

# **THE CORE COMMITMENTS**

**Of Trinity Baptist Church  
New Haven, Connecticut**

**Adopted May 30, 2002**

# THE CORE COMMITMENTS OF TRINITY BAPTIST CHURCH

## MOTTO:

Reaching Locally, Effecting Globally, Through The Word of Life

## CORE COMMITMENTS:

1. The Glory of Christ
2. Word-Driven
3. Outsider Aware
4. A Biblical Community
5. Alpha and Omega Discipleship
6. A Growing Church
7. A Church with a Mission
8. Three-Dimensional Christianity

## EXPLANATION, CLARIFICATION AND APPLICATION:

### 1. The Glory of Christ

- **Explanation:** We are committed to the “Glory of Christ” more than anything or anyone else. Our desire is to see the name of Jesus exalted. We therefore value the “Glory of Christ.”
- **Clarification:** Being committed to the “Glory of Christ” does not mean a devaluation of the other members of the Trinity, God the Father or God the Holy Spirit. As Paul described how Christ’s humiliation and atoning sacrifice, in the plan of the Father, will lead to everyone bowing their knee before Jesus Christ, so we value the exaltation of Jesus.
- **Application:** The “Glory of Christ” is the measure of our success and the purpose of our endeavor.

### 2. Word-Driven

- **Explanation:** We are committed to being a Bible-believing, Bible teaching, and Bible following Church. We value the Word as the seed which produces spiritual growth. We value the word as the means of Christ’s Lordship being expressed among us. We therefore intend all our activities and energies to be shaped and energized by being “Word-Driven.” We aim for everything we do to be animated by, motivated by, and in joyful submission to the Word of God.
- **Clarification:** Being “Word-Driven” means that we are orthodox in our faith but it does not mean that we are archaic in our style. We aim instead to be relevant in style but never compromised in our beliefs. We are living not boring; we are growing not

stultifying. We don't study the Bible merely for the sake of learning more about the Bible. Rather we thoroughly study the Bible so that we may live more for God and worship him better in lip and life. We treasure the Bible, but not like a miser treasures his money—storing it up never to use it. We make use of the Bible, letting it work on us, form us, and revitalize us so that everything we do or say may be inspired by God's word.

- **Application:** Preaching the Bible from the pulpit is central to us; daily Bible study is important to us; Bible teaching in Sunday School, midweek groups, and in every way reflect this key emphasis.

### 3. Outsider Aware

- **Explanation:** We are committed to being welcoming and reaching out to those outside our Church. As such we value being aware of the needs of outsiders. We value being open to Christians who are new to the area or getting involved with Trinity for the first time. We value the gospel being proclaimed to seekers in a way that aims to be clear and free of jargon and with no unbiblical stumbling blocks. We therefore intend all our meetings and activities to be “Outsider Aware.” We aim for maximum clarity and minimum confusion about the gospel.
- **Clarification:** Being “Outsider Aware” means being sensitive to the needs of seekers but not pandering to the spirit of the age. It means being clear but not being needlessly offensive. It means having an attitude of mission and evangelism while at the same time encouraging depth and Bible teaching. In the same way that Paul urged the Corinthian Church to make sure that their worship was intelligible to the outsider, so we are committed to all our worship services and small group ministries being jargon free and clear about the gospel.
- **Application:** We are committed to not be territorial but to leave room for newcomers to get involved. We make every effort to avoid “The Language of Zion” and to make everything understandable for both non-Christians and Christians new to our community. We assume the best of Christians new to the Church and allow them (better yet, want them!) to share in the work of the church. We are sensitive to the needs of the broken hearted coming from experiences in life or religion which have left them in need of a new family.

### 4. A Biblical Community

- **Explanation:** We are committed to being a “Biblical Community.” We see this as a powerful witness to the truth of the gospel in our pluralistic and increasingly fragmented society. The lie is abroad that community only comes through the removal of truth statements. But we stand for the truth of the gospel even as we're united in community! Not all the same, different, but still one in the revealed truth of the Bible—“One in Christ.” We are a “Biblical Community”: standing firm on the Bible and yet culturally, racially and socially diverse.
- **Clarification:** Being a “Biblical Community” means being welcoming of all without moving one inch from the objective truth of the Bible. A “Biblical Community” is not socially manufactured. It is Christ who calls people of all nations, cultures and

classes to himself. Our community simply reflects a facet of this complete Lordship of Jesus Christ. We stand firm on the Bible; we value the objective truth of the gospel; and this the very truth of God is exhibited by bringing people of all different kinds to worship the Lord Jesus Christ.

- **Application:** We are not just about the city of New Haven. We are not just about the universities. We value being about both. Nor are we just about the university and city, we are about the suburbs and beyond. As New Haven is a hub city of culture, entertainment and education, so too Trinity aims to be a hub Church. We intend to reach out to all who live at this cross roads of culture, to all who pass by, and to all who live in the region. We are committed to be involved in each other's lives and build one another up in our faith.

## 5. Alpha and Omega Discipleship

- **Explanation:** We are committed to learning and maturing in our faith and Christian lives. We value discipleship and Christian development in holiness, godliness, and knowledge. This means that we aim to become mature in Christ, the Alpha and Omega. We intend to change and grow as followers of Christ. As such we are committed to "Alpha and Omega Discipleship."
- **Clarification:** Our desire for discipleship never means saying "now that I've become a Christian and I've got the gospel it's time to turn to other lessons." We aim for the true discipleship which is the gospel fostered and furthered. The gospel of Jesus is not simply the ABC of the Christian faith. The gospel is the A-Z of the Christian faith, understanding and living, as Christ is the Alpha and Omega. We aim to continue our voyage to faith in Jesus always saying, "give me more of Jesus Christ." Because discipleship happens as Christ is exalted this commitment to discipleship never competes with a commitment to evangelism.
- **Application:** We aim for all our Bible teaching, ministries, and endeavors to be effective at discipling Christians. We value an attitude of willingness to learn, realizing that we all have more to learn of Christ, the Alpha and Omega.

## 6. A Growing Church

- **Explanation:** We are committed to being open to change wherever the word and the gospel suggest it. We want seekers to become Christians and join the church. We do not aim to be a small social club. We intend to be a dynamic growing church that values people becoming Christians and the Kingdom of God advancing. We are, therefore, committed to being a "Growing Church." We want Christ to have a deep and abiding impact on New Haven, New England, America, and the ends of the earth.
- **Clarification:** Being committed to being a "Growing Church" does not mean selling out to underhanded techniques. Nor does it mean dumbing down the message of the Bible. Rather it expresses our desire for the gospel to grow in our lives as individuals, as a community of believers, and in the society around. As Christ promised to build his church so we look for his work in our church to be growing and building.

- **Application:** We aim to structure our church around an expectancy of church growth, so that major and minor decisions are made which leave room for new people to join the church and which enable growth.

## 7. A Church with a Mission

- **Explanation:** We are committed to the local and world wide mission of the church. Foremost, we are a church committed to spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all parts of the world. We believe that God has made us body and soul, so we are committed to ministering to people in all their needs, physical and spiritual.
- **Clarification:** A commitment to being a “Church with a Mission” does not mean that we undervalue the mission needs of our immediate environment. As the early Church was called first to Jerusalem, then Judea, then Samaria, and then the ends of the earth, so we value our mission to New Haven and New England. There may be seasons when we are more committed to Jerusalem and Judea than the ends of the earth. However value of a “Church with a Mission” entails a continual commitment to a “Church with a Mission” in some shape or form.
- **Application:** As an international hub city New Haven has special opportunities to be involved in mission. There are people from countries otherwise closed to the gospel who live for a few months or years in New Haven. These present a greatly strategic opportunity for being a “Church with a Mission” on our doorstep. There are also missionaries on furlough in New Haven on a regular and on-going basis. We value these missionaries and seek to support them where feasible and where our doctrines and commitments coincide.

## 8. Three-Dimensional Christianity

- **Explanation:** We are committed to a full Biblical Christianity. As befitting “Trinity” Baptist Church we value the truth of the Trinity, as well as all other Biblical teachings, and the Biblical doctrines expressed in Trinity’s Doctrinal Statement. We therefore value a balanced, three-dimensional approach to Christianity, whereby the profound truths of the Bible are upheld and our lives are brought gradually into synch with those truths.
- **Clarification:** “Three-Dimensional Christianity” means nothing more nor less than Biblical Christianity. In an age where “market share” considerations persuade us of the need to “specialize” to gain a “niche,” we deliberately and whole heartedly value the full conviction of the teaching of the Bible.
- **Application:** With a commitment to a balanced faith we intend to be a balanced Church, with seekers and learners, doctrine and life, word and Spirit, submission and freedom, professionalism and yet also a sense of family. We also value balanced life-styles, giving and receiving, sacrificing and feasting, working and enjoying God, life, each other and the glory of the gospel of Jesus Christ!