

# The Church Family Fellowship – Foundations of our Faith

## An Introduction To Our Process

### I. Foundations of our faith – Process Introduction (Series Logo Slide #1)

*(Introductory Note: Tom to kick off or introduce to a new Topical Series that will be done by each of our Elders over different time frames explaining who we are as a Church and what we are all about. In the Intro use some of our old church slides much like family vacation slides.)*



When it comes to the Foundation of The Church the Word of God is clear (Slide #2)  
**The Church is Built on The Rock of Jesus Christ!**

#### Matthew 16:13-18

<sup>13</sup> When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"

<sup>14</sup> They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others, Elijah; still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

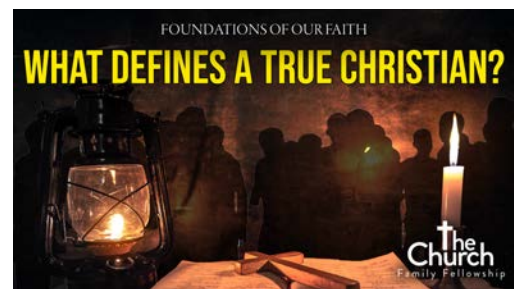
<sup>15</sup> "But you," he asked them, "who do you say that I am?"

<sup>16</sup> Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

<sup>17</sup> Jesus responded, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father in heaven.

<sup>18</sup> And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

But there are so many Christian churches and with so many different styles of worship, and religious practices, and even organizational forms of government, so which one should I choose to be a part of and why? Well, in of preliminary message for this series Pastor Lenny provided us with (Previous Logo Slide #3) a great foundation to help answer this question by pointing out "What Defines A True Christian?" thereby he pointed out the importance of "The Need for a Creed!" Specifically, he identified the Nicæan Creed referencing the fact that this year we are celebrating the 1700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this significant statement that defines the foundation of the Christian Faith.



Which brings us to the topic of today's sermon within our Foundations of the Faith Series, (Today's Logo Slide #4) called "An Introduction to The Church". This is the first of our five (5) sermon series that will answer the questions of: how did this church come to be, with whom is its associated, and what are its unique distinctions?

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*To understand the answers to these questions we'll need just a short lesson in understanding Church History and Church Government. But let's first begin with (Original Church Logo Slide #5) seeing the very first Church Family Fellowship logo and dive into a bit of our history.*



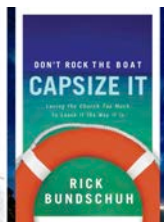
The Word of God tells us that He brings (Slide #6) “beauty from ashes”.

### Isaiah 61:3

*To provide for those who mourn in Zion; to give them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, festive oil instead of mourning, and splendid clothes instead of despair. And they will be called righteous trees, planted by the Lord to glorify him.*

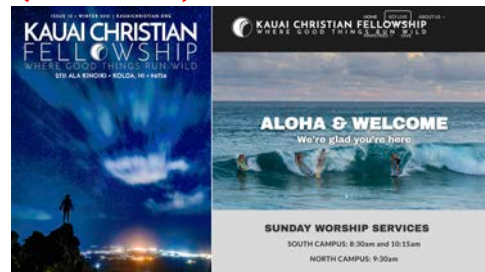
And so, it was with this Body of Christ in its humble beginnings as, The Church Family Fellowship. You see for many years ago God had placed it upon my (Tom) heart to start a new church, with a different kind of pastoral concept. Yet, at that time it was unclear exactly what that leadership concept would look like. Additionally, it just never truly seemed like the right timing to do so. Therefore, it just kept getting pushed to the back burner, until...

In the summer of 2017 when God gave Tom and Lee Ann a very clear vision along with a successful model of what this “different kind of pastoral concept” might look like. It was while visiting a church in Kauai, called (Slide #7) Kauai Christian Fellowship. After the service there we spoke with (add Slide #8) one of the Pastors,

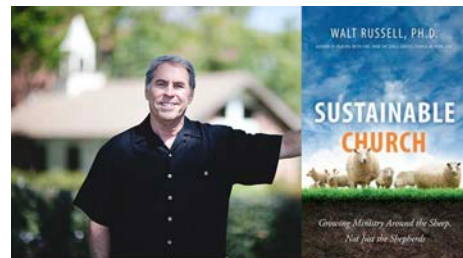


**Rick Bundschuh.**

He not only explained how their church began, but he also



shared their concept of team pastoring, and he gave us a copy of his book, called (Slide #9) “**Don’t Rock the Boat, Capsize it**”. It was only a couple of weeks later that Lee Ann and I (Tom) experienced a third major hurt in ministry. So, after a lot of prayer and seeking direction from the Lord, we both felt it was time to start that new church concept here on the mainland. We shared this concept with Cleve and Tari, and they loved the idea. Cleve then shared it with Lenny, who suggested another book, (Slide #10) by **Walt Russell**, called (Slide #11) “**Sustainable Church**”, and when we read it, we knew it was a perfect fit.



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So, we invited Lenny and Christy to join in on this new church vision and they were excited to join us.



With our three-pastoral team, and wives, in place we began planning and talking until **January of 2018**, when we had our first church planting concept meeting (Slide #12) in which we shared the vision for a truly new church plant called “The Church Family Fellowship” with (Slide #13) about 50 of our friends on **January 24, 2018**. We tried to make it clear (Slide #14) that this was NOT going to be your typical church, but I’m not so sure we communicated it all that effectively way back when; honestly, we were still learning what that all meant ourselves.

But the concepts we did share at that time were that we had several distinguishing differences in mind, including: (Slide #11 Original Logo) the Name of Church,



(Slide #12) the Structure and Governance of it (Elder Led), including the **dramatic difference** that we (Slide #13) would NOT have a senior pastor model, everything in this church (Slide #14) would be done in Teams and we would all be volunteers (Slide #15) (*in other words, even the teaching pastors would all have outside “tentmaking” jobs*), and the biggest

distinguishing feature of this church’s ministry focus would be determined by the (Slide #16) gifting and leading that the Spirit of God pours out among us within the context of our various ministry Teams. We believed this to be more in line with the original concepts of how the early church that Jesus Christ established back in the gospels and through the work of His Holy Spirit as He did in the book of Acts.

Though we attempted to explain all this, since most people’s concepts of church were limited to the traditions and patterns of the western civilization church models, now having been around for generations, trying to explain this original concept difference ended up being a bigger project than we had thought. We then chose to take the first year trying to explain to whomever God would bring into our path, what we understood from the early church examples in the Bible and how we will be planning to operate as a body of believers – The Church – as we started a regular



weekly (Slide #18) Bible Study meeting on February 7, 2018, and our first sermon was Pastor Lenny preaching on “The Need for a Creed” – just like last week! We then went through a series on The Church Family Fellowship’s Statement of Faith for about (Slide #19) one year we were a church of 8 people.

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Now, seven years later, we have grown and shrunk, grown and shrunk into a Church Family (Slide #20) of about 30 to 40 people who regularly Fellowship on a weekly basis, both on (Slide #21) Sundays and Thursday nights (Slide #22), in addition to our (Slide #23) monthly activities and a monthly Saturday (Slide #24) Love Feasts (where we gather for a shared meal, fellowship time, worship, a short devotion, and communion).

We have been doing this by God's Grace as a growing Body of Christ through the gifts of His Spirit as He works through each one of us. Currently we are



meeting for our Sunday services (Slide #25) at 9:30 AM and Thursday nights at 7:00 PM at our new permanent location 4130 Adams Street, Riverside, CA 92504, where we continue to have our regular activities and fellowship times as well. We have a Common Vision and Mission Statement as we serve and grow...



### Our Vision & Mission Statements:

(Slide #26)

#### Vision Statement:

“Our desire and design is **to see all believers maturing and serving effectively in unity so all people embrace God in an intimate relationship, giving Him all the glory.**”

(Slide #27)

#### Mission Statement:

“The Church exists by God's grace as a community of believers equipping Christ-Followers to exercise the grace gifts given them for **glorifying God, growing up the body, and going out to reach the world.**”

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**Our Vision and Mission Statements** = Both reflect the (Slide #28) Great Commission and (Slide #29) Great Commandments, which are the directions given to The Church by Jesus Christ Himself. And if you go visit (Slide #30) The Church Family Fellowship's website ([www.thechurchhome.com](http://www.thechurchhome.com)) you will find additional helpful information there regarding our service, times, links to our YouTube channel and social media connections.

However, my purpose here today is not only share with you the history and beginnings of this local body of Christ, but to also provide you with the context and intention of this new 5 sermon series called...

(Slide #31)

### The Church Family Fellowship – Process & Purpose “Find Where You Belong”

(Slide #32)

**The Church's Process:** is to be Gifted by The Spirit, so we can Grow Organically through the Outworking of the Holy Spirit as we Exercise these Grace Gifts Confirmed by the Church Leadership as He has given them to us for the building up of the Body of Christ.

(Slide #33)

**The Church's Purpose:** is to be Glorifying God by Reflecting His Son, Jesus Christ, as seen within our Vision and Mission Statements, which are defined by the Word of God (The Bible) and summarized or highlighted for us within our Statement of Faith.

(Slide #34)

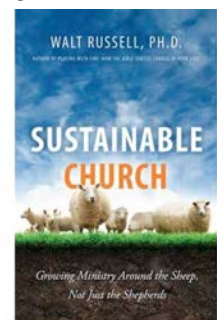
**What do we mean by the Church's Process is Organic:** this means it is a natural and free flowing gifting of the Spirit of God given to help organically grow the body of Christ and it is confirmed and supported by the Elders/Overseers of the Church. To be “Organic” does not mean something is without Organization. For we know that “*God is not a God of Disorder or Chaos but of peace*” (1 Corinthians 14:33). Additionally, since one of the Spiritual Gifts is the gift of Administration, or Organization, it is not our intention to legalistically nor religiously require people to qualify, instead our focus will be on confirming what is evident that the Spirit of God is doing in each individual and encourage them along their Spiritual Growth Process and Commitment. Simply put we would say that The Church is an Organic Organization.

Clearly, as I have already pointed out, the foundation and sole definition of The Church Family Fellowship is laid out for us in the pages of Scripture. And yet as is often the case, we get diverted from so many of the original intentions of the early church two additional books that have helped us to refocus our design and structure, mentioned earlier were:

**Rick Bundschuh's (Slide #35) “Don't Rock the Boat, Capsize it”**

and

**Walt Russell's (Slide #36) “Sustainable Church”**



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In Rick's book (Slide #37) he cites an **example of typical Church attitudes** and traditions that so often get in the way of the spiritual growth and development of the Body of Christ when we hear **the story called, "The Inner Sanctum" (page 75).**

In terms of (Slide #38) **Church leadership, Rick** speaks about it in an interesting way (page 38-40).

You see for The Church Family Fellowship Rick's book captures (Slide #39) **the Heart of what we are about**, we are not about doing things because that's how it has always been done or making certain that we protect everything that we have because that's what good stewards do. Our heart is to invest in and love on people generously (like the Prodigal Father) and even though it may get messy at times we really want to see people of all walks of life come to Jesus and grow to reflect him even more, just like we should be doing.

Now **whereas Rick's book reflects the Heart of who The Church Family Fellowship is, Walt Russell's book, he speaks about the Mind and the Theology of who we are.**

(Slide #40)

(Slide #41)

### **WHO IS THE PASTOR OF YOUR CHURCH?**

"Periodically I will do some teaching in one of the mega-churches of Southern California where I live. If I happen to mention that I spoke at such a church, invariably people will say, "Oh, isn't that Pastor X's church?" I will jokingly use the occasion to express the biblical perspective by saying, "No. It's Jesus' church, but Pastor X is there." You can imagine the nervous laughs and sometimes guilty looks that I get in response to my statement. But the point needs to be made: No church is "Pastor X's church."

(Slide #42)

**"PASTORS" ARE ACTUALLY "ELDERS" OR "OVERSEERS"** (page 187 – 189)

"Few biblical terms have been as distorted and redefined throughout church history as the term "pastor." By our contemporary usage, one would be hard-pressed to connect the New Testament's definition and description of pastoral ministry with those that we call "pastors" today. Therefore, let's take a brief look at the central New Testament passages that reveal the three terms that give the three perspectives of the leaders of local churches:

- The primary term for local church leaders is "elders" (literally "older men"). This term has a long heritage throughout Israel's history and the word even appears seven times in Acts for "the elders of the people" of Israel. There are 16 New Testament references to Christian elders of local churches (10 in Acts and 6 in the epistles).
- A secondary term for local church leaders is "overseers." As a noun it is used once for "the office of overseer" (1 Tim. 3:1), four times for the overseers of local churches (Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:2; and Titus 1:7), and once for Jesus as "the Overseer of your souls" (1 Pet. 2:25). It appears once as a verb in a textually debated passage in 1 Peter 5:2 where the Apostle Peter exhorts elders to be "exercising oversight" for the flock of God among you."
- "The other secondary leadership term is "shepherd" and it only appears as a verb to exhort church leaders to shepherd the flock of God in Acts 20:28 and 1

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Peter 5:2. It is quite noteworthy that the noun “shepherd” (“pastor”) is never applied to local church leaders, but only to Jesus in the New Testament.

- “20Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, 21equip you with everything good that you may do his will.” (Heb. 13:20-21a ESV)
- “For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.” (1 Pet. 2:25; my translation)
- [the Apostle Peter to elders] “And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you [under-shepherds] will receive the unfading crown of glory.” (1 Pet. 5:4)

The conclusion demanded from the New Testament terms and the usage of these terms for our local church leaders is that we have isolated and glorified the wrong term—“pastor”—for a local church leader. In so doing we have lost two very important things:

- 1) the plurality of the group of elders who are to oversee as under-shepherds and
- 2) our focus on the only one the New Testament calls “the shepherd”: Jesus.”

“The elders’ role is to shepherd God’s church which Jesus purchased with His own blood. But the elders “posture is as under-shepherds who are among God’s people, not over them. This language is very intentional in emphasizing the relational connectedness of under-shepherds to the flock, not an “otherness” and certainly not an “overness”. This is why Peter underscores the relational dynamic when he says, (Slide # 43)

“nor yet as lording over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.” (1 Pet. 5:3)”

(Slide # 44)

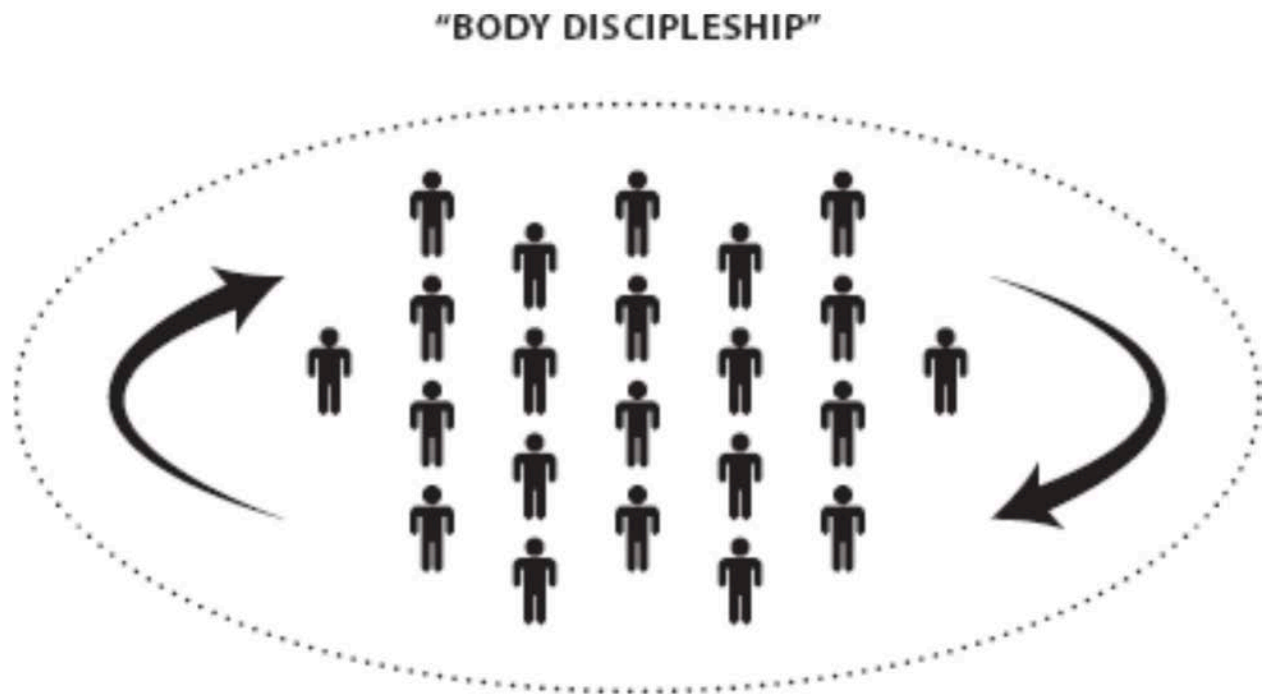
### **THE APOSTLES IMPLEMENTED “BODY DISCIPLESHIP”**

“The apostles primarily interpreted the discipleship charge of the Great Commission in corporate, body of Christ terms, not in individualistic discipling terms. The primary means of both developing disciples in local churches and multiplying new communities of believers (church-planting) is through “body discipleship.” Body discipleship is the body of Christ building itself up in love both qualitatively and quantitatively through the proper working of each individual body part equipped to discover and use their spiritual gifts to fulfill the church’s historical mission (Eph. 4:11-16).

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(Slide #45)



“...from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.” (Ephesians 4:16 NASB)”

“Older, more mature believers still build into the lives of younger Christians, but not in a discipler/disciple sense per se. Rather, we should relate as co-disciples with each other as we all follow Christ as His disciples.”

Again, being a disciple of Christ is not a transitory role. The emphasis is upon working together as fellow-disciples to build into each other’s lives as each one of us directly relates to Christ the discipler. Paul’s use of peer terms to describe his “disciples” validates this as well. Paul never referred to any of the people he disciplined (in the popular sense of the word) as “my disciple.” In fact, the word *mathētēs*, disciple, never occurs in the Pauline epistles. Rather, Paul uses 17 different sun-cognates in Greek (sun meaning “with, co, or fellow” when combined with other nouns) to refer to those many would call “his disciples.”<sup>9</sup>

Excerpt From  
Sustainable Church  
Walt Russell

<https://books.apple.com/us/book/sustainable-church/id1117137410>

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(Slide #46)

### CONCLUSION

“What does all this mean for the sustainable, organic church and her equipping of the saints? It means we should “lead” in light of Jesus’ vision for our local body as reflected in His gifting of the members and in the collective heart and passion for ministry His flock possesses.

I cannot emphasize this point enough. The under-shepherds’ vision for ministry for a local church is therefore informed by the personality of the flock and tempered by the resources that Jesus has graciously given to that local congregation. Both the authority to shepherd and the resulting vision for ministry are derived from the Good Shepherd. Our task as under-shepherds is to determine what emphasis in ministry Jesus has given us through the grace-gifts of our local body. The vision for a local church is an organic thing coming from each church’s collective giftedness. Therefore, we use our delegated authority as delegated under-shepherds who function as delegated servant-leaders who are supposed to equip God’s people to fulfill the delegated vision. What do we have that does not flow from Jesus’ hand? It is all derived from and delegated by Him.

“Perhaps we will have to rediscover a few things:

- A state-of-the-art building is a luxury, not a necessity for a local church.
- A biblical model of sustainable leadership is built around a plurality of under-shepherds, most of whom are bi-vocational.
- We must train and equip the saints more effectively and intensely in local churches so we can produce more mature believers and leaders.

Perhaps we will have to rediscover the model of the sustainable church that has been right before our eyes in God’s Word the whole time.”

Excerpt From  
Sustainable Church  
Walt Russell

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### Series Outline:

(Slide #47)

**“The Church Family Fellowship – Process & Purpose  
*Find Where You Belong*”**

**Who We Are, What We Are All About, & How to Get Connected?”**

(Slide #48)

**1. Introduction & Humble Beginnings Part 1** – Pastor Tom (Covering: Vision, Mission, Unique Distinctions, & Process)

(Slide #49)

**2. Salvation & Conversion Part 2** – Elder Brent (Covering: Acceptance of The Gospel, what happens at Conversion, New Believer Growth Process) (Key Verse is John 3:6-8, 16) “Whatever is born of the flesh is flesh...”

(Slide #50)

**3. Baptism & Body Fellowship Part 3** – Pastor Lenny (Covering: Baptism, Body Fellowship, & Testimony [*sharing your gospel story*]) (Key Verse is Matthew 28:19) “Go therefore, and make disciples...”

(Slide #51)

**4. Scripture Part 4** – Pastor Lenny (Covering: The Bible “God’s Word” is the Ultimate Authority, Inspired & Inerrant in its Original Writings) (Key Verse is

(Slide #52)

**5. Spiritual Gift & Service Discovery Part 5** – Pastor Ray (Covering: Learning about Grace Gifts, Spiritual Service, & Power of Teams) (Key Verse is Acts 2:38 “Repent and be Baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”)

(Slide #53)

**6. Family Connection & Ministry Confirmation Part 6** - Pastor Tom (Covering: Church Family Connection & Adoption, Spiritual Gifts & Ministry Confirmation, & Leadership Development) (Key Verses are Romans 8:14-16 “...you received the Spirit of Adoption...” Ephesians 4:12-13 “...to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ...” 3 John 1:8 “Therefore, we ought to support such people so that we can be coworkers with the truth.”)

### **3 Questions for the Sermon Review:**

1. Do you agree with our Mission and our Vision Statement? (go to the link at <https://www.thechurchhome.com/about-the-church/mission-statement/> And <https://www.thechurchhome.com/about-the-church/vision-statement/>) Yes, or No?
2. Do you agree with our Statement of Faith? (go to the link at <https://www.thechurchhome.com/statement-of-faith/>) Yes, or No?
3. We have no Senior Pastor at the Church Family Fellowship because Jesus Christ is the head of the church, the Chief Shepherd, so the Elders and Pastors of the church are “under-shepherds” or overseers of the church. True or False?