger men, and older women to teach younger women.

Marriage

We believe marriage is one of the God's highest callings because He designed it to be a picture of His union with the Church. Marriage points all of us to something much greater, the gospel (Eph 5:22-33). Therefore, our beliefs about marriage are deeply rooted in our beliefs about God.

God created humanity as male and female and included our born gender as part of our eternal identity. Therefore our bodies are both a gift and a calling (Gen 1, 2). Marriage is the union of two people who have become one flesh. This is a union between one male and one female who have committed before God and the Church to be one until death separates them (Mark 10:9).

We believe God allows divorce to take place in rare and extreme circumstances only. However, His goal is always redemption and committed union whenever possible (Matt 19:3-10). Not everyone is called to marriage, but we all need to honour God's design for marriage and sexuality (1 Cor 7).

Church Leadership:

God calls qualified people to lead His family within each local church. The leadership is found in two specific offices; the role of elder and deacon (1 Timothy 3:1-16; Titus 1:5-9).

1. Elders/Pastors serve by leading. The Elders' have six primary responsibilities. The first is to ensure that the **doctrine** of the church is biblical and be teaching those in the church these biblical beliefs. Second is to **direct** The Meadows Church in the way of God's leading. This means the Elders are entrusted with the decision making and guidance of the church. Next, they are to administer **discipline** in love and humility through the process provided in Matthew 18:15-20. They are also to be **devoted** to God's family like a shepherd would care for his flock. They are responsible for **developing** other leaders. Just like in 2 Timothy 2:2; "what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." Lastly, they **demonstrate** an exemplary life that is as close to Jesus' life as possible.

The Scriptures teach that whenever possible a plurality of elders is necessary to lead any church (Prov 15:22; Acts 14:23; Acts 20:28; Titus 1:5; Phil 1:1). Every elder on the leadership team is equal in authority. However, this does not necessarily mean they are equal in influence. For instance, the Lead Pastor through his giftedness and calling should be the most influential over the local church, even though he is equal in authority to the rest of the elders (1 Tim 5:17-18; 1 Pet 5:1-5).

eternally. In order to save human beings he added to his divinity a full and perfect human nature and became Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus was miraculously conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of a Jewish virgin, Mary. He lived a sinless life in obedience to God the Father, and his obedience culminated in his death as a payment of the penalty for the disobedience of sinful humans. God vindicated him when he raised him bodily from the dead, and he ascended to heaven where he is free from the limits of this world. He now intercedes for us who believe in him and preserves us in our relationship with the Father while we await his personal return. (Matthew 1:18-23; John 1:1-18; Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8)

Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit is a fully divine person, not an impersonal force. The Spirit makes the work of Jesus Christ effective in us by convincing us that we have sinned against God, that we therefore fail to meet God's standard for human life, that we are subject to God's judgment for that reason, and that Christ is the answer to our need. Christ gives the Spirit to indwell all those who believe in him, and the Spirit gives to believers a new spiritual ability to understand God's Word and live in obedience to it. By indwelling us he sets us apart as God's children; he continues to transform us into faithful followers of Christ; and he will in the end make us fully like Christ. (John 7:37-39; 14:16-17; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:13)

Satan:

Satan (also called the Devil) exists as an evil, personal, spirit-being who opposes the work of God in the world. Although created as a good, angelic being, he originated rebellion against God and continues to use his real but limited power to oppose all that would serve the glory of God and the good of humanity. (Genesis 3:1-15; Job 1:6-12; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; 1 Peter 5:8-9)

Humanity:

Human beings were created by God to be like him in every way. This is necessary in order to be in relationship with him. They serve as God's visible representatives in the exercise of responsible dominion over the created world. Our first parents sinned by disobeying an explicit divine command and thus brought ruin on the human race. The Bible describes this ruin in terms of "death": spiritual, physical and eternal death.

Spiritual death involves corruption at the core of our being, so that human beings are by nature totally incapable of pleasing God. Physical death is the destiny of all humanity. And ultimately eternal death involves permanent separation from God as the destiny of all those who refuse to repent and respond to God's offer of grace. (Genesis 1:26-27; 3:1-24; Romans 5:12-19; Ephesians 2:1-3)

Salvation:

Although God could have left all human beings in their sin and guilt, in love, he freely and graciously chose to deliver us from our ruined condition. He provided his eternal Son to become human in order to save us. Christ's saving work focused on his death, in which he bore the penalty which is justly ours, thus satisfying the demands of God's moral law and turning away the wrath of God which is poured out on unrepentant sinners. God signified his approval of Christ's work by raising him from the dead and exalting him as Lord in heaven. On the basis of this work of Christ on our behalf, God accepts as perfectly righteous all those who trust in Christ who died and rose again. We come to believe in Christ because God does a special work of grace to overcome our sinful disposition and draw us to himself. Then God continues this work of grace, so that all who have been drawn to faith in Christ will be preserved in faith and salvation and will enter into the perfect conditions of eternal life in the age to come. (John 6:35-40; Romans 3:19-26; 8:28-30; 1 Peter 1:18-23)

Future Things:

We believe that Jesus Christ will return personally, bodily, and gloriously, just as he promised and his apostles affirmed. In the end, Christ will raise from the dead all who have ever lived, and he will declare God's perfect judgment concerning every person. Those who have been saved will live eternally in the perfect, renewed creation, and those who have been unrepentant will exist eternally in the conscious punishment of hell. (Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Rev. 20-22)

The Church:

The universal church, the community of **believers** in Christ, is manifested in local churches throughout the world. A properly ordered local church is a loving community of persons who have confessed their faith in Christ by being immersed in Christian **baptism**, and who by their baptism have **committed** themselves to one another as well as to Christ.

Together they seek to proclaim the gospel of Christ, to build up each other as growing followers of Christ, to transmit the Christian faith to succeeding generations, and to worship God as his people called to be a distinct society in this world. Each local church is called to acknowledge Christ as Lord and Head of the church and to use its divinely given abilities and opportunities to make Christ known in its community. (Romans 12:3-8; Ephesians 4:1-16; 1 Timothy 3:1-15; 1 Peter 2:9-10)

The Mission:

Jesus has commissioned the Church to join him in making disciples of all ethnic groups. This is the daily action of every follower of Jesus to share (with words) and show (with works) the gospel message with those around them. This begins with their neighbours and continues to the ends of the earth. The Church is called to serve in this mission together both as individuals and as a community. (Matthew 28:16-20)

Symbols of the Gospel:

Among the things commanded by Christ, there are two visible symbols of the gospel, which he instituted for observance by his followers until he returns, one as a sign of Christian initiation and the other as a means of ongoing nurture.

1. Baptism is the immersion in water of a confessing believer, designed to occur at the beginning of Christian experience as the formal means of response to the gospel and initiation as a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Although baptism is not required for salvation, it is commanded of all believers and is for believers only (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:38, 41; Acts 18:8). Scripture shows that a person was baptized after personally receiving forgiveness of sin by accepting Jesus Christ. The act is a **powerful symbol of union with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection**, with all that this implies about our death to our old life and our spiritual rebirth. The waters of baptism are a symbol of death, burial, and resurrection to newness of life that happens when a person becomes a new creation in Christ (Colossians 2:12; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 6:1-4).

2. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic meal in which believers together partake of bread and wine as a tangible reminder of the body and blood of Christ, which were offered up for our salvation. By this act of eating and drinking, the whole community of believers proclaims the Lord's death until he returns. It is treated as a celebration of the redeeming work Christ has done in the lives of believers. (Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-34)