

# EVANGELICAL BAPTIST CHURCH

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**"one Lord, one faith, one baptism" - Ephesians 4:5**

## **THE DOCTRINE OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE MSC ICB**

The systematic doctrine of Evangelical Christian Baptists was developed from the Bible. The Union of Christian Baptist Churches, developing on the territory of Eurasia, from time to time republished its doctrine, the basis of which was the text developed in the last century by the Baptist preacher I. G. Onken. So in 1906 the doctrine of Christian Baptists was published under the editorship of the chairman of the All-Russian Union of Baptists D.I.Mazaev and in 1928 - under the editorship of the chairman of the All-Union Union of Baptists N.V. Odintsov. A similar doctrine was adopted in 1985 at the 43rd Congress of the AUICB.

The content of this doctrine of Evangelical Christians-Baptists reflects the text of the above editions. We hope that this teaching will serve as an auxiliary material for the spiritual education and growth of believers and the further organization of churches of our Evangelical-Baptist brotherhood, united in the Union of Churches of the ICB.

Evangelical Christians-Baptists are the church of born-again Christians and in their creed reflect the desire for the biblical teachings of the first apostolic church.

### 1. ABOUT GOD

#### The Trinity of God

We believe in one, living, true God (Isaiah 45:22; Jer. 10:10; John 17: 3), who created heaven, the earth and everything that fills them (Gen. 1: 1-2; Ps. 24: 1; Isa. 40, 26-29; 45, 12; Acts 17: 24-29), Who manifests Himself in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit - three in one and one in three persons, living forever, "and these three are one" (Isa. 48, 16; 1 John 5, 7; Rom. 11:33). God is spirit (John 4:24), and as a spirit He is invisible to people (Ex. 33, 20; John 1, 18; 1 John 4, 12; 1 Tim. 6, 16). However, "His invisible, His eternal power and Divinity, from the creation of the world through the viewing of creatures are visible ..." (Rom. 1:20).

Man can recognize God only through the revelation of God about Himself, which is contained in the Word of God and becomes understandable through the action of the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1, 20-21; John 14, 26).

#### God the Father

We believe that God is beginningless (1 John 2:14), omnipresent (Psalm 139: 7; Acts 17:27), omnipotent (Genesis 17: 1), omniscient (Hebrews 4:13), all-wise (Rom. 14,26; 1 Tim. 1, 17), perfect (Matt. 5:48), loving man (Ex. 34, 6), merciful, long-suffering, many-merciful, true (Ex. 34, 6); saint (Is. 6: 3; 1 Peter 1: 15-16), righteous (Deut. 32: 4), just (Ps. 119, 137), unchanging (Num. 23, 19; Mal. 3, 6; Luke 21, 33; James 1:17; Heb. 13: 8), hating evil (Ps. 5: 5-6; 33, 17; Habakk. 1:13; John 3:36; Rom. 1, 18; Eph. 5: 6), punishing unrighteousness (Jer. 5: 1-9; Heb. 2, 2), avenger (Naum. 1, 2; 1 Thess. 4, 6), consuming fire (Deut. 4, 24;

Hebrews 12, 29), a righteous Judge (Ps. 7: 11-13; Acts 17:31), compassionate (James 5:11), desiring the salvation of all (1 Tim. 2, 4; 2 Pet. 3, 9).

God is light (1 John 1, 5). He dwells in unapproachable light (1 Tim. 6, 16). God is love (1 John 4:16). He loves His creation, and this love is shown to mankind in Jesus Christ (John 3:16; 1 John 4: 9-10; Rom. 5, 8; Eph. 2: 45). For the salvation of man, God sent His only begotten Son and the Holy Spirit to earth (John 3:17; 16: 8-11, 13-14; 1 John 2:27; Rom. 8, 26-27). **God the Son - Jesus Christ**

Jesus Christ is eternal God (1 John 5:20) and has no beginning of days or end of life (Heb. 7: 3). He is also the Creator of the Universe (Col. 1:16). Before the creation of the world, God predestined His only begotten Son as a propitiation sacrifice for the redemption and salvation of the human race (1 Peter 1: 18-20; 2:24; 3:18; 1 John 2, 2; Gal. 4: 4). He appeared in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:16), born of the Virgin Mary through the immaculate conception of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:18).

God the Son united in Himself both the Divine and the human nature (Luke 1:35). He came into the world "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8: 3), but there was no sin in Him (1 John 3: 5). "He did not commit any sin" (1 Peter 2:22). He is not part of evil, therefore he could become a sacrifice for the sin of the world (John 1:29; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 9:26).

Jesus Christ is the promised Anointed One of God and the only Savior of the world (Luke 4: 18-19; John 4:42; 10:28; Acts 2:36; 4:12; Eph. 5, 2). He defeated the devil and hell (Rev. 3:21; 5, 5; 1 Cor. 15, 54-55), destroyed death (2 Tim. 1, 10).

By His death, the Lord Jesus Christ deprived the power of the one who had the power of death, that is, the devil (Luke 4: 33-36, 41; 1 John 3, 8; Heb. 2, 14-15; Rev. 20: 3-4, 14) ... He redeemed us with His Blood, becoming the only mediator between God and man (Col. 1:20; 1 Tim. 2: 5-6; Tit. 2:14; Heb. 7: 24-25). He became an Intercessor for us before the Father, as well as the High Priest of future blessings (1 John 2, 1; Heb. 9: 11-12, 24).

Whoever believes in Him has eternal life (John 6:47). The resurrected, ascended into heaven and glorified Jesus Christ is the Creator and Head of the Church (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1: 22-23; 5:23; Col. 1:18; 1 Tim. 3:16). He will judge the universe (John 5:22; Acts 17:31). **God the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is a person and, being God (Acts 5: 3-4), possesses:

- omnipotence (Rom. 15-19),
- omniscience (1 Cor. 2:10),
- omnipresence (Psalm 139: 7),
- holiness (Eph. 4:30) and other attributes.

The Holy Spirit is the Creator of the universe along with the Father and the Son (Gen. 1, 2; Job. 33, 4). The Holy Spirit inspired the prophets and apostles (2 Peter 1:21). On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was sent down to testify about Christ, to glorify Him and to build up the Church (John 15:26; 16: 7, 14; Acts 1, 8; 1 Cor. 12, 13).

The Holy Spirit denounces the world about sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16: 8), leads a person to repentance and revives him. He dwells in the repentant, converted and obeying God (John 3: 3-6; Acts 5:32; 1 Cor. 6: 19; Tit. 3, 5).

The Holy Spirit lives in the born again (Rom. 8: 9; 1 Cor. 3:16; Eph. 1:13), teaches (John 14:26), denounces (John 16, 8-9), instructs (John 16:13; 1 Cor. 2: 12-13), guides (Acts 8, 29; 13, 2), encourages and comforts (John 14:26), arms (Eph. 3: 16-19), produces fruit (Gal. 5, 22-23; Eph. 5, 9) and gives gracious gifts for ministry in the church (1 Cor. 12: 7-11, 28).

The Word of God repeatedly commands believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18; Acts 2: 4; 4: 8, 31; 1 Cor. 2: 4) in order to have power for a holy life and testimony of Jesus Christ (Acts 1 8; 4:31; 1 Cor. 2: 4). Holy Scripture commands not to sin against the Holy Spirit (Isa. 63, 10; Mark 3:29; Acts 5: 3, 9; 7, 51; Eph. 4:30; 1 Thess. 5:19).

## 2. ABOUT THE WORD OF GOD

We believe that the Bible, that is, the canonical books of the Old (39 books) and New (27 books) Testaments, is the Word of God, written by men of God by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21) to show the human race the path to salvation ( 2 Tim. 3, 15-16). To everyone who fears God, He opens the mind to comprehend the Scriptures (Ps. 25, 14; Luke 10:22; 24, 45; 2 Peter 1:20), so that with the assistance of the Holy Spirit it becomes for him a source of knowledge of God, quite sufficient to know the truth and will of God regarding life and ministry (2 Tim. 3:16). Any revelation that contradicts the Word of God is false (Isa. 8:20).

Holy Scripture is the only source of Christian faith (John 20:31; Romans 10:17) and spiritual guidance for believers regarding salvation, life and ministry (Joshua 1: 7-8; 2 Peter 1:19; Rom 15, 4; 1 Tim. 4:16; Heb. 4:12).

Addition to the Word of God and subtraction, as well as distortion of the text during translation or interpretation, entails severe punishment from God (Rev. 22, 18-19).

## 3. ABOUT THE CREATION OF THE WORLD

We believe that God created the heavens and the earth, the sun, the moon and the stars (Gen. 1 and 2 chapters; Acts 17:24), everything visible and invisible (Ps. 89, 12; 1 Cor. 8: 6; Heb. 11: 3; Rev. 4:11), showing His eternal strength, power and many different wisdom (Eph. 3: 9-10; Col. 1:16).

God also created man in his own image and likeness (Gen. 1, 27; 5, 1; James 3, 9). "From one blood He made the whole human race to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26).

### Man is created:

- for dominion over all living on earth (Genesis 1, 26; Ps. 8, 4-8);
- for good works (Eph. 2:10);
- to glorify God (1 Cor. 6, 19-20);
- for eternal (Gen. 2: 9, 17), holy (1 Peter. 1, 15-16; Matt. 5, 8) and blessed life in constant communion with God (Gen. 3, 8; John 12, 26; 14: 1-2, 23; 17:24; 1 Thess. 4:17).

God created Angels (Col. 1:16) to serve Him (Ps. 102:20; Heb. 1: 7) and those who inherit salvation (Heb. 1:14). Angels are disembodied beings (spirits), superior to people in fortress and strength (2 Peter 2, 11), different in name and degree of power (Col. 1, 16; 1 Thess. 4, 16).

Angels of God are always in the face of the Heavenly Father (Isa. 6, 1-7), rejoice at the salvation of sinners (Luke 15, 10), watch over the life of nations and children (Dan. 10, 12-21; Matt. 18, 10) , behind the life of the churches (1 Cor. 11:10; 1 Tim. 5:21).

The Lord sends Angels to punish the insolent blasphemers of God (Acts 12, 23). Although Angels are superior to man in their power, God's Word forbids worshipping them (Rev. 22: 8-9).

The most excellent of the angels did not stand in the truth, sinned (Ezek. 28, 16; 1 John 3, 8), became a murderer (John 8, 44) and was called the devil. Following him, some of the angels did not retain their dignity and sinned, for which God tied them with the bonds of hellish darkness (2 Peter 2, 4; Jude 6).

## 4. ABOUT PERSON

We believe that God created man in His own image and likeness (Gen. 1: 27; 5: 1; Isa. 45, 12) and made him the ruler over the works of His hands (Ps. 8: 6). God created man sinless, with free will (Genesis 2: 16-17; Joshua 24:15; Jer. 21: 8). God blessed man (Genesis 1: 28).

### The fall

Tempted by Satan, man fell into sin and lost the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). Sin entered the world by one person (Rom. 5, 12) and passed into all generations, into every person (Rom. 5, 19), everyone became children of anger (Eph. 2, 3) and everyone will receive the wages of sin, that is death (Rom. 6:23).

Sin divided man from God (Isaiah 59: 2). Having violated the commandment of God, man fell, separated himself from God and began to do evil. A person is not able to independently return to the path of righteousness, because his mind and conscience are defiled (Tit. 1, 15) and by nature he is a child of wrath (Eph. 2: 1-3).

### Redemption

God loves man and does not want him to die. He sent His only-begotten Son into the world in a human body (Heb. 10: 5) so that He, by His blood shed on the Cross of Calvary, would accomplish the redemption of all people (Eph. 1: 7; Rev. 5: 9). Jesus Christ satisfied the requirements of God's holiness (Rom. 3: 25-26), and now salvation by grace is given to all people (Acts 28, 28; 2 Peter 3:9; Rom. 3:24; Titus 2, 11) ...

To receive salvation, faith is necessary, which comes from hearing the Word of God (Acts 4: 4; Rom. 10:17; Heb. 11: 6). God gives salvation to those who receive His Word and repent of sins under the influence of the Holy Spirit (Luke 7: 29-39; Mark 1, 15; John 3:16; Acts 2: 38, 41; 16, 31; 26, 18 ; Eph. 2, 8). Faith prompts a person to trust the Lord and be obedient to Him (Matt. 4: 18-20; Luke 8: 38-40; Acts 19: 18-20; 2 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 11: 8). Confession of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior is a confirmation of true faith (Matt. 10: 32-33; Luke 12: 8-9; John 20:28; Acts 8:37; Rom. 10: 9-10; Cor. 4 , 13). Deeds of faith testify to true faith (James 2:26; Gal. 5: 6; Heb. 11 chap.). "... Faith, if it has no works, is dead in itself" (James 2:17).

It depends on a person whether he will be saved through faith (Acts 2: 40-41; Eph. 2: 8) or, having rejected the Word of God, he will make himself unworthy of eternal life (Acts 13, 46). He who believes and is regenerated, that is, who has become a partaker of Christ, who has once been enlightened and tasted of the gift of heaven, who has become a partaker of the Holy Spirit and tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, will achieve eternal life only if he firmly preserves the life he began to the end (Ezek. 18 , 24; Heb. 3:14; 6, 4-6; 10, 38-39).

## Repentance, conversion, forgiveness, revival

The Holy Spirit convicts a person of sin and reveals to him the goodness of God, encourages him to repent and turn to God (John 16: 8; Acts 2: 31-38; Rom. 2: 4). A person is saved (Acts 2:40) if he receives conviction from the Holy Spirit, repents of sins, turns from dead works to God and accepts Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord (John 1:12; Acts 3:19; 5:31 ; Heb. 6: 1; 9, 14).

Repentance and conversion includes contrition for sins (Ps. 38, 19; 2 Cor. 7, 10), confession and forgiveness of sins (Proverbs 28, 13; Luke 18, 13-14; Acts 19, 18- 19; 26, 20).

The consequence of the conversion and personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior is the forgiveness of sins (Acts 10, 42-43; 1 John 1, 9; Col. 1: 13-14) and the birth of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, without which it is impossible to be saved and enter the Kingdom of God (John 1, 12-13; 3, 56; James 1, 18). Through being born again, a person becomes a child of God, a partaker of the divine nature and the temple of the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1, 4; 1 Cor. 6, 19; Heb. 2:14).

Signs of being born again:

- a change in lifestyle (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 4:22; 5, 8; Rom. 6, 16-17);
- rejection of wickedness and worldly lusts, hatred of evil (Ps. 97, 10; James 1:21; 2 Peter 1, 4; Eph. 4, 22-24; Tit. 2, 12);
- doing the will of God (Ps. 143, 10; Eph. 6, 6);
- love for the Lord and the church (John 13, 34; 1 John 3, 14; 5, 1; 1 Cor. 16:14; Gal. 5:13; Eph. 4:15); • thirst for communication with God through the Bible and prayer (Ps. 55, 18; 62, 2; 118, 10; Acts 17, 11);
- striving to be like Christ (Phil. 2, 13-15; 2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 4:19).

## Justification, adoption

By faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, those who have been born again are justified free of charge, by His grace, through the atonement in Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:24; Gal. 2:16). By faith they find peace with God (Rom. 5: 1), receive a testimony from the Holy Spirit that they are children of God and heirs of eternal life (1 John 5, 10-11; Rom. 8, 16-17; Gal. 4, 6-7).

Justification changes the position of a believer before God: he is saved from the wrath of God (Rom. 5, 9) and set free from eternal condemnation (Rom. 4, 5; 5, 1; 8: 1, 30). The believer is freed from guilt for sins committed and from the fear of condemnation for them (Rom. 3: 24-25, 28; 5, 9; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 2:16). The redeemed and justified God adopts, and they become heirs of the Kingdom of God (Rom. 8: 16-18; Gal. 3:26; 4, 45; Eph. 1: 4- 7).

## Consecration

Sanctification is the will of God for all the redeemed: "For God has called us not to uncleanness, but to holiness" (1 Thess. 4: 3-8). Without holiness, no one can see the Lord (1 Thess. 4: 3-7; Heb. 12, 14). By believing, a person is sanctified by the blood of the covenant (1 Peter 1, 1-2; Heb. 10: 10, 14, 29; 13, 12). The Christian needs constant sanctification throughout his life (Heb. 12:14; Rev. 22:11). Guided by the Word of the Lord and walking in the Spirit, he bears the fruit of holiness (1 Peter 1: 15-16; Rom. 6:22; Gal. 5:16).

Sanctification is separation from sin (1 Peter 2, 9; Titus 2:14), dedication to God and transformation into the image of Jesus Christ (1 John 3, 2-3; Rom. 6: 2, 6, 8, 12-13; 12, 1-2; 2 Cor. 5:15; Phil. 2: 5, 15; 1 Thess. 3:13).

Sanctification is carried out by God (1 Thess. 5:23) with the participation of the believer himself. God works through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Rom. 6: 11-12; 1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 5:27; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 10:10), through His Word (John 17, 17) and the Holy Spirit living in us (1 Cor. 6: 19-20).

Human participation includes: condemnation, confession of one's sins and awareness of the need for the forgiving grace of God (1 John 1: 7-9; 1 Cor. 11:31; 2 Cor. 7: 1; Heb. 4:16); faith in cleansing by the Blood of Christ (Heb. 10: 19-22); researching and accepting the Word of God with a desire to obey it (John 5:39; Acts 17:11; James 1:21; 1 Peter 2, 1-2; 1 Tim. 4:16; 2 Tim. 1:13 ; 3, 15-16); holy walking before God under the influence of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8, 14; 12, 1-2; Rev. 22, 11); trust in the Lord in all circumstances of life (Jude 24-25 v .; 2 Tim. 1, 12). Holy love for the Lord and His commandments, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, draws the children of God to constant sanctification (Rom. 5, 5; 2 Cor. 3:18; 7, 1; Eph. 4: 15, 23-24).

## Prayer

Prayer is a means of communication between a person and God (Ps. 5: 1-3; Phil. 4, 6). In prayer, we worship God, praise Him, speaking of His majesty and glory (1 Chron. 29, 11-15; Ps. 103: 1-19).

In prayer, we reveal our desires and needs to God, who is able to fulfill our requests (Phil. 4, 6-7). He answers the prayers of those who cry to Him with a pure heart, with faith and according to His will (Ps. 50, 15; 65, 18; Mark 11:24; 1 John 2, 21-22). "The Lord is close to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth. He fulfills the desire of those who fear Him, he hears their cry, and saves them "(Ps. 145, 18-19).

God's Word teaches us to pray:

- that the name of our Father in Heaven should be sanctified (Matt. 6, 9);
- about the coming of His Kingdom (Matt. 6, 10);
- that His will be done on earth, as in heaven (Luke 11, 1-2);
- about yourself and your family (Matt. 6: 11-13; 15:22; 17:15);
- about the success of spreading the Gospel (1 Tim. 2, 1-4; 1 Thess. 1, 8; 2 Thess. 3, 1);
- about all the saints and about the church (Eph. 6, 18; Phil. 1, 4);
- about ministers (Matt. 9: 37-38; Rom. 15:30; Eph. 6:19);
- about the sick and suffering according to the will of God (James 5: 14-16; 1 Peter 4:19; Heb. 13: 3); •  
about those who offend and persecute the children of God (Matt. 5:44);
- about rulers, rulers and all people (Jer. 29, 7; 1 Tim. 2, 2).

The children of God are called to thank the Lord always and for everything, because all His intentions are for the good of the believer (Jer. 29, 11; Rom. 8:28; 1 Thess. 5: 17-18).

The apostles and disciples often prayed with fasting (Acts 13: 2; 2 Cor. 11:27). According to the Word of God, prayers with fasting are performed: if you need personal humility and if you want to be closer to the Lord (Ezra 8, 21a; Isa 57, 15; Dan. 10, 12); in the election and ordination of church ministers (Acts 13, 2-3; 14, 23); with the general needs of the people of God (Ezra. 8, 21-23) and calamities (Joel 1, 14; 2, 12-15); during experiences, sorrows (2 Kings 1, 12; Ps. 35, 13; 68, 11) and other circumstances (Mark 9, 29; 2 Cor. 6, 4-5).

Fasting is not only abstaining from eating and drinking and staying in prayer, but also the manifestation of virtue, the release of the "fetters of unrighteousness" and the establishment of proper relationships with people (Is. 58, 3-12; Matt. 5, 23-24).

## 5. ABOUT THE CHURCH

We believe that the Church was created by Jesus Christ (Matthew 16:18). It was established on the basis of the teaching of the Apostles and prophets and has the cornerstone of Jesus Christ Himself (1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20; Col. 1:18).

Members of the church, baptized by one Spirit (1 Cor. 12, 13), are members for each other and constitute one body (Rom. 12, 5; 1 Cor. 12, 14), constituted and mated by means of all mutually bonding bonds. The head of this body is Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:22; 4: 15-16). Spiritual kinship attracts the saints to unification, and therefore Christians living in one locality unite in the local church (Acts 11, 22; 13, 1; 2 Cor. 1: 1).

Local churches, constituting a single body of the Lord, are interconnected by many different ties. The Lord provided this to participate in the needs of the saints (Acts 11, 27-30; 1 John 3:17; Rom. 15, 25-27; 2 Cor. 8, 14-15; 9, 12-14), for joint resolving spiritual issues (Acts 15: 1-2, 4-29).

Ties between churches grow stronger when the community is cared for by ministers who have received the grace of God and the trust of the churches for this (2 Cor. 11:28; Col. 4: 7-8; Phil. 2: 19-25). The purpose of their ministry is joint asceticism for the faith once betrayed to the saints (Jude 3 v.; Phil. 1, 27-29), the organization of local churches (1 Tim. 3, 14-15; 5, 17-22; Tit. 1, 5) and spreading the good news about the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Acts 16: 1-3; 20, 4; Rom. 16: 3-4).

We believe that the unification of churches into a close union of love and peace, based on holiness, is accomplished by the Lord Himself by the Holy Spirit (Ps. 93, 5; Eph. 1: 4; 2, 13; 4:16). Since the day of Pentecost, there has been an Ecumenical (invisible) The Church created by Christ, which includes local churches (Acts 2, 41-47; Eph. 1: 20-23).

### Ecumenical Church

The Ecumenical Church consists of saved, born again people (Acts 2:47; Tit. 3, 5), redeemed by the Blood of Christ from every tribe, tongue, people and tribe (Col. 1: 12-22; Heb. 12, 22- 23; Rev. 5: 9-10), having in themselves the testimony that they are children of God (1 John 5: 10-11; Rom. 8, 16). The Universal Church is:

- the flock of Christ (John 10, 16; 21, 15-17; 1 Peter 5, 2; Heb. 13, 20);
- the spiritual house, or the temple of God (1 Peter 2, 5; Eph. 2: 19-21; Heb. 3, 6);
- the bride of Christ (2 Cor. 11: 2; Eph. 5:27; Rev. 19: 7-9; 21: 9-10);
- the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12: 12-13, 27; Eph. 1, 22-23; Col. 1, 17-27);
- pillar and statement of truth (1 Tim. 3:15). All those who believe and are born again, Jesus Christ baptizes (immerses) with the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ (John 1:33; Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:12).

At the end of the period of grace, the Church of Christ will be caught up from the earth to meet the Lord, to always be with Him, to see Him and to share His glory (John 17:22, 24; 1 Cor. 15, 51-57; Phil. 3:20) 21; 1 Thess. 4, 13-17).

## Local church

A local church is a gathering of regenerated souls living in one locality, united by one faith (one confession), one love and hope for building up the body of Christ and serving the Lord together (Matthew 18:17; Acts 2: 42-47; 14, 23; Eph. 4: 11-16; Phil. 2: 1-2). Belonging to the Universal Church does not exempt from the need to belong to the local church (Acts 2:41).

Local churches are built up by the Lord in different countries, cities and towns (Heb. 3: 4-6). Their purpose is to proclaim the perfection of the One who has called us out of darkness into His wonderful light (1 Peter 2: 9), to glorify God (Rom. 15, 9), to promote the growth of church members in the knowledge of God and Christ (Col. 2, 2), help Christians to improve in a life of faith and love (Eph. 4: 12-16), spread the Kingdom of God on earth (Acts 13: 1-3; Rom. 10, 15; Phil. 1, 5), promote mutual service each other (1 Peter 4, 10).

## Membership in a local church

Faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, rebirth and water baptism is a prerequisite for joining the soul to the local church (Acts 2, 38; 8, 37; 19, 2-5; Rom. 10, 9-10; 1 Tim. 6, 12). Baptism is taught to those who willingly accepted the Word of God and to believers with all their hearts (Acts 2:41).

Through baptism by faith, a person makes a covenant with the Lord and becomes a member of the church (Acts 2, 41-42; Heb. 8, 10).

## Local church arrangement

Every local church belongs to God (1 Cor. 1, 2). The head of the Church Jesus Christ - determines order in the churches through the Word of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 11, 2; 14:33, 40; 16, 1; Eph. 4: 11-12). Ministers in the church are supplied by God through the Holy Spirit (Acts 13: 2; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11). He calls to the ministry men filled with the Holy Spirit and wisdom (Jer. 30, 21; Acts 6, 3; Heb. 5: 1-4), endows them with gifts and ability to serve (2 Cor. 3, 4-6) ... According to the signs noted in the Holy Scriptures, the church should determine those who are called by God and choose them for service (Acts 6, 2-7; 13, 1-3; 15, 22; 20, 28 Eph. 4, 11-12; Tit. fifteen).

Elders, evangelists and deacons elected by the church must meet the requirements of Holy Scripture (1 Tim. 3, 1-12; Tit. 1, 5-9). Teachers are chosen by the church on the basis of their calling (Rom. 12: 6-7). The ordination is accomplished by the laying on of the hands of the minister who is commissioned to do so (2 Tim. 1, 6; 4, 5; Tit. 1.5).

In accordance with the New Testament teaching of Jesus Christ and the Apostles, the order of the ordination of ministers by ordination is established in the brotherhood on the basis of Acts. 6, 3; 14, 22-23; 1 Tim. 5, 1-15; Titus. 1, 5-9. Elders, as stewards of the Church of Christ, lead the local church. They are required to be faithful (1 Cor. 4: 1-2), diligently and God-pleasing to take care of souls (1 Peter 5: 1-4; 1 Cor. 4, 1-2; Heb. 13, 17).

The task of the elders:

- shepherd the church (Acts 20, 28-31),
- support the weak (Acts 20, 35),
- instruct church members in sound doctrine (2 Tim. 2:15),
- denounce, forbid, admonish with all patience and edification (2 Tim. 4, 2; Tit. 1, 9).



Evangelists and teachers, as well as elders, are stewards of the church and perform the ministry of the sacred rite (Rom. 15:16; Eph. 4: 11-12). Together with the elders, they participate in the discussion and resolution of spiritual issues (Acts 15: 6, 22; Phil. 1, 1).

On behalf of the church and ministers, evangelists and elders minister outside local churches, preaching the Gospel to all people, and take care of churches (Acts 13, 14; 16, 1-3; 2 Tim. 4, 1-5).

Deacons help elders and teachers in their ministry. Mostly they are entrusted with the work of material service and charity (Acts 6: 1-4).

The ministers of the church can be on its content (Matt. 10, 10; 1 Cor. 9:14; Gal. 6, 6; 1 Tim. 5, 17-18).

Ministers who have sinned are subject to church discipline on an equal basis with other members of the church (1 Tim. 5, 19-20), but their issue is considered with the participation of a responsible minister who cares for many churches (1 Tim. 5, 19-20).

Ordination becomes invalid when a minister commits a grievous sin or an act of unfaithfulness (1 Cor. 4: 2; Heb. 12: 15-17). In such cases, the church decides on the punishment and removal of the ordination with the participation of the minister who has the commission to ordain (Ezek. 44, 10-14; Hos. 4, 6; Mal; 2, 7-9).

## Responsibilities of Church Members

Church members should:

- maintain obedience and faithfulness to the Lord (1 Samuel 15, 22-23; Rev. 2, 10);
- live among themselves in peace and in mutual love (2 Thess. 1, 3);
- pray for ministers and worthy of the ruling elders to show increased honor and obedience (1 Peter 5, 5; Gal. 6, 6; Col. 4, 3; 1 Thess. 5, 12-13; 1 Tim. 5, 17; Heb. 13, 17);
- maintain the unity of the church according to the teachings of Jesus Christ (Rom. 15, 5-6; Phil. 1, 27; 2, 2);
- take a zealous participation in the life of the church, its needs and material ministry (1 Peter 4:10; 1 Cor. 12:25; 2 Cor. 9: 7; Heb. 13:16);
- keep the secret of the church from outsiders (P. Songs 4, 12; Matt. 7, 6).

Every member of the church is called to attend church services (Ps. 16: 3; 26: 4; 121, 1; Heb. 10:25) and worthily participate in the Lord's supper (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11: 26-28) ... **Church discipline**

Those who are born again and are taught the basics of biblical teaching are accepted into the church; accepted only after the church gets acquainted with their spiritual condition and they confess their faith before her (Rom. 10, 9-10; 1 John 4: 1-3, 15). Acceptance is carried out by the decision of the church.

Church members should be attentive to each other (Heb. 10: 24-25), cautious (Rom. 12, 10), lovingly accept admonitions, without violating the Lord's ordinance (Matt. 18: 15-17), should watch so that no one should be deprived of the grace of God (Heb. 12, 15).

Church ministers are required to keep the commandments cleanly and without shame (1 Tim. 6, 14), to be a model for the faithful (1 Tim. 4, 12), to teach the children of God to observe everything that the Lord commanded (Matt. 28, 20) , were vigilant (2 Tim. 4, 5), denounced those who opposed the truth (Tit. 1, 9).

Having food and clothing, Christians should be content with this (1 Tim. 6, 8), submitting to the love of God, which leads them to the path of selflessness and rejection of material excesses, prompts them to sacrificial service for the success of the preaching of the Gospel (Matt. 6, 25-34 ; 16, 24).

At divine services and in everyday life, the children of God should look decent to saints, that is, dress with bashfulness and chastity (1 Tim. 2, 9; Tit. 2, 3). According to Scripture, wives must cover their heads (1 Cor. 11: 5-10).

Imitation of the world in clothes, in the general way of life, in indecent fashion, in the performance of musical works at divine services and in everyday life - speaks of friendship with the world and is enmity against God. The minister is called to be zealous for the purity of the church, in order to present her to Christ as a pure virgin (2 Cor. 11: 2).

To preserve purity and decency in the church (1 Cor. 5, 6-7; 2 Thess. 3, 6) there are measures of church influence: exhortation (1 Tim. 1, 5; Tit. 2, 15), reproof (Matt. 18 15-18), remark (2 Thess. 3:14) and excommunication (1 Cor. 5, 12-13).

The excommunication of a Christian from the local church can be carried out in the case of:

- falling away from faith in God (1 Cor. 16:22),
- deviations into heresy (Tit. 3, 10),
- committing a sin (Matthew 18: 15-18; 1 Cor. 5: 11-13; 2 Thess. Z: 6).

Church members who violate the commandments of God and after the admonition made by him do not repent openly and heartily, who do not intend to correct themselves and remain in sin, the church punishes: reprimands or excommunicates (2 Thess. 3:14). If there is a difference of opinion on the issue of punishment, the minority must submit to the decision of the church.

The church accepts the excommunicated after his/her sincere repentance, the forgiveness of sin and the presence of the fruits of repentance (2 Cor. 2, 68). Thus, it is necessary to establish order in the church and keep it clean so that the Lord can dwell with His people (John 14:23; 2 Cor. 6: 15-18).

## 6. ABOUT WATER BAPTISM

We believe that water baptism by faith is a commandment of Jesus Christ, as well as a testimony of faith and obedience to the Lord (Mark 16, 15-16; Acts 2: 38, 41). This is a solemn promise to God of a good conscience (1 Peter 3:21).

Baptism is taught to those born again who willingly received the Word of God and Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord (John 1, 12; Acts 2, 41; 5:31). All who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death (Rom. 6: 3-5; Gal. 3: 26-27; Col. 2:12). Baptism can only be received by those who have reached a conscious age (Mark 16, 16; Acts . 2, 41).

When baptism is performed, the minister asks the person to be baptized: "Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?" (Acts 8:37). After an affirmative answer, the minister, based on Matt. 28:19, says: "At the command of the Lord and according to your faith, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen". The baptized one confirms: "Amen". Baptism is performed by a single full immersion in water.

After water baptism, a prayer of blessing is performed in the presence of the church. The minister prays over the baptized with the laying on of hands (Acts 8, 17; 19, 6), then performs the breaking of bread.

## 7. ABOUT THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that the Lord's supper (breaking of bread) is the commandment of Jesus Christ to remember and proclaim His suffering and death on the cross (Matt. 26, 26-28) and should be performed before His coming for the Church (1 Cor. 11, 23-26) ...

Those who participate in the Lord's supper testify of their unity with the Lord and with each other (1 Cor. 10: 16-17). Therefore, only regenerated souls who have witnessed their death with Christ through water baptism and are in peace with the Lord and with the church can partake of the body and blood of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 11: 27-29).

## 8. LAYING OF HANDS

We believe that the teaching of the laying on of hands is one of the beginnings of Christ's teaching (Heb. 6: 12).

When praying with the laying on of hands, the minister invokes a blessing from God on the one over whom he prays (Gen. 48, 15-16; Num. 27, 19-23; Acts 14, 23).

A minister who makes a prayer, laying on his hands, recognizes that the one on whom he lays his hands is worthy to receive the blessing and meets the requirements of God. Therefore, the Word of God warns against the hasty laying on of hands, so as not to become a participant in other people's sins (1 Tim. 5:22). "Without any contradiction, the lesser is blessed with the greater" (Heb. 7: 7).

The Bible speaks of the laying on of hands when Jacob blessed Joseph's children (Gen. 48, 13-20).

God commanded Moses to lay hands on Joshua, "a man in whom there is a Spirit," to put him before the community and give him instruction. "And give him of your glory" (Num. 27, 18-23). Joshua "was filled with the spirit of wisdom ... and the children of Israel obeyed him" (Deut. 34, 9).

The Lord Jesus laid hands, healing the sick (Mark 6: 5), blessing children (Mark 10, 16), and gave a promise to those who believed: "... they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover" (Mark 16, 18). Based on the facts set forth in the Holy Scriptures, ministers who have the right to perform sacred rites - elders, evangelists and teachers - lay hands on with faith and prayer:

- on those baptized by faith. The purpose of such a prayer is to call upon God's blessing on the future life of the baptized person, to ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and protection from all evil (1 Chron. 4, 10; Ps. 25, 12; John 17:12, 20; Rom. 8, 12) ;
- on children whom parents dedicate to the Lord and who cannot yet be held accountable for their actions. The minister asks for blessing by entrusting the child to God's care (1 Samuel 1: 11, 27-28; Matt. 19, 13-15; Mark 10, 13-16). At the same time, parents are reminded of their responsibility before God to bring up children in the teaching and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6: 4);
- on the sick at their request and faith. The purpose of prayer is healing. Prayer over them is preceded by confession and repentance of wrongdoings (Mark 16, 18; James 5, 14-16; 1 John 3, 20-22);
- on getting married. The purpose of prayer is to invoke the blessing of God on the life together of those entering into marriage (Genesis 1:28; Psalm 127: 1-4; Prov. 10:22).

When the brothers elected by the church are appointed to be an elder, evangelist, teacher or deacon, the ordaining minister places his hands on them during prayer (Acts 6, 6; 13, 1-3; 14, 23; 1 Tim. 4:14).

We do not see in the Holy Scriptures the basis for the doctrine of the succession of grace from the Apostles, because the Lord Himself sets the ministers in the church (Eph. 4:11), endowing them with gifts for ministry and wisdom (Jer. 1, 5; 1 Cor. 12, 11; Gal. 1:15), and blesses by prayer the one who ordains, who received a commission from the responsible servants of the brotherhood (Titus 1: 5) with the witness of the Holy Spirit. Bread and wine indicate the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 11: 23-25).

## 9. ABOUT SUNDAY

We believe that Jesus Christ was resurrected for our justification on the first day of the week (Matt. 28: 1-6; Mark. 16: 9). This day heralds the victory and glorious triumph of our Redeemer and the future resurrection of all people (1 Cor. 15: 22-23). This is the day of the Lord: "This day the Lord has made ..." (Psalm 117, 24; Rev. 1:10).

The first and second appearance of the risen Christ to the disciples took place on the first day of the week (John 20: 19-26). The descent of the Holy Spirit also took place on the first day of the week (Acts 2: 1).

We honor Sunday as a special day on which the church gathers to worship God together and study the Holy Scriptures (Acts 20: 7; 1 Cor. 16: 1-2).

## 10. ABOUT MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

We believe that marriage is established by God (Genesis 2: 18-24). This is a union between a man and a woman, created for mutual help and support, for the continuation of the human race (Genesis 1, 28) and for the joint passage of the life path in love and harmony.

A husband can have only one wife, and a wife - only one husband (1 Cor. 7: 1-5). Christians have the right to marry only members of the church of their faith (1 Cor. 7:39).

God established that those who entered into a marriage union would not divorce (Matt. 19: 6-9), so that the spouses were faithful to each other until death (Rom. 7: 2). After the death of one of the spouses, the Word of God allows you to remarry, but only in the Lord (1 Cor. 7:39).

According to the Word of God, divorce is not permissible, for what God has combined, let man not part (Matt. 19: 6-9). Christ confirmed this word once more: "Whoever divorces his wife, not for adultery, and marries another, commits adultery; and he who marries a divorced woman commits adultery" (Matthew 19: 9). It speaks of divorce for any reason other than adultery. Consequently, the Christian family is indissoluble until the death of one of the spouses.

The church, guided by the Word of God, considers difficult divorce issues with the participation of responsible ministers. Children in a family are a precious gift from God (Ps. 127: 3). The spouses faithful to the Lord accept children from the hand of God, at His discretion (Psalm 128: 3-4; Isa. 29, 23).

Parents, and especially fathers, are responsible for the spiritual education of children (Deut. 6: 5-9; Ps. 78: 3-7). Their Christian duty is to educate children in the teaching and admonition of the Lord, setting a personal example of Christian piety (Eph. 6: 4).

## 11. CHURCH AND STATE

We believe that existing authorities are established by God. Therefore, in civil matters that do not contradict the command of the Lord, members of the church must submit to the authorities (Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13: 1-7).

Christians are called to pray for rulers (Jer. 29: 7; 1 Tim. 2: 1-3), so that the exercise of the authority entrusted to them would lead to the preservation of peace and justice, so that we may lead a quiet and serene life in all piety and purity.

The separation of church from state and freedom of conscience are in line with the principles of the gospel.

The head of the Church is Christ, and it is in her nature to obey Him (Eph. 5: 23-24). The Church of Christ is not of this world (John 17: 15-16; 18:36), and it cannot be dependent on secular authorities or interfere in its affairs (2 Cor. 6: 14-18), much less take on the functions assigned by God to secular authorities and act in its spirit and its methods (Matt. 20, 25-28; Luke 12, 13-14).

The Church is obliged to keep herself from any outside interference in her internal life and ministry (Acts 4:19; 5:29). In relation to the state, members of the church live according to the principle proclaimed by Christ: "Give what is Caesar's to Caesar, but what is God's to God" (Matt. 22:21).

## 12. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

We believe in the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 1: 11), which includes two events.

1. The rapture of the Church, that is, the resurrection of the dead in Christ and the change of the faithful who survived. This is the invisible for the world the rapture of the Church and her meeting with Christ in the clouds (1 John 3, 2; 1 Cor. 15, 52-57; Phil. 2, 16; 3, 20-21; 1 Thess. 4, 16- 17; 5, 23). After the rapture, the saved will appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ (1 Peter 5, 4; 1 Cor. 3:14; 9, 24-25; 2 Cor. 5, 10; 2 Tim. 4, 7-8).

2. The coming of Jesus Christ in power and glory on the day of the Lord (Matt. 24, 27; 25, 31; 26, 64; 1 Thess. 1, 10; 2 Thess. 1, 7; Rev. 1, 7; 19, 11) This open, visible coming of Christ will be marked by the judgment of mankind, after which the millennial kingdom will come (Rev. 20, 1-6). In a thousand years, the unrighteous will also be resurrected. They will appear before the white throne for judgment (Rev. 20, 11-15). Then eternity will come. The righteous will enter into eternal bliss, and the wicked will be thrown into the lake of fire for eternal torment (Matt. 25, 46; John 5:29; Rev. 20, 11-15; 21, 7-8). "Hey, I am coming soon! Amen. Hey, come, Lord Jesus! " (Rev. 22:20).