

WE WANT YOU TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IT MEANS TO JOIN MOUNT CARMEL CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Mount Carmel Christian Church is committed to live out the faith of the New Testament Church in today's context.

OUR BIBLICAL MANDATE:

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20 NIV)

OUR BIBLICAL MODE:

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:42-47 NIV)

Mount Carmel's application of the Biblical Mandate and the Biblical Mode means that we are committed to be:

1. A JESUS-WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY (LOVING GOD):

- We learn and live scripture.
- We worship God by giving our best.
- We celebrate the evidence of God at work.
- We make prayer our first ministry move.
- We are committed to being one in Christ.
- We give in order to resource mission.
- We share the gospel in order to bring people to Christ.

2. A JESUS DISCIPLE MAKING COMMUNITY (LOVING PEOPLE):

- We are a community of **belonging**.
"Belonging begins when I know your name and I am interested in you becoming a disciple of Jesus."
- We are a community of **servicing**.
"We will use our God gifts to bless those in our church family and those outside our church family."

- We are a community of **disciple training**.
“We will equip, encourage and enthuse Jesus disciples who make Jesus disciples by going small, going strong, going slow.”

To be a member of the the church, in the pattern of Acts 2:42-7, is to be committed to:

THE APOSTLES TEACHING: We learn the Bible so we can live the Bible.

- What we believe about God
- What we believe about Jesus the Christ
- What we believe about the gospel
- What we believe about the Holy Spirit
- What we believe about the Bible

FELLOWSHIP: We are Jesus-disciples who make Jesus-disciples.

- What we believe about the church
- The Mount Carmel structure
- The Mount Carmel disciple making strategy

BREAKING OF BREAD: We gather as a church in order to be the church.

- Weekend worship: Music, Communion, Offering, Sermon
- Children’s Ministry
- Student Ministry

PRAYER: We rely on the Holy Spirit.

- Prayer practices of Mount Carmel

SERVE

- Serving in church
- Serving in local mission
- Serving overseas mission
- Serving through financial support

WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT THE CHURCH

What is the Church?

The Greek word ἐκκλησία (ekklēsia) refers to people with shared belief: a community or a congregation. It is formed from two root words: ἐκ (“out”) and καλέω (“to call”).

The word was used in the larger Graeco-Roman society to refer an assembly of local citizens

“So then, some were shouting one thing and some another, for the assembly was in confusion, and the majority did not know for what cause they had come together.” (Acts 19:32 NASB)

In the New Testament it is used to refer to:

1. Local congregations:

Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus. They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them. Greet also the church that meets at their house. Greet my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia. (Romans 16:3-5 NIV)

2. The universal body of believers:

For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. (Ephesians 5:23-25 NIV)

The English word “church” is derived from the Latin word, kuriakos. The idea is “the Lord’s” or “those belonging to the Lord.” The word is used in a number of ways:

1. The local congregation
2. A building dedicated to worship
3. The actual worship service
4. Universal body of believers
5. Specific denominations

What the church is determines what the church does and how we define the church makes impacts how Christians operate in this world.

THE BIBLE TEACHES THE FOLLOWING ABOUT THE CHURCH:

The church was conceived by God.

And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. (Ephesians 1:22-23 NASB)

The church was founded by Christ.

He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything. (Colossians 1:18 NASB)

The church was organized by the Apostles

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:19-22 NASB)

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH?

To make disciples of Christ.

Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age. (Matthew 28:19-20 NLT)

A disciple is someone who has devoted their life to following Jesus. Being a disciple implies that the person believes that Jesus is the Savior, has received forgiveness of their sins by faith in Jesus, and has received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. In summary, the disciple has dedicated their life to obeying the teachings of Christ.

The Structure of the Church

THE APOSTLES

The Greek word apostolos, from which we get our word Apostle, means "sent one," or "one who is sent forth."

Requirements to be an Apostle:

1. Must have been an eyewitness of Christ's resurrection.

Therefore, it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection. (Acts 1:21-22 NIV)

2. Must be chosen and appointed by Christ.

When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles... (Luke 6:13 NIV)

Special powers of the Apostles:

1. Perform Miracles

The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon's Colonnade. (Acts 5:12 NIV)

2. Ability to bestow miraculous gifts to others.

Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw. When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." (Acts 8:13-19 NIV)

3. The ability to receive extensive revelation from God.

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you." (John 14:26 NASB)

The functions of the Apostles:

1. To testify to the resurrection of Christ.

"It is therefore necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus

went in and out among us-- beginning with the baptism of John, until the day that He was taken up from us-- one of these should become a witness with us of His resurrection.” (Acts 1:21-22 NASB)

2. To organize the Church

- Establish doctrine: And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (Acts 2:42 NASB)
- Make initial appointments of church “officers”: “But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. (Acts 6:3 NASB)

c. Nurture and guide the infant church

I do not write these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. I exhort you therefore, be imitators of me. For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church. (1 Corinthians 4:14-17 NASB)

Names of the Apostles:

1. The Twelve

When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles: Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor. (Luke 6:13-16 NIV)

2. Matthias

Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles. (Acts 1:26 NIV)

3. Paul

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God in Corinth, together with all the saints throughout Achaia... (2 Corinthians 1:1 NIV)

It is evident from scripture that the office of Apostle was a temporary one. These were men who were given the special role of establishing the church. Their teachings and activities are recorded in the New Testament and, therefore, we have the means to establish the church of Christ as they intended. Once the church had been established leadership of the church was moved to the permanent office of Elder.

Leadership Structure of the Established Church

ELDERS

Three different terms are used in the New Testament to refer to the same church leaders:

- ποιμήν: which means “one who guards or leads, a shepherd.”
- πρεσβύτερος: which means “an older person” and/or “an official” (i.e., an elder)
- ἐπίσκοπος: which means “one who has the responsibility of safeguarding.”

“To the elders I say... Be shepherds of God’s flock, serving as overseers...” (1 Peter 5:1-2)

“Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. When they arrived he said to them... Guard yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be pastors of the church of God...” (Acts 20:17-18, 28)

Who should be an elder?

Two passages outline the kind of person an elder should be: 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

An Elder must:

1. Be someone who wants to be an Elder
2. Be blameless – means nothing to hinder his reputation

3. Be the “husband of one wife” – means elders are to be men, and to be faithfully married to one woman.
4. Be temperate – “stable”.
5. Be self-controlled.
6. Be respectable.
7. Be hospitable.
8. Be able to teach.
9. Not be a drunk.
10. Not be a brawler.
11. Not be greedy for money.
12. Be gentle.
13. Not be quarrelsome.
14. Not be covetous.
15. Have a good family.
16. Have faithful children who are obedient to him.
17. Not be a recent convert.
18. Have a good reputation in his community.
19. Love what is good.
20. Be fair.
21. Be Holy.
22. Be disciplined.
23. Be a man who holds faithfully to the Word.

Duties of the Elder

Elders are to do two things in the church:

1. Lead the flock
 - Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. (1 Timothy 5:17 NASB)*
2. Guard the flock from false doctrine and immorality
 - Preach and teach sound doctrine (1 Timothy 5:17)
 - Alert the congregation of false teaching (Acts 20:28-31)
 - Monitor the growth of members (Hebrews 13:7)
 - Visit the sick (James 5:14)
 - Model sound Christian living (1 Peter 5:1-3)

MINISTERS

Does the role of our modern day preacher exist in the New Testament? Some possibilities:

1. The modern day preacher closest parallel in the New Testament is the elder who specializes in preaching and teaching. See 1 Timothy 5:17.
2. The modern day preacher is the same as the “evangelist” listed in Ephesians 4:11 and Acts 21:8. Some traveled preaching and teaching in local congregations (2 Timothy 4:5) and some stayed in one location as Philip did in Caesarea (Acts 21:8).

What we do know:

The “Pastor” “Preacher” “Minister” is a biblical function of either a preaching elder and/or evangelist whose work is focused in one congregation.

Duties of the Minister

1. Evangelize and make disciples
 - Proclaim the gospel to those who do not know Christ.
 - Persuade converts to live up to the gospel demands – 1 Timothy 4:13
2. Lead the church
 - There is a distinction between the administrative authority of the eldership and the “proclamative” authority of the minister. These two aspects must work in harmony. The minister comes under the

wisdom and oversight of the Elders.

- The minister is the primary spokesman of the Eldership.

Instruction for all ministers to follow:

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers. (1 Timothy 4:12-16 NIV)

DEACONS

The term δίακονος means “servant” in general. It is not an office of leadership, but one of service.

Two instances where the term is used to specify an office. – Philippians 1:1, 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Duties are to perform services assigned by the Eldership as modeled in Acts 6:1-5.

Qualifications for deacons are listed in 1 Timothy 3:8 – 13.

HOW MOUNT CARMEL CHRISTIAN CHURCH IS STRUCTURED:

The structure of the church should not be determined by culture, business practices, or even denominational traditions. The nature of the church determines its structure.