

# Standards and Instructions for Teachers and Helpers

Evangelical Covenant Church, Lindsborg, Kansas  
Christian Education Board ♦ Adopted November 13, 2005

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**Praise the Lord!** If you are reading this, *you* are a vital part of our Church Ministry. It means you are part of the church body that teaches *history, doctrine, theology* and *character* to young people in our church.

The following packet of information contains important and helpful information for all teachers and helpers **in the children and youth departments of our church.**

**This document is both a Tool and a Guideline**

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| <b>Tool</b>      | • Those who teach children can use it to help solidify particular teachings.  |
| <b>Guideline</b> | • It is a guideline that will help keep us all within the boundaries of orthodoxy. In other words, it will help us stay on the same page theologically as a church. |

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# Introduction / Vision

## Foundational

We as a Covenant Church hold to “the centrality of the Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, as the authoritative Word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct. We believe it is essential to the life of the Church that it be a company of people who want, above all else, that their lives be shaped by the powerful and living Word of God. The alternative is clear. Not to be shaped by the Word is to be shaped by the world.” (*Covenant Affirmations: a brief form*)

At the same time, we acknowledge “the reality of freedom in Christ, who delivers us from the power of sin and moves us by his grace into a whole new experience of obedience and life. This freedom creates an ecclesiastical climate which allows for differences of opinion in matters of interpretation, doctrine, and practice within the context of biblical guidelines and historical Christianity. Such freedom ‘is to be distinguished from the individualism that disregards the centrality of the Word of God and the mutual responsibilities and disciplines of the spiritual community’” (*Covenant Affirmations: a brief form, quoting from Preamble to the Constitution.*)

There are certain tenets that are foundational to the  
Christian faith and to the unity of this body.

Therefore, the Christian Education Board of the Evangelical Covenant Church of Lindsborg, Kansas, requests:

- That all workers carefully read the attached doctrinal guidelines and teach in agreement with them (while in the classroom).
- In addition, because of our (Covenant Church) nature, the Christian Education Board asks our teachers to *respect* differing views on Scripture by deferring students to their parents on debatable issues such as baptism, end times, styles of worship, women in ministry, and contemporary manifestations of the Holy Spirit (i.e., tongues, healing, and spiritual gifts). There are times when teachers need to remain silent on their own strongly-held interpretations of Scripture.
- The curriculum, which adheres to basic Christian orthodoxy, is to be the standard for instruction.

*In necessary (essential) things, Unity;  
In doubtful things, Liberty;  
In all things, Charity.*

(Richard Baxter, 17th Century Minister, translated from  
The Imitation of Christ by Thomas à Kempis, c. 1380-1471)

# Doctrine / Theological Boundaries

## Faith

We believe these things about faith:

1. *It is a gift from God.* We are, because of our fallen nature, primarily self-centered, so turning our lives over to God's control requires a power beyond our own. Faith begins and ends with God. Faith involves our cooperation with God, but it is both initiated and completed by Him. (Eph 2:8-9)
2. *It is believing right doctrines about God.* God has revealed Himself to us through creation, the Bible, and Jesus Christ. Faith involves understanding and accepting as true what the Bible tells us about who God is and what He has done. The foundational doctrine of our faith is that Jesus Christ is Lord. (Jn 8:24; 1 Jn 5:1,5)
3. *It is trusting in the person of God.* This is a complete and whole-hearted dependence, surrender, and commitment to the one true God made known in Jesus Christ. (Rom 4:16-20; Col 2:12; 2 Tim 3:15)
4. It is demonstrated by obedience to God. Genuine faith is evidenced by works of obedience and service to God. (James 2:17, 26)

## The Bible

We believe the Bible, consisting of the 66 books of the Old and New Testament, inspired by God and written by man, is the Word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct. (2 Pet 1:21; 2 Tim 3:16) While the Bible speaks authoritatively on many different topics and issues, it has one primary purpose: to reveal to us who God is and what He has done to restore us back to a right relationship with Him and to each other through the person and work of Jesus Christ. (Jn 5:39, 20:31; Lk 24:27)

## The Godhead

**Who He is:** We believe there is only one true God (Deut 6:4), eternally existing in three equal but distinct persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Matt 3:16-17, 28:19; John 14:16; 2 Cor. 13:14) God is not bound by time, space, or matter, so He is everywhere simultaneously present (Ps 139:7-12), unlimited in His knowledge (Psalm 139:2-6) and power (Gen 18:14; Luke 1:37), and unchanging in His nature and character (Malachi 3:6; Heb 13:8). **Some** of His attributes include: holy (Lev 19:2; 1 Pet 1:15) and loving (Jn 3:16; Rom 5:8; 1 Jn 4:8,16), just (Ps 119:137; Rev 15:3) and merciful (Psalm 103:8-17), truth (John 14:6, 17:3; Titus 1:1-2) and gracious (Ps 111:4; 1 Pet 5:10), faithful (Deut 7:9; Ps 89:1-2), judge (Rev 16:5-7) and kind (1 Sam 20:14; Ps 18:50), wrathful (Ps 7:11; Rom 12:19) and gentle (Mt 11:29; Mt 21:5), righteous (Ps 119:137), and compassionate (Ps 116:5;

### **The Godhead —Who He is (continued)**

Ps 145:9), sovereign (Is 46:9-11) and meek (2 Cor. 10:1), forgiving (Ps 86:5; Micah 7:18) and patient (Numbers 14:18).

**What He does:** He is the creator (Acts 17:24-25; Is 40:28), redeemer (Titus 2:14; Is 48:17), sustainer (Ps 54:4; Ps 55:22), and perfecter of all things (Hebrews 12:2), sovereign Lord over all creation (Dan. 4:17, 7:14). He has intervened in that history to correct the damage done to all of creation by the fall of mankind and to restore humanity back to a right relationship with Himself through the person and work of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

### **The Father**

We believe that God is the first person of the Trinity (Mt. 28:19). He is personal, eternal Spirit (Is. 40:28; John 4:24), creator of the universe (Gen. 1:1-31), Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:3), and our Father (1 John 3:1).

### **The Son**

We believe that Jesus Christ is eternally God (John 1:1), co-equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit (Mt. 28:19-20), and that at the appointed time He took on human flesh (Hebrews 2:14) so that He is now and always will be both Creator and creature, God and man (Phil. 2:6,7). We believe Jesus was born of a virgin (Mt. 1:18), lived a sinless life (1 Peter 2:22), died on the cross to take our place in death, was buried for three days, was physically raised back from the dead on the third day (1 Cor. 15:3,4), ascended to the right hand of the Father (Mark 16:19), intercedes on behalf of all believers (1 John 2:1; Heb. 7:24-28), prepares a place for us (John 14:12), and will one day physically and visibly return to earth in great power and glory to establish His eternal Kingdom (Mt. 24:42-44, Rev. 1:7). We believe there is only one mediator between God and man, and that is the God-man, Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 2:5).

### **The Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is eternally God (Hebrews 9:14), co-equal with the Father and the Son (Mt. 28:19-20), who sent Him into the world to reveal and glorify Jesus (John 16:14). He convicts the world of guilt in regard to sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16:8). He regenerates (Titus 3:5), sanctifies (1 Cor. 6:11), baptizes (1 Cor. 12:13), indwells (1 Cor. 3:16), seals (Eph. 1:13), anoints (Luke 4:18), illumines (John 16:13,14), guides (John 16:13), and gifts all believers for the purpose of ministry (1 Cor. 12:7). We experience His fullness (Luke 11:13), power (Acts 1:8), and holiness (1 Thess. 4:7,8) through our faith (Hebrews 11:6) and obedience (1 John 2:36; John 14:21-23). As we live by the Spirit we do not gratify the cravings of the flesh (Gal 5:16), He shapes us more and more into the image of Jesus (2 Cor. 3:18), and our lives increasingly bear the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-26).

## **Satan**

We believe that Satan is a real person (Mt. 4:1-12). Though he is crafty and powerful (Eph. 6:11, 12), he is a created being (Ezek. 28:11-19), and therefore not equal in nature, character, power, or glory, to God Himself (Isa. 14:12-15). He is a liar and a murderer (John 8:44). He wanders the earth like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8). He attempts to steal, kill, and destroy (John 5:18) people through deception and bribery (Gen. 3:4,5; Mt. 4:1-11), but he and his demonic forces were defeated at the cross and the resurrection (Col. 2:15; Heb. 2:14), and therefore no longer have authority over the community of saints (James 4:7). On the contrary, though we are aware of his evil schemes and respect his cunning and power, we need not fear him (1 John 5:18), as he is a defeated foe, and we have Jesus' delegated authority over him (Luke 10:20). When we submit ourselves to God and resist the devil he must flee from us (James 4:7).

## **Humanity**

We believe that mankind was created in God's image (Gen. 1:26) and that this imparts sacred significance to all human life not shared by any other created being. We are all descendants of the first man, Adam, (Gen. 1:27,28) and therefore all people everywhere share equal value regardless of any human distinction such as gender, ethnicity, or socio-economic status (Prov. 22:2; Gal. 3:28). God's purpose in creation was to share His glory with His people through an eternal love relationship with us (Psalm 8:4-6).

## **Sin**

We believe that sin is any attitude, thought, word, or deed which violates God's character or is contrary to His will (Romans 3:23). Sin, in its essence, is pride and selfishness resulting in rebellion. When mankind sinned, we rejected God's love and rebelled against His commands (Romans 5:19), cutting ourselves off from relationship with Him (Isa. 59:2). Our sin was justly condemned by God and we were alienated from Him. Physical death, disease, decay, and suffering all came into the world as a direct result of our sin (Romans 6:23; Gen. 3:16-19; Psalm 38:3), as did relational alienation, distrust, disharmony, conflict, envy, hatred, bitterness, and guilt. These are the things which characterize who we have become, so that we are, by nature, sinners (Matt 7:11, Luke 13:1-5). If there is to be a remedy, it must come from a source external to ourselves (Gal. 2:21).

## **Salvation**

We believe the ultimate purpose of salvation is to restore us back to a right relationship with God as our Father (2 Cor. 5:18), which was also God's original purpose for creation. We cooperate with God's work in us (Romans 10:9,10), but salvation is initiated and completed by God (2 Tim. 1:9; Phil. 1:16). It is a gift, freely given to us by God (Eph. 2:8). It comes not as a result of who we are or what



## **Salvation** (continued)

we have done, but because of who Jesus is and what He has done. It comes to us by grace alone through faith alone (Eph. 2:8). For those who repent of sin and ask Jesus to forgive them, salvation can be thought of as a process (Phil. 2:12). In a sense, we are *already* saved, we *are being* saved, and we *will be* saved. These three stages of salvation are called justification, sanctification, and glorification.

**Justification:** (Our spirit is saved) This is a point in time event in which our spirit is made alive again (Eph. 2:5-6). We are cleansed and forgiven of all sin, past present, and future (1 John 1:9). We are given new life in Christ (Rom. 6:4) and, indeed, become totally new creations (2 Cor. 5:17). The Holy Spirit takes up residence in our bodies (John 14:17), we are adopted into the royal family of God (Eph. 1:5), and we are transferred from the Kingdom of Darkness to the Kingdom of Light (Col. 1:12).

**Sanctification:** (Our soul - mind, will, and emotions - is saved) This is a life-long process in which we are gradually conformed to the image of Jesus Christ by the work of the Holy Spirit within us (Romans 15:16). As we develop our relationship with God through spiritual disciplines, God produces in our lives the fruit of the Spirit in ever increasing measure (John 15:1-8).

**Glorification:** (Our body is saved) This is a point in time event that occurs at the resurrection of the saints. We will receive new glorified bodies similar to the one Jesus has, bodies that are immune to disease, pain, decay, injury, and death, and therefore eternal bodies (1 Corinthians 15:41-44, 52). At this time our salvation will be complete, and we shall be made like Jesus (1 John 3:2).

## **Church**

We believe the Church is made up of all those, past and present, who have repented of their sin, placed their trust in Jesus Christ for their salvation, and surrendered to His rule and lordship (Hebrews 12:1). The Bible uses a variety of metaphors to describe this group: the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27), the bride of Christ (Rev. 19:7), the assembly of the saints (1 Cor. 14:33), a holy city (Rev. 21:2, 10), a lampstand (Rev. 1:20), a building/house/habitation of God (1 Cor. 3:9; Heb. 10:21), a holy hill, the Israel of God (Gal. 6:16), a Kingdom of priests (Rev. 1:6), a pillar (1 Timothy 3:15), a temple (2 Cor. 6:16), a flock of sheep (John 10:16), and a wild branch grafted in (Romans 11:17).

We believe our mission and purpose as a Church is to carry out our Lord's command to make disciples of Jesus (Mt. 28:19). We are to do this through baptism and teaching others to obey everything He has commanded us (Mt. 28:19-20), and we do that through the corporate spiritual disciplines of worship, witness, teaching, serving, and fellowship (Col. 3:16; Eph. 6:7; Acts 2:42). All of these things serve our one, common purpose, to help others come to know, love, and serve our Savior.

# Teacher / Worker Agreement

This agreement, as well as the "Standards and Instructions," is put forth by the Christian Education department to lend clarity to the responsibilities of the teacher or worker, but also in recognition of our dependence upon the Holy Spirit to guide these efforts. Please read these thoroughly, pray over your acceptance of this commission as a teacher or worker, and let this be an "agreement" between you and the Lord. **This is not to be turned in.**

*Realizing the vital task of Christian Education and my privilege and responsibility in serving the Lord through the organized efforts of the Lindsborg Evangelical Covenant Church, by God's grace I will endeavor to:*

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Remain steadfast in my faith in Jesus Christ.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Take the time necessary to prayerfully and thoroughly prepare for my weekly responsibilities. In doing so, I will consider the full counsel of Scripture and carefully preserve the curriculum.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be a role model for my students of consistently following Christ's teachings and example.   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grow spiritually through reading God's Word, prayer, and other spiritual disciplines.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Regularly attend teacher/worker meetings, realizing the importance of training and fellowship.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regularly attend the worship services of this church body, and encourage my pupils to attend  | <input type="checkbox"/> Keep in contact with my students and encourage their regular attendance.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be present at each of my assigned classes. If it is necessary to be absent, I will try to arrange for a substitute from the list of substitutes provided. If this is unsuccessful, I will notify the Superintendent or program director as early as possible. | <input type="checkbox"/> Earnestly pray for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The salvation of any unbelievers in my class</li><li>• Continued growth for those who have been regenerated</li><li>• All Christian education efforts of this church body</li><li>• The whole work of this church in Christ's name</li></ul> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arrive at least 10 minutes before class time in order to be prepared to greet my students.  |   |

*This does not need to be turned in to anyone; however, if you feel that you cannot, in good faith, serve in this capacity, please speak to the Sunday School Superintendent or the program director.*