



**Northcliffe**

**New Members Guide**



## A Message from the Lead Pastor

Welcome to Northcliffe's New Member's Course!

I'm so excited that you have taken this step towards becoming a part of the Northcliffe family!

As you prayerfully consider becoming a part of this community of faith, you should know that if you are looking for a perfect church, this isn't it. At Northcliffe, we are believers in Jesus who love God and strive to mirror God's love at all times. But we are all human and sometimes we will disappoint. The good news is; we don't expect perfection from you either! One of our core values is accepting people—just as you are.

We do strive to improve and become better individuals, families, and as a church. To do this, we all have to be open, willing, and eager to learn and grow in our faith. We choose to spend time together, follow the Holy Spirit, understand our core values, and commit to do our best to live out the gospel each and every day.

Throughout history, God has used people in the local church to be catalysts to make this world into a better place. Each person in our congregation is uniquely created by God to serve in a way no one else can. I believe that when we come together and with hearts surrendered to God, we are positioned for the extraordinary and lives are transformed!

At Northcliffe, we are passionate about helping people meet Jesus, serving our community, and supporting the global Church to bring about lasting change. Northcliffe is a place where people are inspired, encouraged, and challenged to find opportunities to put their faith into action for the glory of God.

I am excited that you are on this journey, and I pray that you will consider joining Northcliffe and becoming a member of this amazing church family. When you say yes to belonging here, you step out of the stands and onto the playing field where you will honor God with your unique contributions to Northcliffe, our community, and around the world. When you say yes, our church is stronger and better for it. And you'll be too.

Blessings,



Jeff Dye  
Lead Pastor



LOVE | LIVE | SERVE

One of the things we believe as a church is that we were never saved for ourselves. We believe that we were saved by Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection from the grave so that we might have fellowship with God and live our lives intentionally reflecting His love and His glory to the world around us. We will talk more about all of that as we go through this guide, but this will give us a good foundation.

## Love

When Jesus was asked what is the greatest commandment, he answered, "*The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'* The second is this: '*You shall love your neighbor as yourself*'" (Mark 12:30-31)

We believe loving God and loving our community are the greatest things a follower of Jesus can do. This is the foundational idea for everything we do at Northcliffe. We are going to talk about mission statements, vision statements, core values, opportunities for service, and more, but everything we are going to look at comes from these two ideas. If we can't love God and our neighbors, then the gospel has not taken root in our lives.

## Live

At Northcliffe we want to live our lives of faith intentionally. We know that God came to save us when we neither deserved nor wanted a relationship with Him (Romans 5:6-8). Accordingly, in love and gratitude, we want to live in way that intentionally displays the love that He gave us when He died on the cross for us.

We are told, "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ (Phil 1:26). To live worthy of the gospel means that we want to live according to the gospel and its implications. Which means we have to choose to live for more than ourselves. We live to complete what Jesus has called us to do and to be.

## Serve

The idea of service lies at the heart of loving God and loving our neighbor. Loving our neighbor means we want to pursue their highest good, which is a relationship with God and, subsequently, living the reality of the gospel in their lives. In order to introduce people to God through the gospel of Jesus we want to show that we care about them, their needs, wants, and hopes. We display the gospel by serving others and serving God. Jesus told us that even he didn't come to be served but to serve others (Matthew 20:28). The humility of Jesus is the pattern which we desire to follow (Philippians 2:5-11).

Philippians 2:3-4 tells us, *"Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility count others as more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests but to the interests of others."* We want to count others as more important than ourselves, by serving others.

In doing so we love God by following His commands and we love others by meeting their needs. Service is a display of God's love to us whether that is serving in the church or in the community.

Our love, live, serve mentality is how we feel we can best accomplish our mission to proclaim, in the Spring Hill area and around the world, the redemptive love of Jesus Christ through worship, witness, education, fellowship, ministry, and missions.

# Northcliffe

LOVE | LIVE | SERVE

## **Disciples of Jesus at Northcliffe**

We believe that every disciple of Jesus has unique gifts, talents, and functions within the church that allows us all to grow up into Christ, serve God, serve one another, and have a gospel impact in the community in which God has placed us (Ephesians 4:11-16). We are always excited for the gifts that God brings into this fellowship of believers as we seek to impact our community with the gospel.

In addition to the uniqueness that we each bring to the life of Northcliffe we believe that there are some common elements of the Christian life that should be growing in each believer. At Northcliffe we have identified seven of these common elements in our HEALTHY acronym.

### **H- Humility:**

We believe that no individual has all the answers or all of the best ideas. So we want to do everything in humility recognizing that God can and will use others for the growth of His church. We want to pursue the good of others more than we pursue our own good. We want to be faithful to Him who called us. We want to serve our church and our community. All of these require humility.

### **E- Excellence:**

We believe that God deserves our very best in everything that we do. God held nothing back when He created the world and redeemed humanity through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Accordingly, we want to offer God the very best of all we have, say, and do. All of our time, talents, and treasure come from God, so we need to honor Him with excellence in how we use them.

### **A- Attitude:**

We want to have an attitude like Jesus, which was humbly obedient to God, loving others without seeking personal gain, and oriented towards the mission of God. This attitude is something for which the disciple of Jesus ought to always strive.

### **L-Leadership:**

We want our leaders to model Christlikeness in all that they do. Leadership at Northcliffe means stepping up when needed and serving whenever possible. At Northcliffe leadership is about the opportunities to serve and not the chance to “be in charge.”

### **T-Teachable:**

Reflecting the humility that we value in disciples of Jesus, teachability is a reflection of the reality that we don't know everything. God is always teaching us something so that we might better reflect His character in our lives and our relationships. We can learn from God's Word, the circumstances He is leading us through, and other believers. All of this means that we need to be open to what God is teaching us everyday as we become more like Jesus.

### **H-Harmony:**

One of the goals for the church is to be a body of people who live in harmony with one another. We want to be a people who avoid unnecessary conflicts, submit to biblical conflict resolution and, if necessary, church discipline. We want Northcliffe to be a church where we live alongside and serve one another in love. Our goal is to live peaceably with one another and point others to Jesus.

### **Y- Yearning for God:**

While this is the last letter of our acronym, it can be considered the driving force of the whole acronym. At Northcliffe we want our highest pursuit to be God Himself. God saved us not for our sake but for His sake. Having a relationship with God is the highest possible good for everyone who has ever lived and who ever will live. Our desire for God drives us to love Him and His creation, to live authentically before Him, and to serve Him and our community.

These are the characteristics that we believe will help us become more like Jesus. You can discover more about these characteristics by going to [www.northcliffeonline.org/healthy](http://www.northcliffeonline.org/healthy).

But where does that journey start? At Northcliffe we believe that journey begins with some fundamental beliefs that form the foundation for life and faith in God.

## Who is God?

The answer to this question is central to the Christian faith. One of the most important parts of the answer to this question is to discover what is the nature of God. We want to tackle this part of the answer right out of the gate because from this point all of the other issues find their context. We want to begin with God's nature as the triune God, or said another way, God exists in trinity.

The Doctrine of the Trinity is easy to define, but could easily take a life time to sort out and understand. Simply stated, the Doctrine of the Trinity is this: God exists in one essence (nature), and exists in three persons.

It may help us if we think of the doctrine of the trinity as having two parts. The first part is that God is one in nature or essence. The second, that God exists in three persons. Let's take a look at each part independently for a moment.

### God is One:

One of the most resounding claims in the Bible is that there is only one God. The belief that there is only one God separates Christianity from the majority of other world religions. We believe that there is one God who brought creation into being, who works throughout history guiding and directing it for His purpose and His ends, and is active in His relationship with humanity to redeem His creation from sin, futility, death, and destruction.

Some of the scripture verses we recognize teach the unity and oneness of God are:

#### **Exodus 20:2-3**

*"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me."*

As God gave the law to the nation of Israel He was sure to make the point that he was the only God that existed and that worshiping anything other than Him would separate Israel from God. In this commandment God is highlighting the reality that he is the only God that exists and that worship either connects us to God or separates us from God. This is one of the reasons worship matters so much to us at Northcliffe, because in our worship we either recognize God for who he is and honor him for who he is or we focus on ourselves and our desires.

**Deuteronomy 6:4**

*"Hear, O Israel: "The Lord our God, the Lord is one."*

Deuteronomy makes it even clearer that God is unique in his nature by claiming the oneness of God. The uniqueness of God is followed up in the New Testament as well.

**1 Corinthians 8:4-6**

*"Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one. 5 For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, 6 yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him."*

What we find is that all of scripture tells us that God is one in nature, but there is more to God than just His oneness. The uniqueness of God is broader than His being one, He is also three persons of one essence.

**God in Three Persons:**

As we think about the three persons of the Trinity we want to take an honest look at some of the passages that tell us about God to see if there really is this idea of a Trinitarian God in the Bible. The first place we want to go to is creation.

**Genesis 1:2-3:**

*"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. 3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light."*

In this passage we see that God the Holy Spirit and God the Father are present and active in the creation of the universe, but it doesn't stop there.

**John 1:1-3:**

*"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made."*

In the opening verse of the book of John, Jesus is referred to as "the Word." So what scripture is indicating is that all three distinct persons are present and have impact at the creation of the world.

Equally, when we look at Genesis 1:26, we can see that God refers to himself in a plural construct.



## **Genesis 1:26**

Then God said, *“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”*

There are two important things to take notice of in this verse. The first is that God refers to himself as a plurality. While God makes sure we understand that he is one, he also refers to himself here as more than one. This verse does not identify who the members of the Trinity are for us, but we can know that God has spoken of himself with the idea of more than one person in the essence of God. This is God giving us a hint at his Trinitarian nature.

The second thing we want to note here is that humanity is created in God's image. Scripture never tells us exactly what being created in the image of God means. However, it at least means that all people are worthy of dignity and respect because God made us in his image, that we have the ability to communicate and understand, and that we were built for a relationship with God. We will talk a little more about humanity later. Right now we are focusing on the Trinitarian nature of God, so let's look at one more place where we can easily see God in three persons.

Creation isn't the only place we can see the reality of the trinity. The baptism of Jesus is a great place to see all three members of the trinity in one place at one time.

## **Matthew 3:13-17**

*“Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. 14 John would have prevented him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?’ 15 But Jesus answered him, ‘Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then he consented. 16 And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; 17 and behold, a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.’”*

Here is the thing we really want to look at here. In this passage, and the parallel passages in Mark and Luke, we see all three members of the Trinity present at the same time, in the same place, and interacting with one another. We have God the Son, Jesus, who is in the Jordan river being baptized, God the Holy Spirit descending like a dove, and we have God the Father speaking from heaven. Each Person of the Trinity is present and distinct from the other two Persons of the Trinity.

Finally, in the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:19-20, we find that as people come to a saving knowledge of Christ and enter into the life of following Him the first act of obedience in is to be baptized, but scripture gives a very specific formula for the baptism.

### **Matthew 28:19-20**

19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Jesus' command to baptize new believers in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit clearly points to the idea that there are three Persons in the Trinity.

Scripture makes two claims about God's nature; that He is one and that He exists in three persons. Neither of these two claims can be sacrificed or the whole idea of Christianity falls apart, and our ability to have a right standing with God is lost. The questions then arise; How does one have a relationship with God? How do we connect with God? These questions lead us to the next foundational belief at Northcliffe Church.

## **What is the Gospel?**

In its shortest form, the gospel is that Jesus died for our sins, that He was buried, and on the third day He was raised from the grave (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). However, the gospel touches every corner of our lives, and as we explain it, we often want to give more context than the most abbreviated form possible. As we communicate the gospel story we want to think of the gospel as the story God has written and which He has graciously chosen to make us a part of. So lets explore the story of the gospel in four major movements: Creation, Fall, Rescue, and Restoration.

### **Creation**

The gospel begins with God. Ultimately, the entire story of reality is about God, though every one of us plays an invaluable part of this story (Genesis 1:1; Psalm 90:2; John 1:1-3). So as we begin to think about the unfolding of the gospel, it is imperative that we start where God started to tell us the story of the gospel: with Creation.

When we look at what God has told us about the reality in which we live, it starts with the world he created (Genesis 1:1; John 1:3-4). God tells us that when he finished creating everything he said it was "very good" (Genesis 1:31). All of creation, including humanity, was in a perfect relationship with God and with each other. There was no dividing wall between God and humanity. All of creation was in harmony with God.

Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden, and they worked the ground; They were healthy, happy, and in perfect relationship with God and one another. Creation had been made with the quality given to it by the perfect expert craftsman: It had a moral quality, and it had a relational quality (Genesis 1:1-30). Humanity, God's crowning achievement in creation, was made in His image (Genesis 1:26-28)

If we look at ourselves, the people around us, and the world we live in socially, politically, and environmentally, it's obvious that something has gone dramatically wrong in the world in which we live. The world does not exist in the ideal or perfect framework that God created it in originally. That is the next part of the we need to look at as we explore the gospel. The quality with which God created reality has been broken, but we need to ask how reality was broken.

## **Fall**

Humanity had the perfect relationship with God, the perfect relationship with one another, and the perfect place to live. Enter the serpent. Adam and Eve had one rule they couldn't break, one tree in all of creation from which they couldn't eat, and the serpent asked one question that shook humanity loose from our relationship to God: "Did God really say...?" (Genesis 3:1).

From there humanity followed their own path which lead to broken relationships in three areas of our experience. We had a broken relationship with God (Genesis 3:8-11), a broken relationship with one another (Genesis 3:11-13; 3:16), and a broken relationship with creation (Genesis 3:17). From that conversation with the serpent, moving forward through all of human history, we see the struggle of humanity with its best attributes and its worst attributes (Romans 7:14-ff). We see that the current state of humanity is that we have all broken God's law and fail to live to His standards (Romans 3:23). Failing those standards, we are left to pay the penalty of breaking God's law. The ultimate penalty for breaking God's law is death (Genesis 2:16-17; Romans 6:23).

Despite all of the many positive aspects of our life experience, when we think about the world in which we live, we see and experience the stains of brokenness that sin has left behind (Romans 3:10); families are broken, people struggle with physical and emotional wounds, diseases seem to be without end or cure, our nation seems to be settling into factions, and countries are torn in two by violence, hate, and war. The world has gone from perfect to broken. No matter what we seem to try, the brokenness persists.

We need to be rescued.

We need to be rescued not just from the broken world around us and our broken relationships, but from the sin that separates us from God (Psalm 51:1-5; Romans 3:19-20).

## **Rescue**

Fortunately, we aren't left with just the brokenness of the world. The only one who has the ability to set the world right is the one who made it in the first place. God tells us there is good news for the brokenness of our lives, and the good news is Jesus. Even though we commit sin and are naturally rebellious towards God, God chose to love us. God reminds us that He "demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

Jesus died for our sins because we can't have a perfect relationship with God on our own. Someone needed to bridge the gap between us as rebellious sinners and God who is holy. The only way to bridge the gap between humanity and God is to satisfy the punishment for sin, which is death (Hebrews 9:21-22). When we die separate from a relationship with God through Jesus Christ, we find ourselves eternally separated from God (Romans 6:23). We needed someone who was sinless, who was like us in that he was human, but unlike us in that he was without sin. Jesus came to earth born as a human so that he could satisfy the wrath of God on behalf of humanity. Jesus, being both God and man, paid the penalty of death for us so that we might have a relationship with God.

When we trust in Jesus and his sacrifice for our sins we become children of God (John 1:12-13; John 3:16, Romans 10:9-10), and we are brought into the community of faith that is the church (Colossians 1:13-14). We no longer suffer from the eternal penalty of sin, even if we have to live with the temporary consequences of what has happened. By trusting in Jesus' death, burial and resurrection, we become children of God. God made a promise to Adam and Eve when he banished them from Eden, and Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection keeps that promise. But just fixing our sin problem while we live here on earth isn't where God stops this story.

## **Restoration**

In addition to rescuing us from the penalties of our sins, God promises that everyone who trusts in Him will have eternal life. Part of that eternal life means that we will live in a world where all of the things that were broken in the fall will be restored. Humanity's three relationships that were broken in the fall will be restored to what God intended them to be. We will have an open relationship with God, we will be able to relate to one another properly, and all of creation will be fruitful.

People will no longer be ruled by sin and selfishness, there will be no more natural disasters, no more violence, pain, or suffering. Instead we will have perfect relationships with God, with each other, and with all of creation (Revelation 21:1-4). God's original design and purpose for His creation will flourish.

## **Our Story in His Story**

We live in the world that is telling the story that God has created from the beginning of time. This is the large story, but how will your story fit into that story? God intended us to be in relationship with him, to worship him, to serve him, and reflect his character as a part of his perfect creation. The question for us is will we join His Story? When you accept Jesus as your Savior and Lord, you enter into this larger story. When we join this story it isn't just a story - in this story we find forgiveness, satisfaction, purpose, and direction as we get to know God who is the author of the story.

We are rescued by faith in Jesus alone. We can't earn our rescue; we can't deserve what Jesus did for us; we can't even fake earning or deserving our salvation. Our salvation is a free gift that we are given by God. Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us, "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."

If the gospel is unfamiliar to you, if you have never accepted the free gift of God's grace, or if you are not sure how you fit into God's story, we want you to know that God loves you and that he has a plan for your life. We want to invite you to trust Jesus today.



## The Bible

Because we believe the gospel, we believe the Bible. Because the author of the gospel is the author of the Bible. We want to make sure we understand what we mean when we say we believe the Bible. It is more than an acceptance of a certain number of facts that are written down and then bound together. We agree with the Baptist Faith and Message (2000) which says:

*“The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction, it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.”*

There are three things we want to focus on as we talk about the Bible. The first is that the Bible or scripture, is ultimately from God. In 2 Timothy 3:16-17 we find this statement,

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

God gave us the Bible from His own mouth, revealed to men who faithfully wrote down what God moved them to write. 2 Peter 1:21 talks about the process when it says,

*“For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”*

God spoke to men, who then wrote it down as a stewardship for those who would come behind them, even down to us today. God used the personality, experiences, and styles as tools to communicate what he wanted humanity to know about himself, about how to have a relationship with him, and his purposes for humanity in light of his glory.

The second thing we want to see is that God had us in mind as He was creating the Bible, which is why we say it has salvation for its end. God gave us the Bible to reveal himself to us, to show us the reality of sin in our lives, and the opportunity we have to trust in God as our savior. One place God's intention for His Word is so prevalent is John 20:30-31:

*Therefore, many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.*

The final thing we want to see is that the Bible is truth without any mixture of error. The idea here is that the Bible says exactly what God wanted it to say. This statement is addressing the original text languages that the Bible was written in called the autographs. We have trustworthy translations today that we use for everything we do. The point we are making here is that what we have in our English translations is a reliable and trustworthy copy of God's word. It is good for our growth in life and faith as we grow towards Christlikeness. Which brings us to our next question; Why do we as a church place such a priority on studying the Bible?

We believe that there are at least four reasons why Christians ought to study the Bible. Each reason shows us how the Bible helps us grow in Christlikeness.

### **Why We Study the Bible**

The first reason we study the Bible is because God wants us to study the Bible. Deuteronomy 6:6-9 tells us:

*These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates.*

This passage underscores how much God wants us to interact with His word. We see that every facet of life is found in this passage. The Word of God is supposed to cover our conversations, meditations, and interactions with other people. As we go about our lives, the Scriptures ought to shape how we live our lives.

Following God's commands to study His word helps us grow in Christlikeness because in order to grow to be like Christ we must first know who He is. Additionally, when Jesus was on earth He quoted scripture often, including when He was tempted by Satan in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-12). So studying and knowing scripture helps us understand who God is, and also helps us be like Him by practicing the habits He practiced.

The second reason we study the Bible is that it protects us from sin, false teachings, and dangerous or harmful decisions. The Bible is the revelation of God to people but it also gives us insight into how we ought to live and why. Romans 12:2 tells us:

*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

One of the most fruitful ways we can transform our minds is by studying and interacting with the Word of God. As we take in God's word by reading it, studying it, memorizing it, applying it, and hearing it, we begin to see and understand what God is doing in us, for us, and through us. As we renew our minds through the study of God's word, we find that we will know and understand more about who God is, what He desires of us, and how we ought to engage the people and the world around us. As we engage with a culture that is indifferent or even hostile to the Word of God, Christians, and the church, we find that knowing and understanding the Word of God helps us not only be comfortable in our own faith and relationship with God, but it prepares us to explain our faith to others.

This then is the third reason that we study God's Word. We study it so we can explain and defend our faith to others when they have questions about why we believe what we do, especially in the extreme times of life. Let's look at 1 Peter 3:15,

*"honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect."*



How can we give a reason for the hope that is within us if we don't understand what that hope is? Right now our world is in turmoil for a variety of reasons, but Christians have a strong hope for the future. Studying the Bible prepares to give that reason. The more we know God's Word and understand how the gospel applies to every corner of our lives, the more we can explain to others how our faith gives us hope.

When people pass away, or there are times of catastrophic evil, or natural disasters, or tragic accidents we need to be a people who declare the hope of Jesus in all of these circumstances. We can't do that if we aren't intimately knowledgeable of God's Word.

We have already hinted at the fourth reason we study God's word. We study God's word so we can grow to be more like Jesus. If we are going to grow to be more like Jesus we have to know who He is and what His character was. There will always be times when being like Jesus, or doing what He would do will be impossible for us, but as we study God's word we will see more and more of His character that we can emulate and by doing what Jesus does we honor Him and live more like what we were created to be.

Jesus prayed for all of the disciples that would come because of what He was doing on the cross in John 17. Look carefully at John 17:13-18

*I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.*

Jesus prayed that His disciples would not be protected from the world or even the suffering that comes with being in the world, but He did pray that we would be sanctified with truth. The Word is truth. If we are to be holy even as God is holy it will come through the study and application of His word in us as believers in Jesus.

Studying God's word is extremely important in the life of any believer because God commands it; it helps us stand against false teaching; it prepares us to give a defense for our hope; and it helps us grow in Christlikeness.

We understand the need to study God's Word, but how do we study God's word? For many Christians this can feel like an overwhelming question. Where to begin studying the Word of God is sometimes the biggest hurdle that many new believers face. At Northcliffe we have a variety of ways that you can begin studying the Bible. The best of course would be to jump in to a few of them at a time and begin to engage with God's word to see it transform our lives.

## **How We Study the Bible**

### **Personal Bible Study**

We believe that every believer in Christ should strive to have private times of one-on-one times with God. There are resources of every type out there. Whether you have time with God daily or weekly, we want to encourage you to grow in your faith by spending time alone with God.

### **Family Devotionals and Bible Studies**

One of the things that we believe is that worship and discipleship begin in the home and the life of the church is a supplement to what God is doing in you privately and among your family. We encourage times together as a family to pray and spend time in the word of God.

For some helpful resource options on personal and family devotionals see the Northcliffe Family Ministry Guide.

### **Sunday Morning Worship**

By now you have probably attended a worship service or two at Northcliffe. This is a great place to start as you link in with the community of faith at Northcliffe. Sunday morning worship services begin with a commitment to the word of God, as our pastoral teaching team digs into passages of scripture and helps us apply them to our lives. Leading us in applying the Word of God and pointing us back to God who loves us and saves us. Added to worshipping in the Word, we have times of worship in song.

### **Life Groups**

Life Groups are our long term Bible study groups that meet on Sunday mornings to dig into God's Word, and fellowship with one another by sharing the joys and praying for the concerns of life

### **Christian Life Development Groups (CLD Groups)**

CLD Groups are designed to be short term fellowships of Bible study around a given topic to help us grow in our walk with Christ. CLDs can be everything from the study of a particular book of the Bible, to understanding how the Bible helps us understand God's plan for parenting, finances, missions, and more. These operate on a Fall and Spring Semester basis.

# The Church

As we move from personal Bible study to corporate Bible study in worship services and small groups, we come directly to the question, "What is the church?" The exact nature of the church has really two portions that we want to address: the church universal and the local church. Each of these two portions is important to the life of every church and particularly to Northcliffe.

## **Universal and Local**

The church universal is the culmination of every person who has ever trusted in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. This is a broad topic and includes a variety of locations, denominations, and Christian perspectives. Northcliffe agrees with the idea of the church universal when we talk about partnering with other churches, denominations, and organizations in the work of spreading the gospel. We respect each church's distinctiveness and recognize that all of us are equally purchased by the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus.

The local church is the individual community of faith that gathers together for the regular study of God's word, worship of God, fellowship, sharing in one another's joys and struggles, discipleship, and partnering together for the spread of the gospel.

For us, Northcliffe is the local church that we belong to. In addition to attending and participating in the life of Northcliffe, this is also the place we identify with the Body of Christ. This leads us to the second emphasis we want to make about the church, the ordinances of the church.

## **Baptism and Lord's Supper**

The ordinances that Northcliffe practices are baptism and the Lord's supper. We do each of these out of obedience to God's commands and his example. They are important parts of the life of the individual believer and also for the community of faith.

### **Baptism**

Baptism is an act of obedience that signifies our decision to take part in God's story by trusting in Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

When we talk about baptism we want to remember three reasons that baptism is important for us at Northcliffe. First, we want to see that Jesus set the example for baptism. When we look at the life of Jesus we see that as he began his public ministry he started by being baptized. We can see this in Matthew 3:13-17:

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. 14 John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" 15 But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. 16 And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; 17 and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

The second reason that baptism is important is that Jesus commanded baptism to be a part of the church. We can see Jesus' command to baptize new believers and disciples in Matthew 28:19-20:

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

This passage is often referred to as the Great Commission (we will talk more about this in a little bit), and it gives believers in Jesus a pattern of how we are supposed to live our lives. Part of what Jesus commands us to do in the Great Commission is to baptize people who trust in Jesus the way we do. Baptism is important to us because Jesus tells us it needs to be a part of the way we live.

The third reason baptism is important for us is that baptism was the practice of the early church. When we look at the record of the early church, particularly in Acts we see that baptism was the normal practice of the early church. Here are a few verses that point out this practice.

Acts 2:41

*“So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.”*

Acts 8:35-36

*35 “Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. 36 And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?”*

Acts 9: 18

*“And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he got up and was baptized.”*

Acts 10:48

*“And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay on for a few days.”*

The idea of baptism has a long history in the Bible and was used in a variety of places for a variety of reasons. At Northcliffe we practice baptism by immersion. We practice baptism by immersion because it was the original method that was used in the Bible. The word baptize comes from the biblical word meaning “to immerse.” Originally, it was used in the context of dying cloth. If a person pours or sprinkles dye on a piece of fabric it will only dye the part of the cloth the dye touched. To fully dye a piece of cloth you had to immerse the cloth completely in dye. Similarly, we baptize believers by immersion.

A final distinction we want to make about our heartfelt commitment to baptism is that we believe in believer's baptism. Believer's baptism understands that once we profess our saving knowledge and commitment to Jesus as our personal Lord and Savior then we are baptized in obedience with that profession. Baptism is something we do because of our loving obedience to Jesus' example and his commands. Accordingly, infants who cannot make the distinction between trusting in Jesus' sacrifice for their sins or rejecting his sacrifice are not baptized within our community of faith.

### **The Lord's Supper (Communion)**

Communion was originally instituted by Jesus the night he was arrested and taken before various authorities to be tried for crimes no one could substantiate (Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20). Communion is an important time in the life of the church because it is a time for us to remember what Jesus did for us, a time for us to show our gratitude, and a time for us to proclaim the gospel until Jesus returns. One of the easiest places to look at Communion is found in 1 Corinthians 11:23-29:

*23 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." 25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.*

*27 Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. 28 Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.*

There are a couple of important items we want to note as we read through this passage. The first thing we want to notice is that Jesus is the person who instituted Communion, which is why it is often called the Lord's Supper or the Lord's Table.

The second thing we want to notice is that Communion is a time for us to give thanks to God for what he has done. Communion is a way we remember the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, and what that means for us as believers. This is one way we give thanks for what Jesus has done.

The third thing we want to recognize is that this is a remembrance of what Jesus did for us. Jesus said, "do this ... in remembrance of me." So we remember what Jesus did for us when he took upon himself the punishment our sins deserved by dying on the cross. The bread represents his body broken for us, and the fruit of the vine represents the blood that Jesus shed for us on the cross.

The fourth thing we want to recognize is that this is a time when we get to visually proclaim what Jesus did for us on the cross. By eating the bread and drinking the juice we are symbolically identifying with the sacrifice that Jesus made for us.

Lastly, we want to note this is a time of reflection for believers.

1 Corinthians 11 makes it clear that we need to take time to take Communion seriously, or in a worthy manner. That means that we ought to take the time to repent of our sin and allow Jesus to make changes in us before we take Communion. We need time to reflect on who we are and submit to what God is doing to grow our relationship with him. Connected to the need for us to take this seriously is the fact that Communion should only be taken by believers. This is a celebration and a proclamation for believers to make about what Jesus has done in their lives. When an unbeliever takes Communion the Bible is clear that the unbeliever is taking judgment upon themselves.

## The Church on Mission

One of the most important commitments we make as a church is that we are a church on mission: individually, locally, and globally.

The best place to start as we look at this particular distinctive is Matthew 28:19-20, which is often referred to as the Great Commission. Matthew 28:19-20 says,

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*

This was the last statement that Jesus made in Matthew's gospel account. It highlights the need for believers in Jesus to be focused on reaching the communities that they are a part of with the gospel and making disciples within those secular communities. Jesus gave us the command to make disciples of all of the nations. That can be a daunting task for a lot of reasons, which is why we want to do all that we can as a community of faith to work together for just that purpose.

One of the ways we are a church on mission is by cooperating with the Southern Baptist Convention and the Cooperative Program. The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' unified plan of giving through which cooperating Southern Baptist churches give a percentage of their undesignated receipts in support of their respective state convention and the Southern Baptist Convention missions and ministries.

There are a variety of ways that the money collected is used to help spread the gospel. Everything from "boots on the ground" missionaries and missionary endeavors to training new missionaries and pastors in colleges and seminaries. The Southern Baptist DNA is about missions and evangelism. Scripture tells us that everyone who does not trust Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior will be condemned to eternal punishment. Equally scripture tells us that we ought to be a people who have been so radically changed by the love of God that we want to share his love with others.



At Northcliffe we are committed to missions and evangelism because missions and evangelism are what God created and called us to do. Northcliffe is planted in an environment where people need the gospel, they need a relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ. We live in, and have influence in, social circles that include people that need to have a relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ. Those people may be family, friends, co-workers, classmates, acquaintances, or even your barista. We have the opportunity and the privilege of sharing the gospel with the world around us through the things we say, the things we do, and the way we value others (Mark 12:29-30). The missionary nature of Christianity is understood from God's character. Our God is a missionary God who came to rescue humanity from humanity's sin, and now he sends us into the world to share that same good news of rescue, reconciliation, and restoration with others.

In addition to contributing to the cooperative program Northcliffe also contributes to local and ministries and missionaries.

- Jericho Road
- A New Generation (Obria)
- Gideons International
- Grief Care Fellowship, Nancy Self
- Life Action Ministries, Meredith Miller

As a part of our commitment to missions and to children we have partnered with Compassion International and sponsored children in both the Dominican Republic and Kenya, which opens the doors to trips to those countries.

Additionally, we strive to share the gospel locally through ministries like the Love in Action Food Kitchen, Food Pantry, Bridge of Hope, and special events at the church like the Fall Festival, the Really Big Easter Party, and Christmas at Northcliffe performance.

# How the Cooperative Program works.



## Stewardship in the Church

Our modern idea of stewardship is limited to how we handle finances. The broader idea of stewardship is that we are responsible for all that has been entrusted to us. We have been entrusted with the time that we have in our lives, we have been entrusted with the talents that we have been given (as believers we are entrusted with spiritual gifts that God has given us), we have been entrusted with financial resources, and most importantly we have been entrusted with the gospel. Stewardship means that we care for and are responsible for all that we have been given.

As a community of faith we take stewardship seriously because how we manage what we have been given is a direct reflection of our relationship with God. If we believe that God has created everything and placed it in our care, then our desire ought to be to use every part of what He has given us for His purposes. One of God's purposes is the mission and ministry of the church, which means we need to be willing to give of our time, talents, gifts, and financial resources for the purpose of the mission and ministry of the church.

Ultimately, how we use our time, talents, gifts, and resources is a reflection our relationship with God. God has called us to live for Him in a way that honors Him, that obeys Him, that shows that we trust Him, and that reflects His nature. It is out of love that we give to God what He has called us to give, because it was out of love that He has given us all we have (2 Corinthians 9:7). As we look at the biblical model for returning to God what he has given us we see that God called us to return ten percent (10%) to Him through the venue of the local church.

There will be times in the life of the church and the lives of believers when God will call us to give more than just our tithe. God will call upon the generosity that He instills in us to meet the needs of the church, the community, or to spread His gospel. Sometimes God's call for generosity will be financial; Sometimes it may require more of our time in service. There will be times we will need to use our spiritual gifts, while other times will require us to use our talents God has blessed us with. The offerings that we give God is a way we put on display our love and obedience to his call in our lives.

Tithes and offerings are our way of recognizing God's continual blessing in our lives with the way we use our time, talents, gifts, and resources. Stewardship is a dynamic part of our life in Christ. It involves setting the best of our time, talents, gifts, and resources before God as an offering to Him in gratitude and love.

## Practical Matters

To this point we have focused on what we believe as a church, but now we want to focus on how we put those beliefs into action and organize ourselves as a church body. What we have discussed so far are foundational beliefs. They are not an exhaustive list of what we believe, but they are our the beliefs that fuel everything we do at Northcliffe. Our pastoral staff is always willing to discuss or explain any specific question about our beliefs you may have. If you discover that you have a question that wasn't answered during the New Members Course, please, feel free to contact us. We would love to discuss any questions you may have.

One of the first things we want to talk about in terms of practical matters is the leadership and organization of Northcliffe Church. The leadership at Northcliffe is a hybrid of paid staff and church member leadership. We are going to begin with our paid leadership and move towards our church member leadership.

### Leadership at Northcliffe



#### Jeff Dye, Lead Pastor

Pastor Jeff is responsible for overseeing the discipleship of our staff, leading us in worship through the preaching of God's word, and setting the vision and direction of Northcliffe as he follows God's direction. Pastor Jeff has a heart for missions and reaching our community with the gospel.

#### Ben Ellis, Pastor of Connections and Discipleship

Pastor Ben is responsible for the helping people connect with Jesus and to grow in their walk with Him by providing opportunities for discipleship, spiritual growth, and service. He oversees the Connection and First Impressions Ministry, Life Groups, Christian Life Development Groups, and is currently developing Home Groups.





**Student Pastor**

The Student Pastor leads all of the student activities here at Northcliffe. He is in charge of IMPACT, student mission trips, student camps, and leads the student life group team.

**Erin Mello,  
Director of Children’s Ministry**

Erin oversees all of the Northcliffe Kids ministries here at Northcliffe. She is in charge of the AWANA program, VBS, Kids Life Groups, and Kids Worship.



**Ron Threadgill, Worship Pastor**

Ron leads music and worship for Northcliffe. He plans our worship services and leads rehearsals for the Celebration Choir, Praise Team, Worship Band and the Tech Team. Ron has a true passion for worship and leading others to worship God through music.

**Jerry Waugh, Pastor Emeritus**

Pastor Jerry specializes in our care ministry at Northcliffe which includes visiting members in the hospital, assisted living facilities, hospice, and shut-in home visits. He offers counseling care or provides professional Christian counselor referrals. He also aides our First Impressions ministry which is designed to help our members and guests feel the love of God and the family atmosphere found at Northcliffe.



Each of our staff members have their own calling into ministry and why they serve at Northcliffe, but one thing that is consistent among all of our pastoral staff is that they have a passion for helping people come to know Jesus and grow in their relationship with Jesus. The second desire of our staff ministers is the desire to equip our church family for what God has called us all to do. Ephesians 4:11-12 tells us that God:

*“gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.”*

Our Staff ministers take seriously the roles they have been called to fill. They love serving the community of faith at Northcliffe. One of the primary ways that they do that is to help disciples of Jesus be prepared for the “good works” that God has prepared for each of us to do. In order to prepare our church members for the “work of ministry” (Ephesians 4:12) the staff ministers do everything from lead mission trips, work with teams within the church, train groups and individuals, and pray for our church family.

## **Administrative and Support Staff**

In addition to our pastoral leadership team we have an amazing team of administrative assistants and support staff. These folks help make the work of ministry flow efficiently. Enough can't be said about their impact in the day to day life of the church, and the modest descriptions below do not detail everything they do to support the ministry of Northcliffe.

### **Administrative Staff**

#### **Cheryl Uroda**

Cheryl handles many of the behind the scenes tasks of ministry. She coordinates the church calendar, connects with people who want to use the church facilities, and helps manage communication with the church concerning whats happening in the life of the church.



## **Marcy Zeron**

Marcy is the financial secretary of the church. She helps keep track of the ways that we are being good stewards of the churches resources. She prepares all of the financial documentation for the church, coordinates with our accountant, and manages the collecting and depositing of the tithes and offerings.



## **Lori Carson**

Lori manages the front office. She coordinates with front office volunteers, gathers and enters church related data, and supports ministries through various administrative tasks.



## **Facilities Maintenance Staff**

Sometimes when we get comfortable in a place we forget everything that goes into maintaining that place. The facilities maintenance staff does the difficult task of consistently preparing the Northcliffe campus for Sunday morning life groups and worship services, Wednesday night children, student, and adult ministries. Their tasks include everything from cleaning the used areas of the campus to maintaining the proper working of all of the facility's mechanical facets.

## **Mark Keene Facilities Manager**



## **Daniel Stevens Custodial Staff**



## **Teams and Committees**

In addition to the ministerial, administrative and support staffs, Northcliffe has a group of church teams that are made up of church members that help lead and serve Northcliffe by handling much of the behind the scenes work of the church. Each member of the church team serves in their team for three years terms. These committees are:

### **Body of Deacons**

#### **Staff Liaison: Pastor Jeff Dye**

The Body of Deacons operates differently from the other church teams listed below. While the the church teams listed below play an important role in the life of the church, the Body of Deacons plays both a practical role and a spiritual role in the life of our church family. Deacons have the privilege of serving our church family in a variety of ways. They are responsible for visiting the sick, preparing and distributing the Lord's Supper, they supervise the use of the benevolence fund, and they are charged with the oversight of church discipline when necessary. Accordingly, the Body of Deacons are held to the standard set out in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

### **Our Current Deacon Body**

Keith Muller (September 2022)  
Chris Chambers ( September 2022)  
Keith Carlson (September 2021)  
Harry Downing (September 2021)  
Willie Washington (September 2020)  
John Young (September 2021)  
Brian Dahmer (September 2022)

### **Nominating Team**

#### **Staff Liaison: Pastor Ben Ellis**

The primary responsibility of the Nominating Committee is to help fill all of the other committees. When people step down from a particular committee, the Nominating Committee then works with members of the Northcliffe family to fill that role of service in the life of the church.

### **Current Nominating Team**

Jerry Campbell (September 2021)  
John Hahn (September 2022)  
Darlene Peterson (September 2022)  
Liz Locke (September 2023)



## **Finance Team**

### **Staff Liaison: Marcy Zeron**

The Finance Committee of Northcliffe is responsible for the finances of the church and making information available to the church body as necessary. They work hard to help create a budget for the life of the church and then help manage our ministry resources throughout the year making sure we are being good stewards of all that God has entrusted to us.

### **Current Finance Team**

Carol Matthews (Sept. 2020)

Cherie Downing (Sept. 2021)

Dick Beaudoin (Sept. 2022)

Sandra Carbone (Sept. 2023)

Patrick Faieta (Sept. 2020)

## **Personnel Team**

### **Staff Liaison: Pastor Jeff Dye**

The personnel committee is responsible for recommending the hiring of new staff members other than the senior pastor. Additionally, the Personnel Team manages all employee salaries, benefits, and personnel issues.

### **Current Personnel Team**

Keith Muller (Sept. 2020)

Gerald White (Sept. 2020)

Lisa Baker (Sept. 2021)

Chris Darby (Sept. 2020)

## **Team of Trustees**

### **Staff Liaison: Mark Keene**

The Trustees of Northcliffe are primarily responsible for handling the church's dealings pertaining to real property, or land, and buildings owned by the church. They are responsible for making sure that the church is insured with both liability and property insurance.

### **Current Team of Trustees**

Chris Soto (Sept. 2022)

John Beatty (Sept. 2020)

Bob McGreevy (Sept. 2022)

## Northcliffe and You

We've talked a lot about what is happening in the Northcliffe church family, but there is still one person left to talk about, you. We want to know how your story fits into the Northcliffe story. We believe God brought you to Northcliffe for a reason and we hope that you will partner with us to see what God has in store for you and our Northcliffe family.

The best way to get to know the Northcliffe family is to hop in and start checking things out. There are many places that you can get connected to the life of Northcliffe. Here are some of the places you and your family can get connected.

### Places for You to Connect and Serve

#### Small Groups

**Contact Person: Pastor Ben Ellis ([ben@northcliffeonline.org](mailto:ben@northcliffeonline.org))**

The Small Groups Ministry at Northcliffe is broken up into two areas, each with a different focus for their group. Life Groups are groups that gather on Sunday mornings to study the Word of God together and apply it to our daily lives. They are a place where people connect, grow, and develop Christ centered relationships that will help them grow in their walk with Christ. Christian Life Development courses (CLD) are designed for a short term study that is directed to address a specific issue, area of teaching, or book of the Bible. CLD's have covered everything from Spiritual Formation to the book of Revelation. There are places to plug in both as Small Group members and Small Group Leaders.

#### Kids Ministry

**Contact Person: Erin Mello ([erin@northcliffeonline.org](mailto:erin@northcliffeonline.org))**

Northcliffe Kids is uniquely designed with your child in mind! Every Sunday, children ages Nursery – 5th Grade experience age-appropriate, safe environments where the Bible is taught in a relevant way! We want to create an environment where our children want to be and help children learn and obey God's Word.

#### Student Ministry

**Contact Person: TBA ([northcliffe@northcliffeonline.org](mailto:northcliffe@northcliffeonline.org))**

Our student ministry reaches out to 6th through 12th grade students from multiple counties. We utilize a wide variety of methods, events, and programs to accomplish our purpose. We have many opportunities to help you grow in your relationship with God and others. We have Life Groups (small groups), student worship services, concerts, camps, retreats, mission trips, and many other events throughout the year.

## **Worship and Multimedia Ministry**

**Contact Person: Pastor Ron Threadgill ([ron@northcliffeonline.org](mailto:ron@northcliffeonline.org))**

One of the things we are striving to do at Northcliffe is to create an atmosphere that fosters authentic worship. We are always looking for people who can sing in the choir, play in the worship band, sing in ensembles, and play instruments. In addition to the on-stage side of Northcliffe's worship ministry, we also strive to meet our goal through a multimedia team that is consistently pursuing excellence in their service to our church family on Sunday mornings and at special services through video, graphic projection, lyric projection, and audio support.

## **Connection and First Impressions Team**

**Contact Person: Pastor Ben Ellis ([ben@northcliffeonline.org](mailto:ben@northcliffeonline.org))**

Connections and First Impressions is people welcoming people to Northcliffe the moment they arrive on our church campus. Each Sunday, we want our first time guests, regular attenders, and members to feel the love of God as we share a warm welcome with them. Connections happen in our parking lots, at the entry of our facilities, in our Worship Center lobby, and at our Information Center. We know that when we express God's love to others through hospitality, people are better prepared to hear from God in other ministry areas. First Impressions is made up of several different ministry teams: ushers, greeters, parking lot personnel, guest guides, first time guest parking lost hosts, and Information Center hosts.

## **Women's Ministry**

**Contact Person: Cassie Ellis ([Cassie\\_Joan@yahoo.com](mailto:Cassie_Joan@yahoo.com))**

Women are invited into a journey of transformation, and building strong community with each other as they pursue full devotion to Jesus Christ through friendships, activities, Bible study, and special classes.

## **Hope Beyond Today; Ministry of Grief Care Fellowship**

**Contact Person: Fran Welch ([franpatwelch@hotmail.com](mailto:franpatwelch@hotmail.com))**

**Website: [www.griefcarefellowship.org](http://www.griefcarefellowship.org)**

This group is specifically for those experiencing the grief process as the result of the death of a loved one. Come and visit with us as we journey down the road toward grief recovery. You will be encouraged and comforted by others who are experiencing the same type of heartache, sorrow and loneliness you feel.

## **Care Ministry**

**Contact Person: Pastor Jerry Waugh ([pastorjerry@northcliffeonline.org](mailto:pastorjerry@northcliffeonline.org))**

The care ministry at Northcliffe strives to do our best to help provide meaningful care to our members and regular attenders in their time of need. In addition to weekly visits to hospitals, assisted living facilities, hospice, and shut-in home visits, we continue to look for ways to expand showing God's love and care to others. Here are some other ways we look to minister to our church family.

## **Cards of Love**

Through this ministry, we give homemade cards made by the Women's Ministry to those in the hospital, assisted living, hospice, or those restricted to being at home.

## **Threads of Love**

Through this ministry, we give beautiful quilts made by the "Threads of Love" volunteers to those in the hospital, assisted living, hospice, or those restricted to being at home. Each quilt comes with a patch on the inside that reminds the recipient of God's love and our prayers.

## **Deacon Care**

Each month, our deacons are assigned ministry visits to make to those in need.

## **Counseling Care**

Part of the Care Ministry also offers counseling. Pastor Jerry is not a licensed, professional counselor but he does do his best to help others. He also provides referral information to licensed, professional local Christian counselors that are best qualified to help with needs such as: depression, grief, anger issues, marriage problems, family problems, etc.

## **Care Calls**

This ministry makes phone calls to those we are aware of who would appreciate a phone call, a prayer, and to be reminded that God cares about them and we do too.

## **Food Ministries**

**([northcliffe@northcliffeonline.org](mailto:northcliffe@northcliffeonline.org))**

This area of Northcliffe's ministry is actually made up of three ministries; the Love in Action Food Pantry, Love in Action Food Kitchen, and the Bread of Life Ministry. Each ministry seeks to honor Christ by helping the homeless or those who need food in a variety of ways. Bread of Life ministry helps with food and clothing as well as helping connect the homeless with other resources in our area that can help.

## **Life's Healing Choices**

**Contact Person: Harry and Cherie Downing (charharry2014@gmail.com)**

Life's Healing Choices is a place to find hope, encouragement, support, and unconditional love. Our meetings provide a place where you can connect to other people, develop close friendships, and share openly and honestly about real life in a safe, confidential environment. In doing life together, fertile ground is sown for the healing process to begin. Meetings are Christ-centered and biblically-based. We learn how to be transformed from the inside out by renewing our minds with the Word of God (the Bible).

## **Serving at Northcliffe**

One of the many things that we value at Northcliffe is that we want to serve where God has equipped us to serve. We believe that God has gifted each of us in some way to be a part of fulfilling the mission of the church. In the section above we have seen that there are a lot of opportunities to plug in and serve alongside other members of Northcliffe. So where do you fit in?

Each of the ministries and service areas above are looking for people to serve. The Small Groups Ministry is always looking for more leaders, Kids Ministry is always looking for more volunteers to teach and care for kids, Student Ministry is always looking for people to invest in the lives of students, Worship Ministry is always looking for people to sing, play an instrument, or lend a hand in technical aspects of Sunday morning worship. All of these ministry areas provide training for any volunteer who wants to join in serving in them. We want you to serve in a place that you are gifted to serve in through your spiritual gifting, your heartfelt passions, and/or your prior experiences. If you aren't sure where to start reach out to one of our ministerial team members and we will gladly help you connect with the ministry that will fit you.

## Vision and Direction

We want to make sure you understand who we are as a community of faith as you consider joining Northcliffe. In order to share with you more about who we are specifically we want to share with you the mission of our community of faith.

**Mission Statement:** Our Mission is to proclaim, in the Spring Hill area and around the world, the redemptive love of Jesus Christ through worship, witness, education, fellowship, ministry, and missions.

In addition to our mission statement we have ten core values that are important to us. They give us a shape to how we put our beliefs into practice and how we pursue the mission of Northcliffe. Our values define how we accomplish our mission statement. Our ten core values are:

### 10 Core Values

**1.The authority of the Bible** - The Bible is the ultimate authority for everything we believe, teach, and practice. It is God's instruction manual for life. The Bible is inspired by God and therefore is absolute truth. Although the cultural setting of the Bible may be different from ours, its timeless principles stay the same and are as relevant today as when written. Our methods may change, but the message will always be the same. (2 Timothy 3:16)

**2.Prayer in all we do** - Prayer must be the power source behind everything we do. It is essential that we seek God first before doing anything else. We believe that prayer changes things. Prayer changes lives and demonstrates our full dependency upon God. (Matthew 7:7-11)

**3.Authentic worship** - Worship is expressing our love, honor and praise to God for who He is, what he has said, what He has done and what he continues to do. God, not man, is the focus and center of our worship. Celebrative and reflective worship, touches both our minds and hearts, and leads us to genuine praise, adoration and trust in God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Singing, praying, and communicating the Word of God, are all vital parts of our worship. (Matthew 22:37)

**4. Introducing others to Jesus** - God is at work in the lives of people. He wants to use us to share the Good News of Jesus with those who don't know Him. Because spiritually lost people matter to God - they should matter to us. Therefore, we will be a church committed to seeking effective ways to share Jesus with others, personally, in our community, and around the world. (2 Corinthians 5:18-21; Matthew 28:19-20)

**5. Spiritual growth** - We believe that God loves us too much to leave us the way He found us. God's desire, and therefore our goal, is to develop every believer into a fully devoted follower of Christ. Full devotion to Jesus Christ is the goal the Bible says we should always be striving toward. We will do our best to show people practical ways to live a life committed to Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 4:15; Romans 8:29)

**6. Life change through small groups** - The most effective way to grow together and share life together is by being a part of a small group. Authenticity, accountability, and spiritual growth happen best in small groups. (Acts 2:42-47)

**7. Marriage and the family** - We promote strong marriages and healthy families. It was God who created marriage- the union between a man and a woman. A meaningful and growing relationship with God should start at home. Our desire is to supplement, reinforce, and promote those biblical values at church. Thus, we additionally understand that it is our responsibility to invest in the lives of our youth and children- the future leaders of the church. (Ephesians 5:22-6:4)

**8. Serving God by serving others** - God has shaped us to serve. When we serve; we bless others, we are blessed, and we fulfill one of God's purposes for our lives. Being a part of God's family means we are committed to serve together. God has something for everyone to do in His family (Ephesians 2:10). Whatever way we serve God, we do it with passion and excellence because we should always give our best for God. (Ecclesiastes 9:10)

**9. Accepting people** - We accept everyone wherever they are in their life - just like Jesus does. Some people may seem easier to accept and love than others. But, God loves everyone and wants to express His love for them through us (Luke 5:27-31).

**10. A "can do" attitude** - Because we believe what we are doing makes a difference now and for eternity, we are a "can do" church. Our philosophy is "whatever it takes" we will do what God has called us to do! We know that God has given us a future to fulfill. Therefore, with visionary faith, we are willing to step out of our comfort zones and take risks for the purpose of advancing the cause of Christ. Since we are partners with God- we dream big! We also make sure to give Him all of the glory! (Philippians 4:13)

## Members Covenant

Having been brought by divine grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to surrender our lives to Him, and having been baptized as Christians in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we choose to covenant together with all members of Northcliffe (John 3:16; Matthew 3:13-17; Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 1:15; Acts 2:37).

Together, we will celebrate and enjoy the glory of God, depend on the presence of God, grow in the knowledge of God, and submit to the Word of God as the all-sufficient authority in our lives and in His church (Psalm 119; Matthew 5:18-20; 2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Together, we commit to draw near to God in regular corporate worship (Hebrews 10:25; Acts 2:42-47). We will commit to holding fast to the gospel from which is our hope. We will explain and contend for the faith delivered once for all to the church. We will regularly participate in communion as we solemnly and joyfully remember the past work of Christ on the cross, celebrate the present work of Christ at the Father's right hand, and anticipate the future work of Christ in his return for his bride (1 Corinthians 11:17-34; 1 Peter 3:15, Jude 3).

Together, we will use our gifts and talents that God has given to us to help, teach, encourage, and serve others (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12-14). We will stir one another up to love and good works (Hebrews 10:24). We will meet with one another consistently, pray for one another regularly, and serve one another selflessly (Acts 2:43-47). We will share each other's joys and bear each other's burdens. We will listen carefully to one another, build one another up with our speech, and encourage one another with our example (Romans 12:9-16). We will humbly and gently confront one another and receive correction from one another in accordance with a New Testament understanding of church discipline and restoration (Matthew 18:15-35). We will give cheerfully and generously to the support of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel to all nations (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:14-16; Acts 2:42-47).

We cheerfully and willingly enter into this covenant relationship with Northcliffe as we seek to serve God's kingdom and accomplish His purposes.



# Your Notes

## **Congratulations!**

You have made it to the end of the new member's course. We are so grateful that you have spent this time with us, getting to know who we are as a community of faith. It is our hope that in walking with us through this process you have a better understanding of what it means to be a member of Northcliffe Baptist Church.

As you choose to join the Northcliffe community let me encourage you to start taking part in the life of the church if you haven't already. We want you to connect with a Life Group, try out a CLD course, stop in and visit the Women's Ministry, let your kids explore the Children's Ministry, or have your middle and high school students engage with the Student Ministry. The best way to really understand the rhythm of life at Northcliffe is to just walk alongside us for a little bit. When you do, we think you will find that the ministries that take place at Northcliffe are about loving God, loving others, and living intentionally for Christ.

The last page of this document is a "Member Covenant." When you become a member you will see the responsibilities that come with being a member of Northcliffe. We are a church that is committed to God, to one another, and to reaching our community with the gospel of Jesus. The Member Covenant is a promise that we commit to as members of Northcliffe; to be engaged in the life of the church, to serve where possible, to biblically and financially support the ministry of the church, and to stand alongside other members as we seek to impact our community for Jesus with His gospel. The "Member Covenant" isn't something we take lightly because it is a commitment made before God to other believers in Christ. We enter into this covenant because we feel that God has called us to be a part of the body of Christ at Northcliffe, to be a part of fulfilling the calling God has placed on this community of faith.

If membership at Northcliffe is something you are interested in, we would love for you to sign and date your copy of the Member Covenant on the last pages of your New Members Guide. When you become a member of Northcliffe this document will be a reminder of the date that God called you to become a part of the church family at Northcliffe.

We look forward to serving alongside of you, growing together with you in Christ, and sharing what God has in store for us as a church family.

Thank you again for sharing this time with us.



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