



CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE
BOKSBURG



**NEW MEMBERS' BOOKLET
2023**



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Introduction

It's always exciting for me to think of prospective new members of our church picking up this booklet for the first time. I remember my own journey from another denomination to the Church of the Nazarene; it took me a little while to figure out what this particular group was all about.

I read many books and spent much time in the Nazarene *Manual* and going through articles on Nazarene websites and Nazarene videos on YouTube.

Before long I realised: this is the place for me. Not just in my role as a pastor, but as a follower of Jesus! The Church of the Nazarene's identity, their doctrines and values, their structure and their membership requirements – they all seem to point me to Christ, and encourage me in my walk with Him.

I came to know that this is a church that is serious, but joyful!

It is a church that is holy, but humble!

It's a church that is Scriptural, and thoughtful.

It is welcoming to all, while being committed to transformation.

It is flawed, but sanctified!

It's a church that I will gladly commit to, seeking to live out my Christian life as a member.

And so I condensed much of my reading into this little booklet. My prayer is that these pages will convince you of the same things I mentioned above. And that, finishing it, you will become a member of our spiritual family at the Church of the Nazarene Boksburg, and spend years here growing and thriving in your faith.

May it be so!

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Luke Powell
March 2023

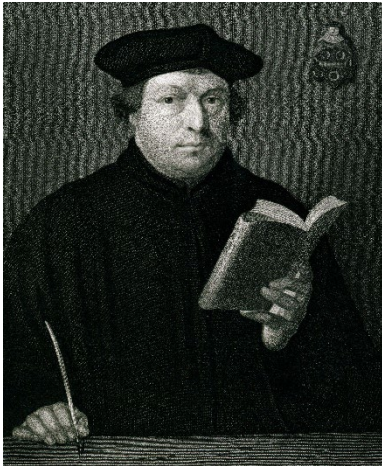
Chapter 1) Our Identity: Who We Are

Many people in South Africa have never heard of the Church of the Nazarene. Some people confuse us with a group called the Nazirites. Some think we are a cult! But the truth is, the Church of the Nazarene is an orthodox Protestant denomination, which finds its roots in the Wesleyan Revival of the 18th century, and the Holiness Movement of the late 19th/early 20th century.

1. The Protestant Movement

The Protestant Movement began in 1517, when a German monk named Martin Luther experienced a renewal in his own faith.

Luther had spent many years trying to earn his salvation through good works and religious practices, as prescribed by the Catholic Church of his day. But he learned that salvation cannot be earned – it is a free gift from God. Famously, he nailed to the church door a list of statements debating the doctrines and practices of the church, and in the years that followed, the European Church was split in two as Luther and his “Protestants” went their own way.



Martin Luther

Luther's Focus

The Protestants differed from the Catholic Church in at least these 3 core areas:

- *Salvation by faith, not works* – unlike the Catholic belief in penance and earning forgiveness.
- *The authority of the Bible* – unlike the Catholic belief in church tradition as equal to the Scripture's authority.
- *The priesthood of all believers* – unlike the Catholic belief in the superiority of clergy over lay people.

The Church of the Nazarene hold the same convictions! We are, therefore, a Protestant Church.

2. The Wesleyan Movement

In the 18th century, a Christian revival swept through England through the leadership of a minister and evangelist named John Wesley.

Wesley's Story

Born in 1703, Wesley very nearly died in a fire at the age of 6. But he was miraculously saved, and he came to believe that this was a gracious act of God, preserving him for a life of ministry in His service.

Wesley was ordained as an Anglican priest in 1728. In the years following, he and his brother Charles were both tutors at Oxford, where they formed a group called The Holy Club, in which a small group of young men gathered to read Scripture and pray. Due to their strictness and methodical spiritual practices, the group became known around the campus as 'The Methodists'.

However, in spite of his rigorous approach to the Christian life, Wesley never felt assured of his standing with God. When a fierce storm threatened to overturn a ship on which he was sailing, Wesley was ashamed of his own fear of death, compared to the calm demeanour he saw in other Christians onboard. He came to doubt his own salvation, and wondered seriously if he was really a Christian.

But everything changed for him on 21 May 1738 at a place called Aldersgate, where he heard somebody reading the words of Martin Luther which spoke of salvation by *faith*, not by good deeds. He came to know that he was loved by God, even though he wasn't perfect, and as famously wrote 'I felt my heart strangely warmed'.

Wesley's life changed drastically after this, and he began to work for God, not to try and earn God's love, but knowing that he was already loved by God. This sparked an incredible ministry which changed many lives in England, and indeed, around the world.



John Wesley

Wesley's Theology

Wesley's thinking differed from Luther's in many ways. In particular, there were 2 beliefs that defined Wesley's theology:

- *Free will.* Where other Christian groups taught that God chooses who to save and who to condemn, Wesley stressed that God's salvation is available to all, and that all people have the choice to accept or reject the saving love God offers.
- *Entire Sanctification.* Wesley believed that Christians can be set free from the power of sin in their lifetime. While he was clear that no human can reach the absolute perfection of God, he did teach that holiness is reachable for any person filled with God's Spirit.

Wesley died in 1791, but his influence was still far from complete!

3. The Holiness Movement

The Methodist Church carried the teaching of Wesley into the 19th century. However, over time the Methodists became less tied to the distinctive Wesleyan teaching of entire sanctification. By the late 1800s, a group called the Christian Holiness Partnership had formed. This was made up of people who believed that the church was losing its focus on the type of holiness that Wesley had taught. In the 1890s there were 3 primary groups who passionately held to their convictions about holiness:

- The Association of Pentecostal Churches of America in New England
- The Holiness Church of Christ in Texas and Arkansas
- The Church of the Nazarene in California

In 1908 these three groups were merged during a famous meeting at a place called Pilot Point, and the **Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene** was born. There was a strong belief among the early leaders of this church that their purpose was to preach and teach the forgotten Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification. In the first Manual of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene, we read:

These persons were convinced that they were called of God unto holiness, to teach others the doctrine, and to lead them into the experience of entire sanctification.

Through the years, this distinct purpose of the Church of the Nazarene has remained.

Phineas Bresee

The key person in the formation of the Church of the Nazarene was Dr Phineas Bresee. Born in 1838, Bresee was ordained to the Methodist ministry in 1861, and spent many years as a respected pastor. In the late 1890s, Bresee broke away from the Methodist Church to begin the Church of the Nazarene in California, with a renewed focus on reaching the poor with the gospel, and preaching entire sanctification.



Phineas Bresee

When the three churches united to form one Church of the Nazarene in 1908, it was Bresee who was elected as the first General Superintendent (see chapter 4 to understand what that role entails), a role in which he remained until his death in 1915. Bresee also spent time leading a local Nazarene Church in Los Angeles and editing a weekly Nazarene newspaper.

Bresee's influence on the Church of the Nazarene can hardly be overstated! At the time of his death, J.W. Chapman, another great leader of the church, said this:

"The Church of the Nazarene has had many worthy teachers and leaders, and it may have more of these yet whom it will hold in high esteem; but it has had and can have but one founder and father; so that the life and work of Phineas Franklin Bresee, untarnished as they are by any unworthy choice or deed, are a heritage invaluable to Nazarenes, to the Holiness Movement, to the whole Church Militant and to the needy world." (Chapman in Brickley 1960: 284)

Praise God for raising up leaders such as these to help our church find its feet!

The Church's Name

The name 'Church of the Nazarene' was thought of by Bresee's close associate Dr J.P. Widney. One morning, after a full night of prayer, the name came to Widney, and for him it symbolized the whole mission – since it was "the name which was used in derision of Him by His enemies", and the name which linked him to "the great toiling, struggling, sorrowing heart of the world. It is Jesus, Jesus of Nazareth, to whom the world in its misery and despair turns, that it may have hope." (Widney in Van Note 1983: 43).

Initially the Church was known at the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene – with the word "Pentecostal" being a synonym for "holiness". But in the early 1900s, when a new group who called themselves "Pentecostals" arose, a different meaning became attached to the word and it was dropped from our church's name in 1919.

The Church's Anthem

To further emphasize the Church of the Nazarene's focus on holiness, a hymn was unofficially adopted as the church's anthem. Written by Lelia Norris, *Holiness Unto the Lord* has long been a standard part of Nazarene assemblies and gatherings, sung passionately and loudly.

It was chosen because the words align with the Church of the Nazarene's mission – to proclaim that God is holy, and that we are called to be holy ourselves! Listen to it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h9hJKCFnXoY> and pay close attention to the words



Ask yourself: Do I understand why the Church of the Nazarene is Protestant? Wesleyan? Holiness?

4. The South African Movement

From the earliest days of the Church of the Nazarene, there was an interest in taking the message of full sanctification to South Africa. It was 1907 when three Nazarene missionaries came to Port Elizabeth and began to preach and teach about God's call to holiness. Initially, one of the missionaries – Harmon Schmelzenbach – settled in Swaziland with his family. But soon enough he felt burdened to go and register the Church of the Nazarene in Pretoria so that the work of God could continue in the Union of South Africa, as it was then known.

However, it was only in 1944 that Schmelzenbach's vision began coming to life. The General Board commissioned Rev. Charles H. Strickland, a pastor from Texas, to travel to Johannesburg to begin a Nazarene ministry. By 1950, the first Assembly of the Church of the Nazarene in South Africa was convened at Parys, where 30 Nazarene ministers and a number of missionaries were in attendance. An ordination service was held, and the South African European District of the Church of the Nazarene was formed.

A significant moment came in 1954, when the Nazarene Bible College was established in Potchefstroom, following the traditional Nazarene emphasis on proper training and education for prospective ministers. Today, the Nazarene Theological Seminary is based in Honeydew, and many churches train ministers through an in-house training programme provided by the Church of the Nazarene in America.

Another important moment came in 1994, when our districts merged. During the Apartheid years, districts were split into 'European' and 'Coloured' groups. With the abolishment of Apartheid, the church decided to be rid of their own policies of division, and merged the two groups in each district.

Boksburg

In the 1970s, a group of believers from the Victory Park Church of the Nazarene began to meet together at a home in Klopper Park, Germiston. Before long this group was growing, and their meetings moved into a local school hall. But that also proved to be too small, and so a church building was planned.



In 1976, our church building in Leipoldt Crescent, Parkrand, was completed! Ds Steyn Roets was the first pastor.

In the late 1990s, Ds Manie Delpport was pastor and it was under his leadership that our church changed its name: instead of simply being called *Kerk Van Die Nasarener Boksburg*, we became *Hisop Gemeente*.

In the Old Testament we read of a plant called "hyssop" which was associated with cleansing (see Psalm 51:7), and was also used by the Israelites to apply blood to their doorposts during the first Passover (Exodus 12:22). Our church began using this Afrikaans word "hisop" as an acronym:

Heiligmaking deur hartsreiniging (holiness through heart purification)

Inspirasie deur Gees en Woord (inspiration through Spirit and Word)

Sondagsverantwoording (Sunday accountability)

Onvoorwaardelike liefde (unconditional love)

Passievolle verhoudings (passionate relationships)

What a powerful vision for our church!

Our current Afrikaans pastor, Ds Pieter Joubert, began leading our church in 2016. Prior to that, Pieter was an assistant pastor under Ds Victor Joubert (no relation!) and Ds Frans Van Loggerenberg. Pieter also spent years in children's evangelism and travelling music ministry.

Ps Luke Powell, who began the English service in September 2022, was also very active in travelling music ministry, before taking on the pastoral role at eMseni Methodist Church

from 2018-2021. He was granted his district license and installed as the English pastor of our church in January 2023.



Ask yourself: Do I understand the Church of the Nazarene's role in South Africa, and in Boksburg?

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Chapter 2) Our Doctrines: What We Believe

In any denomination, doctrines are important. They underline what a group believes and teaches, and they give focus to the way of life expected of church members.

If you'd like to find out what the Church of the Nazarene is all about, there are 3 places to look:

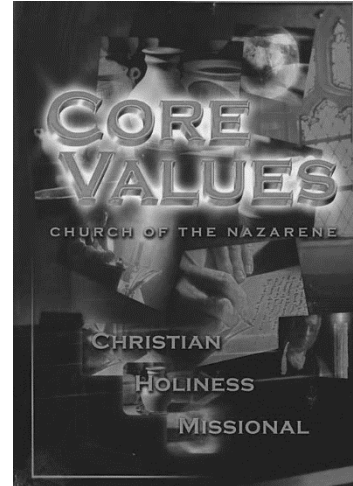
1. Our Core Values

In 2001, the Church of the Nazarene published our *Core Values* in a small booklet which was distributed worldwide. The book states:

In the early years of this new millennium, it is appropriate for the Church of the Nazarene to identify those distinctives that we joyfully embrace and celebrate. Our most precious treasures – our mission, calling, beliefs and highest values – we gladly offer as a gift to the generations to come.

We pray that our core values will continue to serve as a guiding light for those who must make their way through the light and shadows of the decades that lie ahead.

These core values are expressed in three words: **Christian, holiness, and mission.**



i) We are a **CHRISTIAN** people

As members of the Church Universal, we join with all true believers in proclaiming the Lordship of Jesus Christ and in embracing the historic Trinitarian creedal statements of Christian faith. We value our Wesleyan-Holiness heritage and believe it to be a way of understanding the faith that is true to Scripture, reason, tradition and experience.

ii) We are a **HOLINESS** people

God, who is holy, calls us to a life of holiness. We believe that the Holy Spirit seeks to do in us a second work of grace, called by various terms including “entire sanctification” and “baptism with the Holy Spirit” – cleansing us from all sin; renewing us in the image of God, empowering us to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and our neighbours as ourselves; and producing in us the character of Christ. Holiness in the life of believers is most clearly understood as Christlikeness.

iii) We are a **MISSIONAL** people

We are a “sent” people, responding to the call of Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit to go into all the world, witnessing to the Lordship of Christ and participating with God in the building of the Church and the extension of His kingdom (2 Corinthians 6:1). Our mission (a) begins in worship, (b) ministers to the world in evangelism and compassion, (c) encourages believers towards Christian maturity through discipleship, and (d) prepares women and men for Christian service through Christian higher education.

The core values truly represent our church's highest beliefs and commitments. They define us! And they motivate us on our Christian journey, keeping us focused on what matters most.



Ask yourself: Are these the core values of my own life as a follower of Jesus? Should they be?

2. Our Statement of Belief

A fuller explanation of the things our church believes can be found in the Statement of Belief. This can be found in the *Manual*, paragraph 20.

Whenever somebody is received as a member of our church, they are asked to affirm their own belief in the following eight statements.

- *We believe in one God – the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*
- *We believe that the Old and New Testament Scriptures, given by plenary inspiration, contain all truth necessary to faith and Christian living.*
- *We believe that human beings are born with a fallen nature, and are, therefore, inclined to evil, and that continually.*
- *We believe that the atonement through Jesus Christ is for the whole human race; and that whoever repents and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ is justified, regenerated, and saved from the dominion of sin.*
- *We believe that believers are to be sanctified wholly, subsequent to regeneration, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.*
- *We believe that the Holy Spirit bears witness to the new birth, and also to the entire sanctification of believers.*
- *We believe that the finally impenitent are hopelessly and eternally lost.*
- *We believe that our Lord will return, the dead will be raised, and the final judgment will take place.*

It is sufficient to state your belief in these principles to become a member of the Church of the Nazarene.



Ask yourself: Are there any statements above that I don't understand or agree? Will I be able to affirm these in front of my local church?

3. Our Articles of Faith

For those who want to go even deeper into the beliefs of our church, the Articles of Faith explain it all. This is our church's official creed – made up of 16 “we believe” statements rooted in Scriptural truths.

What follows is the ‘easy-to-read’ version of the articles. If you would like to read these in language that is more technical and theological, you can find them in the *Manual* or on our church's website.

Article 1: The Triune God

We believe in one God who is eternal and without limits. He is the creator and the ruler of the universe. He sustains all things. God is holy in every part of His being. He is holy light and holy love. God is one being whose nature is triune. He is revealed to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: the Trinity.

(Genesis 1; Leviticus 19:2; Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Isaiah 5:16; 6:1-7; 40:18-31; Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19-20; John 14:6-27; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 4:4-6; Ephesians 2:13-18; 1 John 1:5; 4:8)

Article 2: Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, who has always been one with the Father. He became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and was born of the Virgin Mary. He is not a man who became a god, nor is He a god who simply appeared to be a man. Instead, He is fully God and fully human: two natures combined into one, the God-man.

We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins. He was resurrected from the dead and took again his body with all things related to the perfection of humanity. He ascended into heaven where He now intercedes for us.

(Matthew 1:20-25; 16:15-16; Luke 1:26-35; John 1:1-18; Acts 2:22-36; Romans 8:3, 32-34; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:12-22; 1 Timothy 6:14-16; Hebrews 1:1-5; 7:22-28; 9:24-28; 1 John 1:1-3; 4:2-3, 15)

Article 3: The Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, who continually works in the Church of Christ and through it. He convinces the world of sin, and He gives new life to those who repent and believe. He sanctifies believers. The Holy Spirit guides into all truth as revealed in Jesus Christ.

(John 7:39; 14:15-18, 26; 16:7-15; Acts 2:33; 15:8-9; Romans 8:1-27; Galatians 3:1-14; 4:6; Ephesians 3:14-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 John 3:24; 4:13)

Article 4: The Holy Scriptures

We believe that the Bible is fully and divinely inspired. The entirety of the sixty-six books of the Old and the New Testaments reveal without error all that we need to know for our salvation. All our articles of faith must be based on this understanding of the Bible.

(Luke 24:44-47; John 10:35; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Peter 1:10-12; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

Article 5: Sin – Original and Personal

5.1. We believe that sin came into the world when our first parents, Adam and Eve, disobeyed God. Their sin brought death into creation. We believe that there are two kinds of sin: original sin and personal sin.

5.2. Original sin is different from sinning. It is an inherited inclination that drives us to commit sinful acts. People are not judged guilty for original sin until they either neglect or reject God's remedy for it.

5.3. Personal sin, also called actual sin, is the act of intentionally breaking a known law by persons who are capable of understanding their actions. Such sins should not be confused with involuntary and inescapable limitations that are the residual results of the Fall. Sins are not the same as mistakes, failures, faults, or other involuntary actions that do not conform to a standard of perfect conduct. However, these limitations are not the same as sins of the spirit. Sins of the spirit include attitudes and actions that are contrary to the Spirit of Christ. Personal sin is primarily and essentially the breaking of the law of love, which may be defined as unbelief in Jesus Christ.

(Original sin: Genesis 3; 6:5; Job 15:14; Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9-10; Mark 7:21-23; Romans 1:18-25; 5:12-14; 7:1-8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:1-4; Galatians 5:16-25; 1 John 1:7-8)

Personal sin: Matthew 22:36-40 {with 1 John 3:4}; John 8:34-36; 16:8-9; Romans 3:23; 6:15-23; 8:18-24; 14:23; 1 John 1:9-2:4; 3:7-10)

Article 6: Atonement

We believe that Jesus Christ suffered, bled, and died on the cross to bring God and human beings into a right relationship. This is called the atonement. It provides the remedy for all human sin, and it is the only basis of salvation. Jesus Christ died for all people. The grace of God provides salvation for children and for those incapable of making decisions for themselves. All others must repent and believe to be saved.

(Isaiah 53:5-6, 11; Mark 10:45; Luke 24:46-48; John 1:29; 3:14-17; Acts 4:10-12; Romans 3:21-26; 4:17-25; 5:6-21; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 2 Corinthians 5:14-21; Galatians 1:3-4; 3:13-14; Colossians 1:19-23; 1 Timothy 2:3-6; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:9; 9:11-14; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:18- 21; 2:19-25; 1 John 2:1-2)

Article 7: Prevenient Grace

We believe that the grace of God, through Jesus Christ, is free and given to all people. It empowers them to choose to turn from sin to righteousness, to believe on Jesus Christ for pardon, and to receive cleansing from sin. The grace of God empowers people to live in ways that are pleasing to God and acceptable to him. This is called “prevenient grace.”

We also believe that humanity was created in the image of God, which included the ability to choose between good and evil. This is known as moral responsibility. Because of the sin of Adam and Eve, all people are born with a corrupt nature. By their own natural strength, they cannot turn to faith and call upon God, and they cannot do good works to save themselves.

(Godlikeness and moral responsibility: Genesis 1:26-27; 2:16-17; Deuteronomy 28:1-2; 30:19; Joshua 24:15; Psalm 8:3-5; Isaiah 1:8-10; Jeremiah 31:29-30; Ezekiel 18:1-4; Micah 6:8; Romans 1:19-20; 2:1-16; 14:7-12; Galatians 6:7-8

Natural inability: Job 14:4; 15:14; Psalms 14:1-4; 51:5; John 3:6a; Romans 3:10-12; 5:12-14, 20a; 7:14-25

Free grace and works of faith: Ezekiel 18:25-26; John 1:12-13; 3:6b; Acts 5:31; Romans 5:6-8, 18; 6:15-16, 23; 10:6-8; 11:22; 1 Corinthians 2:9-14; 10:1-12; 2 Corinthians 5:18-19; Galatians 5:6; Ephesians 2:8-10; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:21-23; 2 Timothy 4:10a; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 3:12-15; 6:4-6; 10:26-31; James 2:18-22; 2 Peter 1:10-11; 2:20-22)

Article 8: Repentance

We believe that the Holy Spirit graciously gives a penitent heart and the hope of mercy to all who will repent. Then, they can believe and receive pardon and spiritual life. Salvation requires repentance, which is a sincere and thorough change of mind about sin. Repentance involves a sense of personal guilt and voluntarily turning away from sin. It is required because we all, through our actions or our intentions, became sinners against God.

We believe that it is possible for someone to return to sin and reject the faith. Those who return to sin will be hopelessly and eternally lost unless they repent of their sins. However, we believe that those who are born again do not need to return to sin. Instead, they may continue to live, without interruption, in fellowship with God because of the power of the Holy Spirit who lives in them. The Holy Spirit witnesses to our spirits that we are children of God.

(2 Chronicles 7:14; Psalms 32:5-6; 51:1-17; Isaiah 55:6-7; Jeremiah 3:12-14; Ezekiel 18:30-32; 33:14-16; Mark 1:14-15; Luke 3:1-14; 13:1-5; 18:9-14; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 5:31; 17:30-31; 26:16-18; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:8-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; 2 Peter 3:9)

Article 9: Justification, Regeneration, and Adoption

We believe that all who believe in Jesus Christ and receive him as Lord and Saviour are *justified*. This means that God fully and freely pardons their guilt and releases them from the penalty of their sins. He accepts them as righteous.

We believe that God freely *regenerates* all those who repent and believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. He provides them with a new spiritual life and a new moral nature, which is capable of faith, love, and obedience to God. This is called the new birth.

We believe that God, who freely justifies and regenerates new believers, *adopts* them as children into the family of God.

Justification, regeneration, and adoption happen at the same moment upon a person's repentance and faith in Christ. The Holy Spirit witnesses to us that God has accomplished these acts of grace.

(Luke 18:14; John 1:12-13; 3:3-8; 5:24; Acts 13:39; Romans 1:17; 3:21-26, 28; 4:5-9, 17-25; 5:1, 16-19; 6:4; 7:6; 8:1, 15-17; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 6:11; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Galatians 2:16-21; 3:1-14, 26; 4:4-7; Ephesians 1:6-7; 2:1, 4-5; Philippians 3:3-9; Colossians 2:13; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 1:9; 3:1-2, 9; 4:7; 5:1, 9-13, 18)

Article 10: Sanctification

We believe that sanctification is the work of God that transforms believers into the likeness of Jesus Christ. This work is accomplished by God's grace through the Holy Spirit. Sanctification starts with regeneration, which happens at the same time as justification. It is also called initial sanctification. It continues through entire sanctification and the continuous work of the Holy Spirit as he perfects believers, transforming them into Christlikeness. It results in glorification, at which time they are fully conformed to the image of the Son.

Entire Sanctification

We believe that after regeneration there is an additional work of God by which believers are freed from original sin, which is also called depravity. Believers enter into a state of entire devotion to God and holy obedience that is perfected love.

Entire sanctification is the result of the baptism with the Holy Spirit, which is also called the infilling of the Holy Spirit. It includes the cleansing of the heart from sin and the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. He empowers the believer to live and to serve like Jesus Christ.

Entire sanctification is possible because of Jesus's sacrifice. It happens instantaneously by grace through faith. It is preceded by the total commitment of a believer to God, which is called entire consecration. The Holy Spirit witnesses to us that he has accomplished this. This experience is known by various terms that represent its different phases: "Christian perfection," "perfect love," "heart unity," "the baptism with the Holy Spirit," "the infilling of the Holy Spirit," "the fullness of the blessing," and "Christian holiness."

Growth in Grace

We believe there is clear distinction between a pure heart and a mature character. A pure heart happens in an instant as a result of entire sanctification. A mature character happens over time through the process of growing in grace.

We believe that the person who is entirely sanctified has a godly desire to grow in grace as a Christlike disciple. This growth is not automatic. It must be consciously nurtured through spiritual development and improvement in order to develop a Christlike character and personality. Those who do not intentionally work at spiritual growth will damage their witness, and they may frustrate God's grace and eventually lose it.

By participating in the means of grace, believers grow in grace and in wholehearted love of God and neighbour. These means of grace include especially fellowship, the spiritual disciplines, and the sacraments of the Church.

(Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Malachi 3:2-3; Matthew 3:11-12; Luke 3:16-17; John 7:37-39; 14:15-23; 17:6-20; Acts 1:5; 2:1-4; 15:8-9; Romans 6:11-13, 19; 8:1-4, 8-14; 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; Galatians 2:20; 5:16-25; Ephesians 3:14-21; 5:17-18, 25-27; Philippians 3:10-15; Colossians 3:1-17; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; Hebrews 4:9-11; 10:10-17; 12:1-2; 13:12; 1 John 1:7, 9)

("Christian perfection," "perfect love": Deuteronomy 30:6; Matthew 5:43-48; 22:37-40; Romans 12:9-21; 13:8-10; 1 Corinthians 13; Philippians 3:10-15; Hebrews 6:1; 1 John 4:17-18)

“Heart purity”: Matthew 5:8; Acts 15:8-9; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:3

“Baptism with the Holy Spirit”: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Malachi 3:2-3; Matthew 3:11-12; Luke 3:16-17; Acts 1:5; 2:1-4; 15:8-9

“Fullness of the blessing”: Romans 15:29

“Christian holiness”: Matthew 5:1-7:29; John 15:1-11; Romans 12:1-15:3; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 4:17-5:20; Philippians 1:9-11; 3:12-15; Colossians 2:20-3:17; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; 4:7-8; 5:23; 2 Timothy 2:19-22; Hebrews 10:19-25; 12:14; 13:20-21; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 2 Peter 1:1-11; 3:18; Jude 20-21)

Article 11: The Church

We believe in the Church, which is the community that confesses Jesus Christ as Lord. It is the people of God’s covenant who are made new in Christ. The Church is the Body of Christ called together by the Holy Spirit through the Word.

God calls the Church to be a visible expression of the unity and the fellowship of the Spirit. The Church demonstrates this unity as it obeys Christ and lives holy lives. Believers are mutually accountable to one another. This unity is visible in worship through the preaching of the Word, by participating in the sacraments, and by ministry in the name of Jesus Christ.

The mission of the Church is to share the work of Christ as He redeems and reconciles the world in the power of the Spirit. The Church fulfils its mission by making disciples. We do this through evangelizing, educating, showing compassion, working for justice, and proclaiming the kingdom of God.

(Exodus 19:3; Jeremiah 31:33; Matthew 8:11; 10:7; 16:13-19, 24; 18:15-20; 28:19-20; John 17:14-26; 20:21-23; Acts 1:7-8; 2:32-47; 6:1-2; 13:1; 14:23; Romans 2:28-29; 4:16; 10:9-15; 11:13-32; 12:1-8; 15:1-3; 1 Corinthians 3:5-9; 7:17; 11:1, 17-33; 12:3, 12-31; 14:26-40; 2 Corinthians 5:11-6:1; Galatians 5:6, 13-14; 6:1-5, 15; Ephesians 4:1-17; 5:25-27; Philippians 2:1-16; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12; 1 Timothy 4:13; Hebrews 10:19-25; 1 Peter 1:1-2, 13; 2:4-12, 21; 4:1-2, 10-11; 1 John 4:17; Jude 24; Revelation 5:9-10)

Article 12: Baptism

We believe that Christian baptism is a sacrament commanded by our Lord. It signifies that a person has accepted the benefits of the atonement and has become a part of the Body of Christ. It is a means of grace that proclaims the believer’s faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour. Baptism demonstrates a believer’s desire to follow Jesus Christ in obedience, holiness, and righteousness.

Young children and the morally innocent are participants in the new covenant. Therefore, they may be baptized at the request of their parents or guardians. The church pledges to provide Christian training. A person may be baptized by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion.

(Matthew 3:1-7; 28:16-20; Acts 2:37-41; 8:35-39; 10:44-48; 16:29-34; 19:1-6; Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:26-28; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:18-22)

Article 13: The Lord’s Supper

We believe that the Lord’s Supper is a sacrament that Jesus Christ established. It proclaims His life, suffering, sacrificial death, resurrection, and the hope of His coming again. It is a means of grace in which Christ is present by the Spirit. All are invited to participate by faith in Christ and to be renewed in life, in salvation, and in unity as the Church. All should come respectfully, appreciating its significance. By participating in this sacrament, we testify to the Lord’s death until He comes again. Those who have faith in Christ and who love the people of God are invited to participate as often as possible.

(Exodus 12:1-14; Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20; John 6:28-58; 1 Corinthians 10:14-21; 11:23-32)

Article 14: Diving Healing

We believe in the biblical doctrine of divine healing. We encourage our people to pray in faith for the healing of the sick. We also believe that God heals through the means of medical science.

(2 Kings 5:1-19; Psalm 103:1-5; Matthew 4:23-24; 9:18-35; John 4:46-54; Acts 5:12-16; 9:32-42; 14:8-15; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; James 5:13-16)

Article 15: Second Coming of Christ

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will come to earth again. Those believers who died will be resurrected and rise to be with him. We who are alive and abiding in Jesus Christ will be carried away with the risen ones to meet the Lord in the air. From then on, we will always be with the Lord.

(Matthew 25:31-46; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; Philippians 3:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 9:26-28; 2 Peter 3:3-15; Revelation 1:7-8; 22:7-20)

Article 16: Resurrection, Judgment, and Destiny

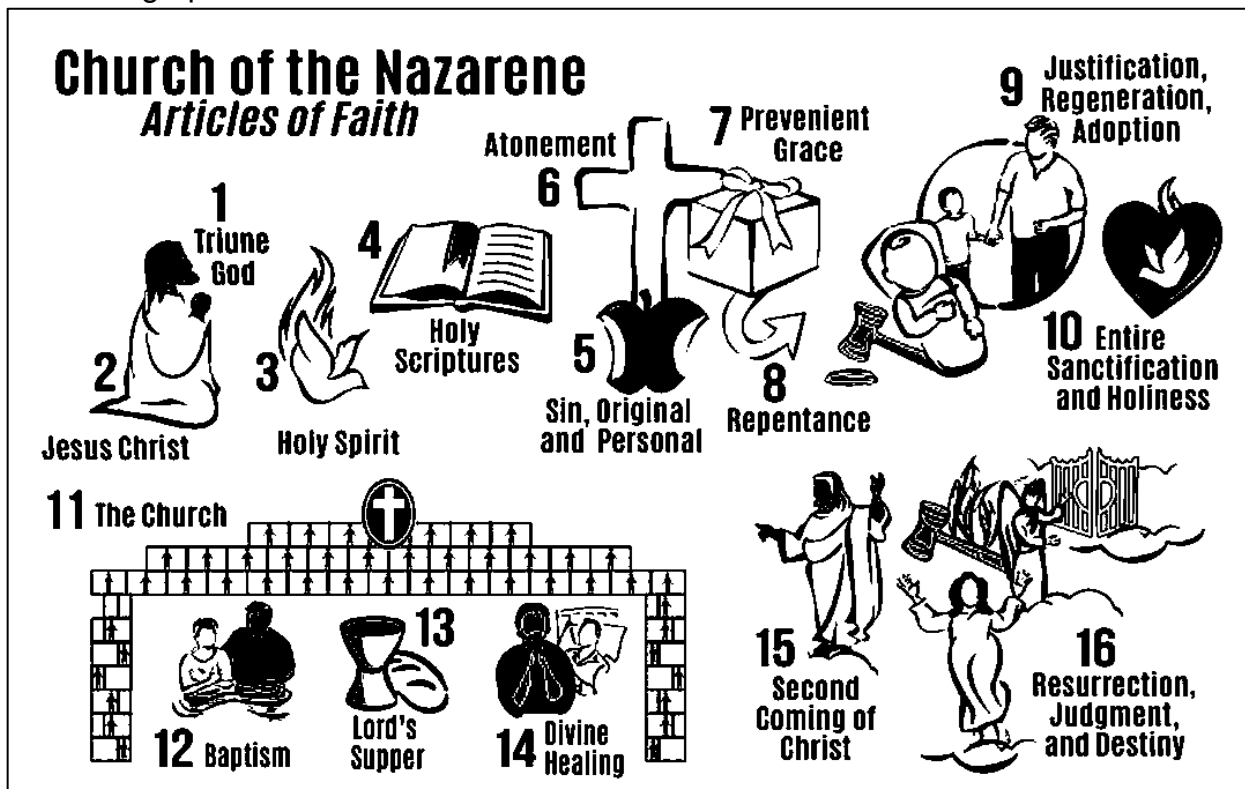
We believe in the resurrection of the dead. That is to say, the bodies of both the just and the unjust will be raised to life and united with their spirits. Those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned.

We believe in a future judgement in which every person will appear before God to be judged according to his or her deeds in this life. Those who refuse to repent will suffer eternally in hell.

We believe that those who are saved by faith in Jesus Christ and who obediently follow Him are assured of a glorious and everlasting life.

(Genesis 18:25; 1 Samuel 2:10; Psalm 50:6; Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2-3; Matthew 25:31-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-31; 20:27-38; John 3:16-18; 5:25-29; 11:21-27; Acts 17:30-31; Romans 2:1-16; 14:7-12; 1 Corinthians 15:12-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10; Revelation 20:11-15; 22:1-15)

Here is a graphic that shows the 16 articles of faith:





Ask yourself: Do I need more help understanding some of these articles of faith? Speak to one of our pastors if so.

In the meantime, you might find these YouTube videos, made by “GlobalNaz Learning”, to be of use:

https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLya3EIdEFN3QBTzglraPaQa_gtlyX-QN

Chapter 3) Our Values: How We Live

Doctrinal statements are essential. But in the end, it is how we live our lives that matters most. What does the life of a Nazarene look like?

As you've seen in the core values, the statement of belief and the articles of faith, Nazarenes have always been focused on *holiness* – living pure lives that honour God. From the beginning of the Nazarene movement, the leadership of the church has provided guidelines for holy living. In particular, the *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene has always contained two sections to guide our members in their quest to live holy lives to the glory of God.

1. The Covenant of Christian Character

In early editions of the *Manual*, a section called *General Rules* could be found. These were based on John Wesley's first three rules which he gave to the early Methodist people: to do good, to avoid evil, and to attend the means of grace.



The current *Manual* has changed the title of this section to be called *The Covenant of Christian Character*. It states: "It is required of all who desire to unite with the Church of the Nazarene, and thus to walk in fellowship with us, that they shall show evidence of salvation from their sins by a godly walk and vital piety; and that they shall be, or earnestly desire to be, cleansed from all indwelling sin" (21). The rules that follow, then, are statements which help Nazarenes show evidence of their faith.

This Covenant has retained Wesley's outline of three rules for Christian living. Let's look at the three sections of this Covenant:

Nazarenes evidence their salvation:

- 1) By *doing good*. In accordance with God's Word, this means:
 - i. Loving God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength, and one's neighbour as oneself (Exodus 20:3-6; Leviticus 19:17-18; Deuteronomy 5:7-10; 6:4-5; Mark 12:28-31; Romans 13:8-10).
 - ii. Pressing upon the attention of the unsaved the claims of the gospel, inviting them to the house of the Lord, and trying to compass their salvation (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; Romans 1:14-16; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20).
 - iii. Being courteous to all people (Ephesians 4:32; Titus 3:2; 1 Peter 2:17; 1 John 3:18).
 - iv. Being helpful to those who are also of the faith, in love forbearing one another (Romans 12:13; Galatians 6:2, 10; Colossians 3:12-14).
 - v. Seeking to do good to the bodies and souls of people; feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and ministering to the needy, as opportunity and ability are given (Matthew 25:35-36; 2 Corinthians 9:8-10; Galatians 2:10; James 2:15-16; 1 John 3:17-18).
 - vi. Contributing to the support of the ministry and the church and its work in tithes and offerings (Malachi 3:10; Luke 6:38; 1 Corinthians 9:14; 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-10; Philippians 4:15-19)
 - vii. Attending faithfully all the ordinances of God, and the means of grace, including the public worship of God (Hebrews 10:25), the ministry of the Word (Acts 2:42), the sacrament of the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:23-30); searching the

Scriptures and meditating thereon (Acts 17:11; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-16); family and private devotions (Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Matthew 6:6).

- 2) By *avoiding evil*. In accordance with God's Word, this means:
- i. Taking the name of God in vain (Exodus 20:7; Leviticus 19:12; James 5:12).
 - ii. Profaning of the Lord's Day by participation in unnecessary secular activities, thereby indulging in practices that deny its sanctity (Exodus 20:8-11; Isaiah 58:13-14; Mark 2:27-28; Acts 20:7; Revelation 1:10).
 - iii. Sexual immorality, such as premarital, extramarital, or same-sex relations; perversion in any form or looseness and impropriety of conduct (Genesis 19:4-11; Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Matthew 5:27-32; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7; 1 Timothy 1:10).
 - iv. Habits or practices known to be destructive of physical and mental well-being. Christians are to regard themselves as temples of the Holy Spirit (Proverbs 20:1; 23:1-3; 1 Corinthians 6:17-20; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 5:18).
 - v. Quarrelling, returning evil for evil, gossiping, slandering (2 Corinthians 12:20; Galatians 5:15; Ephesians 4:30-32; James 3:5-18; 1 Peter 3:9-10).
 - vi. Dishonesty, taking advantage in buying and selling, bearing false witness, and similar works of darkness (Leviticus 19:10-11; Romans 12:17; 1 Corinthians 6:7-10).
 - vii. The indulging of pride in dress or behaviour. Our people are to dress with the Christian simplicity and modesty that is fitting for holiness (Proverbs 29:23; 1 Timothy 2:8-10; James 4:6; 1 Peter 3:3-4; 1 John 2:15-17).
 - viii. Music, literature, and entertainments that dishonour God (1 Corinthians 10:31; 2 Corinthians 6:14-17; James 4:4).
- 3) By *joining the Christian community*. As the manual says,
- i. Abiding in hearty fellowship with the church, not inveighing against but wholly committed to its doctrines and usages and actively involved in its continuing witness and outreach (Ephesians 2:18-22; 4:1-3, 11-16; Philippians 2:1-8; 1 Peter 2:9-10).



Ask yourself: Is my own faith evidenced by these three rules – to do good, avoid evil, and join in the Christian community?

2. The Covenant of Christian Conduct

In Phineas Bresee's first *Manual*, issues such as temperance, tobacco, divorce, songs, and literature were all discussed – in line with the Methodist tradition of commenting on social issues in their *Discipline* book. In the Nazarene *Manual*, this section was called "Special Advices", which later changed to "Special Rules", and finally in 2001 was renamed "The Covenant of Christian Conduct".

In putting together such a statement, the church seeks to avoid two extremes views on behavioural issues: legalism, in which the following of rules becomes the main focus; and the general cultural practice of placing few – if any – limits on behaviour.

The Covenant of Christian Conduct deals with different areas of our faith. The following is a shortened version of the *Manual's* guidelines on these issues:

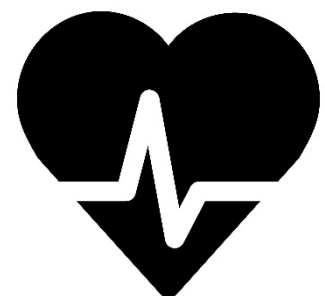
- 1) **The Christian Life.** The church joyfully proclaims the good news that we may be delivered from all sin to a new life in Christ. By the grace of God, we Christians are "to put off the old self"—the old patterns of conduct as well as the old carnal mind—and

are “to put on the new self”—a new and holy way of life as well as the mind of Christ. This means:

- i. **Avoiding entertainments that are subversive of the Christian ethic.** Our people, both as Christian individuals and in Christian family units, should govern themselves by three principles: a) Christian stewardship of leisure time; b) recognition of the Christian obligation to apply the highest moral standards of Christian living; and c) the obligation to witness against whatever trivializes or blasphemes God. We suggest that the standard given to John Wesley by his mother, namely, “whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things, whatever increases the authority of your body over mind, that thing for you is sin,” forms the basis for this teaching. (Romans 14:7-13; 1 Corinthians 10:31-33; Ephesians 5:1-18; Philippians 4:8-9; 1 Peter 1:13-17; 2 Peter 1:3-11)
- ii. **Avoiding lotteries and other forms of gambling, whether legal or illegal.** The church holds that the final result of these practices is detrimental both to the individual and society. (Matthew 6:24-34; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13; 1 Timothy 6:6-11; Hebrews 13:5-6; 1 John 2:15-17)
- iii. **Avoiding membership in oath-bound secret orders or societies including but not limited to those such as Freemasonry.** The quasi-religious nature of such organizations dilutes the Christian’s commitment, and their secrecy contravenes the Christian’s open witness. (1 Corinthians 1:26-31; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; Ephesians 5:11-16; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17)
- iv. **Avoiding all forms of dancing that detract from spiritual growth** and break down proper moral inhibitions and reserve. (Matthew 22:36-39; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 10:31-33; Philippians 1:9-11; Colossians 3:1-17)
- v. **Avoiding the use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage, using illicit drugs, using of tobacco in any of its forms; or trafficking therein.** In light of the Holy Scriptures and human experience concerning the ruinous consequences of the use of alcohol as a beverage, and in light of the findings of medical science regarding the detrimental effect of both alcohol and tobacco to the body and mind, as a community of faith committed to the pursuit of a holy life, our position and practice is abstinence rather than moderation. (Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-24:2; Hosea 4:10-11; Habakkuk 2:5; Romans 13:8; 14:15-21; 15:1-2; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:9-12, 19-20; 10:31-33; Galatians 5:13-14, 21; Ephesians 5:18)
- vi. **Avoiding the use of stimulants, depressants, hallucinogens and other intoxicants outside proper medical care and guidance.** In light of medical evidence outlining the dangers of such substances, along with scriptural admonitions to remain in responsible control of mind and body, we choose to abstain from intoxicants, stimulants, depressants, and hallucinogens outside proper medical care and guidance, regardless of the legality and availability of such substances. (Matthew 22:37-39; 27:34; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 9:24-27)

2) **The Sanctity of Life.** The Church of the Nazarene believes in the sanctity of human life and strives to protect against abortion, embryonic stem cell research, euthanasia, and the withholding of reasonable medical care to handicapped or elderly.

- i. **Induced Abortion.** We believe that human life must be respected and protected from the moment of conception. We oppose induced abortion by any means, when used for either personal convenience or



population control. We oppose laws that allow abortion. Realizing that there are rare, but real medical conditions wherein the mother or the unborn child, or both, could not survive the pregnancy, termination of the pregnancy should only be made after sound medical and Christian counselling. (Genesis 2:7, 9:6; Exodus 20:13; 21:12-16, 22-25; Leviticus 18:21; Job 31:15; Psalms 22:9; 139:3-16; Isaiah 44:2, 24; 49:5; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:15, 23-25, 36-45; Acts 17:25; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 6:16; 7:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-6).

The Church of the Nazarene also recognizes that many have been affected by the tragedy of abortion. Each local congregation and individual believer is urged to offer the message of forgiveness by God for each person who has experienced abortion. Our local congregations are to be communities of redemption and hope to all who suffer physical, emotional, and spiritual pain as a result of the wilful termination of a pregnancy. (Romans 3:22-24; Galatians 6:1)

- ii. **Genetic Engineering and Gene Therapy** is supported by the Church of the Nazarene for good purposes, but opposed when used for injustice, disrespect of a person's dignity, or abortion.
- iii. **Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research and Other Medical/Scientific Endeavours that Destroy Human Life after Conception** is opposed by our church, flowing from our affirmation that the human embryo is a person made in the image of God.
- iv. **Human cloning** is opposed by the church, since the personal dignity and worth bestowed on us by our Creator is denied in this act.
- v. **Euthanasia** is opposed by the church. Euthanasia violates Christian confidence in God as the sovereign Lord of life by claiming sovereignty for oneself; it violates our role as stewards before God; it contributes to an erosion of the value the Bible places on human life and community; it attaches too much importance to the cessation of suffering; and it reflects a human arrogance before a graciously sovereign God.
- vi. **Allowing to Die.** When human death is imminent, we believe that either withdrawing or not originating artificial life-support systems is permissible within the range of Christian faith and practice.

3) **Human Sexuality and Marriage.** The Church of the Nazarene views human sexuality as one expression of the holiness and beauty that God the Creator intended. Because all humans are beings created in the image of God, they are of inestimable value and worth. We believe that God has called some to singleness and some to marriage – but all to holiness in matters of the body. We believe members of the body of Christ, enabled by the Spirit, can and should refrain from:

- i. **Unmarried sexual intercourse and other forms of inappropriate sexual bonding.** We believe that it is God's intention for our sexuality to be lived out in the covenantal union between one woman and one man, and that these practices often lead to the objectification of the other in a relationship.
- ii. **Sexual activity between people of the same sex.** Because we believe that it is God's intention for our sexuality to be lived out in the covenantal union between one woman and one man, we believe the practice of same-sex sexual intimacy is contrary to God's will for human sexuality. While a person's homosexual or bi-sexual attraction may have complex and differing origins, and the implication of this call to sexual purity is



- costly, we believe the grace of God is sufficient for such a calling. We recognize the shared responsibility of the body of Christ to be a welcoming, forgiving, and loving community where hospitality, encouragement, transformation, and accountability are available to all.
- iii. **Extra-marital sexual relations.** Because we believe this behaviour is a violation of the vows that we made before God and within the body of Christ, adultery is a selfish act, a family-destroying choice, and an offense to the God who has loved us purely and devotedly.
 - iv. **Divorce.** Because marriage is intended to be a life-long commitment, the fracturing of the covenant of marriage, whether initiated personally, or by the choice of a spouse, falls short of God's best intentions. The church must take care in preserving the marriage bond where wise and possible, and offering counsel and grace to those wounded by divorce.
 - v. **Practices such as polygamy or polyandry.** Because we believe that the covenantal faithfulness of God is reflected in the monogamous commitment of husband and wife, these practices take away from the unique and exclusive fidelity intended in marriage.

Sexual sin and brokenness is not only personal but pervades the systems and structures of the world. Therefore, as the church bears witness to the reality of the beauty and uniqueness of God's holy purposes we also believe the church should refrain from and advocate against:

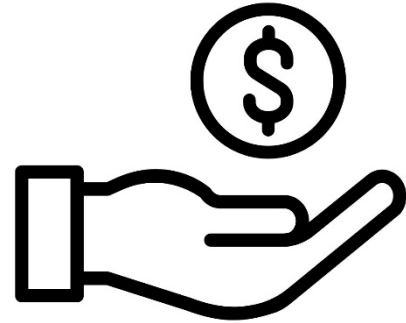
- i. **Pornography in all its forms**, which is desire gone awry. It is the objectification of people for selfish sexual gratification. This habit destroys our capacity to love unselfishly.
- ii. **Sexual violence in any form**, including rape, sexual assault, sexual bullying, hateful speech, marital abuse, incest, sex trafficking, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, bestiality, sexual harassment, and the abuse of minors and other vulnerable populations. All people and systems that perpetrate sexual violence transgress the command to love and to protect our neighbour. The body of Christ should always be a place of justice, protection, and healing for those who are, who have been, and who continue to be affected by sexual violence.

Therefore, we affirm that:

- i. **Where sin abounds, grace abounds all the more.** God's healing is effective in dealing with the brokenness of humanity in the areas of sexuality.
- ii. **The human body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.** We affirm the need for our sexuality to be conformed to God's will. Our bodies are not our own but have been bought with a price. Therefore, we are called to glorify God in our bodies through a life of yielded obedience.
- iii. **The people of God are marked by holy love.** We affirm that, above all the virtues, the people of God are to clothe themselves with love. The people of God have always welcomed broken people into our gathering. Such Christian hospitality is neither an excusing of individual disobedience nor a refusal to participate redemptively in discerning the roots of brokenness. Restoring humans to the likeness of Jesus requires confession, forgiveness, formative practices, sanctification, and godly counsel – but most of all, it includes the welcome of love which invites the broken person into the circle of grace known as the church. If we fail to honestly confront sin and brokenness, we have not loved. If we fail to love, we cannot participate in God's healing of brokenness.

4) **Christian Stewardship.** The Scriptures teach that God is the Owner of all persons and all things. We, therefore, are His stewards of both life and possessions. God's ownership and our stewardship ought to be acknowledged, for we shall be held personally accountable to God for the exercise of our stewardship. God, as a God of system and order in all of His ways, has established a system of giving that acknowledges His ownership over all human resources and relationships. To this end all His children should faithfully tithe and present offerings for the support of the gospel.

i. **Storehouse Tithing.** Storehouse tithing is a scriptural and practical performance of faithfully and regularly placing the tithe into that church to which the member belongs. All who are a part of the Church of the Nazarene are urged to contribute faithfully one-tenth of all their income as a minimum financial obligation to the Lord and freewill offerings in addition as God has prospered them for the support of the whole church, local, district, educational, and general.



ii. **Fundraising and Distribution.** In the light of the scriptural teaching concerning the giving of tithes and offerings for the support of the gospel, and for the erection of church buildings, no Nazarene church should engage in any method of fundraising that would detract from these principles, hinder the gospel message, sully the name of the church, discriminate against the poor, or misdirect the people's energies from promoting the gospel.

iii. **Support of the Ministry.** The church is obligated to support its ministers, who have been called of God, and who, under the direction of the church, have given themselves wholly to the work of the ministry. We urge therefore that the members of the church voluntarily commit themselves to the task of supporting the ministry by gathering money for this holy business and that the pastor's salary be paid regularly.

iv. **Life Income Gifts, Planned and Deferred Giving.** The Church of the Nazarene, recognizing the need for faithful stewardship in this life and the God-given vision to leave a legacy for the future, has established the Church of the Nazarene Foundation to enhance Christian stewardship through planned and deferred giving. Each Christian should give attention to the preparation of a last will and testament in a careful and legal manner, and the Church of the Nazarene through its various ministries of missions, evangelism, education, and benevolences—local, district, educational, and general—is recommended for consideration.

v. **Shared Responsibility for the Denominational Mission.** The government of the Church of the Nazarene is representative. Each local congregation supports the overall mission of the church as defined by the General Assembly and implemented through the leadership of the Board of General Superintendents in world evangelism, education, ministerial support, and district ministries.



Ask yourself: Does the Church of the Nazarene's teaching on these matters help me to understand the Christian view of the world?

Chapter 4) Our Structure: How We Are Organised

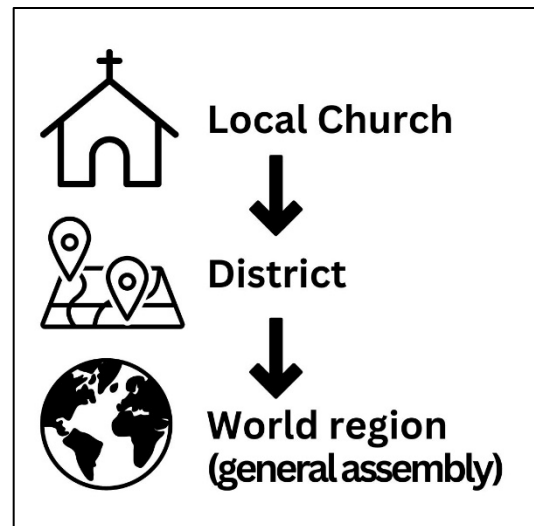
Around the world, different churches and denominations have different ideas when it comes to organisational structure. Over the years, three common forms of church government have been seen:

- 1) *Episcopal* government, in which churches are managed in a ‘top-down’ style where authority rests with the regional clergy. Catholic, Anglican, and Methodist churches use this model.
- 2) *Congregational* government, in which all authority is given to local church congregations rather than regional clergy. The local church does not answer to any regional leader or board, but remains independent. Baptist and Congregational churches use this model.
- 3) *Representative* government, in which authority is shared between local churches and denominational regions, as well as being shared between local clergy and congregation members. The Presbyterian church uses this model.

When the Church of the Nazarene began, the leaders believed that two things were essential: democracy and efficiency. This led them to adopt the **representative form of government** – in which superintendents oversee districts, but local churches manage their own affairs.

Therefore, in joining the Church of the Nazarene, one becomes part of a *local church* (in our case, Church of the Nazarene Boksburg). Each local church belongs to a *district*, overseen by a District Superintendent (in our case, the Gauteng District, overseen by our DS Reverend Craig Brophy). And each district falls into one of six *world regions*, which together make up the general assembly (in our case, Africa World Region).

Let’s look at each one of these bodies.



1. The Local Church

The *Manual* states: “It is in the local church that the saving, perfecting, teaching, and commissioning takes place. The local church, the Body of Christ, is the representation of our faith and mission. These churches are grouped administratively into districts and regions.”

It’s important to remember that *the church is not the building!* The church is made up of a group of people who worship and serve God together, as well as serving and loving others.

Each local church is made up of:

1) The Church Board

The church board represents the shared power between the lay members of the church and the clergy. It is comprised of:

- The pastor: chairs church meetings.
- The stewards: serve the church in practical ways.
- The trustees: responsible for the church building and property.
- The secretary: minutes the meetings of the church.
- The treasurer: oversees the church finances.
- The superintendent of SDI: oversees Sunday School and Discipleship.

- The president of NYI: oversees the Youth ministry.
- The president of NMI: oversees the Missions ministry.

The church board meets at least every second month to conduct the business of the church. The church board also conducts an **annual church meeting** which may be attended by any church member, in which reports from various officers of the church are given, and officers and delegates to the District Assembly are elected.



Ask yourself: Would I be willing to serve on the church board? These roles are not for everyone, but every church needs wise, committed board members who will assist in the running of the church.

2) The Pastor

The Church of the Nazarene believes that all believers are called to ministry! We also believe that certain individuals are called to the work of public ministry – that is, leading local churches.

There are two ‘tracks’ for ministry recognized by our church. There are those who are called to work of preaching and shepherding local churches – these individuals are ordained as *elders*. For those who are called to other types of ministry such as evangelism, mission-work, chaplaincy or other services in the church – these people can be ordained as *deacons*.

It’s important to note that the Church of the Nazarene believes in ordaining both men and women to the ministry. See the *Manual* for more information.

Different types of pastors

Becoming an ordained pastor is a 3-step process:

- i. Becoming a *local minister*. Any member who feels the call to ministry may be granted a local minister’s license by a local church. After examining the candidate’s call, knowledge and abilities, the pastor recommends the candidate and the church board grants the license. This is valid for one year, during which time the local minister must undertake a recommended course of study and report to the church during the annual church meeting.

- ii. Becoming a *district licensed minister*. A local minister may apply for their district license. This allows a minister to participate in their called form of ministry, and if acting as an assigned minister they may administer the sacraments and officiate at marriages where the laws allow. To qualify, a candidate must:

- have held a local license for one year
 - be recommended by their local church board
 - have completed the required progress in education
 - show evidence of gifts and graces
 - have been examined by the district in terms of their education and their call
 - have any disqualifications removed
 - be in a proper marriage relationship for those who have been or are married
- A district license is valid for one year, and must be re-applied for at the district assembly.

- iii. Becoming an *ordained minister*. A district licensed minister may apply to be ordained. The requirements for ordination as an elder include:

- fulfilment of the course of study
- having held a district license for two years

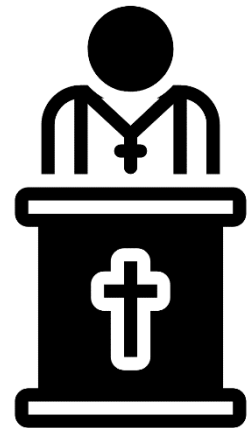
- received the recommendations of the local church and the District Credentials Board
- completed years of service depending on the nature of one's ministerial activity:
 - two consecutive years of full-time service are required as a pastor or registered evangelist
 - three years as associate or assistant pastor
 - four years as a teacher in the religion department of a Nazarene institution
- the candidate's marriage relationship must be such that it is not a disqualification

Ordination, however, is more than simply having met the above criteria. Pastors are ordained by a general superintendent by the laying on of hands, since we believe that *ordination is the act of the church through which God's grace flows*.

The Pastor's role

Many people believe that the pastor only works on a Sunday! But the work of a pastor is far deeper than that. Our *Manual* states that the core duties of a pastor are to:

- Pray.
- Preach the Word.
- Equip the saints for the work of the ministry.
- Administer the sacraments of the Lord's Supper and Baptism.
- Care for the people by pastoral visitation, particularly the sick and needy.
- Comfort those who mourn.
- Correct, rebuke, and encourage, with great patience and careful instruction.
- Seek the conversion of sinners, the entire sanctification of the converted, and the building of God's people in holiness.
- Give due care to matters relating to solemnizing marriages.
- Nurture the call people feel toward Christian ministry and mentor such persons, guiding them toward appropriate preparation for ministry.
- Fulfill the expectations of God and the Church for a program of lifelong learning.
- Nurture his or her own call through the years of ministry, maintain a life of personal devotion that enriches his or her own soul, and, if married, guard the integrity and vitality of that marriage relationship.
- Oversee the administrative duties of the church.



Ask yourself: Is this the type of person you would want to lead your church? *Pray for your pastors.* They need all the help they can get to fulfil this role!

Calling a Pastor to the Church

If a local church would like to invite someone to become the pastor of their church, the *Manual* underlines the following process:

- i. The district superintendent must approve the nominee, and if the nominee is already a member of the said local church, the District Advisory Board must also approve.
- ii. The nominee must have received a two-thirds majority vote by the church board.
- iii. The nominee must have received a two-thirds majority vote by the members of the church, through a process of voting through secret ballots at an annual church meeting or specially called meeting.

If the nominee meets these qualifications, the local church is to specify their expectations for the pastor as well as the proposed remuneration. The nominee then has 15 days to accept the invitation.

The Church/Pastor relationship

Every year the pastor and church board are to meet to renew expectations and goals. A written document of these is to be filed with the District Superintendent.

Additionally, each pastor is to undergo a formal review process. This is conducted within 60 days of the second anniversary of a pastor's appointment and every four years after the first review has been conducted. These review meetings are planned and coordinated by the district superintendent and the pastor, with a focus on discovering the church board's feelings regarding the continuation of the present pastor. Discussion is held about the relationship between pastor and people, and the effectiveness of the pastoral leadership. The church board only takes a vote if they want to recommend the issue for a congregational vote. If so, the church board must vote by a majority of members present to send the issue to the entire church.



Extra info: Our local church, Church of the Nazarene Boksburg, can be found online at our website www.cotnboksburg.co.za.

2. The District

Local churches in our denomination are organised into *districts*. These are further divided into phases in this way:

- A phase 1 district is created when a church is formed in a new area.
- A phase 2 district has a minimum of 10 organized churches, 500 full members, and 5 ordained elders, with 50 percent of district administrative funds raised by the district.
- A phase 3 district has a minimum of 20 organized churches, 1,000 full members, and 10 ordained elders, and is fully self-supporting.

In South Africa, districts are simply divided into provinces – meaning that we fall under the Gauteng District.



Extra info: You can find out more about the Gauteng District of the Church of the Nazarene at their website www.nazarene.co.za.

Gauteng is a phase 3 district, with 79 churches, 7025 members and 84 ordained elders in 2023.

District Roles

Like a local church, the district needs people in place to play certain roles. Each district must have:

- The *District Superintendent*. The D.S. has always played the essential role of 'pastor to the pastors' since the beginning of the Church of the Nazarene. Their job is to monitor the health of local churches and pastors, and to intervene if a crisis develops. The D.S. also oversees the review process of pastors, and has general oversight of the business and spiritual activities of the district. The shared nature of power in the Church of the Nazarene is again found in that all official acts

of the district superintendent can be reviewed and revised by the district assembly. Our D.S. is Rev Craig Brophy, who also leads Unified Church of the Nazarene in Florida, Roodepoort.

- The *District Secretary*, who records all district activity and distributes minutes and other district related information to local pastors. Our District secretary is Mrs Grizelda Smith.
- The *District Treasurer*, who oversees the district's finances. Rev Dr Shaun Mellors, pastor a Groblersdaal Church of the Nazarene, is our District Treasurer.
- The *District Advisory Board*, is essentially a church board at district level, overseeing the work of the district.
- The *Ministerial Credentials Board* and the *District Board of Ministerial studies*, which oversee the licensing and ordination processes.

The district also has a president for the SDMI, NDI and NYI district ministries respectively.

The District Assembly

Once a year, representative from all the churches in the district meet together for the District Assembly. During this time district leaders are elected, reports from pastors and district boards are heard, district licenses are awarded and new ministers are ordained, and the people of our church get to worship and fellowship in a special way.

Each local church has a responsibility at district assemblies. The pastor is required to send a full report of the local church each year, which is necessary for the district to give accurate statistics and figures. Additionally, each local church is meant to be represented at the district assembly by the pastor and the SDMI, NYI and NDI leaders, as well as one or more lay delegates elected at the annual church meeting. This ensures that any voting conducted at a District Assembly receives fair participation from all local churches in the district.



Ask yourself: Should I ask to attend the next District Assembly? It is a wonderful experience to see what God is doing in the greater Church of the Nazarene, and to make friends with others in the district.

3. The General Assembly

The Church of the Nazarene is present in over 160 countries worldwide, with over 30 000 churches and more than 2 million members! These countries are split into six Regions:

- Africa Region
- Asia-Pacific Region
- Eurasia Region
- Mesoamerica Region
- South America Region
- USA/Canada Region

The Board of General Superintendents

Each region is led by a *General Superintendent* – the highest office one can reach in the Church of the Nazarene. Each of the six General Superintendents is elected to a four-year term. The general superintendents' primary responsibilities include providing supervision, guidance, and motivation for the general church; interpreting the law and doctrine of the Church of the Nazarene; having primary authority with regard to issues of theology, ordination, and mission strategy; and the nomination, appointment, or approval of candidates

for various positions within the denomination, including missionary and District Superintendent.

Only General Superintendents can ordain people to the ministry. Therefore, we usually see a GS presiding over each District Assembly to perform that role.



Extra info: If you'd like to learn more about the Africa Region of the Nazarene, head to www.africanazarene.org. The General Assembly's website, where you can find out about our global church, is here: www.nazarene.org.

Our GS in the African Region is Dr Filimão M. Chambo, who was ordained in the Gauteng District in the year 2000 and served as pastor at Mphagane and Eldorado Park Churches of the Nazarene and later in Mozambique at Igreja do Nazareno da Matola Cidade.

The General Assembly

Every four years, the Board of General Superintendents gather for the General Assembly. Delegates from each district around the world are elected, and the important work of the global Church of the Nazarene is carried out.

Note: the next General Assembly is taking place this year! For more info, go to <https://ga2023.nazarene.org/>

Chapter 5) Our Members: What Membership Means

We hope, at this point, that you are still wanting to join the Church of the Nazarene as a member! It would be our joy to have you join our fellowship. But perhaps you're still not sure if you should take the plunge.

1. Membership Benefits

Many people question the necessity of church membership in our times. "Why can't we just come and worship here on a Sunday without becoming a member?" some would ask. Of course, you are more than welcome to do that – the church is not only for members, it is for all!

Having said that, we do believe that church membership is a wonderful thing, and should be something that every Christian commits to. This is something we see in the earliest days of the Church – the believers *coming together* to worship and fellowship in a group.

Shared vision

As a church member, you get to be part of the shaping and unfolding of the church's vision. It is only church members who are permitted to vote for various church matters such as electing nominees to leadership and selecting pastors. Joining as a member enables you to join in when it comes to such vital decision making!

This is precisely why the *representative* form of government was chosen for the Church of the Nazarene – to give the congregation a voice! Become a member, and your voice will be heard in important matters such as these.

Shared growth

Perhaps most importantly, becoming a member of a church shows your own commitment to your spiritual growth. While there is much growth that Christians achieve in their personal spiritual practices, there is more growth that is achieved only in the context of a Christian community.

Committing to joining a local church gives you a new sense of responsibility in your faith journey. The community aspect brings a whole new dimension of shared influence. Think of it – why did Jesus gather twelve disciples around Him when He lived on earth? One reason is that they were all better and more effective in their faith *together*.



In fact, John Wesley (who we spoke of in chapter 1) was a great believer in group Christianity. He famously said that "holy solitariness is no more consistent than holy adultery". And so wherever he went, he organised the local Christians into groups, knowing that the best thing for their growth in the faith was to journey with other Christians! *Together* we motivate each other and keep each other accountable.

Shared joy and pain

This shared life of faith results in shared joy. The book of Acts talks about how the disciples "ate together with glad and sincere hearts" (Acts 2:46 NIV). Living life as a spiritual family provides a joy that cannot come from an individualistic spirituality!

Another benefit is shared pain. Paul wrote “carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:2 NIV). It is a great privilege for church members to come alongside their brothers and sisters in the faith and comfort them in times of need. Don’t miss out on this! When you need it most, your church family will be there to help you through – encouraging you just as Christ encourages us and helps us through the worst of times.

Of course, this is not to say that the church is a perfect family or institution. Tensions inevitably rise and difficult situations come about even in the most dedicated churches. Yet, the benefits of the shared life of faith are worth the risks.

If you’re still not convinced that membership is for you, have a look at this article:

<https://www.crossway.org/articles/10-things-you-should-know-about-church-membership/>



Ask yourself: How would it benefit my walk with God to be a member of this church?
Am I willing to endure the difficulties in order to enjoy the shared life of faith?

2. Membership Requirements

If you decide to become a member, we are very excited to welcome you!

During the induction service, where we as a local church welcome new members into our fold, the pastor will call prospective members (who have completed the new members’ course) to the front of the church, and ask them seven questions. Let’s have a brief look at them:

1. [Having read the Statement of Faith]: Do you heartily believe these truths?

Response: "I do."

Go back and read the Statement of Faith in chapter 2. Are you able to agree to them? If you have any questions, please feel free to speak to one of our pastors.

2. Do you acknowledge Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour, and do you believe that He saves you now?

Response: "I do by faith."

Church membership is for those who know God’s saving grace! It’s important to state your faith in Christ and proclaim that He is Lord of your life, if you are to become a member. Remember, *all* are welcome at our church, particularly those who are seeking and have not yet been saved. But membership is specifically for those who have taken this step in faith.

3. Desiring to unite with the Church of the Nazarene, do you commit to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and your neighbour as yourself as expressed by the Covenants of Christian Character and Conduct?

Response: "I do."

Go back to chapter 3 and read through these two covenants. They represent all that the Church of the Nazarene stands for when it comes to holy living.

4. Do you commit to the mission of God as expressed in the doctrine, fellowship, and work of the Church of the Nazarene?

Response: "I do."

Each Christian is called to the work of the mission of God. Membership assumes that you are driven by this same mission.

5. **Will you support the teachings of the Church of the Nazarene and strive, with God's help, to grow in your understanding and practice of the same in a way that enhances the witness of the church?**

Response: "I will."

We need our members' support! Our prayer is that you will grow in your faith as you strive to live out the Christian life with us here.

6. **Will you endeavour in every way to glorify God, by a humble walk, godly conversation, and holy service; by devotedly giving of your resources; and by faithfully participating in the means of grace?**

Response: "With God's help, I will."

Once again: *we need our members' help*. Your faithful giving and attending our church services will keep our ministry alive.

This is our desire for you! And with you joining our church, we will do all we can to assist you in this great calling.

Responding to these statements in the presence of the local church means that you will be welcomed in as a member.

3. Membership – next steps

You've made it through our members' booklet! If there is anything that you are not sure of, or anything that needs further explaining, **please don't hesitate to contact Luke or Pieter**. They will be more than happy to talk to you about the things in this book.

We hope that the information in this book has deepened your desire to join our church as a member. If you would like to do so, here are the next steps:

- 1) Complete the questions in our **New Members' Course** online at this link: <https://forms.gle/2krw2fPAPSjyd2Kh6> or ask a pastor for a physical copy if you'd prefer. *Note: this is not about the marks, it's just to show that you've read through this book!*
- 2) Attend the next **New Members' Social**. The church will make the date of the next one known.
- 3) Attend the next **New Members' Induction Service**. Again, the church will announce the date for this.
- 4) Get plugged into our church! We'll be looking forward to seeing you on Sundays and at other church events. You may want to consider completing the *Network Course* when it is offered, to learn about your spiritual gifting and possible places of services.

Many blessings to you, and remember, we here at the Church of the Nazarene in Boksburg are here for you.