



Crossroads
Christian Church
experience community.

Discovering Crossroads

Our History

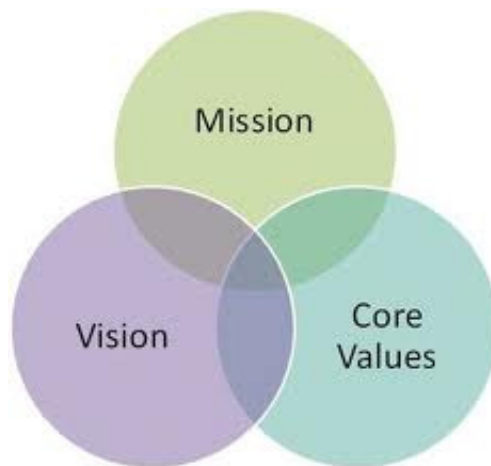
The best place to start in understanding Crossroads is with our history. From a Biblical prospective we believe ourselves to be following the pattern established by the New Testament Church that began on the day of Pentecost when Peter preached Jesus Christ to the Jewish people in Jerusalem (Acts 2). Under the guidance of the apostles of Jesus Christ the Church grew and set forth for us an example to follow.

However, in more recent terms, we consider ourselves to be a congregation of the Restoration Movement. The Restoration Movement is first indigenous American religious movement. It began back in the early years of our country. The movement was the result of God bringing together the work of Barton Stone with the work of Thomas Campbell and his son, Alexander. Each believed that a common basis for unity could be found in accepting the Bible as our sole authority on all matters of faith and practice.

The first service of our congregation was on Sunday, October 18th, 1992. Two years later, eighteen acres of land was purchased on which our building was erected. It was dedicated on Sunday, March 12th, 1996. We have added to the original building twice and have plans for the final phase of construction.

As New Testament church, there are several distinctive aspects that set us apart from most other congregations. The first is that we are an autonomous congregation. This means we are independent of any denominational organization. All decisions are made by the membership of the church according to the teaching of the Scriptures and the laws of the state of Indiana and the United States of America.

Another distinctive about our congregation is that we have no clergy. While we do have paid full-time and part-time staff, every member is a minister (servant) of God. We strive therefore to help each member discover and serve God in whatever ministry He has prepared for them.



Our Mission

Crossroads has a mission statement that is more than just words on sign or catch phrase for branding our congregation. It was the result of a very prayerful and intentional process of determining God's leading for our church. It is reflective of our DNA as a people of God. It is a tool we use as we plan and evaluate the present.

It is our relentless focus to connect individuals with God through Jesus Christ; to root them in His Church and guide them to His purpose for their lives.

We want to "connect" people to God through Jesus Christ. The connection must be more than a passive acceptance of Biblical truth. We want to help people experience a daily, growing relationship with Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.

For some that means guiding them in God's plan of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ as God's Son, confessing Him as their Lord and Savior, repenting their sins for which Jesus died on the cross, and then submitting to being immersed (buried) with Christ for the forgiveness of their sins and to receive the gift of God's Holy Spirit.

For others, it may take the the form of "RE-connecting" them to God. There are many today that are "de-churched". They may have grown up in a church or denomination, but have not be actively pursuing a relationship with Christ recently. We recognize the spiritual journeys often detours and rough spots, but God is still gracious and faithful.

Another extremely important aspect of this concept of connecting is the corporate worship of the congregation. We need to corporately come into God's presence and worship Him as a body of believers. Worship properly aligns us with God's purpose for the coming week and helps us to see Him more clearly.

To be rooted in His Church means that you develop deep connects with others in the body of Christ at Crossroads. The life of a follower of Jesus Christ cannot be lived in isolation from others. We have strategically chosen to build authentic community through a structure of small groups. We have two (2) semesters of small groups each year. Members are expected to participate and can choose from a wide range of groups based on both interest and life stages.

Guiding believers to God's purpose for their lives is an exciting part of our mission. Instead of trying to force individuals into areas of service WE NEED, we intentionally look to help you discover how God has wired you to serve. We have a ministry team structure where everyone works together for the glory of God.

Our Values

As a congregation, we have certain core values which guide how we will go about fulfilling our mission. There are two (2) important things to note about our core values. The first is that we have intentionally set them based on our shared understanding of the New Testament. The second is that we have established them in an order of priority.

Why is priority important? It is critically important if you want to avoid disagreement when values may possibly be conflicting. In this way, the value with the higher priority would prevail.

Our Core Values are 1) Grace Prevails; 2) Everyone Matters; 3) Divine Catalyst

When we talk about grace prevailing, it is not in an abstract sense. We believe that grace is the most practical reality of the gospel. We are all sinners and equally in need of God's grace. We all have a past where we did not follow God or Jesus Christ. However, regardless of our past, grace prevails. We are forgiven and that is a label we all get to wear.

For us, grace is something you cannot earn, don't deserve, and cannot repay. We continue to receive it every day of our lives as we follow Jesus. The reality is that we never come to a point where our need for grace is satisfied.

Everyone matters because the church as to exist for everyone or it cannot exist for anyone. People come to Crossroads from all walks of life and with all kinds of backgrounds, educations and struggles. No one is dismissed or favor. Everyone is welcome and made to feel at home. They matter because everyone is created in the image and likeness of God with an eternal soul. People always mattered to Jesus, so that matter to us.

Being a divine catalyst means that we realize that all growth takes place outside of our comfort zones. We choose to interact with our community in ways that hopefully causes people to consider God's offer of salvation. From our daycare offering quality affordable childcare to providing a place for those who need to find recovery from addictions and life struggles, we want to be the catalyst that starts the divine moving in the lives of individuals.

Our Vision

There is often some confusion when it comes to what a vision statement is. Some think of it as a mission statement. However, there is a significant difference. The mission statement tells us WHERE we are going. The core values tell us HOW we are going to get them. The vision statement tells us WHAT it will look like when we get there. It is what one person called "a statement of our PREFERRED FUTURE."

Our vision statement is also reflected of our congregation's DNA. It is the "guiding star" of our leadership when we need to make decisions about individual situations or problems. Even when it comes to exercising church discipline, we want to remember what our vision is and decide accordingly.

Our vision is to become a place where people experience transforming grace in genuine community.

What we mean by transforming grace goes hand in hand with our core value about grace prevailing. Grace that transforms is a willingness to be forgiven and to forgive others. Too often, believers carry the weight of their sins by being unwilling to truly and fully accept God's forgiveness. They falsely believe that what they have done is either too bad or too shameful for God to forgive. Sometimes they want to try to earn forgiveness through service and sacrifice.

By accepting God's forgiveness, they are set free to change, to transform and to experience the joy of Lord in their service. It is from that place that they are to extend forgiveness to EVERYONE in their own lives. This is not an easy thing, but a necessary thing if they are to continue in God's grace.

Genuine Community is what the Church of Jesus Christ is all about. We are to be the Body of Christ. Authentic community encompasses three (3) critical elements: accountability, belonging, and caring. Without these elements existing in equal measure, community is meaningless.

Accountability is the missing ingredient in many church communities. In fact, it is the key to spiritual growth in every individual. Discipleship can only exist within a web of mutually accountable relationships. We must love each other enough to confront each other when we are straying or slacking off in our walk with Christ. It has been said that everyone needs to be mentoring someone younger in the faith and being mentored by someone older in the faith.

Belonging is the sense that you are building the relationships you need and sharing in relationships with others. In Celebrate Recovery, they talk about the members of the group being their "Forever Family". That's also true for every member of the congregation. We are "Forever Family" and we should feel like it.

Caring is the support, encouragement and service we provide to each other in our times of struggle or need. From providing meals after surgery, to paying for Christian counseling, and everything in between, being a community means caring for each other.

To facilitate genuine community, we have chosen to implement semester small groups where members can build accountable, caring friendships. Small groups DO LIFE TOGETHER. Every session of small groups is one more opportunity to build friendships for eternity and grow spiritually.



Our Ordinances

The New Testament church has two (2) ordinances. An ordinance is something that is commanded, ordered, or ordained to be done. We are commanded to observe communion and to practice immersion (baptism). Our practice of these ordinances is uniquely different than any other churches and denominations.

The Lord's Supper (Communion) was instituted by Jesus Christ at the Passover meal as means of His disciples later remembering His sacrifice. Every Sunday, we offer an open invitation to all believers in Jesus Christ to participate in the Lord's Supper with us. We believe that communion is a remembrance of what Jesus Christ did on the cross for each of us and has no innate sacramental value. In other words, you do not receive any measure of forgiveness for participating in communion.

No commandment is given on how often one should celebrate the Lord's Supper. We have chosen to make communion a weekly part of our worship following the example of the early church. We do believe that communion is only intended for the believer.

On the ordinance Christian Baptism (immersion), many have difficulty accepting the teaching of the New Testament. Calvinism and Protestantism have conditioned many to believe in salvation by saying the "Sinner's Prayer". Nowhere in the New Testament was anyone instructed to respond to the gospel invitation of salvation through a simple prayer.

While we will examine the teaching of Scripture on baptism, it is too brief to address every question or situation. You are encouraged to study this topic more in depth with the someone in leadership. Here are some of the frequently asked questions.

What is baptism?

The word “baptism” is a transliteration of the Greek word “baptizo” that was invented when scholars who were translating the King James version of the Bible. They simply took the Greek word and gave it an English spelling. They could then define the new word anyway they choose.

Had they properly translated “baptize”, it would have been translated “immersion” or “submersion”. In Scripture, it refers to the specific practice of immersing someone in water (Acts 8:38,39). The Bible teaches no other form of baptism except immersion.

Who should be baptized?

Being united with Jesus Christ in baptism is based on certain factors being place BEFORE it. Jesus said one must BELIEVE before they can be immersed into Him (Mark 16:16). Peter stated that one must REPENT (Acts 2:38) before being immersed. Repentance is more than being sorry that you sinned but a decision to resist sin. Therefore, baptism is only for those who have faith in Jesus Christ, confess that faith and a desire to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, and repent of their sins. Only then can they be immersed with Jesus Christ. This means that infants and children without the understanding of sin and God cannot be immersed.

What happens when one is baptized?

When a repentant, believing person is immersed, they receive the forgiveness of their sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38, 22:16, Romans 6:4). It is how every person accepted the offer of the gospel in the New Testament. Jesus described the process of salvation as being “born again” (John 3:5, Titus 3:5, 1 Peter 3:21,22).

What about what other churches and denominations?

However, while other churches have differing views on baptism, it is not our place to judge them or their salvation. We can only teach what the Bible says, and leave judgment to God. Christian baptism should not be a matter of division or confusion in the church. Paul told us that we should be unified because, as he said, “one Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Ephesians 4:5).

Our Structure

We are properly structured both legally and biblically. We are correctly registered with the Internal Revenue Service as qualified 501(c)(3) organization and have a constitution and by-laws are total agreement with ALL the New Testament mandates.

As with any organization, the Church relies on godly leaders to lead and guide the congregation. In the New Testament, there are two complimentary leadership roles: the pastor-teachers; the Evangelist. Each of these roles is essential to the sustainability of the church. Each provides a necessary prospective in the decision-making process.

The role of the pastor-teacher is a cooperative role. It is referred to in the New Testament as elders, shepherds, and overseers. These names are all referring same role in the church. The “elders” in Scripture are collective of individuals acting in concert. Nowhere in the New Testament is there a single reference to an elder acting on his own authority.

The leadership of the elders operates in two areas (1 Peter 5:1-4). They are to “shepherd” (or pastor) the people of the congregation. They are responsible for the care and protection of the people just like a real shepherd cares and protects his sheep. This requires the elders to have a relationship with the members.

The elders also provide oversight and accountability to the programs and ministries of the church. They insure that resources are used properly and account for accordingly. God gave us very specific qualifications for those who serve as elders in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. The qualifications given are not optional or suggested. They should be seriously considered by the membership when elders are selected.

The role of the evangelist is different from the elders in that he exercises leadership through the teaching and preaching of the Word of God. He is to make sure that everything that is taught and practice with a congregation is consistent with the teaching of the Scriptures. There can only be one evangelist in a congregation at a time. The qualifications for an evangelist are:

- Possess the ability to preach and teach in a competent manner. (2 Timothy 4:1-5)
- Live in a Christ-like way that is consistent with his teaching. (I Timothy 4:12,13)
- Evangelist must be a man because the role requires teaching men. (1 Timothy 2:12)

The evangelist and the elders work cooperatively at the leadership team. They identified and divided the ministry of church into broad areas. Ministry teams are formed, and qualified individuals are asked to serve a “Point Persons” for each ministry area. The leadership team selects and approves these persons based on qualifications are given us in the Scriptures. (1 Timothy 3:8-13).

Our Membership

Membership at Crossroads is a covenant relationship between the individual and the congregation. Because it is a covenant relationship, we are obligated to fulfill our responsibilities even when the other party fails to perform them. To become a member at Crossroads, there are three (3) requirements

First, you must be an immersed believer in Jesus according to the plan salvation given in the Scriptures. (*Believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that He died, was buried, and resurrected from the grave. Confess your faith in Christ. Repent by turning your life over to Jesus as Lord. Be immersed for the forgiveness of sin and to receive the Holy Spirit. Walk in a daily relationship with Jesus.*)

Second, you must read the booklet entitled “Discovering Crossroads” and agree with the specific teachings contain therein. While some are Biblical doctrines, other subjects are important understandings that the leadership and the congregation have agreed are important. The mission, the vision and the core values are critical components of our congregation’s DNA. Any serious disagreements should be considered before seeking membership.

Third, you must read, understand, and sign the membership covenant. It represents your acceptance of the responsibilities of being a member. We ask for a signature because every important commitment you make in your life involves you signing something. When you got married, you signed the license. When you bought your first house or car, you sign the papers. When you first child was born, you signed their papers to bring them home. Your signature is pretty important to you.

We have also found by spelling out in concrete terms what the expectations are people know what they are committing to. Clarity prevents misunderstanding and miscommunication.

Conclusion

This booklet is provided as a starting point in the discussion of membership. It provides only the most basic teachings and important understanding we hold as a congregation. We are committed to the Scriptures as our final authority and continue to study them in an effort to grow in our understanding and practical application of them to our lives, our congregation, and our ministry to the community.

