

## Practice & Position Statement

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*The purpose of this statement is to outline the practices of the church in line with our understanding of the Bible, and to discuss the church's standings on present day matters. These are non-essentials for salvation but are listed for unity purposes. We encourage all believers to be compassionate and gracious where there may be different viewpoints, and respectful of the position of the Lakes Church in these practices.*

**"In Essentials – Unity, In Non-Essentials – Grace, In All things – Love."**

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### PRACTICES

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#### **Baptism & Communion.**

Galatians 4; Ephesians 2:1-10; 1 Peter 3:18

We believe that Baptism and the Communion (also referred to as the "Lord's Supper" or the "Lord's Table,") are two ordinances that Jesus Christ has commanded His church to observe. As believers in Jesus Christ, it is our desire to obey him in all things. However, these two practices are not a means of receiving salvation. We are saved by grace through faith alone, in the completed and all-sufficient work of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ on the cross.

- **Baptism.**

Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:37-41; Acts 10:44-48; Romans 6:1-4

Baptism is a public testimony by which the believer identifies with the Saviour who died, was buried, and rose again. In baptism, there is also the visible demonstration that the believer is dying to self and rising to new life in Christ. We believe that baptism is for believers only, and we practice baptism by full immersion.

- **Communion.**

Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-23; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Communion is a visible, symbolic reminder that Jesus Christ gave His body and shed His blood on the cross for our redemption and to remind us of His second coming. We observe communion together regularly. The bread and the cup are available to all who are believers in Jesus Christ.

#### **Church Leadership & Teaching**

1 Timothy 3:1-7, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:17

Men and women have equal standing and value before God, and their various contributions to church life are of equal importance. Members are encouraged to serve in their areas of gifting. Teaching on Sunday morning, as approved by the Elders, is generally by men, but there may be occasions when women are also involved.

In matters of leadership, we believe that the responsibility of Elders and Pastor of the church has been given to men who subscribe to the qualifications outlined in Scripture.

## Spiritual gifts.

John 14:16-17, 26; 16:7-13; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12; 3:16; 2 Corinthians 3:17; Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 5:1

All believers receive spiritual gifts that differ according to the will of God. These gifts should be used in love for the unity and common good of the church. We encourage believers to discover and use their gifts given by the Holy Spirit for the benefits of the entire church.

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## POSITION

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### Sign Gifts.

1 Corinthians 13:8-10, James 5:14-16

We believe that some spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues, miraculous healings and prophecy (foretelling the future) were given as authenticating signs to the early church. While God may still choose to use these in His wisdom today, we do not practice these sign gifts at Lakes Church.

We do believe in and promote prayer for healing in the lives of people as God is the Sovereign Healer who according to His will, answers the prayers of the righteous. We value biblical verses and words of encouragement for the benefit of the believer, and the whole church.

### Human Sexuality

Genesis 2:18-24.

The qualities that make male and female unique and different, are recognised as part of God's design and to be appreciated. We believe God created sex to be enjoyed within the marriage relationship between one man and one woman. It is God's desire that sexual/intimate activity is kept for marriage only.

### Marriage / Divorce / Remarriage

Genesis 2:24; Malachi 2:16; Matthew 19:3-9; 1 Corinthians 7:10-13

God's plan for a Christian marriage is an exclusive, life-long covenant between one man and one woman, establishing a mutually supportive relationship that reflects God's love for His Church. Divorce and remarriage might be permitted by the Scriptures in certain circumstances. Grace and love are encouraged.

We urge those who are struggling in their marriages to seek counsel from the leadership and/or professional Christian counselling support.

### Sanctity of Life

Psalms 139:13-16, Exodus 20:13, Genesis 1:27, Psalm 90:10-12.

We believe that human life is a gift from God and that we are all created in the image of God, therefore each life is valuable. Life is to be respected from the moment of conception (fertilization) until natural death. To destroy or harm any human life is not the will of God and is inconsistent with Scripture. We encourage all in the church to be compassionate and gracious towards any concerned with such matters, just as God is loving and forgiving.