

Kawartha Community Church
Ethos
Update 2009



The Kawartha Community Church

Manifesto

~ **Our Philosophy Of Ministry** ~

Where are we going?

How are we getting there?

Who is coming with us?

Forward!

This document is a "work in progress". It captures the crucial, unchanging foundation and pillars that our church is built upon, but also deals with issues of style and details of structure that may need to be reworked or expanded as we grow and develop as a congregation. Still, the bulk of the content of this document is absolutely foundational to our church's "modus operandi" and important for everyone who is a part of the Kawartha Community Church to read, remember, and implement (**Ezra 10:4**).

Why Is This Document So Crucial?

"Now, dear brothers and sisters, I appeal to you by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ to stop arguing among yourselves.

Let there be real harmony so there won't be divisions in the church. I plead with you to be of one mind, united in thought and purpose."

~ 1 Corinthians 1:10 (NLT)

It's easy for a church to get 'out of focus'. When that happens, blurred vision causes ineffective efforts and competing agendas generate disagreement, discord, and division.

Every church needs to declare its mandate, its mission, its means, and its methodology if it wants to avoid confusion and disappointed expectations.

While the New Testament provides an overview of how the early church operated, much of the detail has been left in the hands of each local congregation to structure their ministries in a way that they feel maximizes their service to God, each other, and the community. Hence, different congregations have a variety of styles and structures of Christian ministry—something that enables the Body of Christ to minister to a variety of people in ways that meet their differing needs.

Although there may not be one absolute way of 'doing church', it is so important that each church be unified in its own unique vision and style.

At Kawartha Community Church we strongly believe that when you're busy rowing the boat, you don't have time to rock it. And so we call those people who would like to make this church their spiritual home to rally around the foundational truths contained within this document and become committed to making it happen. We realize that our philosophy of ministry might not be perfect—that's why we are always open to change. But we also realize that, perfect or not, as a congregation we need to be fiercely committed to moving in the same direction together.

At KCC we strongly believe that faith is a process that needs to be fed, nurtured and maintained with the goal of maturity in Christ in mind. The only organization, implemented by God that can effectively do this is a healthy church. We think it's going to be a fun ride, and we hope you'll want to come with us!

Part 1: Where Are We Going?

"I am focusing all my energies on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead."

~ Philippians 3:13 (NLT)

1) **OUR PURPOSE...**

"KCC exists for the purpose of helping spiritually seeking people become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ."

A fully devoted follower of Christ is committed to:

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.

Love your neighbour as yourself.

There is no commandment greater than these."

~ Mark 12:30-31 (NIV)

&

Makes a commitment to Christ, is baptized, Spirit-filled and is consistently seeking to grow in five areas (Acts 2:37 -47):

Grow – Learning about God and worshiping him.

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them TO OBEY everything I have com-

manded you."

~ Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV)

"And the people of Berea were more open minded than those in Thessalonica, and they listened eagerly to Paul's message. They searched the Scriptures day after day to check up on Paul and Silas, to see if they were really teaching the truth."

~ Acts 17:11-12 (NLT)

We not only expect committed Christians to be "feeding" on the Bible, but also living out what they learn. We see education without application being like eating without exercise – it's spiritually unhealthy! The very calories that are meant to give you energy for life will weigh you down if you don't use them up regularly. That's why we are committed to helping people *apply* God's Word, and not just learn it. (Also see Colossians 1:28; Hebrews 5:11-14.)

Glow – In a love relationship with God.

"O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together."

~ Psalm 34:3 (NRSV/NASB)

"The time is coming and is already near when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for anyone who will worship him that way."

~ John 4:23-24 (NLT)

We must never lose sight that EVERYTHING we do as a church is first of all for God and his kingdom.

Gather- Actively in relationship with the family of God expressed in the Church.

"May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves AS YOU FOLLOW CHRIST JESUS, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

~ Romans 15:5-6 (NIV)

Notice the Bible promises that by keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus we can expect a greater spirit of unity.

The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing!

We think giving Jesus the central place in all we do as a church will be the key that leads to our unified **Fellowship**.

Give- Is using their time, resources and talents to build God's Church.

"A spiritual gift is given to EACH OF US as a means of helping the entire church."

~ 1 Corinthians 12:7 (NLT)

"God has given gifts to EACH OF YOU from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Manage them well so that God's generosity can flow through you."

~ 1 Peter 4:10 (NLT)

(Also see Matthew 25:14-30; Romans 12:6-8; Ephesians 4:11 -16; 5:18 .)

Go- Is actively sharing their faith with those who are not in relationship with Jesus.

"You are the light of the world—like a city on a mountain, glowing in the night for all to see. Don't hide your light under a basket! Instead, put it on a stand and let it shine for all. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father."

~ Matthew 5:13-16 (NLT)

"Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone, everywhere."

~ Mark 16:15 (NLT)

(Also see Matt. 16:19; 25:31-46; Acts 5:42; 1 Cor 9:19-23; Col. 4:5-6.)

"Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. But how can they CALL on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they BELIEVE in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they HEAR about him unless someone tells them? And how will anyone GO AND TELL them without being sent? That is what the Scriptures mean when they say, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'"

~ Romans 10:13-15 (NLT)

Again, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."

~ Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV)

The leadership of KCC pledges to do our part to help congregation members reach out to their family, friends, and neighbours in a variety of ways, including Sunday services that aim to be *always* "Seeker-Sensitive" and *sometimes* "Seeker-Targeted".

Most of all, we believe the greatest tool for evangelism is the fully devoted and disciplined follower of Jesus. So we see our chief method of outreach being the training, equipping, and encouraging of each believer to share his or her personal faith with others.

1) OUR CORE VALUES

Outward – Our desire is to do ministry in a way that brings the message of God’s love to people who have yet to encounter him. As a church family and as individuals, we are passionately committed to Outreach in a way that does not compromise the truth while speaking a language that is in tune with our society.

Matthew 28:16 Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee , to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

"We are not the church trying to reach the culture, but we are the culture trying to become the Church." – Aaron Holbrough – Teaching Pastor, KCC

Access – We want to be a bridge that brings people into full, balanced, vibrant life in Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 5: 16So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. 17Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 18All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Scripture – Scripture contains all the truth, guidance and foundation for a healthy life, an effective church and eternal reward.

2 Timothy 3:14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation

through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Impact—We aspire to become the church through recognizing our culture, our opportunities and our future and building on what is effective in obtaining the goals of Scripture. 1 Corinthians 3:6 I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. 7 So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. 8 The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. 9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. 10 By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an *expert builder*, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. 11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Synergy—We operate in teams, and minister in groups. The output of a team will always exceed its individual parts.

Ecclesiastes 4:9 Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work:

10 If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!

11 Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone?

12 Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

Mark 6:7 Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village.

Calling the Twelve to him, he sent them out *two by two* and gave them authority over evil spirits.

3) OUR METHODOLOGY (What is currently working for us).

As a church we are endeavouring to:

- Love God—*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind and all your body* (the Torah and Jesus).—Deuteronomy 6:4-6 and Mark 12:28-34
- Love people—*A new command I give you: Love each other* (Jesus).—John 15:12
- Serve the World—*Love your neighbour as yourself* (the Law and Jesus).—Deuteronomy 6:4-6 and Mark 12:28-34

Our simple faith challenge:

- Listen one hour to God this week and respond to it.
- Involve in your faith community and in your local community weekly.
- Feed your mind in one meaningful conversation about faith this week.
- Encourage one person a day.



Part 2: How Are We Getting There?

1) Maintain the Message, adapt the methodology.

"It is good to grasp the one and not let go of the other. Those who fear God will avoid all extremes."

~ Ecclesiastes 7:18 (NIV)

The *New Living Translation* of **Ecclesiastes 7:18** says we are to "**try to walk a middle course**", while the *Contemporary English Version* says we are to "**keep in the middle of the road**".

Balance is a key biblical principle that is often overlooked and unfortunately sometimes even preached against. Churches often begin to hamper what God wants to do through them by replacing the message with the methodology. Our approach to ministry is current. Someday it will be outdated. When we become about how we do things rather than what we are trying to represent or become, we will lose the focus of the truth of God's message. On the other hand truth spoken in unintelligible ways is just gibberish to those who do not know about God's love for them. We need to consistently be evaluating our methods, changing our methods and allowing the message to be communicated in new and creative ways.

Luke 5:36 He told them this parable: "No one tears a patch from a new garment and sews it on an old one. If he does, he will have torn the new garment, and the patch from the new will not match the old. 37 And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. 38 No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins. 39 And no one after drinking old wine wants the new, for he says, 'The old is better.'"

We also believe we're called to build our church on ALL of the 5 G's we've mentioned rather than trying to teeter on just one or two. If we aren't committed to this balance we run the danger of becoming one of these *off-balance churches* that rallies around their favourite single pillar...

The Worshipping Worship Church

The Family Reunion Church

The Social Activist Church
The Sunday School Church
The Get-em-Saved Church

For example, let's look at worship: Since we endeavour to be "seeker-sensitive" in our Sunday services, we encourage believers to worship openly, genuinely, and vibrantly, but at the same time in a way that doesn't frighten away non-believers or new believers. We also try to balance our use of time in the service between explicit worship and practical Bible teaching.

The Apostle Paul clearly supports this approach in such passages as **1 Corinthians 14:23-25** and **2 Corinthians 5:13**..

"If it seems that we are crazy, it is to bring glory to God. And if we are in our right minds, it is for your benefit."

~ 2 Corinthians 5:13 (NLT)

2) Plug people in where they belong !

1 Corinthians 12:11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

12The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. 13For we were all baptized by] one Spirit into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free--and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. (NIV)

Ephesians 4:10b He handed out gifts above and below, filled heaven with his gifts, 11filled earth with his gifts. He handed out gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, and pastor-teacher 12to train Christians in skilled servant work, working within Christ's body, the church, 13until we're all moving rhythmically and easily with each other, efficient and graceful in response to God's Son, fully mature adults, fully developed within and without, fully alive like Christ. (The Message)

"Anyone who is busy rowing the boat doesn't have time to rock it." Bruxy Cavey

"Anyone who isn't helping me opposes me, and anyone who isn't working with me is actually working against me."

~ Matthew 12:30 (NLT)

Those are strong words of Jesus. At *KCC* we don't think we're doing anyone a favour by allowing them to develop a consumer attitude toward church. According to Jesus, if we're not an active part of the solution, we're part of the problem.

In an extensive survey of members of nearly a thousand churches, people were asked to respond to the following question: "*Why does the church exist?*" And the results? 89% said, "*The church's purpose is to take care of my and my family's needs.*" This is simply not a biblical approach to church.

The Greek word translated "deacon" is *diakonos*, which literally means "one who serves/ministers/helps". This word and its derivatives are used exactly 100 times in the NT, yet only translated "**deacon(s)**" 4 times (in the NIV). Usually it is simply translated "servant" or "minister" and refers to the responsibility of *every* follower of Christ.

"EACH ONE should use whatever gift he has received
to serve (diakoneo) others, faithfully administering
God's grace in its various forms."

~ 1 Peter 4:10 (NIV)

This biblical truth has led to another one of our mottoes:

"Every Member is A Minister"

This makes sense if each of us, as Disciples of Christ, are supposed to be patterning our lives after Jesus...

"For the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve (diakoneo),
and to give his life as a ransom for many."

~ Mark 10:45 (NIV)

Our goal in this regard is to help turn seekers into saints, consumers into contributors, members into ministers, an audience into an army (a *spiritual* army, that is!).

And as we are faithful in serving others with the gifts God has given us, the Bible promises us that this very activity will be the thing that God uses to strengthen our own faith!

...

3) We will deliberately ingrain prayer into our approach to ministry.

"I believe that people are meant to live in an ongoing conversation with God, speaking and being spoken to."

~ *Dallas Willard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Southern California*

"I make it my business to persevere in his Holy presence, wherein I keep myself by a simple attention and a general fond regard to God, which I may call an ACTUAL PRESENCE of God; or, to speak better, an habitual, silent, and secret conversation of the soul with God."

~ *Brother Lawrence*

"Pray without ceasing."

~ 1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NASB)

Following Jesus is about connecting with Jesus. Although there are many benefits from getting to know other people, we also grow and see ourselves and see our world changed by reaching out to God through prayer. At KCC we will acknowledge that prayer doesn't just happen, but needs to be taught, modeled and cast in vision in order to bring about the dream God has given us about reaching lost people. Without God's presence and power in our lives, we are on our own!

We will accomplish this by beginning everything in prayer, supporting everyone in prayer and everywhere putting reminders of the power and necessity of prayer.

Prayer works!

- Each person that leads in KCC needs a prayer support.
- People with the spiritual gift of interceding (praying powerfully for other people) needs support.
- Every new endeavour needs the input and wisdom of God.

Every new beginning needs the support of prayer.

"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."

~ John 10:27 (TNIV)

"Earth's crammed with Heaven, and every common bush afire with God; but only he who sees takes off his shoes."

~ *Elizabeth Barrett Browning*

4) Our value will be measured in introducing, growing and equipping people with Jesus.

1 Corinthians 3: 9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. 10 By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. 11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, 13 his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. 14 If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward.

The church is not a building built by men but a community called together by God. Our dream is that people when speaking about Kawartha Community Church would say, "Those people are everywhere and they do neat stuff!" At Kawartha, we want to maintain our capital in people, not things. This means we will operate lean, maintain our mobility, spread out our resources and maintain cutting edge ministry by staying current in our use of resources. We will one day stand before God and give account of our lives. The "gold, silver and costly stones" will be made up of what God values: lost people found, changed lives and dedicated hearts.

5) We will build alliances to maintain our focus in ministry.

Churches tend to try to become great at everything and end up being not good at anything! We will keep our eyes on our goal of helping people become fully devoted followers of Christ by building partnerships with other churches, Para church organizations and businesses in order to maintain our focus on what we are best at. This will include farming out much of our Christian counselling, mission's work, marketing and facility development.

6) We will be a community of small churches, not one big gathering.

At Kawartha, we want small church dynamics with big church effectiveness. Our desire is to build a community of churches connected administratively, but operated freely in order to keep growing while staying small. We will do this by planting new churches, start-

ing new services, and making acquisitions that promote this model. Each cell of this model will need a leader, committed core and place to meet. Each model will be encouraged to be unique, while sharing the purpose and value of KCC as a whole. Each leader will stay connected to the leadership of KCC and remain administratively and doctrinally accountable to "the hub".

7) We will creatively get the message of God's love out to our community.

Over our first three years we have used fliers to promote our congregation to our community. This has brought many spiritual seekers to our congregation. We plan to do more.

KCC will provide ministries to pre-Christian people in our community as a necessary part of our purpose and core values. These kinds of functions are not easy or inexpensive but necessary for becoming an Acts 2:42-47 church. Each year we will plan, budget and execute functions that have no other purpose than communicating the love of God to our community and world.

This will include KCC people engaging in ministry to needs in our own city. This will also mean teams will be sent out to other countries in order to practically show the love of God to our world. We need to put our best and most creative ideas behind thinking of new and innovative ways to communicate the love of God to pre-Christian people.

Part 3: Who's Coming With Us?

1. Those that support our basic beliefs (See Appendix for details on our statement of belief)
2. Those who decided to give their lives to Christ (See Appendix for details)
3. Those who have declared their desire to follow Christ by being baptized. (See Appendix for details)
4. Those who are committed to making KCC their church home and are willing to throw themselves behind the purpose, values and vision of KCC.
5. Those who are actively involved in supporting our church with their time, resources and talents (See Appendix for details).
6. Those who are passionate about seeing people who do not know Christ come to know him and enter into the adventure of a life lived for God.

A Closing Thought

Congratulations! - You've just come to the end of working your way through a heap of information about KCC. We trust this information is helpful and hope you'll feel free to approach any of our leadership with your questions or comments.

An even better idea would be for you to sign up for our next Window's session and take a closer look at this unique church. There's a lot more to tell and questions to answer and we think you'll like what you learn.

At least for now you should have a good understanding of where we're going, how we're going to get there, and who's coming with us. *We hope you'll join us for the journey!*

Kawartha Community Church

~ Practical, Positive, Casual ~

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APPENDIX #1-#4

#1) OUR BASIC BELIEFS

Christians hold a wide variety of positions on many different doctrines. Here's a brief overview of our position on a broad spectrum of Christian beliefs. For us, these are some non-negotiable...

- **THE BEGINNING** – We believe that there is one God, the Creator of all, who exists as plurality-in-unity as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is the personification of pure love and complete power and deeply desires a loving relationship with his people.
- **THE BIBLE** – We believe the Bible is God's 'love letter' to humanity. Although written

through people with the perspective of their own era, culture, and traditions, the Old & New Testaments were inspired by the Holy Spirit and thus are our timeless and final authority in all that we believe and do. That's why every Christian should read it, study it, and obey it.

- **THE PROBLEM**–We believe that God created all humanity in his image, regardless of gender, colour, or class and thus all people are precious image bearers. But due to our own sinful choices and inherent self-centredness, we have all fallen short of God's ideal for us and are in need of forgiveness and reconciliation with him.

- **THE SOLUTION**–We believe that Jesus is God's only answer to our human need. Through Christ's death on the cross he made it possible for us to find forgiveness in a way that didn't circumvent God's justice. Because Jesus was miraculously conceived by God and lived a perfect life, he died as a pure, sinless sacrifice to "atone" for our sins. And because he rose from the dead he forever lives as our advocate and friend.

- **THE ENEMY**–We believe that Satan (the Devil) is a real spiritual being–the ultimate personification of evil. He was originally an angel created by God but he betrayed him, led a rebellion against heaven, and has worked against God's purposes ever since. He and his army of fallen angels (demons) are the real enemy in spiritual matters, not people.

- **THE CHURCH**–We believe the Spirit empowered, Bible based, Christ-centred Church is the ultimate tool God uses to reach out to hurting humanity. In truth, we are not an *institution* as much as an *organism* - the living, active body of Jesus carrying on his ministry today.

THE FUTURE–We believe that in the end, God wins. Those who are part of his family will live forever with him and those who have rejected his love will live forever apart from him. *The choice is yours.*

NOTE: Please understand that the above *Statement Of Faith* is a summary, an overview of what we believe. For further study and scriptural references see the "Statement of faith" published by the PAOC.

#2) WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SURRENDERED TO JESUS

To know *about* God is not the same as really knowing him. That's the point of **James 2:19-20**, where the author reminds us that no one knows *about* God better than Satan and his demons, but they have severed intimate relationship with him. Obviously, it's not

enough to agree with a set of doctrines. We have to accept the person of Jesus as our Saviour and serve him as our Lord.

Jesus also warns against just coming to church to look good on the outside without making a personal commitment to him on the inside. He calls that "hypocrisy", and so do we (**Matthew 23:27 -28; Luke 12:1**). And let's face it: having more hypocrites is the LAST thing any church needs.

Whether you call it being "saved", "born again", or simply becoming a "believer", the Bible does teach that each of us have a responsibility to respond personally to the call of Christ.

Let's take a good look at

The Facts of Life!

Fact #1 - You're dead!

Romans 5:12 - "When Adam sinned, sin entered the entire human race.

Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned." (NLT)

Romans 3:23 - "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (NIV)

Romans 6:23 - "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (NIV)

(Also see 1 Corinthians 15:22 & Ephesians 2:1-2.)

Fact #2 - Only Jesus can give you life!

1 John 5:11 -12 - "And this is what God has testified: He has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

So whoever has God's Son has life; whoever does not have his Son does not have life." (NLT)

Colossians 1:19 - "God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things...

by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross." (NIV)

John 14:6 - "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me." (NLT)

1 Peter 2:24 - "He personally carried away our sins in his own body on the cross so we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. You have been healed by his wounds!" (NLT)
(Also see 2 Corinthians 5:21 & Galatians 3:13.)

Fact #3 - Spiritual life can be yours - *if* you believe it, receive it, & live it.

Acts 16:31 - "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved...." (NIV)

John 1:12 - "To all those who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." (NIV)

John 3:16-18 - "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. God did not send his Son into the world to condemn it, but to save it. There is no judgement awaiting those who trust him. But those who do not trust him have already been judged for not believing in the only Son of God." (NLT)

John 5:24 - "I assure you, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life." (NLT)

1 John 1:9 - "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (NIV)

Ephesians 2:8-10 - "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." (NIV)

James 2:14-26 - "Dear brothers and sisters, what's the use of saying you have faith if you don't prove it by your actions? That kind of faith can't save anyone.... So you see, it isn't enough just to have faith. Faith that doesn't show itself by good deeds is no faith at all - it is dead and useless.... Do you still think it's enough just to believe that there is one God? Well, even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror! Fool! When will you ever learn that faith that does not result in good deeds is useless?... Just as the body is dead without a spirit, so also faith is dead without good deeds." (NLT)

Matthew 16:24-26 - "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must put aside your selfish ambition, shoulder your cross, and follow me. If you try to keep your life for yourself, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for me, you will find true life." (NLT)

(Also see Romans 3:21-24 & 10:9-10.)

What else can we say about this? In the words of the apostle Paul in **2 Corinthians**

5:20 , if you're not already, "**We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.**

#3) WHY WE ARE BAPTIZED AS BELIEVERS

"Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you."

~ Matthew 28:18-20 (NLT)

Let's clarify some confusion and correct some misunderstandings about baptism...

Baptism is a symbol.

Like a wedding or engagement ring, baptism is an outward symbol of an inner commitment. It's a symbol of cleansing (**Acts 3:19 & 1 John 1:7**) as well as a symbol of burial & resurrection to new life (**Romans 6:3-4 & Colossians 2:12**).

Baptism is for believers.

"Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church – about three thousand in all."

~ Acts 2:41 (NLT)

"But when they believed Philip as he preached the Good News of the kingdom of God and the name of

Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."

~ Acts 8:12 (NIV)

Baptism is a symbol of our commitment to Christ, like a wedding or engagement ring.

Baptism does not save you.

In **Luke 23:40-43**, Jesus tells the thief hanging on the cross beside him, "**Today you will be with me in paradise.**" There was no opportunity for a baptism there.

And in **Acts 10:44 -48** the household of Cornelius first receives the gift of salvation – the Holy Spirit – and *then* is baptized.

Also, in **1 Corinthians 1:17** Paul says his mission is to preach the gospel, but not to baptize anyone. If baptism were the means to access salvation, this would be an odd statement to make for someone who wanted to win converts for Christ.

No, it's not our baptism, but our faith that appropriates God's saving grace in our lives (**Ephesians 2:8-9**). Just like the wedding ring – wearing one doesn't make you married, but shows that you already have been.

#4) WHY WE ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO BE ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS

Why choose a church home and get involved?...

To let the church know where you stand.

Church is not a spectator sport. It's an active, alive community that promotes growth through learning, connecting with God, giving of our time, resources and talents, sharing our faith and building friendships with other believers. At KCC we are not interested in performing for an audience (our audience is God) but seeing life change in a community.

To let you know where you stand.

We often don't realize the benefit of becoming involved in something until we become an active participant of it. There is something to be said for the satisfaction we feel when we get involved, work alongside other believers and know that we make a difference in this world through our efforts.

To let others know where you stand.

Many have given sacrificially of themselves to plant, establish and keep KCC going day by day. Nothing is more exciting than seeing new participants join us each week as we set out to reach the city of Peterborough . Singularly we can't do much, but as a team our efforts create something great!

To put it strongly...

"Church attendance is infected with a malaise of conditional loyalty which has produced an army of ecclesiastical hitchhikers. The hitchhiker's thumb says, 'You buy the car, pay for repairs and upkeep and insurance, fill the car with gas - and I'll ride with you. But if you have an accident, you are on your own! And I'll probably sue.' So it is with the credo of so many of today's church attenders: 'You go to the meetings and serve on the boards and committees, you grapple with the issues and do the work of the church and pay the bills - and I'll come along for the ride. But if things do not suit me, I'll criticize and complain and probably bail out - my thumb is always out for a better ride.'"

~ Kent Hughes, as quoted in *Christianity Today*, May '92