

Bayou George House of Prayer

**Articles of Faith, Bylaws,
Church Covenant and Doctrinal Statement**

Bayou George House of Prayer

Preamble

These Bylaws are made to:

1. Preserve and secure the principles of our faith.
2. Preserve the liberties of each individual member of the church.
3. Ensure freedom of action of independence from any religious body or organization.
4. Provide for orderly conduct of internal affairs, in dealing with others, and in all matters of church governance.

I. Name

The name of this church shall be Bayou George House of Prayer.

II. Business Location

The address of the principal office of this church shall be:

7635 Bayou George Drive
Panama City, Florida 32404

III. Purpose

The purposes of Bayou George House of Prayer are:

1. To worship and serve God and to fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ as set forth in Matthew 28:19-20.
2. To minister to the needs of the members and others as the church is able to do so.
3. To do any and all things related to and in connection with the carrying out of the object and purpose herein set forth.

IV. Articles of Faith

1. We believe the Holy Bible as the inspired Word of God, without any error, the all-sufficient authority in matters of faith, doctrine, and Christian living.
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ, and that He is true God and man. He died on the cross for our sins. He rose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven where He sits at the right hand of the Father and is now our High Priest and Advocate.
4. We believe that man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and was therefore lost. Only through regeneration by the work of the Holy Spirit can man's salvation and spiritual life be obtained.
5. We believe that salvation is the free gift of God, entirely apart from man's works, and is possessed by any and all who have faith in and receive Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.
6. We believe in the Baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire according to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. We believe in the associated Gifts and Fruit of the Spirit. This is not to be regarded as means or necessity for man's salvation.
7. We believe in and pray for miracles from God including but not limited to, healings both physical and spiritual, dreams, visions and prophesy. These all must be by the direction and inspiration of the Holy Ghost and will therefore be in perfect harmony with the scripture.
7. We believe in a regenerated church membership: that is, persons old enough to understand their need for Jesus Christ and, of their own free will, accepted Him as their personal Lord and Savior.
8. We believe that baptism is by immersion and the Lord's Supper is a memorial to His suffering and death on the cross. We believe in Foot Washing as an expression of humility and mutual servitude among believers. These are ordinances to be observed by the church in its present age. They are, however, not to be regarded as means or necessity for man's salvation.
9. We believe in the personal, bodily, imminent, glorious and pre-tribulation return of the Lord Jesus Christ for the catching away of the saints, often referred to as "The Rapture" and in His Second Coming to earth for the completion of His eternal Kingdom. This blessed hope inspires believers for dynamic and zealous life and service for Him while awaiting His return.
10. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead, the everlasting blessedness of the saved in heaven, and the everlasting punishment and separation from God of the unsaved in hell.
11. We believe in the autonomy of the local church. The church shall manage its own affairs and shall not be subject to any other religious body or organization.
12. We believe in paying Tithes and giving freewill offerings to support the local church.
 - (a) According to the Scriptures, tithes should be used for the support of the active ministry and for the propagation of the gospel and work of the Lord and not be given to charity or used for other purposes.
 - (b) We recognize the duty of tithing and urge all our people to pay tithes to God. It is recommended that arrangements satisfactory to the pastor and the church be made so that the pastor may receive regular and adequate support. We disapprove, however, of the teaching that all tithes necessarily should belong to the pastor.

V. Government

The government of Bayou George House of Prayer is vested in its members. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of its life and organization.

VI. Nonprofit Status and Liquidation

This church is not organized for profit. In the event of liquidation or dissolution of the church, all of its assets and property of every nature and description whatsoever shall be paid over and transferred at the direction of the trustees to another Christian church, denomination or ministerial organization which holds the same articles of faith as Bayou George House of Prayer.

VII. Amendment

These Bylaws may be amended provided the proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing at a regular church business meeting and then circulated to the membership. Amendments to these Bylaws shall be two-thirds vote of members of the church who are qualified to vote and are present in the business meeting with a quorum to discuss and vote for this matter.

General Bylaws:

I. Church Membership

Orientation of New Members:

Candidates for membership and new members need to learn and understand the privileges and responsibilities that members have to God and the church. Appropriate instruction shall be given by the Pastor or such Elders as the Pastor shall appoint.

A. Qualifications:

Membership in Bayou George House of Prayer shall consist of people who request church membership and have made a profession of their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and who have been scripturally baptized by immersion, and are in agreement with the Articles of Faith of the church. It shall be the duty of church members to uphold the Articles of Faith, Bylaws and Covenant of the Church.

B. Reception:

Membership in the church may be attained by majority vote of the church in any of its regular business meetings and in one of the following manners:

1. By request to the Pastor following conversion and scriptural water baptism.
2. By transfer of church letter from another evangelical church of like faith and practice.
3. By a statement of faith of their prior experience of conversion and scriptural baptism in an evangelical church of like faith and practice.
4. By restoration to the church membership after having been dropped.

C. Termination:

Membership in this church shall be terminated when a member:

1. Requests a letter of transfer to join another church.
2. Is dropped from the roll of membership when he or she joins another church. A letter of transfer is not necessary.
3. Dies
4. Is dismissed by a vote of the church due to reasons and circumstances provided in the church discipline. The pastor and/or elders will counsel the member for restoration prior to action of dismissal or upon a request of the member to be dismissed from membership.
5. Is dismissed by the congregation/or officers according to the following conditions:
 - a. The member's life and conduct is not in accordance with the Statement of Faith in such a way that the member hinders the ministry influence of the Church in the community.
 - b. Procedures for dismissal of a member shall be according to Matthew 18:15-17 or Titus 3:10-11.

II: Voting Limitations

A. Members in good standing shall have the rights and privileges to full participation in the life and work of the church. Each member in good standing is entitled to a voice and one vote in all business matters brought before the congregation.

B. A member not in good standing shall not have a voice or vote in the business matters of the church. A member shall be considered in good standing only so long as he or she is faithful in attendance and financial support of the church.

1. Absence from regularly scheduled services for a continuous period of four weeks or absences in excess of one half of the regularly scheduled services over any three month period shall remove a member from good standing. Exceptions regarding attendance requirements may be made where acceptable reasons account for the absences. (i.e. illness, travel, etc.) Exceptions shall be at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.
2. Upon recommendation of the Pastor or Treasurer, a member who fails to faithfully support the church in tithes and offerings shall be removed from good standing.
4. Voting by proxy is acceptable.

III. Church Officers

All church officers must be members of the church in good standing.

A. The Pastor:

1. The qualifications for pastor shall be consistent with those listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7.

His training, skills, and experiences are needed in this area of leadership.

2. His responsibilities:

(a) These generally fall into the following areas: Preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling, administration, planning, and guiding the church to grow and fulfill its purposes.

(b) He shall lead the church, the organizations, and all leaders of the church in performing their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, and evangelism.

(c) The pastor shall be an ex officio member of all church standing committees, except the Pastor's Selection Committee.

(d) He shall provide or assist the elders in securing a minister for pulpit duties in times of his absence.

3. Call:

- (a) A pastor shall be chosen and called whenever a vacancy occurs.
- (b) A Pastor's Selection Committee shall be appointed by the church to seek out a suitable pastor and this committee's recommendation will serve as a nomination.
- (c) The Pastor's Selection Committee will recommend only one candidate at a time.
- (d) The pastor's election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week notice shall be given to the members.
- (e) An affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of those present is necessary for a Choice.

4. Terms of Service:

- (a) The chosen pastor shall serve until the relationship is terminated by either his request or that of the church.
- (b) There shall be a written mutual contract/agreement made between the pastor and the church.

B. Church Staff:

- 1. The church shall employ or call staff, as it shall need.
- 2. A written job description and mutual contract/agreement will be prepared when the need for church staff is determined.

C. Deacons:

1. Number, term of office:

Deacons shall be elected for a term of service of three years as voted upon by the church.

2. Qualifications:

- (a) A church deacon must meet the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
- (b) A deacon shall demonstrate an exemplary Christian testimony in private, family, and public life; a committed Christian leader and partner of the pastor; supporter and promoter of the church faith, practice, programs, and ministries.

4. Ordination:

- (a) Selection, election, and ordination of deacons and elders is a privilege of the local church.
- (b) When ordination of deacons and/or elders is planned by the church, it shall authorize the pastor to assemble a council to examine the candidates concerning their fitness to serve as deacons.
- (c) The council directed to examine the deacons shall be composed of the pastor and at least two church members in good standing chosen by the pastor.
- (d) When the council recommends the ordination of deacons, the ordination service shall be scheduled as led by the pastor.

5. Duties:

- (a) Deacons serve as a committee of counsel to assist the pastor concerning the progress and welfare of the church.
- (b) Seek to solve any fellowship problem of the church.
- (c) Assist the pastor in administering the church ordinances.
- (d) Serve as church membership committee.

D. Secretary

1. The church secretary shall be elected and be responsible for keeping an accurate record of all business meeting transactions of the church and preparing the annual report.
2. He or she shall keep a register of the names and addresses of the church members, with dates of admission, current standing, dismissal, and deaths of members of the church family.

F. Treasurer:

1. The church treasurer shall be elected as the custodian of all moneys of the church and shall disburse these moneys by checks as authorized by the church.
2. He or she shall keep, at all times, an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements and shall render an annual report of this account to the church.
3. The treasurer shall be elected and shall be responsible for seeing that the offerings are properly received, counted, and deposited in the church's bank account.
2. He or she shall properly credit each contributor and their offerings.
3. He or she shall be responsible for preparing and mailing an annual record of contributions to the donors.

G. Trustees:

1. At least three (3) trustees shall be elected by the church to hold in trust the property of the church.
2. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property of the church without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action.
3. It shall be the function of the trustees to sign any, and all legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or lease of church property or any other legal documents requiring the signature of the trustees for and in behalf of the church.

H. Vacancies:

In case of vacancy in any office, except that of the pastor and staff members, the vacancy shall be filled by the church at a regular or special meeting as soon as possible after such vacancy has occurred.

IV. Church Committees

- A. Committees may be formed as needed by the church.

V. Church Meetings

A. Worship Services:

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning and evening for the worship of God, for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and on any other night or nights designated by the Pastor. These meetings will be open to all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor or designated church officer in the absence of the pastor.

B. Sunday School:

The Sunday School shall be divided into classes and departments as it grows and conducted under the direction of a director for the study of God's Word. The tasks of the Sunday School shall be to teach the Bible, lead all church members to worship, witness, learn, and minister daily;

C. Annual Business Meetings:

An Annual business meeting shall be held each year. The agenda shall be circulated or made known to the church one week prior to the business meeting. Should there be any unusual meeting or matter of unusual interest to be brought before such regular meeting, notice shall be given to the membership one week prior to that meeting.

D. Special Business Meeting:

A special called business meeting may be called by the pastor, and with other church officers, or by action of the church to consider special matters of significant nature. A one-week written notice or announcement must be given for the specially called business meeting.

E. Quorum:

The quorum consists of those members in good standing who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called. At least one-fourth of the members in good standing shall constitute a quorum.

F. Parliamentary Rules:

Robert's Rules of Order (revised edition) is adopted as the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church and for all other meetings that demand voting of the church members, including committee meetings.

VI. Licensing and Ordaining

A. Licensing:

Any member of the church who has shown by his life and has felt the call to the gospel ministry may by vote of the membership at a regular meeting be licensed by the church to the Christian ministry.

B. Ordination:

When a church shall have called as its pastor a member of this church who possesses scriptural qualifications and as demonstrated by his skills and training for ordination to the work of the gospel ministry, and shall request in writing that he be ordained, a special committee shall be elected to conduct the process of his ordination.

VII. Church Discipline

A. Should any unhappy difference arise among members, the aggrieved member shall follow in a tender spirit, the rules given by our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17.

B. Should any case of gross breach of covenant, or of public scandal occur, the pastor, deacons and elders shall endeavor to resolve the conflict; and if this effort fails, shall report the case to the church.

C. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, but should an adverse decision be reached, the church may proceed to admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.

D. Any person whose membership or good standing has been terminated for any offense may be restored by vote of the church, upon evidence of his repentance and reformation; or if in an account of continued absence, upon satisfactory explanation.

E. Violations of the principles stated in these Bylaws may give cause for disciplinary action by the Pastor or Board of Trustees. Among such causes for action shall be:

- a. Moral failure involving sexual misconduct.
- b. Any moral or ethical failure other than sexual misconduct.
- c. Sowing discord or exhibiting other unchristian behavior.
- d. General inefficiency in the ministry.
- e. A failure to represent our Pentecostal testimony correctly.
- f. A contentious or noncooperative spirit.
- g. An assumption of dictatorial authority over an assembly.
- h. An arbitrary rejection of Biblical counsel.
- i. A declared open change in doctrinal views.
- j. Immoral, unethical, or illegal practices related to personal, church, or ministry finances.
- k. A marriage in violation of our stand on marriage and divorce.

Ratified by action of the church in its business meeting on ____ day of _____, _____ .

Pastor: _____

Secretary/ Treasurer: _____

Elder: _____

Member: _____

Church Covenant

A church covenant defines proper relationships between members and is an objective document that groups of Christians can use to make decisions related to membership. It is the covenant that defines the relational character of the church body as taught in the Holy Scriptures. The church covenant must neither replace nor conflict with the Biblical instructions regarding relationships among believers but rather serves only to focus our attention and commitment to those instructions.

Christians voluntarily associate together by covenant and thereby constitute— comprise, make up, form— a church. A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is local body of believers who are associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel. They unite to observe the ordinances of Christ, learn and commit to His teachings, exercise the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His word, and pursue the extension of the gospel to the ends of the earth. The word most used to describe the connection of believers is covenant. We are in covenant with God through the blood of His Son Jesus. We are in covenant with each other through the Sonship of the New Birth and we are in covenant with the seed of Abraham by the justification of our faith toward God. We are a body of Christian people coming together in a clearly identified, articulated, and affirmed relationship under the headship of Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

We, the members of Bayou George House of Prayer, an Independent, Full Gospel, Bible Believing Church, do hereby covenant with each other before God to:

Be a family; to be committed to each other; to love, accept, and forgive each other until death or God's call causes us to part. Live for Jesus Christ and take His commands seriously. Help one another grow toward Christian maturity by bearing one another's burdens, encouraging one another, exhorting one another, praying for one another, confessing our sins to one another, speaking the truth in love to one another, admonishing one another, submitting to one another, serving one another, patiently bearing with one another, being hospitable to one another, greeting one another, living in peace with one another, regarding one another as more important than ourselves, caring for one another, exercising our spiritual gifts to serve one another, being kind and tenderhearted to one another, being devoted to one another, accepting one another, forgiving one another, loving one another. Invite one another to pray for us, teach us, correct us, or rebuke us, if necessary, in a spirit of gentleness and humility should we stray from our Lord's commands, because the thing we desire most in life is to serve Christ. We voluntarily submit ourselves to one another and to the discipline of the church. Such discipline will always be for the loving purpose of restoration— restoration to fellowship with God and with the covenant community— and it will always be done in accordance with Matthew 18:15-22. Bring honor to the body of Christ by maintaining a good testimony. We enter into this covenant because we have the common purpose of obeying Jesus Christ, and because we believe that we need one another's help to do this. As believers, and disciples of Jesus Christ, we have entered into a covenant relationship with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob— with the God who revealed Himself in Jesus. Since the blessing and promise of the covenant have been freely extended and given to us, out of wonder, love, thanksgiving, and reverence, we hereby accept and take up the covenant responsibilities that go with such privilege. This is our reasonable service and we should do nothing less. God help us all! We rely on His grace and hold fast to His promise that there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus and who walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh.

Doctrinal Statement with Scripture References

1. The Scriptures Inspired

The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct.

- 2 Timothy 3:15-17
- 1 Thessalonians 2:13
- 2 Peter 1:21

2. The One True God

The one true God has revealed Himself as the eternally self-existent "I AM," the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed Himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

- Deuteronomy 6:4
- Isaiah 43:10,11
- Matthew 28:19
- Luke 3:22

a. Terms Defined

The terms "Trinity" and "persons" as related to the Godhead, while not found in the Scriptures, are words in harmony with Scripture, whereby we may convey to others our immediate understanding of the doctrine of Christ respecting the Being of God, as distinguished from "gods many and lords many." We therefore may speak with propriety of the Lord our God who is One Lord, as a trinity or as one Being of three persons, and still be absolutely scriptural.

- Matthew 28:19
- 2 Corinthians 13:14
- John 14:16-17

b. Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead

Christ taught a distinction of Persons in the Godhead which He expressed in specific terms of relationship, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but that this distinction and relationship, as to its mode is inscrutable and incomprehensible, because unexplained.

- Luke 1:35
- 1 Corinthians 1:24
- Matthew 11:25-27
- Matthew 28:19
- 2 Corinthians 13:14
- 1 John 1:3-4

c. Unity of the One Being of Father, Son and Holy Spirit

Accordingly, therefore, there is that in the Father which constitutes him the Father and not the Son; there is that in the Son which constitutes Him the Son and not the Father; and there is that in the Holy Spirit which constitutes Him the Holy Spirit and not either the Father or the Son.

Wherefore the Father is the Begetter, the Son is the Begotten, and the Holy Spirit is the one proceeding from the Father and the Son. Therefore, because these three persons in the Godhead are in a state of unity, there is but one Lord God Almighty and His name one.

- John 1:18
- John 15:26
- John 17:11
- John 17:21
- Zechariah 14:9

d. Identity and Cooperation in the Godhead

The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are never identical as to Person; nor confused as to relation; nor divided in respect to the Godhead; nor opposed as to cooperation. The Son is in the Father and the Father is in the Son as to relationship. The Son is with the Father and the Father is with the Son, as to fellowship. The Father is not from the Son, but the Son is from the Father, as to authority. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son proceeding, as to nature, relationship, cooperation and authority. Hence, neither Person in the Godhead either exists or works separately or independently of the others.

- John 5:17-30
- John 5:32
- John 5:37
- John 8:17,18

e. The Title, Lord Jesus Christ

The appellation, "Lord Jesus Christ," is a proper name. It is never applied in the New Testament, either to the Father or to the Holy Spirit. It therefore belongs exclusively to the Son of God.

- Romans 1:1-3
- 2 John 1:3

f. The Lord Jesus Christ, God with Us

The Lord Jesus Christ, as to His divine and eternal nature, is the proper and only Begotten of the Father, but as to His human nature, He is the proper Son of Man. He is therefore, acknowledged to be both God and man; who because He is God and man is "Immanuel," God with us.

- Matthew 1:23
- 1 John 4:2
- 1 John 4:10
- 1 John 4:14
- Revelation 1:13
- Revelation 1:17

g. The Title, Son of God

Since the name "Immanuel" embraces both God and man in the one Person, our Lord Jesus Christ, it follows that the title, Son of God, describes His proper deity, and the title, Son of Man, His proper humanity. Therefore, the title Son of God, belongs to the order of eternity, and the title, Son of Man, to the order of time.

- Matthew 1:21-23
- 2 John 1:3
- 1 John 3:8
- Hebrews 7:3
- Hebrews 1:1-13

h. Transgression of the Doctrine of Christ

Wherefore, it is a transgression of the Doctrine of Christ to say that Jesus Christ derived the title, Son of God, solely from the fact of the incarnation, or because of His relation to the economy of redemption. Therefore, to deny that the Father is a real and eternal Father, and that the Son is a real and eternal Son, is a denial of the distinction and relationship in the Being of God; a denial of the Father, and the Son; and a displacement of the truth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.

- 2 John 1:9
- John 1:1
- John 1:2
- John 1:14
- John 1:18
- John 1:29
- John 1:49
- 1 John 2:22,23
- 1 John 4:1-5
- Hebrews 12:2

i. Exaltation of Jesus Christ as Lord

The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, having by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; angels and principalities and powers having been made subject unto Him. And having been made both Lord and Christ, He sent the Holy Spirit that we, in the name of Jesus, might bow our knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father until the end, when the Son shall become subject to the Father that God may be all in all.

- Hebrews 1:3
- 1 Peter 3:22
- Acts 2:32-36
- Romans 14:11
- 1 Corinthians 15:24-28

j. Equal Honor to the Father and to the Son

Wherefore, since the Father has delivered all judgment unto the Son, it is not only the express duty of all in heaven and on earth to bow the knee, but it is an unspeakable joy in the Holy Spirit to ascribe unto the Son all the attributes of Deity, and to give Him all honor and the glory contained in all the names and titles of the Godhead except those which express relationship (see Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead, Unity of the One Being of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and Identity and Cooperation in the Godhead) and thus honor the Son even as we honor the Father.

- John 5:22,23
- 1 Peter 1:8
- Philippians 2:8,9
- Revelation 5:6-14, 7:9-10; Revelation 4:8-11

3. The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:

His virgin birth,

- Matthew 1:23
- Luke 1:31,35

His sinless life,

- Hebrews 7:26
- 1 Peter 2:22

His miracles,

- Acts 2:22, 10:38

His substitutionary work on the cross,

- 1 Corinthians 15:3
- 2 Corinthians 5:21

His bodily resurrection from the dead,

- Matthew 28:6
- Luke 24:39
- 1 Corinthians 15:4

His exaltation to the right hand of God.

- Acts 1:9, 11
- Acts 2:33
- Philippians 2:9-11
- Hebrews 1:3

4. The Fall of Man

Man was created good and upright; for God said, "Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness." However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God.

- Genesis 1:26,27
- Genesis 2:17
- Genesis 3:6
- Romans 5:12-19

5. The Salvation of Man

Man's only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

Conditions to Salvation

Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God, according to the hope of eternal life.

- Luke 24:47
- John 3:3
- Romans 10:13-15
- Ephesians 2:8
- Titus 2:11, 3:5-7

The Evidence of Salvation

The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit.

- Romans 8:16

The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness.

- Ephesians 4:24
- Titus 2:12

6. The Ordinances of the Church

Baptism in Water

The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded by the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Saviour and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life.

- Matthew 28:19
- Mark 16:16
- Acts 10:47,48
- Romans 6:4

Holy Communion

The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements --bread and the fruit of the vine-- is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4), a memorial of his suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26), and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26), and is enjoined on all believers "till He come!"

Foot Washing

The practice of foot washing among believers is commanded by Jesus. The ceremony exhibits the proper spirit of a servant who humbles himself and follows the example given by his Lord and Master.

- John 13:3-17

7. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian Church. With it comes the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry.

- Luke 24:49
- Acts 1:4,8
- 1 Corinthians 12:1-31

This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth.

- Acts 8:12-17
- Acts 10:44-46
- Acts 11:14-16
- Acts 15:7-9

When believers are baptized in the Holy Spirit, this experience:

1. Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs.
 - Mark 16:15-20
 - Acts 4:29-31
 - Hebrews 2:3,4
2. Adds a dimension to a worshipful relationship with God.
 - 1 Corinthians 2:10-16
 - 1 Corinthians 12, 13, 14
3. Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ and care for the poor and needy of the world.
 - Galatians 5:22-26; 6:10
 - Matthew 25:37-40
 - 1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:12
 - Ephesians 4:11,12
 - Colossians 1:29

With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as:

- an overflowing fullness of the Spirit, John 7:37-39, Acts 4:8
- a deepened reverence for God, Acts 2:43, Hebrews 12:28
- an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work, Acts 2:42
- and a more active love for Christ, for His Word and for the lost, Mark 16:20

8. Physical Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance and the Fruit and Gifts of the Spirit being brought forth in the life of the believer.

- Acts 2:4
- Gal 5
- 1 Corinthians 12

The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues, but is different in purpose and use.

- 1 Corinthians 12:4-10, 28

9. Sanctification

Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God.

- Romans 12:1,2
- 1 Thessalonians 5:23
- Hebrews 13:12

The Scriptures teach a life of "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord."

- Hebrews 12:14

By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command: "Be ye holy, for I am holy."

- 1 Peter 1:15,16

Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by continually offering one's every member and faculty to the dominion of the Holy Spirit.

- Romans 6:1-11,13; 8:1,2,13
- Galatians 2:20
- Philippians 2:12,13
- 1 Peter 1:5

10. The Church and its Mission

The Church is the Body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of His great commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn which are written in heaven, the Bride of Christ, the Lamb's wife.

- Ephesians 1:22,23; 2:22
- Hebrews 12:23
- Rev 21:9; 22:17

Since God's purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshipped by man, to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, and to demonstrate His love and compassion for all the world, the priority reason for being a part of the Church (Bayou George House of Prayer being but a church within "the Church" Mt 16:18; 1 Cor 10:32) is:

1. To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world.
 - Acts 1:8
 - Matthew 28:19,20
 - Mark 16:15,16
2. To be a corporate body in which man may worship God.
 - 1 Corinthians 12:13
3. To be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son.
 - Ephesians 4:11-16
 - 1 Corinthians 12:28
 - 1 Corinthians 14:12
4. To be a people who demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world.
 - Psalms 112:9
 - Galatians 2:10; 6:10
 - James 1:27

11. The Ministry

A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the fourfold purpose of leading the Church in:

Evangelization of the world.

- Mark 16:15-20

Worship of God.

- John 4:23,24

Building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son.

- Ephesians 4:11-16

Meeting human need with ministries of love and compassion.

- Psalms 112:9
- Galatians 2:10; 6:10
- James 1:27

12. Divine Healing

Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the atonement and is accessed by faith in accordance with the will of God.

- Isaiah 53:4,5
- Matthew 8:16,17
- James 5:14-16
- 1 John 5:14,15

13. The Blessed Hope

The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the church.

- 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17
- Romans 8:23
- Titus 2:13
- 1 Corinthians 15:51,52

14. The Millennial Reign of Christ

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on earth for one thousand years.

- Zechariah 14:
- Matthew 24:27
- Matthew 24:30
- Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6

This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel, and the establishment of universal peace.

- Ezekiel 37:21,22
- Zephaniah 3:19,20
- Romans 11:26,27
- Isaiah 11:6-9
- Psalms 72:3-8
- Micah 4:3,4

15. The Final Judgment

There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to the everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

- Matthew 25:46
- Mark 9:43-48
- Revelation 19:20
- Revelation 20:11-15
- Revelation 21:8

16. The New Heavens and the New Earth

"We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."

- 2 Peter 3:13
- Revelation 21
- Revelation 22