

**Indian Creek Baptist Church**

Est. 1843

Membership Course

# Sessions

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## Session 1: Introduction

Welcome and Opening remarks

How long I have been at ICBC

### Opening Questions

Q: What brought you to ICBC?

Q: Why are you interested in baptism and/or membership?

Q: Have you ever been a member of another church? \*

### Indian Creek Baptist Church's Purpose Statement

*Our purpose is to be God's light to the mountain by preaching the gospel, winning souls to Christ, making disciples, and ministering to the whole person through missionary outreach*

### Indian Creek Baptist Church's Doctrine Statement

We believe:

- The Bible to be the inspired Word of God.
- The birth of Jesus Christ as evidence of His deity, in that He was virgin born.
- The blood of Christ shed on the cross to be the only atonement for sin.
- The bodily resurrection of Christ from the tomb and His ascension into heaven.
- The body of Christ, called also the church, to be composed of all believers.
- The blessed hope and His personal return to earth.
- The believer's call to a life of consecration.

\*Those who are members of other churches may need to transfer a letter of membership to the ICBC Clerk

## **Who we are**

Indian Creek Baptist Church (ICBC) is a theologically and socially conservative American Baptist Churches U.S.A. body of believers that operates as a family-style\* ministry.

*\*Family-style ministry: many members of our church had parents or grandparents who were also members of ICBC. Strong relationships have been established between families. Because of the makeup of our church body, we tend to prioritize expressions of concern such as sending cards and meals to those in need. We are casual and we tend to value outreaches that enable us to reach children and youth with the Gospel.*

## **Commitment to Sunday School**

One unique aspect of ICBC is our commitment to Sunday School. On Sunday mornings, we have Sunday School opening at 9:30 followed by our SS classes for all ages. Some of our classes have members who participate online.

## **Services**

Campground Ministry (Memorial Day to Labor Day) 9 a.m.

Sunday School Opening at 9:30 a.m.

Sunday School classes: 9:45-10:30 a.m.

Morning worship service: 10:40 a.m.

Sunday evening worship service: 7 p.m. during the school year; 7:30 in the summer

Sunday evening services rotate location between ICBC and the Mill Run UMC

Wednesday Evening Bible Study at 7 p.m.

Q: Do you have any questions about who we are or about our services?

## **Church History**

Watch the video on the ICBC YouTube Channel titled *175 Presentation Video*

Demonstrate how to access the church YouTube Channel and website. Read the section titled *Church History* under the *About* tab on the website.

Q: Do you have any questions about our history?

**Doctrine** (Please have those in attendance look up Biblical references)

What do we believe about God?

- There is One God (Deut. 6:4; Is. 43:10)
- The Trinity (Matt. 28:18-20)
- Definition: *within the one Being Who is God, there exists eternally three coequal and coeternal Persons, namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit* (James White, *The Forgotten Trinity*).
- God the Father (Eph. 1:3)
- God the Son (Phil. 2:5-11)
- God the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4).
- God is uniquely worthy of worship (Is. 43:10)
- He is not limited by physical properties (Jn. 4:24)
- He is beyond the realm of time (Ps. 90:2)
- He alone is the Creator (Is. 41:4)
- He is all-powerful (Job 42:2)
- God is sovereign over Creation (Col. 1:16-17)
- God is love (1 Jn. 4:8)

What do we believe about the Bible?

The Bible is God-inspired (2 Timothy 3:16)

The Bible is powerful (Romans 1:16)

The Bible is accurate in everything that it teaches (Ps. 119:140)

The Bible is the final authority for faith and practice (2 Tim. 3:16-17, James 1:22-25)

**Concluding Question and Assignment**

Q: Are you in agreement with our beliefs about God and the Bible?

Q: Do you have additional questions about what we discussed?

**Handout:** Indian Creek Baptist Church By-laws and Constitution

**Assignment:** Please read the handout before next session

## Session II: Our Church

Welcome

Review from the previous week

### **What is a church?**

The word translated *church* in our English Bibles does not mean *house of worship* or *place of gathering*. It has far more to do with the *who* and the *what* than the *where*. Church means *assembly*. It is a group of individuals who are assembled together. It is not a generic assembly; it is a specific one. The true church is comprised of those who have trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation, organized under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the purposes of equipping the saints for the work of ministry and reaching the lost for the glory of Jesus Christ.

### **Are we part of a denomination?**

We are part of the American Baptist Churches U.S.A. Although we will discuss our denomination further in the third session, there are a few points to note about our denomination here:

- We are voluntarily partnered with the American Baptist Churches U.S.A. Baptist denominations do not have a strong central authority structure wherein the denomination owns church property, hires and fires ministers, and places specific demands upon congregations.
- We partner together to support local, national, and international missions. This requires the funding of central offices, ministries, ministers, and staff as they assist local churches and facilitate mission work.
- The American Baptist Churches U.S.A. is broken down into regions. We are part of ABCOPAD, or *The American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware*. Within Pennsylvania and Delaware, associations have been established to help local churches support one another. ICBC is part of the Monongahela Baptist Association. There are 15 churches within our association, ranging from Confluence to Greene County.

## **What is expected of a church member?**

As noted in our doctrine statement, we believe in the believer's call to a life of consecration. This means that we recognize that we have been set apart from the world by God to be used by Him for His glory. There are specific expectations placed upon those who assemble together in the New Testament:

- They live to bring glory to Jesus (Eph. 3:20-21)
- They commit to living holy lives (Eph. 5:3)
- They maintain a godly testimony (Titus 2:7-8)
- They are accountable to one another (James 5:16)
- They participate in corporate worship (Hebrews 10:25)
- They strive for unity and shun practices that undermine it (Phil. 2:1-8)
- They use their spiritual gifts to encourage other believers (Eph. 2:10; 1 Cor. 12-14).
- They share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the lost (Matt. 28:18-20).

## **Officers of ICBC**

Officers of Indian Creek Baptist Church are church members who have recognized the spiritual gifts God has given them and have chosen to use those gifts within a specific role. Church officers are elected at the annual business meeting (held the second Wednesday of January). Some officers serve for one year and others serve for three years. List of officers:

Deacon/Deaconess

Director

Treasurer

Assistant Treasurer

Sunday School Secretary

Assistant Sunday School Secretary

Sunday School Treasurer

Financial Secretary

Sunday School Superintendent

Church Clerk

Organist and Pianist

Senior Choir Director  
Assistant Sr. Choir Director  
Youth Choir Director  
Assistant Youth Choir Director  
Junior Choir Director  
Ushers

## **Our Pastoral Staff**

Pastor Chris McLaughlin, Senior Pastor  
Pastor Jason Seevers, Associate Pastor of Youth

## **Other opportunities to serve**

One need not be a pastor or an officer to serve at ICBC. We have many opportunities available for you to use your spiritual gifts. Please note that all who volunteer at ICBC must have background clearances, per Pennsylvania law. If interested in learning more about serving or about our Child Protection Policy (available on our website- please see our *resource* tab), please reach out to a pastor or the Child Protection Committee. A further discussion will occur in session III.

## **Child Protection Policy**

ICBC seeks to provide a safe sanctuary for all. In accordance with Pennsylvania law, all employees and volunteers of ICBC must submit appropriate background clearances. Additionally, all must read our *Child Protection Policy* and *The Addendum to the Child Protection Policy*, and sign a statement of agreement with it. We have a zero-tolerance policy regarding harassment, abuse, or any other violation of our *Child Protection Policy* or *The Addendum to the Child Protection Policy*. Our church takes the responsibility of mandated reporting very seriously. We encourage all to read our policies, which may be accessed on the church website under the *resource* tab.

## **Meetings**

### Monthly Board Meeting

Each month from February-May and then from September-December, we hold a regular monthly board meeting on the second Monday of each month. This meeting involves revisiting notes from the previous meeting, reviewing and approving financial statements, and making motions on ongoing business/ministry within the church. Although it is only officers who are able to vote at the monthly board meeting, all church members are welcome.

### Annual Business Meeting

Our annual business meeting is held on the second Wednesday of January. We strongly encourage all members of ICBC to attend. During this meeting, we review the financial statement from the previous year, receive reports on ministries, commit to certain ministries for the upcoming year, and elect new officers and committees.

## **Concluding Questions**

Q: Do you have any questions about boards/committees within ICBC?

Q: Do you have any questions about our pastoral staff?

Q: Are you in agreement with our church's position on the duties of a church member?

## Session III: Our Commitment to Missions

Welcome

Review from last session

### **Why missions?**

The Lord Jesus Christ stated His purpose: *to seek and save that which is lost* (Luke 19:10). Jesus' words communicate the fact that the unbeliever is dead in sin, separated from spiritual life. If the unbeliever were to die having never accepted Jesus Christ as one's Savior, he/she would spend eternity in hell. Throughout Jesus' ministry, He expressed grief over the enslavement the unbeliever has to sin, and He died on the cross for the sins of the world (John 3:16). He commanded His disciples to make disciples of all the nations (Matt. 28:18-20). If you were to read from Acts through the conclusion of the Bible, you would note that the church faithfully obeyed the Lord's words.

Please note that cross-cultural missions (a missionary going to another country) are only one example of mission work. Cross-cultural missions are essential because missionaries/mission organizations take the Gospel to places desperately in need of the Word of God, humanitarian aid (a vehicle through which the Gospel may be proclaimed), and supporting ministries. In some cases, the Gospel is taken to places where nobody has ever heard about Jesus. In others, governments or local groups hostile to the Gospel message harm those who tell others about Jesus. We are proud to partner with several missionaries (please use our church's webpage to find the missionaries we support on the *resources* tab and to discuss each family we support):

World Vision

Duncans (Avant Ministries)

Peggy Cunningham (Rumi Rancho)

Whites (World Venture)

Comptons (The ONE: Peru Ministries)

Browns (South America Mission)

Nathan\*

Adam & Judy\*

*\*Ministering in a restricted nation*

## **Prayer for the Persecuted Church Sunday**

The first Sunday in November is set aside as a service of prayer and reflection upon the persecuted church. Using resources from *Voice of the Martyrs* and *Open Doors*, we typically focus on one nation in which Christians are suffering severe persecution. We help our congregation to understand the difficulties faced by believers in those nations and we pray for them. The Mission Committee of ICBC helps to plan this service.

## **Local outreaches**

Just as there is a need for the Gospel to be shared in other nations, so also is there a need right in our nation and community. As a church family, we are committed to *being God's light to the mountain*. We have several outreaches: God's Tots, King's Kids Club, VBS, Harvest Party, and a senior luncheon. In times of distress, our church has organized rapidly to respond to needs. When the most recent Connellsville flood occurred, our church immediately responded, sending over 50 people to help clean up houses. Nationally, we have gone on building trips with *Builders for Christ*.

## **Our partnership with the American Baptist Churches U.S.A.**

As noted in the previous session, we are a part of the American Baptist Churches U.S.A. Our denomination has a proud history of evangelistic work (if time allows, please discuss famous missionaries including Adoniram and Ann Judson). Our voluntary partnership with the ABC USA includes collecting four special offerings annually: America for Christ Offering, One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, World Missions Offering, and Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering.

## **American Baptist Women**

Our church has been involved with the American Baptist Women for many years. Here is a brief overview of their history:

*American Baptist Women's Ministries became a national organization 1951, with the formation of the National Council of American Baptist women. But women's ministries in our denomination began long before 1951. For well over a century, women have been strong partners in the American Baptist family-raising money for missions at home and abroad, sending missionaries, and ministering in local churches and communities.*

*Through the years, women have shaped their ministries to meet emerging needs. The Woman's Baptist Society, organized in 1871 (the forerunner of the Woman's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society), focused on women in other lands. The Women's American Baptist Home Mission Society, formed in 1909, centered on evangelism in the United States. The World-Wide Guild was established in 1915 to train, inspire, and empower girls for Christian ministry and leadership; it became a program of Educational Ministries. In 1992, AB Women's Ministries affirmed and accepted all responsibility for the girls' ministry and organized it as AB GIRLS.*

(<https://abwomensministries.org//page.aspx/contentId/29/History/>)

If you would have interest in learning more about this vital ministry, please speak with Pam Hughes or Denise Miner.

### **Using your spiritual gifts**

We believe that God has given every Christian spiritual gifts. Those gifts help to inform us of areas in which God has uniquely created us to serve within the local church (Ephesians 4:16).

**Handout:** Spiritual Gift List and Survey (Lifeway).

Discussion on spiritual gifts

### **Concluding Questions/Assignment**

Q: Where do you see yourself serving within ICBC?

Q: How can we assist you in sharing the Gospel?

Q: Do you know anyone in need of salvation? Let us pray for that individual tonight.

**Take home assignment:** complete the spiritual gift survey and bring it back for session IV.

## Session IV: Baptism and Our Commitment to Obedience

Welcome

Review from last week: What did you learn from your spiritual gift survey? How do you believe God has gifted you to serve within our church family?

### **What do we believe about salvation? (Please look up verses)**

- We believe that God is holy. He is without sin (1 Jn. 3:5).
- All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).
- Because of sin, those who have not trusted in Jesus for salvation are spiritually dead. The wrath of God abides upon them (John 3:18).
- God has revealed His plan of salvation that people may respond in saving faith (Titus 2:11).
- Jesus Christ died as a sacrifice for our sins (1 Jn. 2:2; 1 Cor. 15:3)
- He rose victoriously from the grave (1 Cor. 15:4)
- Because of His death, burial, and resurrection, those who trust in Jesus Christ for salvation will receive eternal life (Romans 6:1-23)
- We must confess and repent of our sins (1 Jn. 1:9), believing in our hearts and confessing with our mouths that Jesus Christ is Lord (Romans 10:9-10).
- Those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ have been declared righteous (Romans 5:1). They are being sanctified (Hebrews 10:14). We will someday be glorified (Romans 8:30).
- We cannot be saved by growing up in church, by being *spiritual*, by being *sincere*, or by works. We can only experience salvation by responding to the Gospel in faith (Ephesians 2:8-9).
- The believer should have confidence that he/she has eternal life (Ephesians 1:13, 2 Cor. 5:17). One cannot lose their salvation (John 10:28-30).
- We reflect upon the Lord's redemptive work when we gather together in victory on Sunday mornings to worship and especially on Sundays in which we observe the Lord's Supper.

Q: Do you have any questions about the Bible's teaching on salvation?

### **What do we believe about baptism?**

Baptism is one of two ordinances of the local church (the other being the observation of the Lord's Supper). Baptism is not necessary for salvation (Luke 23:39-43). Nevertheless, Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize disciples (Matt. 28:18-20). Notes about baptism:

- Baptism is a depiction of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 6:3-4).
- In baptism, we identify with Jesus Christ
- In baptism, we make a public proclamation that we are believers
- There are no examples in Scripture of anyone being baptized prior to conversion

Q: Do you have any questions about the Bible's teaching baptism?

## **The baptism service**

### Notes

- The baptism service is held on Palm Sunday at 7 p.m.
- The baptismal candidate will be asked to have a family member, friend, or spiritual influence read his/her testimony.
- The baptismal candidate will supply the church pianist with a favorite Christian song that will be played as the candidate enters the baptistery.
- All baptismal candidates will be given a white robe to wear for the service. Please wear dark clothing underneath. Please also bring towels and a change of clothes. Some individuals choose to wear flip flops, which are acceptable.

### Procedure

- The pastor will enter the baptistery and share a brief reflection upon baptism.
- The candidate's selected song will play as he/she enters the baptistery.
- The candidate will stand in front of the pastor.
- The candidate's testimony will be read.
- The pastor will place one hand upon the upper shoulder of the candidate and the other on the wrist (the candidate will close his/her nose with that hand).

- The pastor will declare, “Because of your profession of faith in Jesus Christ, I baptize you my brother/sister in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit... buried in the likeness of His death...”
- At this point, the candidate will be lowered into the water
- The candidate will be quickly raised from the water as the words “... and raised to walk in newness of life” are declared.
- The congregation will clap.
- The baptized believer will dismiss the baptistery to the selected song.
- The diaconate board will assist the baptized believer down the stairs to get changed.

### **Concluding questions and tasks**

Q: Are you in agreement with our beliefs about salvation and baptism?

Q: Do you have any doubt about your salvation?

Task: Please receive a baptismal robe

Task: Please select an individual to share your testimony during the service

Task: Please select a song for your baptism

**The Indian Creek Baptist Church**  
[lcbcmillrunpa.com](http://lcbcmillrunpa.com)