



Body of Christ

Organisation

The church is simply people. All sorts of different people. But people with at least one special thing in common. *We are all children of God.* Sisters and brothers brought together into one family through faith in God's Son! Our heavenly Father, through His word, speaks of His church in two senses: First, there is the *universal church*, which is the sum of all those people of every time and place who have been reconciled to God in and through Jesus Christ (this is the church Jesus promised He would build upon the foundation of Peter's confession that Jesus is God's anointed Son, Matthew 16:15-18). Second, there is the *local church*, which is God's primary provision for the organization and fellowship of His children in any given locality through voluntarily cooperating and serving together to facilitate spiritual growth and ministry (cf. Acts 2:41-47; Hebrews 10:24-25).

Our Mission Statement highlights the simplicity of the purpose and work of the New Testament church: Living and maturing as disciples (apprentices) of Jesus Christ while inviting others to likewise be

"... If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be ... Deacons likewise must be ... I am writing these things to you so that ... you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth."

1 Timothy 3:1-15 ESV

reconciled to God through His Son and to follow Him. So, it is not surprising that the organization of apostolic congregations is also relatively simple (but perfectly adequate and suited to accomplish God's mission for His church). For example, the apostle Paul addressed the church at Philippi as "all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers* and deacons" (Philippians 1:1 ESV; cf. Ephesians 4:11). Paul also described to the evangelist** Timothy the particular qualities or qualifications that should characterize those who may be appointed to the roles of elder and deacon to serve in *God's household* (1 Timothy 3:1-15).

*Bishops (literally, overseers) are also described as shepherds (pastors) and elders (presbyters) in the New Testament. These are not distinct roles or offices, but interchangeable terms used to describe different aspects of the same leadership role or function in the local church (cf. Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:1-4). While the focus of the elder's pastoral role might be described as *the ministry of prayer and the word*, the focus of the deacon's (literally, a servant) role is *administrative* (e.g. Acts 6:1-7). It appears to us that the apostolic tradition established for church government is a plurality of suitably qualified elders overseeing each local body of saints (e.g. Acts 14:21-23; Titus 1:5) with the support and assistance of deacons (ministry leaders) and evangelists.

**Evangelists (literally, gospellers) are communicators of the very *good news* (gospel) about those things that God has accomplished in and through His Son, Jesus Christ, with a view to bringing people to faith in Christ, and (along with other teachers and elders) educating, encouraging and equipping Jesus' disciples to live lives shaped by the gospel (Ephesians 4:11; 2 Timothy 3:10-4:5; cf. Matthew 28:18-20).

Following this simple model of New Testament church leadership (i.e. elders, evangelists, deacons), The Point Church has identified and appointed the following members who currently serve the congregation as leaders:

The Point Church's elders and their wives:



David & Gloriamae
Clark



Peter & Hilde
Searson



Stephen & Donette
Wilson

The Point Church's deacons and their wives:



Peter & Yvonne
Amos



Arthur & Jan
Bowell



Johan & Lara
Engelbrecht



David & Iona
Graham

In case you are wondering what denomination we are part of (we all love to pigeon hole one another, don't we?!) ... The Point Church is not organizationally or institutionally tied to any larger federation of churches or denominational hierarchy. Our understanding is that each congregation established under apostolic authority as described in the New Testament was autonomous (i.e. self-governing; organized under their own leadership of elders, deacons, evangelists). But, at the same time, each of these autonomous congregations were united as **one body** through their mutual faith in Christ and their commitment to following Jesus' teaching revealed and established through His uniquely authorized and Holy Spirit equipped ambassadors: Jesus' apostles ... whose authoritative teaching and practices we have today recorded and preserved in the inspired New Testament Scriptures. Just like the first century church, **we are simply Christians** – without the desire or need for any additional distinguishing labels or allegiance to any extra-biblical ecclesiastic authorities and extra-congregational hierarchical structures (the hallmarks of denominationalism).

This undenominational character of apostolic churches is further evidenced by the lack of any *proper names* given to the churches described in the New Testament. All the many terms and metaphors used of the first century churches are descriptive of the saints' relationship to God, to His Son, and to one another. For example: the **household of God** (1 Timothy 3:15) describes the relationship between God and one another as members of God's family; **churches of Christ** (Romans 16:16) describes ownership (i.e. churches belonging to Christ), as does the **church of God** (e.g. Acts 20:28). The **body of Christ** (Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:25-32) describes the organic communion between Jesus Christ and those who are in Him. The apostolic churches were identified as all of these things. But this did not create any confusion of identity for them. They understood there is only **one church** (Ephesians 4:4) and that they had only **one head** (Ephesians 1:22-23). It may be hard to get our minds around this in today's religious climate, but in the beginning there was no such thing as different denominations (early hints of partisanship and factionalism among Christians at Corinth were denounced by the apostle Paul, 1 Corinthians 1:10-15). Most often, churches were simply addressed in connection to their locality (e.g. all the saints at Philippi; the churches of Galatia). In our desire to reflect and honor the non-sectarian character of the apostolic churches, we usually refer to ourselves simply as being the church that meets in the vicinity of Wellington Point, or more simply and colloquially: The Point Church.

Steve Wilson