



*Shoreline*  
*Church*

**Membership Class**

# Membership

Prepared for those interested in becoming members of  
Shoreline Church or any of its affiliate churches.

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By asking people to first counsel with their Home Group Leader or Elder, their relationship is deepened. Also it reduces the amount of time the Pastor has to spend involved in direct counseling, and allows his schedule to remain open for any crisis that may need his personal ministry.

By recognizing that information flows upward, the Pastors, Elders, and Home Group Leaders all work together as a wonderful team without breaking the lines of confidentiality.

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# Pastor's Letter

We are writing to you today about the importance of church attendance. We want to speak to you as Pastors who love you with all of our heart. One of the most important things that we can do in our Christian Walk is to become part of a local church. Becoming part of a local church is essential for spiritual growth.

## Ephesians 4:11-16

*“He also gave apostles, prophets, missionaries, as well as pastors and teachers as gifts to his church. Their purpose is to prepare God's people, to serve, and to build up the body of Christ. This is to continue until all of us are united in our faith and in our knowledge about God's Son, until we become mature, until we measure up to Christ, who is the standard. Then we will no longer be little children, tossed and carried about by all kinds of teachings that change like the wind. We will no longer be influenced by people who use cunning and clever strategies to lead us astray. Instead, as we lovingly speak the truth, we will grow up completely in our relationship to Christ, who is the head. He makes the whole body fit together and unites it through the support of every joint. As each and every part does its job, he makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. “*

This passage of scripture reveals Gods blue print for spiritual growth. When we become part of a local church and join ourselves to the body of believers of that church on a regular basis something powerful takes place, we receive an impartation of strength and encouragement that we need in order to grow spiritually.

Parents provide headship over their children. For that reason, no children's worker, youth worker or leader at Shoreline Church will ever keep information from parents. Many times teenagers will come to youth workers asking them to listen to their secrets and asking them NOT to tell their parents. Our workers are taught to avoid that trap of the Adversary. They explain that the parents are the heads over their children and thus an authority over the youth workers in the lives of their children.

Husbands provide headship over wives (Ephesians 5:21-33). We don't ever agree to hide information about one mate from their spouse. Any marriage partner who ever begins sharing personal information with others, but hides it from their mate, is inviting seeds of destruction into their marriage.

Elders provide headship over their Home Group Leaders and Deacons. Pastors provide headship over Elders, Home Group Leaders, and Deacons. As a result, Deacons understand that they are always to share any information about anyone hurting in the body with the Home Group Leader. The Home Group Leader knows to share with their Elder, and the Elder knows to share with the Pastor.

The entire book of 1 Corinthians was written because some people in Chloe's household told Paul about some problems in the church (! Corinthians 1:11). In fact, almost every epistle was written because someone followed the principle of information flowing upwards.

The second application of this principle has to do with access to the Pastor and Pastoral Staff. If someone wants to meet with the Pastor, they will first be asked to meet with A Home Group Leader or Elder. If after that meeting the person would still like to meet with the Pastor, then he will schedule to meet.

assigned Elder. The Elder will then work directly with that home group leader(s)

- b) Home Group Leaders – Shoreline Church will work diligently to choose leadership that is trustworthy, stable and mature. It is then your responsibility to choose a home group leader that you feel comfortable with, someone you feel you can trust.
- c) We give you freedom to change home groups – Since it’s our desire that you grow, mature and become involved, we want you to be comfortable with those in leadership over and with you. For this reason, if necessary, you can change home groups with the blessings of your home group leader upon your request.
- d) You determine how much you share – Home group leaders are trained to help you be all that God created you to be. They will ask you “Is there anything I can pray for you about?” You alone make the determination as to how much you share with your group or your group leader(s).

## **2. INFORMATION FLOWS UPWARD**

The second truth that helps us to always honor God’s idea of confidentiality is our understanding of the scriptural truth that “Information Flows Upward.” Obviously, as Christians everything in our lives is available and open to the Lord. He is our head, our leader. When we pray we are fulfilling the truest form of information flowing upward. Jesus placed positions on earth that are extensions of His headship.

As pastor, one of the most important things that we could say to you is that you must find the church where God has called you. You must then give your heart and time to be involved and share the giftings that you have with that church.

Involvement in church is more than becoming a member. It requires that you become a regular in attendance. Why? When you are faithful, you give no greater testimony to those around you. Discipline says that when one child is sick, the other parent and the rest of family still come to church. If you have to work Sunday Afternoon, you don’t sleep in, but you still come to church. When relatives or friends visit, they know that you are going to attend church on Sunday. Social activities are not a reason to skip church.

Now with that said, we are not in bondage, there are times of vacation, and times when attending will not be possible. We understand this, but we need to remind you that your testimony is one of the most important possessions you have.

For those of you who consider church a decision that you have to make every week, or a priority in your schedule that can be bumped by other activities, please listen to these words as though your spiritual life depended on it: Every single person we have ever met who considered church attendance an option, drifted away from Christ. We have experienced the pain of watching this happen many, many times.

Please consider the following before making any decision that keeps you away from church.

**1) Realize the seriousness of the spiritual warfare.** You have an enemy who wants to deceive you. Satan’s first and most consistent attack against you is always to try to separate you from the body of Christ. If he can convince you that skipping church is “No big deal”, then he has won. Satan is cunning and deceptive.

*“**11 Corinthians 11:3** - However, I'm afraid that as the snake deceived Eve by its tricks, so your minds may somehow be lured away from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. “*

**2) Realize how easy life becomes when you have the discipline of church attendance.** People who have to “decide” every Sunday whether or not they will go to church, face a lifetime of battles and decisions. They feel imposed upon by Christ. He is restricting their freedom of choice and they resent it. By making a decision not to skip church, you’ll find that it becomes easier to get up. We still face the same pressures on our time and schedules that we all face, but we have a peace that through Christ, He will make a way. And guess what? He does!

Once we make the decision to be disciplined, we can then begin to reap the benefits of obedience. Life will become easier, and your life of obedience and discipline will be used by Him for influencing those around you.

**3) Realize what you’re doing to your children & family.** Now I know you love your children passionately and you are putting great efforts into being the best parent you can be. That is why I must share with you my heart.

Your parents, much like mine, probably did not train you in the discipline of church attendance. Look at your life. Now consider this; what type of world are we living in today? Is it different from when we were kids? How much worse will it be in 10 -20 or 30 years if the Lord tarries?

If you’re like us, we want our children to have every chance possible for them to be successful in life and to have a meaningful walk with our Lord. What better example do they have than you? - Your children look to you. They follow your leading even when you least expect it. Most times our children take on our passions and unfortunately, they also take on our

*“Obey your leaders, and accept their authority. They take care of you because they are responsible for you.”*

## Confidentiality

A church family is one of the most important places on earth for Christians to feel safe. It is absolutely essential that we be responsive and caring when people share their problems, while at the same time being careful to protect their confidentiality. There are two truths that guide our desire to honor your confidentiality.

### **1. IT IS YOUR CHOICE HOW MUCH YOU SHARE ISSUES IN YOUR LIFE WITH US.**

We can’t say this emphatically enough. If you have some problem or painful situation in your life it’s totally up to you to whether or not you share it with your church family. We hope that you will trust us enough to share it with us. We hope to always have a motive to serve you and cover you with prayer and wisdom in any situation. However, we are very aware that trust is a gift. If you choose to give us this gift then we must prove faithful in how we respond.

#### **1 Corinthians 4:2**

*“Managers are required to be trustworthy.”*

Trust is usually a gift given incrementally. That is, most people give a little bit of trust at a time. If we prove faithful in handling this gift of trust, then eventually you will give us more trust.

The practical application of this first truth produced 4 policies:

- a) The Home Group Structure – Home group leaders will be trained by the Pastor or

## **Practical Solutions:**

If someone comes to you and begins to blurt out negatives about someone else, Immediately ask them (politely) to stop, and kindly ask them if they have discussed their feelings, thoughts, etc with that person?

Kindly redirect them back to that other person and to God.

DO NOT BECOME INVOLVED – As soon as you become involved it becomes a very volatile situation. Once you become known as someone who will not listen to gossip, then the gossipers will stop coming to you!

The overall result of this is:

1. People are much less free to have a critical spirit, complain, gossip and slander.
2. True problems are then dealt between the parties only.
3. People are encouraged to grow spiritually.
4. You are not caught in the middle
5. Loyalty is greatly enhanced in the body of Christ

## **One Important Exception:**

To share with an Elder or Pastor that someone is battling with a particular sin is NOT GOSSIP. The very definition of receiving someone as your elder or pastor is that you open your life to them.

### **I Corinthians 1:10**

*“Brothers and sisters, some people from Chloe's family have made it clear to me that you are quarreling among yourselves”*

### **Hebrews 13:17**

weaknesses. You are the most powerful influence on your children and family. At times it may not seem that way, but they are watching. And although it seems true that those we love most are quicker to show us our faults, living a disciplined life does speak volumes to them and given time and God's grace, some day you may experience first hand the joy of having your family members look up to you. Not for what you know, but for who you know- Jesus.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my heart and I pray that God will confirm these words in your heart and mind.

We love you,

Michael & Meredith Calo  
Pastors

# Articles of Faith

**1) The Scriptures are inspired:** The Bible is the inspired Word of God, a revelation from God to man, the infallible rule of faith and conduct and is superior to conscience and reason, but not contrary to reason. [2 Timothy 3: 15-17, 1 Peter 1: 2 3-25; Hebrews 4:12].

**2) The One True Godhead.** The triune Godhead is comprised of three separate and distinct personalities, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, who are eternally self-existent, self-revealed and function as one entity. (Genesis 1:26) ; Isaiah 6:8; John 10:30]. Jesus Christ, who is God manifested in the flesh, is the second member of the Godhead, coequal and co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. [John 10:30]

**3) Man, his Fall and Redemption.** Man was created good and upright, for God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our Likeness." But, man by voluntary transgression fell, and his only hope of redemption is in Jesus Christ of Son of God [Genesis 1:26-31, 3:1-7; Romans 5:12-21].

## **4) The Salvation of man.**

(a) Man's only hope redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. On the cross Jesus Christ became sin and sickness providing both salvation and divine healing for all mankind, [Psalm 103:3] being justified freely by His Grace through the redemption

*Our Vocabulary does matter.* An often overlooked area of speech is the use of thoughtless expressions and minced oaths. Without using outright profanity, some Christians use words like "gee," "darn," and "gosh" without thinking of what they might be saying. Studies of the origins of words have demonstrated that these are senseless substitutions for "Jesus," "damn," and "God." Other seemingly innocent words with unknown origins are unwittingly used in the personal vocabulary of many Christians today. All believers would do well to evaluate the words they use in expressing themselves. A Christian's speech should reflect God's grace and give subtle testimony to the fact God is alive and at work in the life of the believer.

We sometimes wonder why there are so many tensions and disagreements in the Body of Christ, and especially in a local church. Most often the difficulty can be traced to a careless word spoken in haste and without thinking how others would understand or receive it. It may not be Scripture, but the old adage is in keeping with the command that we love one another and work toward the unity of the church: "Think before you speak." And while one is thinking, the Holy Spirit will have opportunity to speak first and cause the speaking to edify and unify believers.

Furthermore, the Spirit-filled believer should be concerned about prayers addressed to God, not to avoid offending God, but to use words that reflect an all-consuming love for our Lord. The baptism in the Holy Spirit, with the prayer language that comes with the infilling, provides a beautiful way of expressing love and praise for God when human expression seems so inadequate. The more we have intimate communion with God through the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the less hold the temptation to gossip will have on us. Paul's word to the Ephesian church is good for us today, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen" (Ephesians. 4:29).

fire out of hell (Eph. 4:25-32; James 3:6). A major reason for gossip in Christian churches, then, is failure to understand how serious it is, and how it is used by the devil.

There are other reasons for gossip. For some, sadly, it is a form of entertainment. But gossip is typically unfulfilling. It only temporarily satisfies one with the communication and relationship needs that God has designed to be met in edifying ways. Though sharing gossip can make people feel accepted and part of a group, it abuses persons outside the group. On occasion gossip is a projection of anger. Sometimes people "let off steam" by talking about something or someone other than the issue or person with whom they are angry. All of these reasons show that gossip does not belong in the life of a person whose confidence and strength is in the Lord, and whose joy comes from loving Christian service.

***Telling truths can be wrong.*** Paul says that because something is lawful, or permissible, it is not always expedient or beneficial. We should not let any compulsion or habit master us, or bring us under its power (1 Corinthians. 6:12). What is basically true may not be constructive, uplifting, or kind to others. We should not act according to our impulses, but do that which is right for others (1 Corinthians. 10:23). Relating another's private matters in a thoughtless way shows lack of self-control. It is a mark of spiritual maturity to refrain from any words that might embarrass, hurt, or offend (James 3:2).

What can we do about gossip? (1) Do not risk beginning a rumor by talking about others. Even in making prayer requests, be careful to say only what is necessary to explain the need. Do not ask suggestive questions, nor pry into the affairs of others. (2) Do not betray a confidence (Proverbs. 11:13). If you feel you must share a confidence to help someone, speak only to a pastor, or a parent who is in a position to act appropriately. (3) Do not listen to gossip. Express your intention not to listen. (4) Be a peacemaker. Be the one to put out fires (Proverbs. 26:20).

that is in Christ Jesus. For by grace we are saved through faith. "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart – that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in salvation" [Romans 3:24; Ephesians 2:8; Romans 10:8-10].

(b) The Evidences of Salvation. The inward evidence, to the believer of his salvation, is the direct witness of the Holy Spirit [Romans 8:16]. The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness. "And this is His commandment, that we should believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us" [1 John 3:23]

(c) Faith and Works. Salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ and not by human works; however, our works will determine the rewards in eternity [Romans 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7; Romans 14-20-21; and II Corinthians 5:10]

**5) Baptism in Water.** The ordinance of baptism by burial with Christ should be observed as commanded in the Scriptures by all who have really repented and in their hearts have truly believed on Christ as Savior and Lord. In doing so, they declare to the world that they have died with Jesus and that they have also been raised with Him to walk in newness of life [Matthew 28:19; Acts 10:47-48; Romans 6:4]

**6) The Lord's Supper.** “ And when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, “this is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me”. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup [1 Corinthians 11:24,25,28]

**7) The Promise of the Father.** All believers are entitled to, and should ardently expect and earnestly seek, the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Ghost 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 endowment of power for life and service, the bestowal of the gifts and their uses in the work of the church [Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31]

**8) The evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.** The full consummation of the Baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit, in comparison to the infilling or the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in believers as it was with John the Baptist, is evidenced by the initial sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, and by the subsequent manifestation of spiritual power in public testimony and service [Acts 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:2,6; 1:8]

**9) The Church.** The church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Holy Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great

Speech and conversation tell a great deal about one's character. "Out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matt. 12:34). We learn much about our Heavenly Father and His only begotten Son Jesus, by reading how Jesus conversed with the Father in prayer (Luke 22:41,42). The profanity and obscene talk of ungodly people reveal the nature of their hearts.

Spoken words have unbelievable power. Words are described as weapons, as swords and arrows (Psalms. 57:4; 64:3; Jeremiah. 9:8). James describes the power of the tongue and its words as the rudder of a ship or a spark that sets a forest on fire (James 3:2-12). Christians observe the power of the spoken word today in political propaganda and media news.

Shoreline Church agrees with the Bible that gossip is sinful. The Bible clearly and frequently condemns all tale bearing and idle talk. "Do not go about spreading slander among your people" (Lev. 19:16). "If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless" (James 1:26). Jesus said "Men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned" (Matthew. 12:36, 37). In every context, gossip is related to words, ideas, and behaviors entirely incompatible with Christian, Spirit-filled living.

The horror of gossip turns language or words, our best gift and most powerful tool, into a cruel weapon. Idle talk mangles truth and exchanges wisdom for foolishness (James 3). Gossip is the opposite of love (1 Corinthians. 13:6; Galatians. 5:14, 15). Instead of helpfulness it brings hurt. Instead of peace it brings anger and strife (Proverbs. 16:28; 2 Corinthians. 12:20). Where there should be trust it brings betrayal (Proverbs. 20:19).

***Why is there gossip among Christians?*** Paul preaching to the Ephesians, and James passionately describing the power of the tongue, both say gossip is giving the devil a foothold. It is like

passive partners in male-male sex nor active partners in male-male sex nor covetous [ones] nor thieves nor drunkards nor slanderers [or, abusive persons] nor swindlers will inherit [the] kingdom of God. “

### **11 Corinthians 12:20**

*“I'm afraid that I may come and find you different from what I want you to be, and that you may find me different from what you want me to be. I'm afraid that there may be rivalry, jealousy, hot tempers, selfish ambition, slander, gossip, arrogance, and disorderly conduct. “*

### **11 Timothy 3:1-5**

*“You must understand this: In the last days there will be violent periods of time.*

*People will be selfish and love money. They will brag, be arrogant, and use abusive language. They will curse their parents, show no gratitude, have no respect for what is holy, and lack normal affection for their families. They will refuse to make peace with anyone. They will be slanderous, lack self-control, be brutal, and have no love for what is good.*

*They will be traitors. They will be reckless and conceited. They will love pleasure rather than God.*

*They will appear to have a godly life, but they will not let its power change them. Stay away from such people”*

### **James 3:1-2**

*“Brothers and sisters, not many of you should become teachers. You know that we who teach will be judged more severely. All of us make a lot of mistakes. If someone doesn't make any mistakes when he speaks, he would be perfect. He would be able to control everything he does.”*

commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in Heaven [Ephesians 1:22; 2:19-22; Hebrews 12:23].

### **10) Total Prosperity.**

- (a) Spiritual. John 3:3,11; 11 Corinthians 5:17-21; Romans 9:9-10
- (b) Mental. 11 Timothy 1:7; Romans 12:2; Isaiah 26:3
- (c) Physical. Isaiah 53:4,5; Matthew 8:17; 1 Peter 2:24
- (d) Financial. 111 John 1:2; Malachi 3:10-11; Luke 6:38; 11 Corinthians 9:6-10; Deuteronomy 28:1-14
- (e) Social Proverbs 3:4

**11) Blessed Hope.** Jesus is coming again to gather all His Saints to Heaven 1Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 11 Thessalonians 2:1

**12) The Lake of Fire.** Those who have not accepted the redemptive work of Jesus Christ will suffer eternal separation from the Godhead. The Devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, and anyone whose name was not found in the book of life, shall be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. This is the second death, the lake of fire. Revelation 19:20; 20:10-15

**13) The Millennial Reign of Jesus.** The return of our Lord Jesus Christ with His Saints from Heaven to rule and reign for one thousand years on earth as the Scriptures promised [Romans 11:25-27; 11 Thessalonians 1:7; Revelation 19:11-16; 20:1-7]. After this, there shall be a new heaven and a new earth. Revelation 21.

# Gossip, Slander & Appropriate Speech

## **DEFINITION:**

To participate in a conversation speaking negative about someone not present when there is no intention of going directly to that person and saying the exact same words

### **Proverbs 26:20-28**

*“Without wood a fire goes out, without gossip a quarrel dies down.”*

### **Romans 1:29-30**

*“Their lives are filled with all kinds of sexual sins, wickedness, and greed. They are mean. They are filled with envy, murder, quarreling, deceit, and viciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, haughty, arrogant, and boastful. They think up new ways to be cruel. They don't obey their parents..”*

### **1 Corinthians 5:11**

*But now, I wrote to you\* not to be associating with anyone being named a brother if he is a sexual sinner or covetous or an idolater or a slanderer [or, an abusive person] or a drunkard or a swindler, not even to eat with such a person.*

### **1 Corinthians 6:9-10**

*“You know that unrighteous [ones] will not inherit [the] kingdom of God, do you\* not? Stop being led astray [fig., being deceived]; neither sexual sinners nor idolaters nor adulterers nor*

a local body of believers, he or she disregards God's instruction that we not forsake assembling together with believers (Hebrews 10:25).

Some Christians do not tithe, claiming they cannot afford to give up 10 percent of their income. Simple arithmetic may suggest that 90 percent will not go as far as 100 percent in satisfying essential family needs. But God has built a multiplication factor into our giving of tithes and offerings. Malachi recorded God's words, "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse... Test me in this... and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it" (Malachi 3:10). Though we do not give to God in order to get more back, as some suggest we should, God's promises are still true—if our giving is according to His instruction.

# *The Vision*

**We believe Shoreline to be a place where every person with a need, whether spiritual, physical, emotional or financial can find unconditional love, acceptance regardless of social status, tangible help, hope for a successful life, Godly forgiveness, selfless guidance, encouragement and discipleship by example.**

**We believe for a place, which shares the Good News of Jesus Christ with thousands of residents of the Connecticut shoreline area.**

**We believe in the pursuit of excellence in all that we do and represent. To operate in complete integrity in ministry, socially and fiscally. Above all to be a peacemaker in our community, promoting unity, eliminating strife and walking in the love of God.**

**It is the dream of Shoreline to welcome 5,000 members into our family and to grow and reach New England and the nation for Christ.**

**It is the dream of Shoreline to train, equip and to help believers to discover their talents so they can implement the ministry for which they were purposed.**

**It is the dream of Shoreline to send out missionaries to all parts of the earth and to plant new seeker oriented churches throughout New England and the United States.**

**These are not the goals and dreams of man, but they are an inspired vision of God. Because it is God, we boldly and assuredly speak of this vision as a soon and coming reality.**

## Purpose Statement

The purpose of Shoreline is to **Celebrate** God's love in the earth. To **Assimilate** people into the family of God by sharing His love, the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ. Then help to lead them to **Renew** their life to the purpose for which they were created. Finally, to **Educate** them to reproduce themselves so their life may be an offering of worship to God our heavenly Father.

*C - Celebrate* God's love in the earth.

*A - Assimilate* people into the family of God.

*R - Renew* lives to the purpose and call of God.

*E - Educate* the world about the Good News of Jesus Christ.

*should be with the Levites when they collect the tenth. Then the Levites should bring one-tenth of these tenths to our God's temple, into the rooms of the storehouses there.*

*The Israelites and the Levites should bring into the storerooms their contributions of grain, new wine, and olive oil. They should bring these products to the place where the utensils of the holy place are and where the priests who serve and the gatekeepers and the singers are. We won't neglect our God's temple.*

Giving is a solid biblical principal that makes no sense in the natural, because it seems foolish, but remember;

### **1Corinthians 1:28**

*God chose what the world considers ordinary and what it despises-what it considers to be nothing-in order to destroy what it considers to be something.*

Christians can miss out on God's abundant blessing by looking on the tithe as the entire requirement for giving. The tithe is only one aspect of support for the church and its ministry of spreading the gospel. The Bible also mentions voluntary offerings given by God's people over and above the required tithe. Of course, the attitude with which both tithes and offerings are given is very important. God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7). The giving of either tithes or offerings with a grudging spirit loses much of the blessing that can come as we faithfully give out of love rather than obligation.

We must also stress our concerned about people who withhold tithes when they do not like decisions and directions espoused by spiritual leaders. Christians should fellowship with a local body of believers and bring their whole tithes into that storehouse (Malachi 3:10). Though some of the Israelites may not have liked decisions made by Moses and his successors, they were given no alternatives. While we may designate some of our offerings (beyond the tithes) to ministries outside the local church, the tithes rightfully belong in the church with which the Christian identifies. And if one is not identifying with

*of priest. However, we speak about another kind of priest, a priest like Melchizedek, not a Levitical priest like Aaron. When a different kind of priesthood is established, the regulations for those priests are different. The priest whom we are talking about was a member of a different tribe. No one from that tribe ever served as a priest at the altar. Everyone knows that our Lord came from the tribe of Judah. Moses never said anything about priests coming from that tribe. The regulations were different. This became clear when a different priest who is like Melchizedek appeared. That person is a priest, not because he met human requirements, but because he has power that comes from a life that cannot be destroyed. The Scriptures say the following about him: "You are a priest forever, in the way Melchizedek was a priest." The former requirements are rejected because they are weak and useless. Moses' Teachings couldn't accomplish everything that God required. But we have something else that gives us greater confidence and allows us to approach God. None of this happened without an oath. The men from the tribe of Levi may have become priests without an oath, but Jesus became a priest when God took an oath. God said about him, "The Lord has taken an oath and will not change his mind. You are a priest forever." In this way Jesus has become the guarantee of a better promise. There was a long succession of priests because when a priest died he could no longer serve. But Jesus lives forever, so he serves as a priest forever."*

**Once you have a true understanding of tithing and you experience God's provision, then you begin to understand that God really does own everything. In Nehemiah 10:37-39 we see that when God's people were obedient, it loosed their blessing**

**Nehemiah 10:37-39**

*Also, we have drawn lots to decide who should bring the best of our coarse flour, contributions, fruit from every tree, new wine, and olive oil to the priests, to the storerooms. We will bring for the Levites one-tenth of the produce from our fields, because the Levites are the ones who collect one-tenth of the produce from all our farm communities. A priest-one of Aaron's descendants-*

## Mission Statement

Save the Lost  
Equip the Saved  
Send the Equipped

## Motto

Everyone is loved, loveable  
and able to love.

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

**(John 3:16)**

To "LIKE" does not equal  
"LOVE".

**Shoreline is founded and grounded in the love of God. We believe that it is the love of God, which transcends all boundaries; physical, spiritual & emotional. If we can learn to love each other with same love Jesus displayed during his short time on earth, we believe our community, our country and our world can be revolutionized.**

In the United States we have a tendency to use the word “love” when we really mean “like”. In many languages there is a clear distinction between both words. Mostly, “love” is used in description of a relationship, and not for describing items or objects. It would be beneficial for us to understand the true meaning of the word before we use the word, or before we claim to understand its meaning.

*Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)* **Therefore to love is unconditional. It is a choice, not a feeling or an emotion. It is a state of being based on a decision we make. To love is not easy. It is work and it requires sacrifice and determination.**

- **We believe in striving for EXCELLENCE in all that we do, say and represent.**
- **To live in INTEGRITY financially and socially**
- **Make LOVE not strife – Be a peacemaker, striving for unity, especially among leadership, which will ultimately produce love among the people.**

Christians who do not tithe, actually live under a curse. As soon as you touch God’s money you have taken control of your own life away from God.

Levitical Law established the giving of 1/10<sup>th</sup> to the Lord – Leviticus 27:30. In Genesis 14:17-20, Melchizedek received the title from Abraham. Melchizedek was a representative of Christ. An Old Testament type and shadow of Christ. In the Old Testament, tithes were paid to men who died. But in the New Testament we pay our tithes to Jesus Christ.

#### **Hebrews 7:2-24**

*“ Abraham gave Melchizedek a tenth of everything he had captured. In the first place, Melchizedek's name means king of righteousness. He is also called king of Salem (which means king of peace). No one knows anything about Melchizedek's father, mother, or ancestors. No one knows when he was born or when he died. Like the Son of God, Melchizedek continues to be a priest forever. You can see how important Melchizedek was. Abraham gave him a tenth of what he had captured, even though Abraham was the father of the chosen people. Moses' Teachings say that members of the tribe of Levi who become priests must receive a tenth of everything from the people. The priests collect it from their own people, Abraham's descendants. Although Melchizedek was not from the tribe of Levi, he received a tenth of everything from Abraham. Then Melchizedek blessed Abraham, who had God's promises. No one can deny that the more important person blesses the less important person. Priests receive a tenth of everything, but they die. Melchizedek received a tenth of everything, but we are told that he lives. We could even say that when Abraham gave Melchizedek a tenth of everything, Levi was giving a tenth of everything. Levi gave, although later his descendants would receive a tenth of everything. Even though Levi had not yet been born, he was in the body of Abraham when Melchizedek met him. The people established the Levitical priesthood based on instructions they received. If the work of the Levitical priests had been perfect, we wouldn't need to speak about another kind*

# Tithing

We believe tithing is a recognition that everything we have comes from God. The practice of tithing disciplines our human greed and promotes personal discipline. Tithing is a wonderful way to show our faith and helps to promote the kingdom of God. We consider tithing a minimal objective for a Christian.

While many have taught that tithing was an Old Testament practice that was not intended for New Testament Christians, we hold firm to the belief that practicing Christians should give to God one-tenth of our income. Since there is no direct statement or command in the New Testament, some may choose to believe tithing is not for us today, but there is also no statement declaring the Old Testament plan as no longer valid.

In Matthew 23:23 Jesus clearly said, "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices... But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness." Stopping at that point in the verse might allow some misinterpretation. But Jesus continued, "You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former." From here we see that Jesus regarded the Old Testament practice of tithing as continuing into the new covenant.

The practice of tithing actually predates the giving of the Old Testament law. Abraham tithed in response to God's blessing and faithfulness (Genesis 14:18-20) and was no doubt blessed because of his faithful tithing. Under the law, proceeds from the tithes were directed primarily for the support of the Levites and priests who provided religious leadership (Numbers 18:21-29) and for the relief of the needy (Deuteronomy 14:22-29). Today's church still relies on the support of tithers.

Excellence - Excellence in ministry is our motto, not meaning that to be involved you have to be the most talented person in the world- but it does mean that any involvement means your work and the results will be the best you can provide with the God given talents afforded you.

**If the secular world can provide top-notch programs, then so can the church. We are ambassadors of Christ and our representation must be the best that we can afford and provide, under the circumstances.**

Excellence must be the goal in everything from the cleaning ministry to the children's church. We believe it is best not to provide a program if we do not have capable leaders and workers necessary to make the program run effectively and efficiently in excellence.

Integrity - **The attitude the secular world has towards ministers of the Gospel is no ones fault but our own. We need to be answerable with our social programs and especially in the area of finances. We must operate in total integrity to the word of God. The days of compromise are over – trust in God and walk in faith and not in our earthly abilities. Our word is Gods word. Do not give it if you cannot keep it. Do not allow feelings and emotions to rule our lives and effect what we are to do.**

Love - **Make love not strife. Walk in love, the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). Love is listed first**

**because without love we have nothing else. Love brings joy, which gives us the peace of God and allows us to be tolerant (longsuffering). This breeds gentleness and goodness to others. Since only God is good (*Matthew 19:17*), only with God through us can we exhibit goodness. Operating in faith, and in submission (meekness) to God and those in authority, with a tempered lifestyle. Then we will be walking in love. Love transcends all bounds. With it we are in his will, without it we are LOST. (*1John 4; I Corinthians. 13; Col. 3:12-14*)**

“This allows each one who has received a valid word to submit it to those in authority over them to help determine the proper timing for fulfilling what was spoken. It also allows another objective voice to speak into their life, enabling them to truly hear what God was speaking without preconceptions and defense mechanisms. It should be noted that personal prophecy should not be taken home and thrown on the pastor’s desk as justification of your calling (or any other situation) which you feel defensive about. Good sheep love their shepherd and will look to him for guidance. Personal prophecy does nothing to change this, and in fact should enhance it.”

*them so that they may do this work joyfully and not complain about you.” Hebrews 13:17*

### **3. GIVE IT HUMBLLY:**

Remember that we can miss God completely. No one is always right or correct.

*“Our knowledge is incomplete and our ability to speak what God has revealed is incomplete.”*

**1 Corinthians 13:9**

### **4. KEEP IT SHORT:**

Don't try and hold the floor for too long. Say what you believe God is giving to you, and then remain quiet. Congregational prophecy is not a time for preaching or personal testimonies.

*“If God reveals something to another person who is seated, the first speaker should be silent.”* **1 Corinthians 14:30**

### **5. BE VERY CAREFUL ABOUT DIRECTIONAL PROPHECIES:**

Major directional prophecies in areas such as marriage, babies, and career changes are not permitted except by recognized five fold ministers.

*“He also gave apostles, prophets, missionaries, as well as pastors and teachers as gifts to his church.”* **Ephesians 4:11**

### **6. THOSE WHO RECEIVE PERSONAL MINISTRY SHOULD REVIEW THEIR PROPHECY WITH THEIR PASTOR OR ELDER:**

For this guideline we will quote directly from Dr. Bill Hamon and his booklet, “Proper Prophetic Procedures”

## **Benevolence Guidelines**

Shoreline Church believes deeply in helping to meet the needs of those in need, widows, and the poor. However, we must have some basic guidelines so that we do not misuse the Lord's goods. The primary ministry of the church is Spiritual, but that does not negate our responsibilities to help when we can.

We believe that the root of all problems lies in the spiritual realm. Every person we have met who was willing to deal with the deep roots of spiritual issues in their lives eventually had God's blessings in every area of their life. Sometimes this restoration of the soul takes time, but it always happens to the humble and the obedient.

As a church, we receive many requests for benevolence. The definition of benevolence is not limited to financial assistance. The definition includes helpful counseling and direction that would aid the individual to take care of a need or debt. Although it is our heart to offer monetary aid to all our members in need, it's just not feasible. We would be unable to offer financial assistance to meet the personal needs of our members and still maintain our goal of reaching the lost for Christ.

The best way for us to be good stewards of the Lord's money is to first be sure that anyone in need of assistance has exhausted all the areas of social service available in our community. Then, we can consider a financial need, with each case being reviewed independently.

Naturally we would prefer if the following items were met prior to us providing any assistance, but once again, each case is individual and unique.

1. A regular attendance schedule to church and church functions.
2. Faithful in tithing and giving to the work of God.
3. Express humility and be willing to go through counseling.
4. Determine that the need is not a direct result of careless spending.

In counseling we would deal with the following areas:

1. Work habits
2. Family problems
3. Prayer life
4. Breaking sin habits
5. Healing wounds from the past.
6. Perseverance in tough job situations without quitting.
7. Preparing a budget.

One notable exception to the aforementioned is widows. It is the churches responsibility whenever possible to provide for its widows. We at Shoreline will do all that we can for those widows in need.

# Guidelines for Prophecy

It is our desire that all of our members eventually learn to operate in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. To assure proper growth, it is necessary to formulate certain guidelines for gifts of prophecy. If members clearly understand the scriptural guidelines, then the congregation is more likely to be open to receive the gifts and to step out in the operation of the gifts.

## Guidelines:

### **1. KEEP IT POSITIVE:**

Rebuke or correction through prophecy is biblical, but should only come through leadership. Most all prophecy falls within the parameters of

*“But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement, and comfort”*

**1 Corinthians 14:3:**

### **2. BE SUBMISSIVE TO LEADERSHIP:**

In a congregation or small group be sensitive to the pastor or overseer. If they feel the service is going in a different direction, be willing to hold your prophecy till another time.

*“Two or three people should speak what God has revealed. Everyone else should decide whether what each person said is right or wrong.”* **1 Corinthians 14:29**

*“Obey your leaders, and accept their authority. They take care of you because they are responsible for you. Obey*