

philosophy of ministry.

BE THE FAITH **EMBRACE** COMMUNITY **ENGAGE** IN SERVICE **EMPOWER** DIS

LEADING PEOPLE
TO FIND AND
FOLLOW JESUS

INTRODUCTION TO HARVESTER CHRISTIAN CHURCH

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE BELIEVE

Harvester Christian Church is part of a movement of churches called the Restoration Movement. In the early 1800's church leaders like Barton W. Stone and Alexander Campbell rejected their ties to established denominations and rallied around the idea of church unity. They believed that Jesus and His Word should be all that is necessary to carry out His mission for the church. These churches sought to restore Christianity to New Testament practices and reject modern denominationalism. The churches, now called Christian Churches or Churches of Christ, grew rapidly across the nation. Four simple mottos expressed the approach that the Restoration Movement embraced.

1. No book but the Bible; no creed but Christ; no name but the Divine.
2. Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent.
3. In essentials, unity; in opinions, liberty; and in all things, love.
4. We're not the only Christians, but we're Christians only.

Harvester Christian Church began as a dream in the minds of several Christian families who lived in the Harvester area in the early 1980's. With the Restoration Movement philosophy as its foundation, the decision was made to plant a church in the center of I-70, I-64, and the Missouri River. This was one of the fastest growing areas in the state at the time.

On July 12, 1981 about 40 people came to worship together at a local school and Harvester Christian Church was born. Jim Hutchison came to serve as the first full-time minister. The goal of Harvester was to imitate the New Testament example of how a church should be structured, function, and operate. In 2005, Harvester Christian Church established a second campus in the Troy, Missouri community.

We strive to minister to the needs of our congregation and our community, as well as partner with our missionaries in various regions of the world. Our primary focus has always been *Leading People to Find and Follow Jesus*, and we accomplish this through many different ministries, teachings, and intentional relationship building efforts.

Harvester Christian Church (hereafter referred to also as the Church or HCC) is a non-denominational, independent Church that is overseen by Elders under Christ's authority. The Elders are responsible for leading the Church but entrust the day-to-day operations to the Lead Team and staff. The Church is incorporated under the laws of the State of Missouri.

PURPOSE STATEMENTS

To help us as a Church and a Staff, move together in unity, we pursue the following purpose statements. Our foundation is Christ, but our purpose statements help us to understand why we do what we do here at Harvester Christian Church.

MISSION -- LEADING PEOPLE TO FIND AND FOLLOW JESUS

This is the "why" of what we do as Harvester Christian Church.

Matthew 28:18-20 is the premise for our Mission Statement. In this Scripture, the first half of Jesus' statement is the command to "make disciples and baptize them." We are called to lead people to find Jesus. The second half of the statement is to "teach them to observe all that I have commanded you." We are also called to lead people to follow Jesus. This is the primary calling and mission of Harvester Christian Church. Everything we do comes from this commission.

VISION -- MULTIPLYING DISCIPLES IN RELATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

This is the "what" we do at Harvester.

We see relationships as key to belonging and accomplishing our mission for Jesus.

STRATEGY

This is "how" we accomplish our mission and vision.

EXPLORE THE FAITH

Our core value: "**Jesus is worth another look.**"

Our primary environment: The weekend service

Disciples are able to say, "I explore Jesus in the pursuit of a growing relationship with Him."

EMBRACE COMMUNITY

Our core value is: "**Circles are better than rows.**"

Our primary environment: Groups

Disciples are able to say, "I belong to a community that is being changed by Jesus."

ENGAGE IN SERVICE

Our core value is: "**Saved people serve people.**"

Our primary environments: The church, our city, and the world

Disciples say, "I engage my gifts to show compassion to those around me."

EMPOWER DISCIPLES

Our core value is: "**Found people find people.**" Our primary environment:

Relationships

Disciples are able to say, "I am compelled and empowered to lead others to find and follow Jesus."

CHURCH VALUES

These values for our church body are what we find important.

- I. **BIBLICAL AUTHORITY:** "Speaking God's Truth in Love" We will present God's Word with love and as the final authority for our lives. John 1:14

- II. DEPENDENT PRAYER: "Thy Will Be Done" We trust that God has better plans for us than we have for ourselves. Matthew 6:9-13
- III. AUTHENTIC ENVIRONMENTS: "Come as You Are" We help real people connect to a real God in relevant settings. John 4
- IV. STRONG FAMILIES: "Invest in the Next Generation Now" We are a family that prepares the next generation to take our place. Psalm 78:1-7

STAFF VALUES

These values are not what we do but how we behave when we're doing work. Demonstrating these values result in a can-do creativity, a church-mentality, and a contagious positivity.

HUMBLE: We know our weaknesses and rely on God and others.

HUNGRY: We are curious and experimental desiring to grow personally and professionally.

HUSTLE: We work hard to solve problems. We have a bias toward productive action.

As a Church and as individuals, we want to honor God by doing things His way. If it's in the Bible, we want to do it that way. We believe the Bible is God's Word and we are to conform our lives to what it says. We believe that God's way is the best way.

DOCTRINAL STATEMENTS

The purpose of our Doctrinal Statements is to clearly outline what we believe as a Church - our core doctrine. **We must be unified in these core beliefs. Our doctrinal statements are truths from Scripture that form the foundation of our faith and are non-negotiable for employment at Harvester Christian Church.**

THE BIBLE

We believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, the written record of His supernatural revelation of Himself to man, absolute in its authority, complete in its revelation, final in its content, and without any error in its teaching. 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21

GOD

We believe that God is the Creator and Ruler of all things. He eternally exists in three persons: The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit - each with distinct attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being. God is eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing and ever-present. He is perfect in love, justice, and holiness, and worthy to receive all glory, honor, and praise. Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:1-2

JESUS

God the Son is Jesus Christ. While eternal in nature, His incarnation was conceived of the Holy Spirit and He was born of the virgin Mary. Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, the Son of the Living God, God in human form, and both fully God and fully man. Jesus perfectly revealed and lived out the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature without sin. He offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for sin and through His death made provision for the redemption of humanity from sin. He died for our sins, was buried, was raised from the dead, and appeared to His disciples proving His power over death and His ability to raise us up from death. He

ascended into Heaven to the right hand of God the Father where He mediates reconciliation between God and humanity. He will physically return in power and glory to judge the world and consummate His redemptive mission. John 1:1, 14, 8:58, 14:9; Colossians 2:9; Philippians 2:5-7

We believe in the literal, bodily resurrection of Jesus from the dead. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

We believe in the literal return of Jesus as promised. John 14:1-6; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18; 2 Peter 3:3-4, 10, 13

THE HOLY SPIRIT

God the Holy Spirit is fully divine. He inspired the writers of the Scriptures. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He enables Christians to understand truth. He dwells in the hearts of every Christian from the moment of salvation. He bestows spiritual gifts on believers through which they serve His church. He comforts and intercedes for them. He seals the believer for the day of redemption. He enlightens and empowers the believer in the church in worship, evangelism, and service. Acts 2:38; Romans 8:26-27; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 1:13-14

THE CHURCH

We believe the Church is a body of Christ-followers who should live in intentional community as modeled by the first century church. Acts 2:42-47

We believe love is to be shown to all people as the central trait of the Christian faith. John 13:35; 1 Corinthians 13:13; 1 Peter 4:8

We believe the mission of the Church is to reach the spiritually lost for Jesus, to teach with the goal of forming Christ in them, and then to mobilize believers to accomplish God's purposes in the world. Matthew 28:18-20

We believe that unity is necessary for the church to accomplish the mission given by Jesus. Matthew 28:18-20; John 17:20-21; 1 Corinthians 1:10; Ephesians 4:1-5

HUMANITY

We believe that all humanity is born with a sin nature. Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:23

We believe in the substitutionary death of Jesus on the cross to atone for the sins of humanity. Isaiah 53:3-6; Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21

ETERNITY

We believe that Heaven and Hell are real places and each of us will spend eternity in one place or the other. 2 Corinthians 5:6-10; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9; Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 20:15

SALVATION

We believe that the forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life are promised to those who trust Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. John 3:16-17; Ephesians 2:8-9

We believe that those putting their trust in Jesus should repent of their sins, confess their faith, and be baptized by immersion into Him. Acts 2:38-39; Romans 6:3-4, 10:9

We believe that those who receive Jesus also receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. He marks them as the possession of God, manifests the fruit of righteousness in their character,

and endows them with spiritual gifts for ministry. 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Galatians 5:22-23

We believe that a spiritual gift is a special ability, given by the Holy Spirit to every believer, to be used to minister to others and thereby build up the body of Christ. Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11; 1 Peter 4:10

UNITY STATEMENTS

The purpose of our Unity Statements is to give clear positions on doctrines that often separate believers and divide churches. This is critical if we are going to be a unified body of believers. We've separated these into two categories: Distinctive Beliefs and Opinions.

Distinctive Beliefs are doctrines upon which we have taken a firm stance and by which members must abide to be part of our fellowship and are **non-negotiable for employment at Harvester Christian Church**.

Opinions are beliefs on which members can disagree and still be part of our fellowship. A clear understanding of these gives us a common language and boundaries within which we can all function together in unity.

DISTINCTIVE BELIEFS

OUR POSITION - COMMUNION

Jesus established the practice of communion (also known as The Lord's Supper, or in some churches as the eucharist), during Passover with His disciples the night before His crucifixion. He commanded His disciples to continually observe this "meal" as a memorial of His sacrifice and a reminder that He will one day return. The elements of the meal represent the sacrifice Jesus made for us: the bread as His broken body, and the juice as His shed blood. We invite all believers to share communion with us at each of our weekly worship services. This time for reflection serves as a renewal of our relationship with Jesus and reminds us of our standing as a child of God with Christians worldwide. Luke 22:14-23; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 11:17-34

OUR POSITION - BAPTISM

Baptism is an act of submission to the lordship of Christ where we participate in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. In the New Testament, baptism by immersion that is accompanied by faith and repentance is the normative response to the message of the Gospel.

The method of baptism in the Bible is immersion of a believing, repentant person. Immersion is important because of the way it symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Harvester baptizes by immersion. The act of baptism does not save a person - God saves us by His grace through faith.

The Bible always records baptism as immediately following faith in Christ, repentance of sins, and confession of Jesus as Lord. Acts 2:36-41; 16:25-34

We also believe salvation is a transaction between God and a sinner who repents. We do not assume that a person who has not been baptized by immersion is categorically a lost soul in need of salvation.

OUR POSITION - STEWARDSHIP

God is the source of all blessings and all that we have we owe to Him. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, proportionally, and generously for the advancement of the Kingdom.

We believe the biblical standard for giving is tithing, setting aside 10% of our income for the local Church. Because we are called to be a generous people, we also give offerings over and above the tithe. Leviticus 27:30; Malachi 3:8-10; Luke 6:38; Acts 20:35; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

OUR POSITION - GENDER ROLES

Harvester embraces a complementarian view regarding women's leadership roles particularly in the positions of elder or lead pastor. While we believe in the priesthood of all believers and equality with regards to oneness in Christ, this view holds to males only in Church government positions, specifically elder and lead pastor - equal value, different roles. This does not exclude women from teaching, leading, or serving in other areas. 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9

OUR POSITION - FAMILY

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

The Bible teaches that the foundational family relationship is marriage and represents the relationship between Christ and the church. The Bible defines marriage as one man and one woman committed together in a covenant relationship for a lifetime. This is the view of marriage Harvester supports. While the husband serves as the head of the relationship, both the man and woman are of equal value to God. Genesis 3:18-24; Ephesians 5:21-33; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

God calls us to holiness in all areas of life, including sexual expression. Sex within the biblical covenant relationship honors God. Sex outside this context corrupts God's design for humans and is sinful, including practices like adultery, promiscuity, and homosexuality. Ephesians 6:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 14:4

Children are a gift from God. From conception, when life begins, they are valued by God. Parents are called to set an example of godly living as children are called to obey their parents in the Lord. Ephesians 6:1-4

OUR POSITION - THE CHRISTIAN AND THE SOCIAL ORDER

We believe all Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society.

Christians must take the Gospel to all corners of the world and every place they live. As disciples, Jesus calls us to display love to all, opposing all forms of injustice, persecution, oppression, discrimination, and racism. The church should advocate for those in need, the marginalized, the unborn, the less fortunate, and the abused. James 1:27-2:13; 1 John 4:7-12

OUR POSITION - THE CHRISTIAN AND THE CHURCH

We believe that we are "Christians only," but not the only Christians. We believe the local Church is an autonomous body which cooperates with many Christian agencies but is regulated or dominated by none. John 10:14-16; Ephesians 5:23

The church should seek unity with all believers in matters essential to the universal Christian faith and contend for the liberty in all matters wherein the Lord has not spoken through His Word. Ephesians 4:2-6

OPINIONS

OUR POSITION - PREDESTINATION AND FREE WILL, ETERNAL SECURITY AND ORIGINAL SIN

Over the course of Christian history, theologians have taken different views regarding the origin and effect of sin, the call of God, and the assurance of salvation. Many times, these different views are described in terms of Calvinism (which emphasizes the sovereignty of God) and Arminianism (which emphasizes the free will of humans). We recognize that devout Christians through the ages have held to both these views. At Harvester, we lean toward the Arminian side of the theological position. From a practical perspective, this translates into the following views that guide our practices.

We acknowledge that God loves all people everywhere, calls them to Himself, and desires that they should repent. At the same time, God has created humanity with a free will whereby we choose whether to respond to God or not. John 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:42; 2 Peter 3:9

We acknowledge that God created humanity perfect and sinless, but Adam's first sin brought disastrous effects upon all humans. As a consequence, all are born with a natural inclination to sin and suffer the physical consequences of sin (eventual death). However, it is only by God's grace that man is able to believe and accept the gift of salvation. Jesus has overcome the eternal consequences of sin. Therefore, babies are not born guilty of sin and do not require baptism for salvation. Romans 3:23; 5:1-21; 6:23

We acknowledge that man chooses whether or not to respond to God's call of salvation. We can have assurance of salvation knowing that we are saved by grace through faith and not by our good works. However, the Bible does teach that falling away from salvation is possible. Romans 8:15-17, 31-39; Hebrews 6:4-8; 2 Peter 3:17; 1 John 5:13

OUR POSITION - SPIRITUAL GIFTS

God gives gifts to people for the benefit of the Church. However, whether spiritual gifts such as tongues, prophecy, and healing still exist today can cause disagreements in the Church. At Harvester whether or not these gifts exist today, we will not seek them out and will refrain from using them in public assembly or small groups for the sake of unity. Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12-14

OUR POSITION - END TIMES

Jesus promised that He would return visibly to the earth in judgment, bring the dead to life, judge humanity, and create a new heaven and earth. John 14:3; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11

This is not regarded as a salvation issue and we are comfortable with the future being in God's mighty hands. 1 Corinthians 15:50-58; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11

TEAM ASSUMPTIONS

The following team assumptions apply to all employees of Harvester Christian Church.

- _____ 1. We will consistently work to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:30), recognizing that the overall ministry of HCC is greater than the individual or any one ministry.
- _____ 2. We will be faithful in pursuing an intimate, personal relationship with God, including daily prayer and Bible study.
- _____ 3. We will only speak positively of others on staff.
- _____ 4. We will maintain strict confidentiality.
- _____ 5. We will practice biblical conflict resolution. Matthew 18:15-17
- _____ 6. We will maintain the highest standards of integrity. Proverbs 11:1
- _____ 7. We will consistently live out HCC's position on biblical stewardship as outlined in the Unity Statement, including tithing to HCC.
- _____ 8. We believe that life begins at conception and is ordained by God, we will not support abortion under any circumstances (see Unity Statement - The Christian and the Social Order).
- _____ 9. We will agree, by God's grace, to walk in holiness as an act of worship to Jesus Christ, who has saved us from our sins that we could live in a new life. 2 Corinthians 5:15
- _____ 10. We will reflect a commitment to purity and to the sanctity of marriage. Our relations with others will never include inappropriate flirting, kissing, or touching. We will not participate in or support lifestyle choices that would include any homosexual behaviors.
- _____ 11. We will be careful to not place ourselves in environments and/or situations that might compromise our relationships or commitment to the Lord.
- _____ 12. We will practice complete chastity before marriage and complete fidelity in heterosexual marriage, including abstaining from cohabitation, pornography, and fornication. Job 31:1; Proverbs 5; Romans 13:12-14; 1 Corinthians 6:9-7:16; Hebrews 13:4
- _____ 13. We will refrain from illegal drug use, drunkenness, gambling, vulgarity, and the sinful behavior as described in Galatians 5:19-21
- _____ 14. We will publicly refrain from any area where we are afforded freedom in Christ (i.e. consumption of alcohol/tobacco), so as not to cause others to stumble or bring reproach on the Church. 1 Corinthians 10:23-24; Romans 14:13-23
- _____ 15. We will agree to confess our sins to a Christian brother or sister and be held accountable to put our sin to death when we fall into sin. Romans 8:13; Colossians 3:5; 1 John 1:6-10

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING & AGREEMENT

I have read the Philosophy of Ministry document and agree with, and commit to upholding, each of the following:

- Purpose Statements (mission, vision, process, and values)
- Doctrinal Statements
- Unity Statements
- Team Assumptions

See agreed exceptions and/or process from becoming aligned.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Print Name

I confirm that I have personally reviewed each part of this document with the above signed and answered any and all questions to their satisfaction.

Staff Signature

Date

Print Name

Staff Position

AGREED EXCEPTIONS – PROCESS FOR ALIGNMENT

List below any agreed exceptions and/or process to become aligned with HCC's Philosophy of Ministry, including specific actions steps and dates of completion (Ministry Team Leader and Lead Team Member approval required):

Signature of Applicant

Date

Team Leader Signature

Date

Lead Team Member Signature

Date