



STEP TWO: KNOW INNOVATION

Our Hope For You

Our hope is to give you a full introduction to our church family. This session is designed to explain who we are, what we believe, and why we do what we do.

We're glad you have chosen to find out more about Innovation Church!

Part One: Our Beliefs

What we believe is important. It's part of what unites us despite the beauty of our differences. We want to be up front about our beliefs because they shape us so powerfully as a community. In the following series of common questions and answers, you'll read a brief summary of our beliefs, which are in accord with the authorized statement of faith for the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel.

Without question, this is the great mystery of our faith: Christ was revealed in a human body and vindicated by the Spirit. He was seen by angels and announced to the nations. He was believed in through the world and taken to heaven in glory.

1 Timothy 3:16 (NLT)

Who is God?

We believe the Bible identifies three distinct Persons – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit – as the One Eternal and Infinite God, the Creator of all things. These three Persons share an eternal loving relationship as the one triune God—what we Christians call the Trinity.

Why is the Bible important?

We believe the Bible is truly and uniquely God's Word. The Holy Spirit so inspired the writers of the Old and New Testament Scriptures, without setting aside their humanity, that the very words of their original writings are His Word. We also believe that the Bibles we have today are accurate and authoritative regarding what we believe and how we should live.

Why are people, and the whole world, so broken?

Though men and women are created in the image of God, and there is real beauty in this, we believe that all people have sinned and have a broken relationship with God. Our rebellion affects all of human society. As a result, we are all in need of forgiveness, healing, and restoration to a loving relationship with God. The alternative is an eternity of voluntary isolation from God's presence and goodness.

What is God doing about the problem?

We believe sin brings guilt that deserves punishment but, because God loves us, God decided that the punishment for all sin would be borne by Jesus Christ when He died on the Cross. And Jesus, who rose from the dead, now offers forgiveness and new life to any who will receive His mercy by trusting that God is completely faithful to fulfill the promise of new life He has made to us in Jesus.

You mean I can't help myself?

We believe that God freely offers us the gift of forgiveness for our sin and intimate relationship with Himself. There's nothing we can do to earn the gift that He offers, but we can receive it.

How do I receive God's forgiveness and new life?

We believe that if we trust in Christ and His death on our behalf, He forgives us and lives within us through the Person of the Holy Spirit. With a sincere change of heart, we turn away from sin because of a new and God-given desire to live for Him. The Bible talks about someone who experiences this as being born into a new reality as one of God's children—a follower of Jesus.

How do I follow Jesus?

We believe there is a real and instantaneous spiritual transformation in the heart of someone who has received Christ by faith. This radically changes his or her heart—the seat of our deepest motivation. The resulting change in our conduct reflects this heart change. When God, the Holy Spirit, comes to live with us and in us, as the Bible promises, He brings a new life, new spiritual vitality, and a whole new set of desires that motivate us as we joyfully follow Jesus, our Savior and Lord.

What about things like going to church, communion, and water baptism?

It's important that Christians meet regularly together "in the temple Courts" (large gatherings) and "house-to-house" (small groups), as was recorded of the early church in the Bible. That's why we encourage people who attend Next Steps to prioritize our Sunday morning services and getting connected in a small group. Both types of gatherings are important to our spiritual growth.

In the Bible, we also read the story of Jesus' last meal with His followers. He tells us to remember Him by celebrating a similar "meal." That is why we believe in the regular practice of the Lord's Supper, or Communion. The bread and the grape juice symbolically proclaim the truth of Christ's sacrificial death for our sins and spiritually feeds the new life in someone who participates in faithful obedience.

We believe that being baptized in water is an important act of obedience to a clear command of Jesus. It is a visible and public statement of what He has done in our lives and declares our desire to live for Him. It is an outward sign of inward work, and distinct from the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit comes to dwell with and in Christians when they put their faith in Jesus, but they can invite the Spirit to show His power in them and work through them in the same manner demonstrated by the early Church. This empowerment is sometimes referred to as the "second blessing," Baptism of the Holy Spirit, or being Spirit-filled. It is a distinctive part of our heritage that is in addition to the indwelling by the Holy Spirit of all believers. We believe the Baptism of the Spirit is crucial to living the Spirit-filled life.

What is the spirit-filled life?

We believe that God gives us the Bible, His Word, and the Holy Spirit, His constant and personal presence in our lives. These two—the Word and the Spirit—are given that we might know of God's deep love for us and respond with consistent obedience. As we do so, we begin to respond to our circumstances in a way that increasingly looks like Jesus, becoming powerful witnesses to Christ's redeeming love. There is great joy and blessing in living a fruitful life transformed by the Word and led by the Spirit.

What are the gifts and fruit of the Holy Spirit?

We believe that the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control—mark us in ever increasing abundance as a direct result of our responding to the Holy Spirit's ministry in our lives.

The gifts of the Spirit are different than the fruit of the Spirit or even from natural talents. They are supernaturally given to the church through us so that we can minister powerfully as witnesses to Jesus' redemptive work.

For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

1 Corinthians 12:8-11

Does it include divine healing?

We believe that divine healing is the power of Jesus to heal the sick. He hasn't changed. He's still willing and able to heal the body, as well as the soul and spirit, in answer to faithful prayer. You might ask then, "Why isn't everyone healed?" A long-time pastor, Ron Mehl, who suffered with active leukemia for more than twenty years, offered a wise answer, "God always answers a prayer offered in faith, but the answer is sometimes 'yes,' sometimes 'not yet,' and sometimes 'I love you too much to do that.'"

How do you maintain balance?

The Foursquare movement values the outwardly visible ministry of the Holy Spirit. These expressions of the Spirit's work among us are always examined in the light of Scripture. We believe that this practice is an important part of the principle of moderation: that our lives should reflect the balance, humility, and self-sacrifice Jesus demonstrated.

What about Jesus' return?

We believe that Jesus Christ will fulfill His promise and return to earth physically and unmistakably at a time that's unknown to us in advance. This is why so much of our ministry is focused on evangelism—showing and telling people about Jesus before He returns to judge the world.

What about judgement?

We believe that one expression of God's love for his creation is judgment. It is in the capacity as Judge that He confronts evil on behalf of those He loves, ending it for all time. Within this larger context, we also believe that all people shall stand one day before God to give account for their lives.

What about Heaven?

We believe that Heaven is the glorious, eternal home of those who love and trust Jesus Christ as Savior. Their love relationship is expressed as a conscious desire to follow Jesus as Lord, and nothing could be more delightful to them than living in unhindered communion with Him.

Okay, what about Hell?

Hell is a place where the door is locked from the inside. That's not just a clever saying. It indicates a powerful truth about a place of eternal isolation, and the resulting suffering, for all those who reject Christ's love, mercy, and forgiveness. It is a place prepared for those to whom nothing could be more unbearable than living in the presence of the Lord.

Is that why evangelism is so important?

In a word, yes.

We believe that helping people open their hearts to Jesus by telling as many as possible about Him is the most important responsibility of the Church, in addition to service and benevolence.

What does it mean to serve and give?

God is the first to give as an overflow of His love, providing us with time, talent, and treasure. Most of His people have the ability to give significantly of these three in order to bless others. We believe that the joyful giving and serving of His people is the means designed by God for the support of His work in the world through his Church.

What's a Christian's relationship with the Church?

There are two ways "church" is talked about in the Bible. The Church, which is made up of all Christians, past, present, and future, is distinct from the local church, made up of Christians from a particular community who meet regularly for worship. We believe it is our responsibility to actively participate in the life of a local church in worship, fellowship, teaching and service. It's one of the most important relationships a Christian has.

Our Mission

Connecting others to their unique purpose.

What We Do

- Build

We are sinners that are saved by grace. Sin has beat us down through our lives but through Jesus Christ the living word, by the Holy Spirit and the scriptures we can rebuild the foundation of, and filter for, everything we believe and do.

- Serve

We believe that the church is about relationship and everyone needs others to go through life with. No matter who you are, where you're from, or what you have done we are here to serve you and commit to help you, and your family in any way possible.

- Empower

God has created you with a specific skill set and placed you right where you are for such a time as this. We'd love to come alongside you and help you discover and release the gifts and talents that He has placed inside you.

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

John 10:10 (NIV)

How We Do It

- We will change often.

We know that God is progressive, so we will lay our ideas, agendas, programs, and everything else down. God is always doing a new thing, so that means as we follow after Him, things will change.

- We take RISK.

If 92% of America believes in God and 40% attend church, it's time to change what we are doing. We can't do the same things and expect different results.

- We are Family.

We're not meant to do this life alone. If the church is body of Christ then we must support one another like family, like brothers and sisters that do whatever we can to build, serve and empower each other to be who God has created us to be.

- We love the 67%.

If 67% of our own community has given up Hope then things must change. Our approach must change. The methods must change while the message stays the same.

- We aren't the best church and it's not a competition.

We are just a different church doing all we can to reach people.

- We will follow Jesus, not religion.

The Jesus in the Scriptures, not our own ideas.

We will do our best to do what Jesus did and what religion forgets.

Why We Do It

*And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone."
Mark 26:15 (NLT)*

Last time we checked that wasn't done yet, so neither are we.

Part Two: Our Structure

For God is not a God of disorder but of peace, as in all the meetings of God's holy people...But be sure that everything is done properly and in order.

1 Corinthians 14:33,40 (NLT)

Partnership Covenant

We, the Partners of Innovation, in order to establish God's Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven, form a healthier body of believers, secure the blessing commanded upon those who walk in unity, ensure a legacy of peace and prosperity for the next generation, and restore respect and honor for God's government and authorities on earth, do ordain and establish this covenant.

We will work together governed by three core spiritual principles: Unity, Honor, and Trust.

Unity

How wonderful and pleasant it is when brothers live together in harmony! For harmony is as precious as the anointing oil that was poured over Aaron's head, that ran down his beard and onto the border of his robe. Harmony is as refreshing as the dew from Mount Hermon that falls on the mountains of Zion. And there the Lord has pronounced his blessing, even life everlasting.

Psalms 133:1-3

We will not participate in, nor be a party to, church splits.

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:1-3

We agree not to cause or allow division in the Body of Christ.

So that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other

1 Corinthians 12:25

“The criticism that's been on Christ and the Church through arguing, fighting, and gossip must come to an end. “

The consequences of disunity are too costly

For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind.
James 3:16 (NLT)

And now I make one more appeal, my dear brothers and sisters. Watch out for people who cause divisions and upset people's faith by teaching things contrary to what you have been taught.

Stay away from them.

Romans 16:17

“Unity is defined with diversity, not conformity.”

We bind together relationally in which divorce is no option.

- We must learn to disagree agreeably.

What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.

1 Corinthians 12:25

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:19-22

- We will work out and walk out our differences, walking together in covenant relationship.

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:1-3

The Church has suffered because we church hop.

- We commit into a new body, and when things get tough, we then quit and leave.

You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

2 Timothy 2:1-2

- We then remarry into another body. Unfortunately, we carry all our hurts, disappointments, and frustrations into that relationship, and it fails too.

Can a man carry fire next to his chest and his clothes not be burned?

Proverbs 6:27

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.

Ephesians 5:31

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two will become one flesh." But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.

1 Corinthians 6:15-17

Honor

Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other.

Romans 12:10 (NLT)

Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes and government fees to those who collect them, and give respect and honor to those who are in authority.

Romans 13:7 (NLT)

We agree to submit to and not undermine God-given, God appointed authority.

Obey your spiritual leaders, and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this with joy and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit.

Hebrews 13:17 (NLT)

To have authority one, must be under authority.

When he had entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, appealing to him, "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly." And he said to him, "I will come and heal him." But the centurion replied, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith."
Matthew 8:5-10 (ESV)

As God establishes rank and order, we will flow together in grace and love

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.

Romans 13:1

Authority is for edification, NOT destruction, we will love, respect, and serve ALL, rather than abuse and harm.

But Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Matthew 20:25-28 (NLT)

I may seem to be boasting too much about the authority given to us by the Lord. But our authority builds you up; it doesn't tear you down. So I will not be ashamed of using my authority.

2 Corinthians 10:8 (NLT)

Owe nothing to anyone—except for your obligation to love one another. If you love your neighbor, you will fulfill the requirements of God's law. For the commandments say, "You must not commit adultery. You must not murder. You must not steal. You must not covet." These—and other such commandments—are summed up in this one commandment: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to others, so love fulfills the requirements of God's law.

Romans 13:8-10 (NLT)

We commit to further the kingdom of God and not build our own.

Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.
Matthew 6:33

"God's Kingdom purpose is superior to our own personal agenda."

Trust

Dear brothers and sisters, honor those who are your leaders in the Lord's work. They work hard among you and give you spiritual guidance. Show them great respect and wholehearted love because of their work. And live peacefully with each other.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

We will remain open to correction from those who love us.

Get all the advice and instruction you can, so you will be wise the rest of your life.

Proverbs 19:20 (NLT)

So watch yourselves! "If another believer sins, rebuke that person; then if there is repentance, forgive. Even if that person wrongs you seven times a day and each time turns again and asks forgiveness, you must forgive."

Luke 17:3-4

While trust is something earned and built, we must commit to the process.

Trust is developed as we come to know one another and involves being open, honest, invulnerable, and transparent.

We will not receive accusations against one another.

We commit to protect one another from our hearts turning against each other.

We commit to resolve biblically any offense within five days.

If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.

Matthew 18:15-20

We will deal with all offenses internally.

We will not go to others.

We will go to the source.

Innovation Church Government

Believers who invest their hearts, time, families and finances in the building of a local church deserve to have confidence in church leadership. People are looking for leaders who conduct themselves with integrity and respect when making decisions that affect their lives.

Innovation Church is led, overseen, and strengthened by these three groups.

Senior Pastor.

The senior Pastor provides the overall vision, accountability and spiritual direction of Innovation Church and is held accountable by the council, the elders and by foursquare leadership.

Advisory Council.

The Advisory Council oversees the general functions and operations of the ministry. They provide general and financial council to the Senior Pastor regarding the business administration, pastoral care and general health of the church.

ELDER TEAM

These are seasoned partners of Innovation Church that help share in the pastoral, church growth, and teaching functions of Innovation. Help with oversight, vision, prayer and care ministries. Also provide supportive council to the pastor and staff regarding spiritual life and development of the congregation.

Leadership Team.

Members of the Leadership Team are each responsible for implementing the overall vision in their assigned ministries. They provide leadership to their individual teams and oversee the day

Part Three: Our Ecosystem

I appeal to you, dear brothers and sisters, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, to live in harmony with each other. Let there be no divisions in the church. Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose.

1 Corinthians 1:10 (NLT)

The Four Parts of our Ecosystem

The Ecosystem is the best way we have found to describe the environment we are striving to create that gives people the most opportunities to grow and mature in their walk with Christ. We cannot make people grow; we cannot make people mature. However, we can create an environment/atmosphere (Ecosystem) that causes people to want to grow.

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:12-13 (ESV)

At Innovation, we organize ourselves around these four environments:

- 1. Worship**
- 2. Community**
- 3. Serving**
- 4. Next Steps**

1. Worship - Weekend Services

We consider reaching people one of our greatest responsibilities. Our weekend services serve people at all stages in their spiritual journey.

Weekend Services

- Celebration

I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord."

Psalms 122:1

But the time is coming — indeed it's here now — when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.

John 4:23-24

- Inspiration

Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

Psalms 22:3 (NLT)

- Preparation

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelist, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-12 (NLT)

- Salvation

For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?

Romans 10:13-14 (NLT)

2. Community - Connect Groups

Real life change happens in the context of relationships. In the Bible, they worshipped in the temple, but ministry happened house to house.

I never shrank back from telling you what you need to hear, either publicly or in your home.
Acts 20:20 (NLT)

How Groups Work

Our groups meet in places all around our city and provide a place for you to connect, grow and discuss the issues and challenges of life. Groups are also where we pray, care for one another and where we are missed if we don't show up!

Our groups are as varied as we are; group leaders use their gifts and passions to create a group that allowed others to join with them in serving God. Regardless of your age, interest, or location, we are sure there is a group for you. If there isn't you can start one!

New groups start and stop three times a year — winter, spring, and fall semesters.

How do I get connected with a group?

- Find a group (Information is at Guest Services, on the web and on the app)**
 - Commit for a season (It's not one and done that's not how relationship is formed. Give it time. Invest for a season)**
 - Experience a life change (You will get out what you put in)**
-

YOU can lead a group!

We believe that everyone has areas of strength and gifting that could benefit others. If this is something that you're interested in, we offer group leader training several times each year.

3. Serving - Teams

All of us were created by God to make a difference in the life of another person. God has a place for you where your unique abilities and passions can touch the lives of others. We believe that your life will never make sense until you find, develop, and fulfill that purpose.

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)

But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus - the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God.

Acts 20:24 (NLT)

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord... All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it.

1 Corinthians 12:4-5, 27 (NLT)

At Innovation Church:

- Every partner is a minister.
- Every task is important.
- Every partner is a "10" in some area.

How do I join a team?

- Attend an orientation or training session in the ministry area of your choice to learn more about how to be involved.

- Complete and submit an application to a ministry leader or the church office.
 - Schedule a meeting with a ministry team leader to share your ideas and find where you may fit the best.
-

4. Next Steps - Four Steps to Growth

The Next Steps offered the information and experiences necessary to help you discover and develop your redemptive purpose. It is designed to lead you through a step-by-step process of growth and leadership.

So let us stop going over the basic teachings about Christ again and again. Let us go on instead and become mature in our understanding. Surely we don't need to start again with the fundamental importance of repenting from evil deeds and placing our faith in God.
Hebrews 6:1 (NLT)

Innovation Next Steps

1. Know God

Equips you with an understanding of who Jesus Christ is, and how His life, death, and resurrection has affected the world, as well as explore the essential habits and beliefs that enable you to deepen your relationship with Him. We also discuss the importance and meaning of baptism.

2. Know Innovation

Become better acquainted with the story, mission, and values of Innovation. Come connect with others and have the opportunity to become a member of the church family.

3. Know your Gifts

This class will help you discover your personality, gifts and purpose in life, and see how God combines them for the best fit in ministry.

4. Partnership

Partnering with Innovation to make a difference in our community.

YOU'RE HALFWAY THERE!

You have completed Next Steps when you have attended all four sessions.



Step Two: Know Innovation Completion Form

Check all that apply:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I understand Christian community. | <input type="checkbox"/> I prioritize worship gatherings. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am part of a small group. | <input type="checkbox"/> I have close Christian friendships. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm a contributing church member. | <input type="checkbox"/> I understand healthy submission. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have a coach/mentor. | <input type="checkbox"/> I pray with others. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I confess sin to others. | <input type="checkbox"/> I submit to others. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I practice love. | <input type="checkbox"/> I practice generosity. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I practice hospitality. | <input type="checkbox"/> I practice forgiveness. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My relationships are healthy. | |

I, _____, completed Step Two on _____.
(print name) (date)

Signature: _____
