

Statement on the Worship and Practice Mandated by Christ for His Church

Formulated by the Spiritual Council of Leidy's Church

At Immanuel Leidy's Church we believe that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God and that the Holy Spirit speaking through that Word is the final arbiter in all matters of faith and conduct.¹ We strive, though imperfectly, to know and follow the Scriptures believing they are the expressed will of God.² Within a fallen world, our state, country, and world has often been in the midst of distress and tumult. In such difficult times, it is good and right to examine the call of the Lord upon His Bride, the Church.

As part of our understanding of the Scriptures call upon the Church, the Immanuel Leidy's Church statement of faith declares, "The Church is blessed by the Holy Spirit to bear the fruit of the Spirit and to be empowered by gifts of the Spirit. Without the presence and life-giving work of the Holy Spirit there can be no Church. This work of the Spirit finds expression in adoration and worship to the one, true, living God; prayers for one another and for the world; in relationships that encourage and nurture spiritual growth; and in the proclamation of the gospel to all nations, teaching them to observe all that Christ, her Head, has taught."³ This summary of the calling of Christ upon His Church provides grounds for our actions in proclaiming the gospel of Christ near and far.

We believe the Scriptures call us to gather together in worship.⁴ That worship should include the preached word of God,⁵ prayer for others and ourselves, the singing of songs of praise unto God,⁶ and the right observation of the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion.⁷ These elements of worship are not designed by man but ordained by the Lord Jesus through His Word. These and other calls to obedience throughout the Scriptures are not subject to the edicts of the civil magistrates but contribute to the lasting duty of the people of God to follow the Lord.

In addition to being gathered for worship, the church is to engage in the proclamation of the Word of God to all nations.⁸ As the Lord Jesus commissions His followers, so we are to go to our friends, neighbors, families, and around the world to communicate the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Church in obedience to the Lord is to serve the material needs of those who are in need both within the fellowship and without as she is able.⁹ Finally, the church is to stimulate one another toward love and good deeds using the gifts the Holy Spirit has given to the church until all might attain maturity in the faith.¹⁰

¹ 2 Peter 1:19-21

² 2 Timothy 3:16-17

³ Immanuel Leidy's Church Statement of Faith, Doctrine of the Church, Paragraph 2.

⁴ Hebrews 10:25

⁵ 1 Timothy 4:13

⁶ Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16

⁷ 1 Corinthians 11:24-26

⁸ Matthew 28:18-20

⁹ Matthew 25:34-40, James 2:15-16

¹⁰ Ephesians 4:11-13

In all of these things, the church recognizes the greatest commandment to love the Lord with all of her heart, soul, strength, and mind¹¹ The church also recognizes the second greatest commandment to love her neighbor as herself.¹² It is a duty of the church to consider the ramifications of its actions upon those within its fellowship and upon the wider community seeking to promote spiritual, emotional, and physical health and wellbeing. This love of neighbor must carry with it a Biblical understanding of love and an appropriate understanding of risks involved.

The Lord Jesus has called those in His church to be good citizens of the land in which the Lord has placed them.¹³ He has also called His church to submit to the civil magistrates that He has placed over the land¹⁴ to the degree that it does not interfere with the polity, practice, and doctrine of the church. However, submission to civil magistrates shall never supersede obedience to the Lord as He has revealed Himself in His Word.¹⁵ Insofar as we are able to accommodate the civil magistrates' directives in exercising obedience to the call of Christ upon His people, we aim to honor our commitments to the Lord in following secular authorities in restricting evil and promoting a peaceful and just society. Where the statutes of the magistrates hinder us from obeying the commands of Scripture, we recognize the greater authority of Christ through whom all things were made.¹⁶

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¹¹ Luke 10:27

¹² Matthew 22:39

¹³ 1 Timothy 2:1-3, Acts 24:16

¹⁴ Matthew 22:21, Romans 13:1-7, 1 Peter 2:13-17

¹⁵ Matthew 10:28

¹⁶ Matthew 28:18, John 1:3, Hebrews 1:3-4