

MEMBERSHIP



*"Ask of me, and I will make
the nations your inheritance,
the ends of the earth
your possession"*
Psalm 2:8

DISCOVER



ICF

www.icfsandiego.org

Jesus replied: “Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”
– **Matthew 22:36-40**

NAME: _____

WELCOME

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We praise God for adopting us into His family by making us His children. What a privilege it is to be part of the family of God! We exist as a church to love the Lord Jesus Christ and to extend His love to others. Our goal in everything is to glorify the name of the Lord.



Our passion is to provide a place for people to gather and have a life-changing encounter with our Lord Jesus Christ. We are a multi-lingual, Spirit-filled, and Bible-believing Indian Church. It is our prayer to be like the New Testament church that teaches the Word of God, worships Him passionately, loves one another sacrificially and is willing to go out and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We function as a family unit and believe that the rule of law in the church is the rule of love. God has connected us for a great purpose: to be His ambassadors in the city of San Diego. There is much to do for the Lord. Let us work together for the expansion of His kingdom.

In His service, by His grace,

Pastor Alexander John

HISTORY

ICF's beginnings can be traced to 2003, when three families came together to pray regularly. For many months, the meetings took place on alternate Saturdays. The Lord directed more families to this fellowship, especially those moving to San Diego for work. As the number of families increased, we began to meet weekly in people's homes.



For a couple of years, we gathered on the first Sunday of the month and met each Saturday evening on all other weekends. After much prayer and deliberation, we decided to give this fellowship a name. India Christian Fellowship was named with the twofold vision of reaching the Indian population in the Greater San Diego area and worshipping God with those who have a heart for the Indian community.

In answer to our prayers and by His divine purpose, we grew in size and number, and soon required a larger meeting place. In June 2010, God led us to *Growing Place Montessori School* on Pomerado Road in Poway, where we continued with our Saturday evening services. In less than a month, the Lord again opened the door for us to move into a larger, more convenient location. On July 3rd, 2010, we started to gather at the *Community Church of Poway*, where we now meet on Sundays.

"For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus" – Philippians 1:6

PURPOSE, MISSION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

WHY DO WE EXIST?

We exist to reach the immigrant population in Southern California with the transforming gospel of Jesus Christ and to make them His disciples through genuine relationships and sound biblical teaching.



OUR MISSION

To know, love, and share the Lord Jesus Christ and to love one another

HOW DO WE DO THIS?

- *We know Christ through sound biblical teaching and preaching, and through prayer*
- *We love Christ through our obedience to Him and by loving our neighbors and loving one another in meaningful fellowship*
- *We share Christ by being His witnesses in all domains of life*

WHO WE ARE

We are a **Christ**-centered, **Spirit**-led, and **Word**-based church

We value family

We believe that God created family units, and that God can do amazing things in our community, city and the world when individual family systems are strengthened and when the church functions as one family unit.

We seek God through prayer

We emphasize prayer – both personal and corporate – as a way to know, experience, and love God.

We model servant leadership

Our leaders lead by example and through acts of service.

We encourage balance in everything

Spiritual & secular, public & private, Word & Spirit.

We practice generosity and hospitality

We strive to be compassionate and contribute to the needs of those around us.

We make disciples, not converts

We live out the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.

We support substance over style

We discern between principles and methods.

*“Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” – 1
Corinthians 10:31*

STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe the Bible to be the only infallible, authoritative Word of God. It is the final authority and foundation for all our doctrines and practice. (*2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21; John 10:35*)



We believe there is one God, eternally existent in three Persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We believe that all things were created by Him and for Him. (*Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:21-22; Matthew 28:19; Colossians 1:16*)

We believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His virtuous sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious atoning death through His shed blood, in His victorious bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His visible personal return in power and glory. (*John 1:1, 14; Matthew 1:18-25; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Hebrews 10:12-13*)

We believe that God created human beings, male and female, in His own image. He created them sinless, equal in value, dignity and worth. (*Genesis 1:26-28; Ephesians 5:22-6:4; 1 Timothy 3:1-7*)

We believe that, as a result of the Fall, all people are sinners by nature and in need of a Savior, and that Jesus Christ is the one and only Savior of the world. We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is essential.

That salvation is by grace alone through faith in Him. We believe that all who call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. (*Romans 3:10; Romans 3:23; Romans 5:18-19; Matthew 1:21; 1 John 4:14; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 10:9*)

We believe that those who are saved must be baptized in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit to be identified with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. (*Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 2:41, Romans 6:3-4*)

We believe the Holy Spirit was sent by the Father and the Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling and power, the Christian is enabled to live an empowered life of fruitfulness according to God's calling. (*John 14:16-17; John 16:7-11; Titus 3:5-6; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 1:13-14; Acts 1:8; Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12-14; 1 Peter 4:10-11*)

We believe that all of the gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in Scripture are available and active in His church today. (*John 14:16-17; John 16:7-11; Titus 3:5-6; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 1:13-14; Acts 1:8; Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12-14; 1 Peter 4:10-11*)

We believe in the literal return of Jesus Christ to the earth for the consummation of God's redemptive plan. (*Jude 1:14; Revelation 19:11-16; Revelation 20:4*)

We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost – the saved unto the resurrection of life, and the lost unto the resurrection of damnation. (*Daniel 12:2; John 5:25-29; Revelation 21:1-22:5*)

We believe that Christ commanded the Church to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every person, making disciples and baptizing those who believe in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit and teaching them. (*Mathew 28:18-20*)

We believe there is one church, the body of Christ, consisting of men and women from every tribe, tongue, people and nation. We believe that each local congregation is an expression of that universal church. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. We also believe in the mutual accountability of believers. (*Ephesians 4:4; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Revelation 5:9; Acts 2:42-47*)

“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

ICF ORGANIZATION

It is our understanding that the church is an organism that functions as a body. We refer to ourselves as the ICF Family. But, there are organizational structures we need for the smooth running as a group. Our organizational system follows the New Testament model for smooth functioning of the church.



The New Testament pattern for church government is that of a group of elders in each local church who govern and guide the body of Christ in that place. The apostle Paul established churches and he appointed elders. In following the New Testament pattern, we are a pastor-led elders-run church.

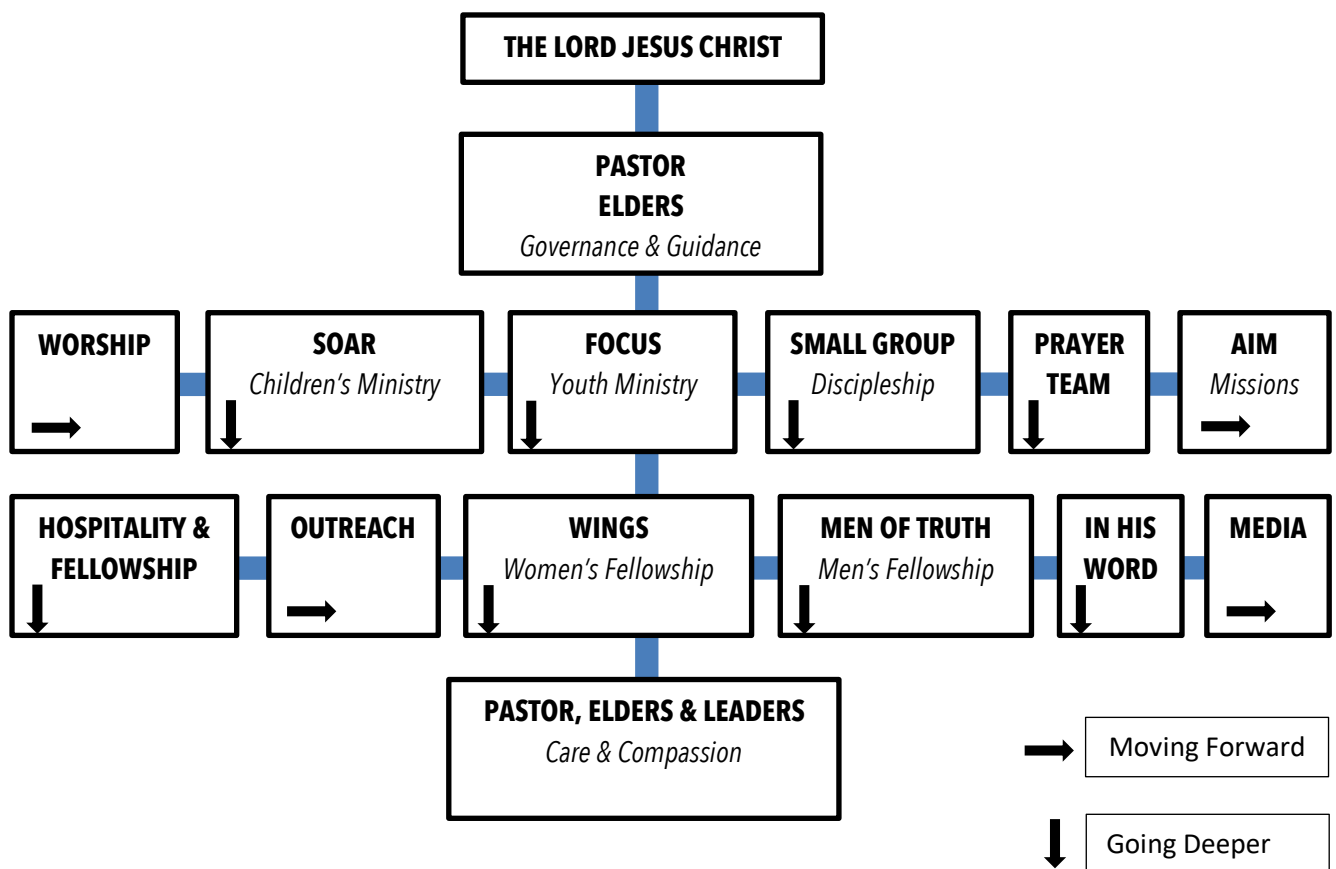
The Lord Jesus Christ is the head and we constitute the body. There are different functions to each organ in the body and Scripture exhorts each organ to function well.

ICF functions as a family unit. We love, care for, and support each other. We encourage each other to walk in holiness. Our goal is to grow together, serve together, and live together as a community for the glory of God.

We are all servants and *"with humility of mind regard one other as more important than"* ourselves (**Philippians 2:13**).

Our model for servant leadership is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ who *"poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded"* (**John 13:5**).

We serve one another having the mind of Christ, who emptied Himself and humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.



"The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve" – Matthew 20:28

MINISTRIES

SOAR CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Having a safe environment to teach our children the Bible and to impart godly values to them was one of our prayers from the beginning. As God sent more families and children to ICF, our Children's Ministry has become vital in fulfilling our mission. We have a dynamic and dedicated team of teachers and helpers.



FOCUS YOUTH MINISTRY

Through this ministry, we seek to be an intergenerational church catering to the needs of our youth and encouraging them to serve God with passion. The legacy we seek to leave behind is a generation of Godly leaders who follow after God's own heart.

WORSHIP TEAM

We have teams leading English and Indian language worship. Worship is central to expressing our love for God for all He is worth. We seek to lift His name through songs in various languages and music of different styles. Our multilingual services reflect a glimpse of worship in heaven where saints from every tribe, nation and language are represented.

SMALL GROUPS

Our desire is for all members of ICF to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Thus, we choose to be discipleship-oriented and not event-oriented. We meet regularly in each other's homes for studying God's Word and for prayer and fellowship. Our Small Group gatherings allow people to have an intimate relationship with each other and to study the Bible in depth.

WINGS – WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The women of ICF currently meet every month to encourage and edify each other. This ministry is a platform for women to grow and serve God in various capacities in the church and community.

MEN OF TRUTH – MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The men of ICF meet regularly for fellowship, study, and prayer. The ministry provides a safe space for cultivating honesty, integrity, and accountability to fight Satan, wickedness, and personal temptation.

HOSPITALITY & FELLOWSHIP TEAM

This ministry strives to make newcomers feel welcomed, helping where needed and facilitating a time of fellowship each week. Fellowship, especially, is as sacred and vital as worship as it facilitates meaningful conversations and builds relationships.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

This ministry brings individuals and families together to regularly intercede for various needs in the church.

BIBLE READING

It is our desire to grow deep in the knowledge and understanding of God's Word, which is the foundation of our doctrine and practices. We read the Bible in a systematic manner and keep each other accountable to spend time in the Word daily.

MISSIONS

AIM - Ascend India Ministries is the global mission arm of ICF. As a church, we have a specific focus and burden for mission work in India. We support local missionaries, as well as organizations that train native missionaries, in various states of India. Pastor John Mathai serves as the director of AIM in India.

LOCAL OUTREACH

We exist to reach out to the Indian immigrant community in the San Diego area with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We do this through various activities and events.

"As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" – 1 Peter 4:10

MEMBERSHIP

At ICF, we believe that while salvation is a personal matter between an individual and God, growth in Christ is possible only through community and fellowship with one another. We believe that being a part of the local church can help a Christian person grow in his or her faith. We value accountability with one another and the exercising of spiritual gifts in the context of the local church. The guiding Bible verse for us in regards to church membership is **1 Corinthians 12:27-28**:

"Now you are the body of Christ, and individual members of it. And God has placed these in the church."

The Bible defines "members" differently than the secular culture does. Individual members of the church are essential parts of a whole. The Apostle Paul likens the church to a body, and each church member to different parts of the body - some are eyes and ears while others are hands and feet. He writes, *"For as the body is one and has many parts, and all the parts of that body, though many, are one body - so also is Christ"* (**1 Corinthians 12:12**). Membership at ICF means that we value each individual as a necessary part of the whole body.



Furthermore, the biblical model of membership in the local church is not about receiving, but instead about giving. It is not about being served, but instead about serving others. It is not about rights, but rather about responsibilities. It is not about privileges, but sacrifices.

Membership at ICF means that we are all uniquely different, but we all work together and serve one another, while valuing all ministries equally. Members strengthen the local church by contributing their time, talents, and treasure.

It is important for a Christian to be part of the local church. Without a local church one can never grow or exercise our spiritual gifts. We need each other for community and accountability.

DOCTRINAL PRACTICES

SALVATION

Having been created in the image of God, man was destined to enjoy an intimate relationship with God and to fulfill His will here on earth. But because of Adam and Eve's willful disobedience in the garden, sin entered into the world, and affected all humanity. Hence, we are all separated from God, spiritually dead, and destined for physical death and eternal separation from God. **(Genesis 1-3, Romans 1: 18-32, Romans 3, Romans 5, Ephesians 2:1-3)**

The Greek words used for "salvation" (*soter*) and "being born again" (*antohen*) have similar meanings to "deliverance" or "new creation." To be born again means to be made alive by God. A person who is spiritually dead has no life by which he/she can respond to spiritual things, much less live a spiritual life. A spiritually dead person is alienated from God and therefore alienated from life. A dead person needs to be made alive and that is what salvation gives - eternal spiritual life. When we become children of God, we are no longer alienated from the life of God. We become spiritually alive through the regenerative work of the Holy Spirit when we believe and identify with the death and resurrection of Christ, leading to intimacy with God.

The born again experience is unseen by the human eye, but can be experienced by any human heart that turns to God through faith in Christ. It is evidenced in a transformed life.

1 Peter 1:23 "For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God."

Romans 10:9-10 "If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved."

The new birth is attributed to the implantation of the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit in us.

We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins as the only sufficient sacrifice, offering the atonement of sins for all mankind through His death, burial, and resurrection. While salvation is available to all, it is only experienced by those who respond to His gracious gift by faith apart from works. For those who do respond, we are regenerated and baptized by the Holy Spirit, becoming children of God, given a new nature and placed into the universal body of Christ, making us eternally secure in Him. As a result of our new relationship with God through His Son Jesus, we are now called to a life of submission to the Holy Spirit, manifesting spiritual fruit, and walking in good works that God has prepared beforehand for us to do. (**John 1:12; 3:3-6, 16; 14:6, Titus 3:4-7, Acts 4:12, Romans 3:21-26, Ephesians 1:7, Ephesians 2:8-9, Hebrews 10:10-12, 1 John 5:11-13, Galatians 3:26**)

BAPTISM & COMMUNION

Baptism and communion are the two ordinances Christ has established for the church to practice. Both are symbolic in nature. Ordinances as symbolic reenactments of the gospel message that Christ lived, died, was raised from the dead, ascended to heaven, and will someday return. Rather than requirements for salvation, ordinances are visual aids to help us better understand and appreciate what Jesus Christ accomplished for us in His redemptive work. Baptism is a one-time symbolic action taken to identify with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Communion, on the other hand, is practiced continually and regularly until the second coming of the Lord.

BAPTISM

We are called as followers of Jesus to be baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The Book of Acts records various individuals immediately being baptized upon following Jesus Christ. It is a public expression of an inner conviction and where one identifies with Jesus Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. Baptism is an outward declaration and sign of the inward transformation and a commitment to live for Jesus. Baptism demonstrates death to self and new life with and in Jesus. At ICF, we practice immersion baptism, because Jesus was baptized in this manner and it is the practice seen in all accounts of baptism in the New Testament. We believe in a believer's baptism, meaning we baptize those who have made a personal decision to follow Jesus.

COMMUNION

Communion is the second sacrament Jesus asked His followers to practice regularly. As we partake in the bread and the cup of our Lord, we are reminded of His sacrifice and grace towards us and we proclaim His death until he comes. We believe that communion is a symbol, pointing to a deeper spiritual reality of what Jesus has done for us and we celebrate that truth together as a community of faith. At ICF, we practice an open table, meaning everyone who is a born-again, baptized follower of Jesus is welcome to partake in communion.

HOLY LIVING

Holy living is a result of a right relationship with God by believing in Jesus Christ as Savior (accepting His gift of eternal life). We are set apart from the world for the Lord and live according to the Word.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. **Romans 12:1-2**

"Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'" **1 Peter 1:13-16**

"Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her" – Ephesians 5:25

MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior, and having been baptized as a believer and agreeing with the philosophy and structure of India Christian Fellowship (ICF), I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite in partnership as a member of this local church family.



In so doing, I commit myself to God and to the other members of ICF to protect the unity of the church by acting in love to others (1 Peter 1:22), by refusing to gossip (Ephesians 4:29), and by following the leadership (Hebrews 13:17).

Furthermore, I commit to share in the responsibility of the church by praying for its growth and spiritual development (Colossians 4:12), by inviting the unchurched to attend (Luke 14:23), and by warmly welcoming those who visit (Romans 15:7).

I will serve the ministry of the church by allowing the Holy Spirit to release His gifts and talents through me (1 Peter 4:10), by being equipped to serve (Ephesians 4:11-12), and by developing a servant's heart (Philippians 2:3-4, 7).

I will support the testimony of the church by attending faithfully (Hebrews 10:25), by living a godly life (Philippians 1:27), and by giving regularly (1 Corinthians 16:2).