

I. THE NAME OF THIS CHURCH

The name of this organization shall be:
BETHEL CHURCH and MINISTRIES INC., CROWN POINT, INDIANA.
It is incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State of Indiana.

II. THE PURPOSE OF BETHEL CHURCH

Bethel Church exists to glorify God by making fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ who worship and exalt Him in all things. We strive to fulfill this purpose as we: devote ourselves to the preaching, study, and application of God's Word; seek the Lord in earnest prayer; experience the power of authentic, life-changing fellowship; and engage our community and the world with the gospel of Christ.

III. THE DOCTRINE OF THIS CHURCH

1. THE BIBLE

We believe that the sixty-six books of the Bible are God's written revelation for all of mankind.¹ These books were written by human authors under the perfect guidance of the Holy Spirit, so that the Bible is the very Word of God—supernaturally inspired in every word and absolutely free from error in the original documents.² In this way the Bible is unique among all other writings.

God's Word is true, sufficient, trustworthy, enduring, and complete. It contains all we need to know to receive salvation, obey God perfectly, and trust Him completely.³ Therefore, the Bible is the final authority in all that it says. It must be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.⁴

The Bible is correctly interpreted as one diligently seeks the purposed meaning and intention of the divine Author and human writers of the text. In studying the Bible, careful attention must be given to grammatical principles, the textual context, and the historical background of a passage. Correct interpretation and biblical proclamation are more than intellectual pursuits; they are essentially spiritual exercises requiring the guidance and illumination of the Holy Spirit. Through the Spirit's ministry, the Bible is rightly understood, and with His help, people are transformed by the power of God's Word.⁵

1. 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Kings 17:13; Jeremiah 30:1-2
2. 2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Samuel 7:28; Proverbs 30:5
3. Psalm 19:7-11; 119:86; 119:89; 119:144; 119:151-152; 119:160; Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 5:18; Mark 13:31; John 17:17
4. Deuteronomy 6:6-7; 12:32; Joshua 1:8; Matthew 4:4; Romans 15:4; Colossians 3:16; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12
5. John 14:26; 16:13-14; 1 Corinthians 2:7-13; Hebrews 4:12

2. THE TRIUNE GOD

We believe there is only one true and living God.¹ He is an infinite, spiritual being who is unchangeable in His perfections, purposes, and promises.² God's power is absolute, and He does whatever He pleases.³ He created everything out of nothing and in six days made the heavens and the earth.⁴ God also has limitless and perfect knowledge, for He knows all things past, present, and future, including every potential reality and all future decisions that people will make.⁵



III. THE DOCTRINE OF THIS CHURCH *(Continued)*

God eternally exists as three distinct persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three persons of the Trinity are united in perfect oneness and are fully equal in divine nature and essence. They also experience complete harmony in relationship with one another as they fulfill different yet complementary roles. Because each person of the Trinity is fully God, each is equally deserving of worship and obedience.⁶

The triune God is perfect, beautiful, and glorious in all of His attributes.⁷ These attributes include, but are not limited to: holiness, sovereignty, power, justice, wisdom, truth, faithfulness, mercy, goodness, and love. God's infinite worth demands that mankind ascribe ultimate glory to Him, and His immeasurable value means that nothing should be honored or treasured more than God Himself.⁸

1. Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; 1 Corinthians 8:4
2. 1 Kings 8:27; John 4:24; Malachi 3:6; James 1:17; Isaiah 46:9-11
3. Jeremiah 32:17; Matthew 19:26; Ephesians 3:20-21; Psalm 115:3; Daniel 4:35
4. Genesis 1:1-2:1; Isaiah 42:5; Acts 14:15; Ephesians 3:9; Revelation 4:11; 10:6
5. Psalm 147:5; 1 John 3:20; Isaiah 46:9-10; Psalm 139:1-5; 139:16; Matthew 10:30; Hebrews 4:13
6. Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 1 Peter 1:2; Jude 20-21; 2 Corinthians 13:14
7. Matthew 5:48; Psalm 18:30; 27:4; 104:1-2; Isaiah 6:3
8. 1 Chronicles 29:11; Psalm 29:2; John 4:23-24; Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Hebrews 13:15; 1 Peter 4:10-11

3. GOD THE FATHER

We believe that God the Father, the first person of the Trinity, is the transcendent Creator and supreme Ruler of all things. The Father is absolutely sovereign, and He freely ordains and foreknows all that comes to pass.¹ In doing so, He never authors or approves of sin.²

The Father directs the Son and the Holy Spirit in all matters of creation, providence, and redemption.³ He is also Father to all people, for as Creator He loves the world and delights in all that He has made.⁴ Therefore, His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship to mankind.

God the Father is also spiritual Father to all who believe in Christ. He elects, adopts, and forever loves all people who are saved by His grace.⁵ Finally, in all that He does, the Father has one ultimate purpose for human history—to bring glory, honor, and praise to the God-head.⁶

1. Ephesians 1:11; Romans 8:28-30; Psalm 103:19; 139:1-5; 139:16; Proverbs 16:9; Isaiah 46:9-10; Acts 17:26; Matthew 5:45; 10:29; Acts 2:23; 4:27-28; 1 Peter 1:20
2. James 1:13-14; Leviticus 11:44-45; Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 99:3-9; 119:68; Matthew 5:48
3. John 8:42; 14:10; 3:16; 5:23; 5:26; Psalm 2:7-9
4. Acts 17:24-29; Genesis 1:4; 1:10; 1:12; 1:18; 1:21; 1:25; 1:31; Psalm 33:13; 145:8; Jeremiah 27:5; John 3:16; Ephesians 4:6
5. Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:3-11; John 1:12; Romans 8:14-15; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5-9
6. Isaiah 43:6-7; John 4:23-24; Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 15:27-28; Colossians 1:16



4. JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, is the eternal Son of God and the promised Savior of mankind. He is fully divine, being coequal and coeternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit.¹ Through Him all things were created, and in Him all things hold together.²

As the promised Messiah, Jesus was sent by the Father to deliver people from their sins. He became fully human at the Incarnation without ceasing to be fully God.³ Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, and lived a perfect life free from sin and guilt.⁴

Jesus Christ was crucified on a cross, and His death provided the all-sufficient atonement for sin.⁵ Christ became our representative before God, voluntarily substituting Himself in our place and bearing our sin and guilt.⁶ His sacrifice made provision for the forgiveness of sins, satisfied God's wrath toward believing sinners, and established a New Covenant between God and man.⁷ Because of Christ's redeeming work, it is now possible for people to experience genuine reconciliation with God and eternal life with Him.⁸

Jesus was bodily resurrected on the third day. He ascended into heaven and is now enthroned at the right hand of the Father. From there He reigns over all things as the righteous Judge, the head of the church, and the supreme Lord.⁹ Yet despite all of His majestic glory, Jesus has an intimate concern for His people. He loves them, ministers to them, and makes continual intercession for them as their faithful High Priest.¹⁰

1. John 1:1; 10:31; 14:9-10; Colossians 1:15-20; 2:9; Micah 5:2
2. John 1:3; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2
3. Isaiah 53:3-12; John 1:10-18; 1:29; 8:42; Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 2:9
4. Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23-24; Luke 1:26-35; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 2:14; 4:15; 7:25-26
5. Isaiah 53:3-12; John 1:29; 10:15; Mark 10:45; Romans 5:8; 1 Peter 2:24
6. 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; Hebrews 9:26-28; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18; 1 John 4:10
7. Romans 3:21-25; 4:25; 5:8-9; Galatians 3:13; Hebrews 9:14-15; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Jeremiah 31:31-34
8. John 3:16; 14:19; Romans 5:10-11; 6:5-10; Colossians 1:20-22; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23; Ephesians 2:13-16; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 1 Peter 3:18
9. Matthew 28:6; Acts 1:9-11; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 9:24; Isaiah 9:6; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Ephesians 1:22; 5:23; Colossians 1:18; Luke 1:31-33; Philippians 2:9-11
10. Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25-26; 9:24; 1 John 2:1

5. THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, is the great Sanctifier and Helper of the church. He possesses all attributes of personhood and divinity, being coequal and coeternal with the Father and the Son.¹ In all that He does, the Holy Spirit glorifies the Godhead by manifesting the active presence of God in the world and in the church.²

The Holy Spirit regenerates sinful people, unites them with Christ, and seals them forever into God's family.³ He convicts the world of sin, testifies of Jesus, and indwells genuine believers, actively transforming them into the likeness of Christ.⁴ The Spirit's unique role in salvation is to apply the redemption that the Father ordained and the Son accomplished.



III. THE DOCTRINE OF THIS CHURCH *(Continued)*

The Holy Spirit also strengthens and sustains God's people. He comforts, assures, instructs, and empowers Christians for godly living and fruitful service.⁵ The Spirit inspired the Scriptures, brings unity to the church, and gives spiritual gifts to the members of Christ's body.⁶ Through His abiding presence, the Holy Spirit blesses believers with the enduring joy, hope, and peace that God gives to all of His children.

1. Genesis 1:1-2; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Psalm 139:7-9; Acts 5:3-4; Hebrews 9:14
2. John 16:13-14; Acts 1:8; 2:4; Ephesians 5:18; Hebrews 2:1-4; Joel 2:28-30
3. John 3:5-7; 1 Corinthians 12:13; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 2:22; 4:30
4. John 16:7-14; 15:26; Acts 1:5; Romans 8:9; 2 Corinthians 3:18
5. John 14:16-17; 14:26; 16:13-14; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:9-13; 1 John 2:27
6. 2 Peter 1:20-21; Acts 28:25-26; Romans 12:5-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31

6. MANKIND & SIN

We believe that God created mankind as the pinnacle of all creation. Adam and Eve were the first people, having been directly created by God personally and individually as complete human beings.¹ As male and female, they complemented one another perfectly in role and relationship and were equally made in God's image. All people are their descendants and thus fully share the same dignity, value, and worth inherent in these first human persons.²

All people have been made in God's image, having intelligence, emotions, volition, and a moral conscience.³ They are designed to enjoy everlasting fellowship with God and to reflect His holy and righteous character. By doing so, mankind fulfills his greatest purpose— to bring glory and honor to the Godhead.⁴

Adam and Eve were created completely righteous, and they lived in perfect harmony with their Creator. Yet by their own choice they rebelled against the moral law of God and fell from their sinless state.⁵ Because of Adam's disobedience, all people have lost their innocence before God and are inherently corrupt. Every person is therefore a sinner by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration.⁶

Apart from Christ, all people are alienated from God and stand under His just condemnation without defense or excuse. This judgment brings physical and spiritual death, and it will result in everlasting, conscious separation from God's blessed presence.⁷ People are utterly incapable of restoring themselves to a righteous state, and all are in desperate need of the salvation God provides through Jesus Christ.⁸

1. Genesis 1:26-2:25; 5:1-2; Mark 10:6; 1 Timothy 2:13-14
2. Genesis 1:27; 2:15-25; 3:20; 5:1-2; 9:6; Matthew 10:31; Acts 17:26; 1 Corinthians 11:7-16; 1 Timothy 2:11-14; James 3:9; Psalm 139:14
3. Genesis 1:27; 5:1-2; 9:6; James 3:9
4. Isaiah 43:6-7; John 4:23-24; Psalm 29:2; Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Hebrews 13:15
5. Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-19; Romans 5:12; 1 Timothy 2:13-14
6. Romans 5:12; 3:9-17; 3:23; John 3:19; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 John 1:8; Psalm 14:1-3
7. Isaiah 59:2; John 3:36; Romans 5:12; 6:23; Hebrews 9:27; Matthew 13:49-50; 25:41-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9
8. 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1-3; Psalm 14:1-3; Romans 3:10-12; 9:15-16; Ephesians 2:1-9; Colossians 2:13-14



7. SALVATION

We believe that salvation from sin and death is possible because of Jesus Christ's redemptive work on the cross. Through His substitutionary atonement, Jesus paid the divine penalty for sin so that people might have their sins forgiven and be restored to a right relationship with their Creator.¹ There is no salvation apart from Christ, for His atoning death and victorious resurrection provide the only basis for reconciliation with God.²

Salvation is freely given when individuals, through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, receive the gift of faith, repent of their sins, and believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.³ Believers are immediately made spiritually alive and receive the gift of eternal life.⁴ God declares them righteous (justification), for their guilt has been transferred to Christ, and the righteousness of Jesus has been credited to them (imputation).⁵ They no longer live in a state of enmity with God, nor are they objects of His wrath (propitiation).⁶ Their sins are forgiven, and they have been freed from the bondage of sin (redemption).⁷ They experience genuine fellowship with God, are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and become united into the body of Christ.⁸

This transformation happens only by the sovereign grace and mercy of God, which He bestows upon those He has personally chosen.⁹ Salvation is not given because of human initiative, status, or works. Nor is it granted because of God's foreknowledge of future decisions a person might make. Rather, salvation comes to people solely because of God's initiative and unmerited favor.¹⁰ Everyone whom He calls to salvation willingly believes in Christ as Savior and Lord.¹¹

After receiving salvation, believers exhibit a positive moral change and begin a life of progressive sanctification whereby they increasingly obey God's Word.¹² Genuine Christians display evidence of God's sanctifying work as they exhibit a growing aversion to sin, strength of faith, commitment to holiness, demonstration of righteousness, and love for Christ. While it is impossible for the sinful nature to be completely eradicated in this earthly life, the Holy Spirit helps believers experience lasting victory over sin as they strive to increasingly reflect the attitudes and actions of Christ.¹³

From the moment of conversion, all believers are forever adopted into God's family. They permanently become His children and are declared heirs with Christ.¹⁴ Their position is not maintained by human works, for it is by God's power and grace that one's salvation is kept sure. Therefore, all genuine Christians can have great confidence that their hope is certain, their faith will persevere, and their future is secure.¹⁵

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1. Isaiah 53:3-12; Mark 10:45; John 1:29; Acts 10:43; Romans 3:21-25; Hebrews 9:26-28; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 4:9-10
 2. Matthew 7:13-14; John 1:12; 3:14-18; 10:7-9; 14:6; Acts 4:8-12; 13:38; Romans 5:10-11; 6:5-10; Colossians 1:20-22; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 1 John 5:12
 3. Mark 1:14-15; Luke 13:3; John 1:12; 3:5-8; 3:16; 5:24; 6:63; Acts 10:43; 16:31; Romans 8:10-11; 10:9-13; Titus 3:4-7; 1 John 1:9; Isaiah 55:7
 4. John 3:14-18; 5:24; 17:3; Romans 6:4-10; 8:10-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Philippians 3:8-11; Titus 3:4-7
 5. Romans 3:21-25; 4:25; 5:8-9; 8:33-34; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 2:16; 3:13; 1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:11-12



III. THE DOCTRINE OF THIS CHURCH *(Continued)*

6. Romans 3:23-25; 5:8-11; Ephesians 2:13-16; Colossians 1:20-22; 1 John 4:10
7. Romans 6:5-14; 8:12-14; Galatians 4:3-7; Acts 2:38; 10:43; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 1:9
8. Ephesians 2:18-22; 3:11-12; Hebrews 4:16; 7:19; 1 John 1:3; John 15:26; Acts 1:5; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:13; 1 John 3:1-3
9. Romans 8:28-30; 9:15-23; Ephesians 1:3-11; 2 Timothy 1:9; Psalm 139:16; Proverbs 16:9; John 6:37-40; Galatians 1:15-16; Philippians 2:13
10. Romans 3:19-28; 4:4-5; 5:1-2; 9:15-16; Ephesians 2:1-9; Philippians 3:9; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:4-7
11. John 6:37-40; Romans 8:28-30; 9:15-16; 11:28-29; Ephesians 1:3-11; 2 Timothy 1:9; Psalm 139:16; Proverbs 16:9; Galatians 1:15-16; Philippians 2:13
12. Romans 6:1-22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 John 2:19; 3:5-9; 2 John 9
13. John 17:16-19; Romans 7:7-8:17; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:20-24; Colossians 3:1-17; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7; Hebrews 3:12-14; 12:1-3
14. John 1:12-13; Romans 8:14-15; 8:23; 8:28-30; 2 Corinthians 6:18; Galatians 4:3-7; Ephesians 1:3-11; 3:6; Hebrews 12:5-9; 1 John 3:1-2
15. John 6:37-40; 10:27-29; Romans 8:38-39; 1 Corinthians 1:8; 15:20-23; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Philippians 1:6; 1:21-24; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 1 Peter 1:3-5; Jude 1:24-25

8. THE CHURCH

We believe there is one true and universal Christian church, which was established by God and consists of all people who have a genuine faith in Jesus Christ. In the church there is no distinction between race, culture, language, or nation, for all regenerate believers are united by the Holy Spirit into this living, spiritual body, with Christ as the head.¹

The church exists to glorify God by making fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ who worship and exalt Him in all things. This happens as those in the church: devote themselves to the teaching, study, and application of God's Word; seek the Lord in earnest prayer; experience the power of authentic, life-changing fellowship; and engage their community and the world with God's truth through acts of compassion and witness. In these things, the church pursues its ultimate purpose—to exalt Christ by spreading His glory and proclaiming His gospel.²

The church practices two ordinances instituted by Christ: baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism by immersion is the public testimony a believer gives after professing personal faith in Christ.³ The Lord's Supper is the believers' remembrance and proclamation of Jesus' death through the partaking of elements that symbolically represent the body and blood of Christ.⁴ Both of these beautiful celebrations are regularly practiced by the church in obedience to Scripture, and they result in blessings and encouragement for the entire church body.

We believe that the church manifests itself in local, self-governed congregations that are under the authority of Christ and led by elders/pastor-teachers and deacons.⁵ These servants of Christ guide the church toward maturity and mobilize believers to reach their communities with the gospel.⁶ They also encourage and equip individuals to use their spiritual gifts to serve others and expand Christ's Kingdom.⁷ Finally, in all things, it is the Scriptures that govern, Christ who leads, and the Holy Spirit who empowers the church body to do its work.⁸

1. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 1:22; 2:11-3:6; 4:15; 5:23-32; Colossians 1:18
2. Matthew 5:13-16; 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; 2:42-47; Ephesians 3:21; 4:11-14; 2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 10:24-25
3. Matthew 3:13-17; 28:19-20; Acts 2:38-41; 8:36-38; 10:47; 18:8; 19:4; Romans 6:1-11



4. Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:23-29
5. Acts 6:1-7; 14:23; Ephesians 4:11-12; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9
6. Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11-14; 1 Peter 5:1-5; 1 Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:7; 13:17
7. In order that the expression of spiritual gifts be a source of unity, Bethel Church does not practice the sign gifts at gatherings within our fellowship.
8. Joshua 1:8; Colossians 3:16; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; Colossians 1:18; John 14:16-17; 16:13-14; Acts 1:8

9. THE FUTURE

We believe that all of human history is moving toward one climactic event: the certain return and final revelation of Jesus Christ. At a time known only to God, Christ will return personally, visibly, and gloriously as the promised Messiah and King to establish His millennial reign and consummate redemptive history.¹ Christ's return will be marked by many wondrous displays of God's power, which include: the rapture of those who are alive in Christ to be with Him; a period of unprecedented judgment upon the world, known as the Great Tribulation; and the bodily resurrection of all God's saints from the dead.²

After Christ's millennial reign, Satan and all demons—who are fallen angels—will suffer their final defeat by the power of Christ and be imprisoned in hell forever.³ In addition, the unsaved will come before Christ in final judgment. They will receive God's just condemnation and will be sent away to everlasting, conscious punishment in hell.⁴ While all those opposed to God will be subject to His wrath, God's holy and righteous saints will receive eternal rewards as they enter into an everlasting state of glory with Christ.⁵

God will end redemptive history by creating a new heaven and a new earth, where His righteousness and glory will dwell forever.⁶ There the redeemed will finally experience unhindered worship of God, and they will enjoy everlasting fellowship with Him and with one another. There will be no sin, despair, or suffering in God's new creation, for it will be filled with perfect harmony, joy, beauty, worship, and love.⁷ This certain hope should motivate all believers to pursue godliness, to endure trials, and to anticipate with joy their blessed and eternal future.

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1. Matthew 24:27-31; 24:36-41; 25:31-46; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 19:11-16; 20:4-6
 2. Matthew 24:15-31; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; Revelation 20:4-6; Romans 8:10-11; 1 Corinthians 15:50-54
 3. Revelation 20:7-10; Matthew 25:41; Romans 16:20; Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:12-19
 4. Revelation 20:11-15; Matthew 13:49-50; 25:41-46; Acts 17:30; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9; John 5:22
 5. John 5:28-29; Matthew 16:27; 25:31-46; Daniel 12:1-3; John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 22:3-5
 6. Revelation 21:1-22:6; Romans 8:19; Isaiah 65:17; 2 Peter 3:10
 7. Revelation 22:3-5; Ephesians 5:5; John 17:3

