

Covenanting Service

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[0:00] Thank you for being here.

Like I said, this is a special day. And we're very happy that you've got here. We're happy here for a, like I said, a significant evening of the Holy Stone Church. A day that we prayed for.

This is a day that we were booked for. This is a day that we planned for and we worked for. This is a day that was put into the heart of many of us several months ago. But a day that was in the heart of God and we were in the past.

I was told it was going to be up here as well. But if you find your respect and find your place in the Bible, do you stand in the honor of reading God's words? Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. The loose, the plod of weakness, who I do to distract the oath, to let the oppressed go free, to break every oath?

[1:15] Is it not that you share your bread, hungry, and bring the homeless and the poor into your house? Will you see the naked, and cover him, not by your mouth from your own flesh? Then shall your life break the world like God, and your healing shall spring up season.

Your righteousness shall go before you, and the Lord of the poor shall be in your rear foot. Then you shall call, and the Lord came, and you shall cry, and you shall say, Here I am.

If you have a way to the oath from your midst, up with those fingers, and see if you wait. And if you pour yourself out from the hungry, and satisfy the desire to the wicked, then shut your life rise to the darkness.

It is limited to the living of the end of your day. For the Lord of the God who continue to satisfy your desire, shall the place, and make your bones strong. And you shall be like the water in your heart, and the spring of the water, as water is free on the ground.

And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt. You shall raise up the salvation, and you shall be called to repair the breeze, and restore the streets and well. If you turn back to your foot from the Sabbath, and doing your pleasure in my holy day, and all the Sabbath, and the life, and the holy day, the Lord's honor.

[2:30] If you honor, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly, then you shall take the life of the Lord. And I will make you alive, and I will feed you with the hair of the James and the Father.

For the mouth of the Lord has spoken. Isaiah, 28, verse 14. Thank you, guys. So, we may call together, by God, today, to proclaim your life to be the king of Christ, who sent the days to come. To be able to prepare for the breeze, and restore the streets of this new love. It is called together to be a church that raises the foundations for generations to come.

So we acknowledge this is an official beginning of the Savior's moment. So, this moment, before we proceed, I ask John Neville to come over and donate us in prayer. Come in prayer.

Gracious everybody, our Lord and the Lord, with all faith, all glory, all worship, and all worship, and all worship, and all worship.

[4:13] This morning, your kingdom, and all worship, and all worship, and all worship.

Thank you.

Okay. Can you hear me? Good times. Well, what a day. It was several months ago that four men came to me and said, James, we're really thinking we need to plant a church, and we'd love for you to be a part of that.

And I said, not just no, but heck no. I don't want any part of it. I'm not headed that direction. I just, I think God's got other plans.

And then, as I've said before, then they tricked me into praying about it. And the Lord changed my heart, changed my direction. And as I look around in this room, man, there are not many other people in the world that I would say this about.

[6:05] But I would run into a hail bullets with this group. Yes. Thank you. All right. Thank you. This is a special day.

We, you know, you think of just even recently of how you see the airplanes. You know, they'll tell you when you get on board, put all your stuff in the overhead compartment, put your things on the seatbelt, because we're going for a ride.

We don't know what's going to happen on this ride. Your seat may become a flotation device. And as you've seen in the news recently, you've seen the doors fly off of airplanes in midair, you know. And the video of just a streak of a plane going by as an airplane catches on fire as it's going to its destination. And I just want to say to you this morning, buckle up, because we have a great ride ahead of us.

We don't know what is going to happen in the days ahead. But here's what we do know. God is in control. And God is the captain of our faith. He's going to get us to the other side.

[7:33] And so whatever else may happen, you can rest assured that God is going to carry us through. I couldn't help but think this morning as I was just getting ready for this time, I think all of us want to be a part of something great.

I think we want to do something great. I don't know if anybody in this room just wants to be mediocre in their life. I don't really think that that's the case. In your heart, especially if you're a believer in Christ, in your heart, there is something driving you to be better, to do more for God. The Holy Spirit living inside of you is driving you. And I think as we've come together as a church, I really feel like that is the spirit of who we are.

We're wanting to do something better. We're wanting to be a part of something better. We are imperfect. We're not going to do it exactly right. But what we're trying to do is we're striving toward the goal of that upward call in Christ Jesus.

And we want to do it well. Knowing with some humility that we're not going to. Right? We're striving for that. And yet in our heart, we know we're going to fail at once.

[9:00] So our plan right now is not perfect. We have, as I have taken on kind of the philosophy of ministry that just says, if you wait until you have a perfect plan, you're never going to do anything.

And so we do the best we can. We plan things. We pull it together. And it's like, pull the trigger. Let's move forward. And so we've worked really hard to try to organize things and put things together well and try to get our doctrinal statement down, our vision statement, our mission and the church covenant and our core values and all these things together.

And it's time to pull the trigger. And I think we're there. I think we're ready. And so, uh, man, as we get started this morning, let me just give you the overview of what's going to happen the rest of this time.

We, this is not a normal service, even though there's normal elements to the service, but, but we're going to covenant together this morning.

Uh, covenant's not a contract contracts between two people. And then the judge decides whether or not you kept your side of the contract. Covenant is different in that this is an agreement between parties and God and God's a part of this covenant.

[10:24] What we're saying as we covenant together as a church is that, Lord, we know that we can't do this apart from your strength. We can't. We will be like every other church and we'll follow the Catholic act.

Uh, what we have back there in, as you leave, you'll want to pick up a copy of the church covenant because that's part of the membership process of you joining the church.

This is symbolic today, what we're doing, but officially you become a member. Once you get that covenant copy, you sign that covenant saying, Hey, I'm in this together with this body of Christ. And then we present you to the church. So we're going to do that in mass here, uh, you know, in a couple of weeks. But when you get that in, that's going to be the official side of it.

So symbolically in the invitation time, if you're ready to join, you come, you sign that covenant and, uh, it'll be symbolic of what we're doing here together. And then after that, we're going to take some steps of official business as cornerstone church.

[11:30] And the official business that we're doing today is one, and very important, calling a pastor. Very important to me, you know. And I think very important to you.

Because as a church, the offices of the church are very important to us. And we have yet to function as a church that way. Now we are coming together as a church. We're going to call the pastor. We're also going to, we're going to, uh, hopefully you've got a copy of the, uh, church handbook. The cornerstone handbook that we put together.

Because in there, it's got all of the statements, all of the, the church covenant, explanation, philosophy of ministry, all those kinds of things in there. And it's going to help you understand who we are.

Now we put that out to those of you that have already been contemplating memberships. We have it on the Facebook page. We've discussed many of these things in the Wednesday Night Bible studies as we look at these issues.

[12:27] And then, and now today, we're going to affirm those statements together as cornerstone church. And then, also importantly, we're going to affirm a budget.

We've got to do a budget. And so that we can get things in motion for the rest of this year. And we're going to affirm that together. So we'll, we'll expedite that. And here's, we've had it out for weeks and weeks.

So there's not a lot of discussion time for today. Uh, but obviously people have come. We've made adjustments all along the way. And hopefully we are in the place now where we have a great, great start to cornerstone church.

A great start. So, the charge. If you have your Bible, and I hope you do, I want you to turn to Revelation chapter 2.

Revelation chapter 2. As you find your place, go ahead and stand. We love to stand in the reading of God's word.

[13:39] We also love to wait until you're comfortable and make you stand up again. Right? Really what I see here is a charge for us to be faithful in an age of compromise.

Revelation chapter 2. And we are beginning in verse. It says this.

And to the angel of the church in Dietersa, write, The words of the Son of God who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like vermished drums.

I know your words. I know your words. Love, and faith, and service, and patient endurance.

And that your latter works exceed the first. And then as you go down to verse 24. Father, we pray this morning that as we hear the inerrant, inspired, authoritative word, the sufficient word that you have given us.

[15:25] I just pray that we would find application this morning in Cornerstone Church. And that this would begin a pursuit of you like our city has maybe never seen.

Maybe they have. But Lord, I pray that it would exceed all expectation, and all precedent for churches that have been, and for churches that will be.

And that we will be a church of uncompromising character that reflects the glory of Jesus, who sits on the throne of David forever and ever.

May his name be exalted from this fruit until he comes. I pray this all in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. We do live in an age of compromise. I don't think that's any question.

[16:33] Saw recently just an interview of the Pope where he was asked about where bad souls go. He's quoted as responding, They are not punished.

Those who repent and take God's forgiveness and take their place among the rank of those who contemplate him. But those who do not repent and cannot be forgiven disappear.

Hell does not exist. Hell does not exist. The disappearance of sinning souls exists. He reiterated that recently even in saying that his belief is that hell is empty.

We see it all over the place. Compromise. We live in an age of compromise and not conviction. Recently, priests in the Anglican Church approved the blessing of same-sex relationships. Methodist church.

[17:39] We see it even among Southern Baptists the question of gender being thrown around. Sometimes we think, Well, maybe that's just some semantic arguments about who should be a pastor.

And then you read the Twitter feeds of some of our pastors and look at what some Southern Baptist pastors are saying you to shake your head and think, My goodness, we are in trouble.

Because we live in an age of compromise and not conviction. Conviction is really when we have strongly held beliefs that compel you to do something.

Strongly held beliefs that prohibit you from doing other things. The early church had conviction. Conviction that would enable you to stand in the middle of persecution, hardship, difficulties.

And to keep moving forward. Revelation chapter 2 is in this list of messages to the churches where John has specifically had influence.

[18:47] And in this region, as he looks from the Isle of Patmos and probably he can't see necessarily the city of Ephesus, but he can look in the direction of Ephesus and some of these other cities of the seven cities he mentioned.

And he can almost span the horizon and imagine where they're at. And as he goes from Ephesus and then from one city to the other, down the Roman road, he walks through his mind.

And all of these passages, you see them broken down into sections. This one's broken down into three sections as he addresses the church of Dieteria when you see it in the commendation for good works and then the condemnation of compromise and then the consolation for believers.

And in this, you just get a great picture of God's love for the church and that God's looking. And so you see through the, even through the first few verses here, to the angel of the church in Dieteria, write the words of the Son of God who has eyes like a flame of fire.

As we talked about last week or the week before, it's all kind of running together for me now, but at some point, I think I talked about it where it describes the eyes of fire, the feet of bronze, and what you see is Christ who is looking with unbelievable intensity at the churches, examining them, eyes like fire.

[20:18] fire. And in that, he is looking and there is judgment in mind, which comes to the feet of furnished bronze where he's going to trample his enemies.

And in this, you just get the picture that Christ is looking at the churches. He's looking for something of great anticipation, of great expectation. He wants to see something in you.

He wants to see something in me. As he's looking to the church of Dieteria, he is looking with unbelievable intensity at their church with eyes like fire.

I want to see something. God's not always mad at us. Sometimes we get the feeling, you know, preachers yelling, God must be mad at us, right?

But here there's commendation for them. And you see it not only as he describes the good works there in the first, in verse 19, where he says, I know your works, your love, your faith, your servant, your patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed your first.

[21:29] And then he moves into some criticism. And so a lot of people will identify this church as being the compromising church. And because that is given right there at the beginning, and then verse 20 shifts into, but I have this against you, you tolerate that woman Jezebel.

And so there is, on the whole, problem in the church. But when he comes back to verse 24, but to the rest of you, what we see here is that not everybody in the church is a compromiser.

This is great news for us. Everybody in the church is not compromising. Everybody in the church is not on the wrong path. And there's commendation for them in this.

And what he says is, I'm not going to put any further burden on you, those of you that are, that are not with them, that are not compromising. Instead, hold fast to what you have until I come.

The charge. Hold fast to what you have until I come. What a word. Right?

[22:43] I hear that, man. I'm like, man, that is simplified. Right? Be faithful. Always faithful. Always ready. Be faithful unto death as we saw

the message to the other churches.

This is the message for us. Hold fast what you have until I come. You're faithful in Christ Jesus. You've given your heart and mind to Christ. You've given your life to Him. You've turned from sin. You've turned to Jesus. And He changed your life. You've come together as a body of Christ. And now, He's saying, you've gotten Jesus. The Holy Spirit has got a hold of you. Now take hold of Him. Hold fast what you have until I come. How do we ensure that our works are going to be commendable? How do we identify what's commendable?

And what's going to be our consolation in the meantime? Right? I mean, so this is a great message for any church. But I think for us right now as we're covenanting together, what a message for us.

[23:48] We're focused on the first question. That bird really lays it out for us. Hold fast.

The word that He uses there at Croteo is about accomplishing something. It literally means to take control of it with your hands. And when it talks about people, it's talking about taking someone into custody.

But when it's ideas, it's for you to hold on to these things holding down the sidewalk in China. You have to be careful at every manhole cover at every crack in the sidewalk because from time to time people just fall through.

I mean, I'm not kidding. It's crazy. And so I'd say, hey, take my hand. We're going to walk together. And he would take my hand. But more than him taking my hand, I had his hand.

And as we walk together, when we come to those puddles, and I know in his mind, he's ready to stomp that puddle and jump in it. I've got him by the hand and I'm lifting him up over the puddle.

[24:51] And when it's coming to the manhole cover and he's about to step on it because it looks like something fun to step on, I'm taking him by the hand and I'm lifting him over the manhole cover. He's got me by the hand.

But more than that, more than that, I've got him by the hand. And so this instruction to us, the charge to us, is to take hold of something.

The Lord's got a hold of us. And he's wanting us to hold on to him. Hold fast what you have until he comes.

What are you to do for you to hold fast? What are you going to hold fast to? What you have. How long are you going to do it until he comes? He says in the beginning of this in verse 20 or in verse 19, he starts off this section by saying, I know your works.

What does the Lord know about the church in Thyatira? He knows something about them. The Lord who's looking with eyes of fire, who's looking with great intensity, investigating, examining them, knows things about them already.

[26:12] And he's acknowledging these things. I know your works, meaning that I recognize them, I know them, I'm honoring the merit of these things. He's not unhappy with them in this.

He is actually satisfied in what he sees in this. I know some things about you, and those are the things that I want you to hold fast to. There's something that you're going to hold fast to, those of you that are faithful, those of you that are looking to me, that haven't fallen to Jezebel's message, and you are going to hold fast to what?

The things you have. The things I know about you. The things that are commendable. The things that are commendable in your life right now as the Lord is looking into your life, and it's those things that at the judgment seat of Christ are going to be commendable at the judgment seat.

Because there's judgment in mind. He's examining with judgment in mind, which means, for us as believers, it's pointing to the behavior and the works and the deeds that we should be exhibiting in our life that are going to come out at the judgment seat.

He sees them now. He'll open them up there at the judgment seat. He's happy with some things.

[27:30] Psalm 33, 5, the Lord loves righteousness and justice. The earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord. Aren't you glad? He's not always mad at us.

He actually is pleased with us. He loves righteousness in us because it reflects Him. And when we submit ourselves to the Holy Spirit and in His strength perform acts of righteousness and goodness, it reflects His character and it reflects His nature.

And then what we see here is that these works, these, this, you use the word ergon in the original language, the actions, the deeds, the practical proof, this is the substance of who you are. This is what He sees in them. This is the substance. Having in two pairs, love and faith, ministry and patience, and then, a third part, that the last works are more than the first.

So there's three sections to this. And all these are really expounding the works. And this is the heart of the works. You want to know what the works that you're to hold on to look like?

[28:37] This is them. You want to know what's going to be commendable to the Lord at the judgment seat? This is that. What are you to hold on to from now until I come? This.

So what does it look like for us to have commendable works before God? What is it going to look like for Cornerstone Church to be a commendable church that God would look at and say, I know this about you, Cornerstone Church.

I'm looking at you with intensity and I know some things about you. And I'm not laying any other burden on you except this. Hold fast to that which you have until I come.

Hold on to it. Live in it. Walk in it. Be filled. Love in faith. We need to look at the character of our work, service, endurance.

We need to look at the value of our work, works in excellence, striving for excellence. Ephesians 2, 8, 9, Paul said it in a summary, a great summary verse.

[29:47] He said, for by grace you have been saved. Aren't you glad you're saved? You saved? That's kind of a weak amen, right? Are you saved?

Yes. Amen. I am saved. Praise God I'm saved. For by grace you've been saved through faith. This is not your own doing. It's the gift of God, not a result of works, so that nobody will boast.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in him. Thyatira is walking in him.

There are faithful brothers and sisters in Christ that haven't fallen. They're standing strong. So how is faithfulness manifested in us?

It can be manifested when we maintain those same kind of works. Commendable works maintain the right motivation. That's point number one. Commendable works maintain the right motivation.

[30:55] That is the charge to you. The motives of our work as he unfolds it here, the first two are identifying motivational forces in us. Love and faith.

Love and faith. You can be doctrinally sound and not love anybody. Right? You can be a church that is doctrinally sound and have not love.

Love. Love he uses here is the agape love, selfless, sacrificial, unconditional love.

It's the character, motivation of their works. What's motivating them to serve God fervently? Love. Love for God, love for others.

The agape, sacrificial kind of love that you found in Jesus when he forgave you of your sins went to the cross for you. Love. I think of dogs barking in the night.

[32:00] Man, a dog barking in the night can be a great thing. Right? I mean, it really can. I think David, you were talking about somebody breaking in the cars in the houses behind your house and somebody said, hey, where was your dog last night?

Right? On another night, somebody might have a dog that's barking at nothing all night long. Like all night long.

Every night. Every night, all night long, barking. And I don't love that dog. And neither do you.

Right? Now, what, what, you would have loved that dog if the dog was barking when the burglar was coming and the burglar is coming, the dog starts barking and you're like, man, I love that dog. What a great dog. Man, he's looking out for us. He's letting us know somebody's coming. But when that dog is barking every night, all night long, at nothing, but maybe the shadows, the moon, I have no idea.

[33:00] Even when the moon's not there, the dog's barking. I have no idea. I don't love that dog. I don't like that dog. That dog is actually a nuisance. Right?

You would love that dog if he barks at the right place. It's a nuisance to you when it barks at the wrong places. All night long. All the time. And I'm saying that because this is the, this is the

commendation to them that you guys are, man, it's love motivating you.

It's like 1 Corinthians 13 said, Paul said, if I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have prophetic powers, understanding all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

If I give away all that I have and deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain, I gain nothing. I'm saying nothing. I'm knowing nothing. I'm gaining nothing.

Nothing. A church that does not have love is nothing. Nothing. Doctrinally sound, without love, you're nothing. You're a sounding gong, a clanging cymbal.

[34:14] Let that, let that never be said of us. Let the motivation of our heart be the thing that we cling to and hold on to, that this is the character quality of Cornerstone Church because it's the character quality of every one of the people that make up the membership of this body.

For people of love. Galatians 5.13, Paul said, For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

The character motivation of the church is to be the character of love. Hebrews 6.10, For God is not unjust to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints as you still do.

And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness and have full assurance of hope until the end. It almost sounds like what he's saying here in Revelation. Until I come. So that you may not be sluggish, the author of Hebrews says, but that you may be imitators of those who through faith and patience have inherited the promises.

Bitearia is not all compromisers. They are people motivated by love. They are people who are serving Christ through love and that is the charge of you. It is to be people of love, that your motivation be love, that your motivation be faith, the strong trust that we have in God and in the teachings of Christ, the motivation of obedience not to earn our salvation but because you have salvation.

[35:55] You're trusting in Christ. God sees your faith in him. And I've seen that in you guys. Love and faith. James 2, 14.

What good is it, brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works, can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food and one of you says go at peace, be warm and filled without giving him the things needed for the body, what good is that?

So also faith by itself if it does not have works is dead. Peggy, you're watching online this morning. We love you. We're so glad you're at home today.

But everybody, you know, just praying for her, asking about her. People going up when she has surgery and sitting at the place and praying for her while she's having surgery.

Love. Faith. Trusting God through hard things. I look at the Campbells and just seeing Dottie and just the update that you guys gave just the other day of her, did she rip the thing out, the tube out of her nose?

[37:04] The Lord's healed her up. She said, I'm done with all this stuff. In the middle of all of that, what were they doing? Well, are there moments when they're like, Lord, please help us.

We don't know what's going on. Of course, of course they are. It's like you are. All the challenges. I'm looking around this room and all these faces and all the challenges that you guys have gone through and are going through and yeah, the struggles, the struggle one after another.

Trust in Jesus. I'm trusting the Lord through this and together praying for motivated by faith and love. You've got that.

You understand that. I'm looking in this room and people who would sacrifice everything for people in this room when there's a need, you jump on it and we go after it. We're trusting God to meet needs and answer prayers and when we do that, we're fulfilling something that Christ has done in us.

He's changed us. He's given us hope. He's given us His Holy Spirit. Spurgeon said to trust God in the light, that's nothing.

[38:11] To trust Him in the dark, that's faith. And you got it. Now hold fast to that. Don't you let that go. The love and faith that has

motivated you to this point.

So many of you standing with me. I'm so glad to see Richard Stilwell here. Richard is pastor at quite a little what's the church? Leakesville.

First Leakesville in Mississippi. When I was going through all my stuff, Richard, man, he reached out to me and he prayed for me. He was willing to drive cross country to go get a vehicle with me. I mean, just, man, I love that guy. So glad you guys are here. His wife, Kim, got that. I went fast to that.

So many of you have stood with me going through hard things. You stood by my side. Maybe you guys held me up. My arms were following me.

[39:13] I didn't plan this either here.

I didn't plan this either. I didn't plan this either. Good night. faith in love.

Jesus said, if you have the faith of a mustard seed, you say that this mountain will be moved.

And in dramatic fashion, Jesus says, and it will be uprooted. Cast in the sea. Why would it splash? I don't think he's just saying it's going to change your mind about things.

I think that's part of it. That is definitely part of it. God is going to change you in prayer. He's going to change your mind about things. But I'm just telling you, he's doing something with David. He's changing things.

[40:30] He doesn't change. His character doesn't change. But man, God is at work. Maintain good works with the right motivation.

Maintain them, number two, with the right character. I better get through this one later. The right character. Service. Service. To serve.

Spirit, this is duty. Do your duty. There's a character about what you're doing. It's important. The things that you do, you take seriously. It's duty. I don't do it just because I have to do it.

I do it because I'm motivated by love and faith. I have duties as a husband. Take care of my family. I meet the needs of my wife and take care of her.

I do it because I have to. I'm her husband. Right? It's not just because I have to. I do it because I want to. I love her. I want to do that. There is a sense of duty with this.

[41:34] Well, don't be legalistic about it. Don't be legalistic. What do you even mean by that? Right? I'm going to be legalistic about it a little bit because there is a relationship here where there's expectations.

Legalistic, not in the fact that I'm earning merit with God but that I have a duty to perform and I'm going to do these things and it's a conviction for me. I'm doing it because it's the right thing to do but I'm doing it because I love it and I love doing the right things for her.

And when we talk and I realize I'm not doing something right for her. I'm not meeting a need. I'm not, she's upset about something. I want to figure out what it is because I love her and I want to meet those needs.

It's duty out of love. And that love relationship is driving me to do things and brings me to a place of conviction. It's duty.

What does it look like? Jesus said, when I was hungry you gave me food. When I was thirsty you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me in. I was naked you clothed me. I was sick you visited me. I was in prison you came to me.

[42:40] The righteous will answer him saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you or thirsty give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you in or naked and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?

And the king will answer them, truly I say to you as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers you did it to me. Service, duty, out of love for the Lord and for others.

You've got this. Hold on to it. Hold fast. You're to let your light shine before others that they may see your good deeds. Glorify your Father in heaven. You're to see your service, your duty, motivated by faith and love.

Galatians 6, 9, Paul said, let us not grow weary of doing good. For in due season we'll reap if we do not give up. So then, as we have the opportunity, let us do good to everyone and especially to those who are in the household of faith.

This is the character of this group. Hold fast to that. Don't you let that go. Service and endurance.

[43:49] Perseverance. And when this word is used, it's used perseverance especially in the face of trials. It's not just I think I'll do good.

It's that I'm going to do good and I'm facing opposition. I'm still going to do it. I've got a sense of duty that's driving me. I don't love it and I'm going to endure. I'm going to make it through this.

Colossians 1, 10.

And so, we are to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord fully pleasing and bearing fruit in every good work. Increasing in the knowledge of God.

There's love and faith paired together in its service and endurance. Alright, you can be seated.

A few items of business to take care of. First, I'm going to ask Aaron Archibald to come. He's going to make a motion. Our church is being planted with a sponsor church which is Fellowship Church of the Monckley, Florida.

[45:01] Timothy Pig is the pastor who came here a few weeks ago and has been a great supporter. He's part of the Conservative Baptist Network and he basically leads the local church side of that network with a conviction that churches are planted by churches.

They're acting as our sponsor church which means their elders are accessible to us. They are with us in the trenches as much as they can be from Florida. I mean, whether it's not believers now on the hiring of pastors and so Aaron's going to bring that motion this time.

We'll talk more about that partnership with them which is going to be a very great and strong relationship with that church. We'll talk about that more in the weeks to come. It was 10 years ago that my family was looking for a church.

We were looking for a place to worship and someone told us about a gentleman that was preaching here in Bartonville that we might want to go check out. And so anyway, it was we came and we visited and we heard James preach and I told my wife and we talked about it that that's that's the man we want to we want to we want to hear every Sunday and that's a church we want to be a part of and so and part of that leadership so it is an honor it really is a privilege to make this motion I didn't expect this either James but so now let's move to our first word of business today we have a proposal from Fellowship Church that is coming to us in writing the proposal is to appoint James Blazadecki as a pastor of Cornerstone Church this is a motion coming from the steering committee so it requires no second I will now read the motion that has been submitted from Lockheed in Florida hereby move to appoint

James Blazadecki as a pastor of Cornerstone Church Department of Oklahoma we believe his qualifications dedication leadership qualities align with the vision and values of both of our churches we request the approval of Cornerstone Church members for this appointment so now let's open the floor and bring a discussion for this motion having no further discussion let's proceed to a vote all in favor of approving the appointment of James Blazadecki as a pastor of Cornerstone Church as proposed by Fellowship Church please say hi aye aye any opposed say nay nay the motion is carried congratulations this time also I would like to have members of our steering team I would like to have anybody that's ordained as deacons or pastors to come forward as we lay hands I've asked Lucas Nettles Ty Campbell I've asked David Douglas excuse me to lead us out in prayer

[49:03] Heavenly Father we are just in awe a year ago none of us knew where we were we here but you made it happen God it's by your sovereign will that we are gathered here today to lay hands on brother James as he has been through his deeds that you have prepared before him to honor the name of Jesus to lead this church but ultimately to do your will at Cornerstone now we thank you and we praise you for James in Jesus name really father it's we come to you today and we are celebrating this covenant together God but we also stand in with an understanding of what lies ahead but there's work to do in this city and this town we just thank you for for James and bringing him here and keeping him here to lead us as we go on in this mission

God we thank you for the boldness he has displayed over the past several years that we've known him and we pray Father that you will give him that boldness to continue God we thank you for his faithfulness in preaching your word God we pray that you would have the strength to continue that in these coming months and years God God we praise you that he has remained steadfast through trial after trial and God we pray that his trials will come he will remain steadfast as he leads us

faithfully God we thank you for the man of God that he is God help us to imitate him as he imitates you God help us as he leads us congregation and each member that they would conform more and more to the image of Christ God we thank you so much for him and his family God we just pray blessings over him in Jesus name

Most heavenly, gracious Father, we are so grateful today as we come together as a church to lift this man up to you. We are thankful for it for Brother James and his family and who they are as people of integrity, walking forward in the goodness as we move forward to grow your kingdom. Lord, we lift him up to you. We lift them up to you. We pray, Lord, that as you lead them and as they continue to hold fast to what you have for us, that we continue to walk towards the everlasting kingdom that is to come, that he leads us well, that we follow well, and that we listen to your word at all times.

I'm so thankful that he is a man to put your word first in all things and to show us the example of how to do that. Pray, Lord, that you give them the strength to continue to do so in spite of all that's around us.

[52:23] We love you, Lord. It's in your name that we pray. Amen. Amen. Pastor James, we look forward to the continued growth and guidance you will bring to our church.

I will now hand things over to you, the moderator. Well, the rest of us we've been offered to go to know. So, thank you guys.

Our prayer is that the latter years of my ministry will be greater than the first. And that that charge that I give to you as a church will be equally applied to me.

And that you run this race together. Amen. Amen. Amen. All right. A couple of items. We'll go through them pretty quickly. Number one, as we move to this item on the agenda, we're going to consider the adoption of the proposed budget for the upcoming year.

Details have been provided. We've got a copy of that over the last several weeks that we've had it out. There is a copy there on the table back there if you haven't gotten one.

[53:43] At this point, are there any questions coming from concerning the budget? I guess I need to take the motion first. Let me entertain a motion that we adopt the budget as presented for 2024.

I'll take that from one of you. David Douglas and John Nettles said, is there any discussion on the budget?

And seeing none, I don't think the Nettles child would be the real question, but that's the beauty of having kids in our service.

They can ask too. But since there is no further discussion on that, then all in favor of adopting the 2024 budget as presented, let me know by saying aye.

Aye. And those opposed, by saying nay. The ayes have it. The 2024 budget is approved. Also move to adopting the documents as presented in the handbook.

[54:52] This includes adopting the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith as referenced in the handbook. Also the mission and mission statements, the core values, and the church covenant.

All of those statements have been provided now for a few months, I think, at this point. Do I hear a motion for us to adopt these statements as presented in the handbook?

No focus and seconded by print. No further discussion. And all in favor of adopting these statements as presented, we'd let it be known by saying aye.

Aye. And those opposed, by saying nay. And the ayes have it. And that, I think, is all the business we have to do, isn't it?

Great and efficient. Our first business meeting took five minutes. Amen. All right. Well, man, I can't say how excited I am. This is the beginning of a new day for us.

[56:00] You, I hereby announce that you are no longer a cello ship. You, I hereby announce that you are no longer a cello ship. Amen.

So I'm going to pray, and we're going to dismiss. We're going to get about our, oh, we've got a picture to take. So we're going to gather here up in the front and finalize this with a commemorative photo of all of us together.

So we're going to move these tables and stuff, and let's gather here as best we can. We'll get this picture taken pretty quickly, and then we'll do our amazing cleanup job and knock this thing out.

So ready, set, go. Go.
Go. Go. Go. Go. Go. Go. Go. Go. Go.
Go. Go. Go. Go. Go. Go. Go. Go. Go. Go. Go.