

FIRST ASSEMBLY OF GOD POLICIES AND PROCEDURES CHURCH MANUAL

I. OUR MANUAL

- a. Why a Church Manual? First, this manual has been compiled to serve as a means of communication and instructional tool, providing meaningful information to the household of God. A lack of information leads only to speculation, which always leads to disorder and confusion. Our God is a God of order. He moves wonderfully and powerfully when His house is set in order.
- b. In this manual we have endeavored to provide an overview First Assembly of God's ministries, policies, and procedures as they relate to our congregational members and adherents. Please take time to carefully read through this manual and familiarize yourself with the operations of your church family. Keep it in a handy place, consult it when you need to. We present this handbook in love.

II. OUR PASTOR

- a. Pastor Paul Gifford came to First Assembly in July, 2006. Pastor Paul is a graduate of Teen Challenge Ministry and Zion Bible College. Prior to coming to Toms River to serve as the Associate Pastor, he and his wife Deena were part of a church plant in Riverside, RI. He served as the Associate Pastor until February 2009. After a 10 month pastoral search Pastor Paul was installed as the Lead Pastor in February of 2010. He is a native of Boston, MA. Pastor Paul has been married to his wife Deena since January of 2004. Deena is a native of Bayville, NJ and also holds a degree from Zion Bible College in adult education. Together they have 3 children; Nathan, Joshua, and Jonathan.

III. OUR HISTORY

- a. First Assembly of God was officially incorporated on January 28, 1964 by Rev. Donald Richardson. Since its beginnings it has had 7 Pastors.

IV. OUR MISSION, VISION AND DISTINCTION

- a. First Assembly is a Pentecostal Church and practices a Pentecostal style of worship. We are a local church whose district resides with the Assemblies of God located in Burlington, New Jersey. Our Sunday services are a blend of Traditional and Contemporary worship songs and provide opportunity for prayer, praise, preaching of the Word, and an altar time.
- b. Mission - We fulfill our kingdom mission to be an epicenter from which the activity of God flows into our community, county and countries of the world in a four-fold vision
- c. Vision – Worship God, Empower Disciples, Encourage Believers, Embrace the Community.

V. OUR OFFICE HOURS

- a. The church office is open five days a week, Monday through Friday from 9:30am-

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3:30pm. However, before you make a trip to the church please be sure to call ahead (732-929-1900) to make sure that someone is in the building.

- b. The pastor may be out of the office for meetings, visitation, errands or hospital ministry. The office is usually closed during holidays.

VI. OUR SCHEDULE

- a. SUNDAYS: Sunday School 9:00am
- b. Morning Worship 10:00am
- c. Prayer Service 6:00pm (First Sunday of the month)
- d. WEDNESDAYS: Mid-Week Service 7:00pm
- e. Boz Kidz 7:00pm
- f. High Point 7:00pm
- g. Rock Solid Youth 7:00pm
- h. Nursery care is available at all services and Children's Church is available each Sunday morning beginning at 10:00am.

PENTECOSTAL DISTINCTIONS

VII. OUR ORDINANCES

- a. **Water Baptism** – Water baptism is a symbolic step Jesus commanded of new believers. In our church, baptism is reserved for older children and adults because it always follows a conscious decision to accept Christ's offer of salvation.
 - 1. We baptize believers by immersing them in water. This process does not save a person, but serves as a public testimony signifying the death of the individual's sinful past and their new birth in Christ. It's an important even in the life of the believer, confirming the changing power of Jesus Christ and a new identity in Him.
 - 2. Various opportunities throughout the year are provided for individuals to make a commitment in this way.
- b. **Communion** – Communion is observed regularly in our church on the first Sunday of the month. In addition, we share communion together on special services; such as our Good Friday Service and our Thanksgiving Eve Service.
 - 1. This solemn commemoration reflects on the loving sacrifice of Jesus, remembering his suffering, His death, and His glorious resurrection. Communion serves as a worshipful reminder of the great price Jesus paid for our salvation and encourages deeper devotion to Christ.

VIII. OUR BELIEFS

- a. **God Loves Us and Offers Salvation** – We live in a fallen world as a result of sin. Its destructive effects are seen and felt in nearly every corner of life. It erodes lives, destroys relationships and separates people from God. Because of this, we all need to be set free from sin and made right with God. This process of being saved and cleansed from sin is what Jesus called "being born-again." The Bible teaches that this gift of

salvation brings eternal life. This is the most central message of Christianity and the most important decision anyone can make.

- b. **Our Core Beliefs** – Our church embraces 16 truths as a statement of faith. Four of these are considered core beliefs.
 - 1. **Salvation** – through Jesus Christ who provides the supreme sacrifice for sin. (John 3:3, 16,17; Romans 10:13; Ephesians 2:8,9)
 - 2. **Baptism in the Holy Spirit** – for empowered Spirit filled living (Acts 1:8; 2:4, 17,18,38,39)
 - 3. **Divine Healing** – for the sick provided through Christ’s atoning death and resurrection (James 5:14-16)
 - 4. **The Second Coming of Christ** – when he returns for all who have accepted Him (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; 1 Corinthians 15:51,52)
- c. **Power for Living** – The teaching that distinguishes our fellowship from many others is the baptism in the Holy Spirit. We believe that this infilling of the Spirit gives believers several benefits as indicated in the NT. These include power to witness and serve others; a fervent dedication to the work of God; an intense love for Christ, His Word, and others; and the bestowment of spiritual gifts (Acts 1:4, 8; 8:15-17). Like the pattern recorded in the Bible, we believe that when the Holy Spirit initially fills believers, they will speak in an unknown language like the 120 who were baptized in the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. This infilling brings joy and power for Christian living, and serves as a gateway to a fuller life in Christ. We believe the Holy Spirit baptism is for everyone, though it is not a requirement for salvation (Acts 2:4).

IX. OUR FOUNDATION

- a. The Church, the Body of Christ, is built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ being Lord. “Simon Peter answered, ‘*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.*’ Jesus replied, ‘Blessed are you Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock (*i.e. that Jesus Christ is Lord*) I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” Matthew 16:16-20.
- b. **Transition to Making Jesus our Lord.**
 - 1. We are obedient to His Word.
 - 2. Good works come as our response to His love for us – and that’s how we measure our faith (i.e. by our labor for Him).
 - 3. We develop relationships in the Body based upon a loving commitment to meet each other’s needs.
 - 4. We move from isolation to building relationships.
- c. **What is Accepted and Practiced?**
 - 1. Everybody is accepted as somebody special in the church! You are an ambassador of Christ!

2. Everyone is accepted as they are while the Holy Spirit transforms us into the image of Christ.
3. Since we are being transformed into His image, we ask church members to receive from the ministries of the church and its leadership what is needed for their growth.
4. We ask that you practice those things that will cause this transformation to take place. Therefore, if there is something that needs to be corrected in your life, it may be necessary for our leaders to offer you some loving advice.

X. OUR GUIDE FOR LIVING

- a. **The Bible** – We believe the Bible is the standard rule of faith for all Christians and is Gods message for mankind. We believe its inspired words are timeless, providing a guide for all cultures and generations. Furthermore, we believe the Bible is without error and is the only true, holy standard for measuring faith and conduct.

MEMBERSHIP, LEADERSHIP & MINISTRIES

XI. OUR MEMBERSHIP

- a. Membership at First Assembly is a serious consideration. All prospective members are required to attend the pastor’s Membership Orientation Class. Upon completion of the class all candidates are presented to the Executive Board for approval.
- b. Those individuals desiring to become members of First Assembly are encouraged to faithfully attend services for a minimum of three months. This applies also to those that are looking to transfer their membership from another congregation.
- c. On a designated Sunday these individuals are prayed for and anointed before the congregation.
- d. The membership class includes a look at our 16 fundamental truths, philosophy of ministry, church policies and procedures, stewardship, pastor and wife’s autobiography, First Assembly’s constitution and bylaws, and the personal spiritual background of the candidate.
- e. Preferably, no one is considered for membership until he/she has attended the church faithfully for at least three months.
- f. One of the requirements is a personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.

1. How Do I Handle Conflicts or Disputes with other Members or Adherents?

- i. Disagreements are to be expected in a church family. They don’t happen to hurt or offend anybody, but rather they serve as an opportunity for both people to grow and mature in the Lord.
- ii. In accordance with Jesus’ words in the book of Matthew chapter 18, we are to meet privately with the person and explain what they did to hurt us or what we are disputing about.
- iii. If it can be resolved at that stage, nothing further is required. It is also acceptable for the two people to “agree to disagree” about something and pray about it.

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- iv. If the matter cannot be resolved, we should ask another church member to meet with us and the other person to resolve the matter.
- v. If that doesn't work, we should ask a member of the church board to help find resolve.
- vi. Finally, if that doesn't work, we should involve the pastor. Whatever is decided at that stage should be accepted by both parties.

XII. RETURNING TO FIRST ASSEMBLY

- a. Due to many reasons people leave and re-enter a church. Leadership is aware that individuals, returning to First Assembly, need an opportunity to transition prior to serving in a ministry.
- b. The Pastor will provide support through an individual conference, prayer and fellowship. It is anticipated that a minimum of 3 months would provide adequate time for this process prior to assuming a role in ministry.

XIII. LEADERSHIP SELECTION AND PLACEMENT

- a. The pastor is responsible for selecting and placing leaders in the Assembly. No department head or other leader should take it upon himself to name a leader for a given area of ministry. Pastor's prerequisites for ministry positions are as follows:
 - 1. The person **must** love Jesus with all his/her heart
 - 2. The person **must** love and understand the New Testament implications of the local church (not a new believer or un-disciplined believer)
 - 3. The person **must** support the pastor's vision for First Assembly
 - 4. The person's home life should be above the reproach of unbelievers. An individual whose personal and /or home life is out of line with the Word of God does not have a ministry
 - 5. The person **must** be faithful to the church in terms of attendance, finances, and participation
 - 6. The person **must** have or desire to have the Baptism in the Holy Spirit
 - 7. **We encourage those seeking leadership roles to become members**
 - 8. The person **must** be a member in good standing
 - 9. Children's workers must complete an application and complete the child abuse training course

1. Board Member Elections and Responsibilities

- i. **Following the nomination process through which active voting members are selected for board consideration. These candidates are then interviewed by the nominating committee which is made up of; the lead pastor, 2 board members, and 2 active members. Candidates are presented to the membership at the Annual Church Business Meeting to be voted upon.**

- ii. The Board includes men and women who perform the ministry of a deacon. Among them, there are a treasurer and secretary, who are considered to be officers of the church corporation along with the pastor, who is the president.
- iii. Board members oversee all the business and financial matters of the church.

2. How we define authority

- i. Being a member of the Body means following the leaders God gives us as they follow Christ (Ephesians 4:11). The church is governed by Christ ruling through His designated, delegated authority.
- ii. This authority includes the pastor, who is selected by a Pastoral Search Committee, usually the Executive Board. The pastor becomes the President and CEO of the operations along with the Board of Deacons, also known as the Executive Board. The membership of First Assembly has the opportunity to elect those to serve on the Church Board. In addition to the pastor and Board there are heads of ministries in the church, appointed by the Lead Pastor.
- iii. We understand however, that authority emanates from relationship. The success of the leader depends very much upon their ability to love, care and relate to the flock.

3. How Do I Resolve Conflicts or Disputes with a Board Member?

- i. We should go to the Board member and try to resolve the problem privately.
- ii. If that doesn't work, instead of asking another church member, we should immediately ask another Board member to go with us.
- iii. The last step is with the pastor.

4. How Do I Resolve a Conflicts or Dispute with the Pastor?

- i. Church members and adherents should feel relaxed about speaking with the pastor privately to resolve their differences.
- ii. The next stage would be to involve a Board member.
- iii. If all else fails, then the matter can be referred to a sectional leader, whose advice should be accepted by all parties.

XIV. OUR MINISTRIES

- a. The church endeavors to provide opportunities for personal growth and ministry, and our ministries are geared toward families. We desire to build strong families. This is seen as a mandate in a day when the home is under such violent attack. All age groups are targeted for outreach and ministry.

1. **Christian Education (Sunday School)** - On Sunday morning classes are held for everyone, infants through adults. We offer a graded Sunday School for children and

youth. We use curriculum from Radiant Life, Gospel Publishing House from Springfield, Missouri. Our adult class meets for discipleship in the Word during this 9:00am time slot.

2. **Nursery** - The church provides a nursery for infants and nursing mothers. The nursery is equipped with a speaker system connected to the sound system so that caregivers may listen to the service.
3. **Children's Church** - Every Sunday morning while the adults are involved in the morning message children's church is taking place at the same time. Currently we are ministering to children up to and including Grade 5.
4. **Prayer Ministry** - Every Sunday at 9:45am the altars of the church are open for anyone who wishes to pray. Corporate prayer is held on the first Sunday of the month at 6:00pm. If you send an emergency prayer request to mantle1@att.net, it will be emailed to everyone in the church who has provided email's to us. It will also be communicated to those without email addresses through a telephone chain.
5. **Altar Ministry** – Our altars are always open during service. Pastor will have specific altar calls at which time a trained team will pray with those who have responded to the altar call. Those of you who desire to be used of God in praying with others, as part of the altar team, should approach the pastor for approval and training.
6. **Ushers/Greeters** – This is a valuable service to the Lord. Greeters are normally the first look that visitors, regular attendees and members have at First Assembly. Our greeters are trained and have knowledge of the building. The Ushers serve and assist the pastor through the services being conducted on Sunday, Wednesday and special services. Recruitment and training occur throughout the year for this ministry.
7. **Worship Team** - Our services are characterized by lively, Spirit-filled praise and worship. Music plays an integral role in our church and God has given us committed musicians and singers who minister under the anointing and are growing. Anyone interested in participating should contact the pastor's office in order to connect you to the Worship leaders.
8. **Pastoral Care/Counseling** – Confidential Pastoral Counseling is available to assist individuals and/or couples in their time of need by focusing on God's Word and relevance to this need. On occasion, professional Christian counseling will be made in specific situations.
9. **Missions** - Currently First Assembly supports 20 missionaries world-wide with an annual total missionary budget of \$16,080. In addition to assisting missionaries financially the church also sends out members of the church on short-term missionary assignments. Missionaries that are supported by the church are featured in the hallway of the church. Framed photos display the missionary, their field of ministry, and our monthly commitment to them. Opportunities for missions partnership is a family affair at First Assembly of God. Teenagers participate in Speed the Light and Compassion International, while the younger children participate in Boys and Girls Missionary Crusade (BGMC)

10. **Care Ministry** – This ministry has grown in several different outlets which includes ministry to our new visitors, members and adherents. We provide home visitations, hospital visitations and nursing home visitations. We also provide meals to those families who have or are recovering from a death, tragedy or surgery. These meals are delivered to the home and are prepared through our compassionate chefs ministry team.
11. **Rock Solid Youth Ministry** - Every Wednesday night at 7:00pm. Youth from across the area meet for their own time of spiritual growth and fellowship. This youth service highlights the spiritual side of life. In addition, our young people frequently engage in outside activities. These activities include a wide variety of events, all appealing to the high energy level of youth. Youth, ages 12 through senior high school are invited to participate.
12. **Boz Kids Ministry** - Boys and Girls in Pre-K participate in our Boz Kidz Class. This class is geared to engage the children with activities, crafts, snacks and the Word.
13. **High Point Ministry** – Boys and Girls K-5 participate in our High Point Ministry. This ministry is sure to be an adventure for every child that comes in to take flight to one of our countries of focus. Kids learn character qualities from God’s Word such as love, forgiveness, kindness, etc. Each week there are activities that will help the child develop a relationship with Jesus.
14. **Mid-Week Service** -Pastor strives to offer relevant, interesting Bible studies on Wednesday evenings.
15. **Women’s Ministries** – Known as Women of Wisdom (WOW), the women of our church have planned month events. At these meetings they are challenged from the Word of God. They also take time to plan ways to minister as a group. They meet twice a month for bible study and prayer on the second and fourth Thursday at 6:30pm.
16. **Men’s Ministry** - Known as Band of Brothers, the men of our church have planned meetings every month. They also meet twice a month for prayer and a message from God’s Word on the first and third Thursday’s at 7:30pm.
17. **Bible, Bagels and Blessings** – This Bible study is for those that cannot make the evening hour’s bible study times (Women’s, Men’s, Wednesday night). It takes place in the Fellowship Hall of the church on the first and third Tuesdays of the month at 9:30am.

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Many times questions arise concerning the policies and procedures regarding ministries, programs, facility use, etc. In order to help you understand what is normal procedure concerning these things, we have stated them here for you. Please understand that these are normal procedures, not all are hard and fast rules. There are times when the Executive Board may feel that circumstances dictate a different approach other than what is stated in this manual. We want to remain flexible enough in

some areas in order to minister to individual circumstances and needs. Following are policies concerning areas where we have had questions, or where we feel clarification needs to be made.

XV. SANCTUARY DÉCOR

- a. Because the decor of the sanctuary changes according to seasonal themes, persons wishing to place flowers in the sanctuary need to make arrangements through the church office first. Flowers are usually designated for the platform area.

XVI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Because we are an active, busy fellowship, and because of the limited space in our weekly bulletin and other newsletters, we can only make announcements that concern the ministries of First Assembly.
- b. For items to be placed in the weekly Sunday bulletin, please notify the church office before Wednesday.
- c. Dates for events should be cleared with the pastor before announcing or scheduling them.
- d. Announcements will be included in all bulletins as time and space permit

XVII. USE OF CHURCH FACILITIES

- a. Church facilities are intended to be used for the glory and up-building of the Lord's kingdom.
- b. No activities which are of a questionable nature or which hinder the purpose of our being will be allowed in First Assembly's facilities.
- c. Any request for use of the building by groups outside the church would have to be cleared by the Executive Board.
- d. Proper paperwork must be filled out and returned to the main office prior to building use for any length of time or special event.
- e. Any other activities and requests for use of the building by groups within the church would also need to be cleared by the pastor. This prevents scheduling conflicts.
ABSOLUTELY NO SMOKING IS PERMITTED IN THE BUILDING.
- f. There is a designated smoking area outside the building that should be kept and maintained by outside groups.

XVIII. WEDDING POLICIES

- a. We are delighted to make First Assembly's facilities available to you for this significant event. Please note the following:
 1. **Reserve** the building
 2. **Premarital counseling** is required of all couples if ceremony is being conducted by Lead pastor.

3. **Individuals who have been previously married**, and who have a former spouse who is still living, are asked to consult privately with the pastor prior to scheduling these counseling sessions.
4. **Pastor will perform** wedding ceremonies for (1) those who agree to participate in the premarital counseling sessions; (2) those who give serious consideration to God's plan of salvation and base their lives on biblical principles; (3) Pastor will only perform wedding ceremonies for those who meet the biblical standard for marriage which is between a man and a woman. The context of Genesis 2:18-24 was God's original plan for how marriage was to be carried out. Genesis 2:24 says; "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed."
5. **Music** - Consult the pastor concerning your choice of music played and sung for the wedding and reception.
6. **Decorations** - Be certain that decorations that are used will not damage walls, carpets, or furnishings. Carpet must be protected with plastic when using dripping candles. The florist chosen by the bride is responsible for all decorations and will be required to remove them.
7. **Photographs** - When the reception is to follow, the photographer is to be instructed by the bride or her parents that everything possible should be done to expedite the taking of pictures after the ceremony in order not to delay the reception or unnecessarily infringe upon the time of the participants and guests.
8. **Cleaning** - It is the responsibility of the wedding couple to make arrangements for the church to be cleaned following the event.
9. **Reception and Cake cutting services**-If an outside caterer is chosen he must clear all arrangements in advance with the pastor, who is responsible for use of the facilities.
10. **Miscellaneous** - Smoking is not permitted anywhere in our church buildings. It is our desire to make all who enter this building conscious of the Lord we serve. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to see that their guests observe this policy. Alcoholic beverages may not be served at any wedding or reception at First Assembly of God. There may be a charge if the church facilities need an additional cleaning prior to next day services. All weddings at First Assembly will be performed by the Lead pastor, Associate pastor, or an outside minister upon approval.

XIX. FUNERAL POLICY

- a. The death of a church member or adherent always provides the local assembly with a great opportunity to minister to survivors in a tangible way. First Assembly is happy to assist the bereaved family in any way possible. So long as the church is given adequate information we will minister in the following manner:
- b. Church members and friends are notified of the death (via phone and email) as soon as information is released to leadership.
- c. Viewing hours are noted and funeral details are released through the church office

XX. FUNDRAISING

- a. First Assembly does not depend upon fundraising to support its ministries. It depends upon the Lord's people, through the giving of tithes and offerings, to meet its financial obligations.
- b. We do recognize, however, from time to time, that groups within the church need a source of income for special projects on which they may be working.
- c. Therefore, we permit these groups to conduct fundraising events each year. **THESE EVENTS SHOULD HAVE PASTORAL APPROVAL AND SHOULD NOT BE CARRIED OUT PRIOR TO THAT APPROVAL.**

XXI. CHURCH LIABILITY CONCERNING PERSONAL PROPERTY

- a. Sometimes people who attend First Assembly leave personal items, sometimes of great value, in the building or on the property. We make every attempt to keep our building and property secure, but we cannot and do not assume responsibility for these items. Liability for loss or theft is assumed by the owner.

XXII. BUILDING SAFETY

1. **Fire Evacuation** - In the event of a fire please locate the nearest pull switch and activate the alarm. There are laminated instructions for leaving the building posted in visible areas throughout the building. When exiting building get to the designated meeting spots on Bay Ave and Cedar Grove Rd. It is here where you will pick up your children.
2. **Background Checks** - Any person desiring to work with children in our church must comply with First Assembly of God's standard procedure for background checks. We provide paperwork and costs to do a local, state and federal background check using your social security number. These documents are kept in a safe/locked location.
3. **Suspicious Activity** - If you suspect a suspicious person wandering the church grounds or the building, do not approach those individuals by yourself. It would be best to let an Usher or Ministry Leader know your concern so that the matter can be handled accordingly.
4. **Child Care** - Parents are required to sign in and sign out their babies, toddlers and children when leaving them in a program (Wednesday Night, Sunday or Special Services). Only designated individuals will be permitted to pick up the child.

XXIII. BORROWING CHURCH FURNISHINGS

- a. From time to time, individuals ask to borrow folding chairs and/or tables from the church. This is perfectly acceptable as long as these items are not in use for a church function. All items should be signed out with the church office staff and returned clean and placed in their proper storage area following use.

XXIV. CONDUCT YOURSELF IN A CHRIST-LIKE MANNER

- a. When we embrace His values, we then over time will produce in a natural way the behaviors of Christ. Here are the ones we consider most important:
- (1) LISTEN
 - (2) BE LOYAL
 - (3) BUILD UNITY AND STRENGTHEN OUR CHURCH FAMILY
 - (4) COMMUNICATING WELL WITH EACH OTHER AND BETWEEN MINISTRIES
 - (5) DEVELOP THE HEART OF A SERVANT FOR BOTH YOUR CHURCH AND COMMUNITY
 - (6) BUILD OTHERS UP, ENCOURAGING THEM, AND EMPOWERING THEM
 - (7) RECOGNIZE AND REWARD OTHERS FOR THEIR DEDICATION AND SERVICE

b. Take Sin Serious

- (1) We must stay ready to meet the Lord. Jesus said, “So you must keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back – whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, don’t let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch’” Mark 13: 35-37. Also see Luke 12:35-40.
- (2) What’s most important is the attitude of the heart towards sinning. The real issue is how deeply we sense the implications of our sins. Are we filled with godly sorrow? Are we pained by the tragic consequences our sin creates in our relationships with others? We don’t mean a phony show of sorrow. Do we feel some of the same sorrow God feels about evil? Are we willing to turn from it?

c. My Relationships; Inside Church and Outside Church?

1. Sharing your Life. We are expected to help one another in both spiritual and material ways when the Holy Spirit leads us. See Acts 2:42-46. Galatians 5:13 says, “You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge your sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.”

2. Tithing. We believe that giving 10% of our gross income to Christ’s church is consistent with the Bible.

- i. Malachi 3:8-10 asks the question, “Will a man rob God?” It then explains that all the tithes should be brought into God’s “storehouse”, that there might be “meat” in God’s house.
- ii. Romans 12:13 tells us to share with people who are in need – to practice hospitality.
- iii. Galatians 6:6 tells us to share good things with those who instruct us in God’s Word.

- d. **What’s the Best Way to Evangelize?** We should always be ready to share our testimony with non-believers. It should be done with grace and seasoned with “salt”. The best way the church can witness to our community is by being one in heart and soul with the people of our congregation. See John 17:21.

- e. Relationships with Others Outside of First Assembly?** Participating in other Christian ministries is an accepted practice. It should be understood, however, that our primary place to serve is where the Lord has planted us.
 - i. We draw others to our church through guest speakers, door-to-door handouts, mailings, radio and other media ads. Follow-up is always essential.
- f. Inviting Other to Church?** There are already too many Christians who leave their own church to find the “perfect” church.
 - i. We do not encourage other Christians to leave their present church. Christians who have no church and are searching are welcome and invited to worship with us. Non-Christians are always welcome in our services.