

Discover Greenbrier Church



Welcome!

Welcome! We are so glad you have taken the time out of your busy schedule to join us for *Discover Greenbrier!* It is my prayer that you will be inspired and blessed to learn about all God is doing in and through our church family. We have been blessed with many incredibly creative people who are learning to be faithful to Jesus Christ and His eternal Word.

In our first session you will catch a brief glimpse of the history, leadership and vision for Greenbrier Church. Then, you will learn about our foundations, the framework that guides our behaviors and shapes our passion. You will meet some of our staff, learn more about how our church “functions, “ and why we are passionate about the glory of God.

We have also planned a special time for you to discover your own S.T.O.R.Y. and where God might use you! By the end of our time together we hope you will understand more about our church family and learn where you can find greater significance by serving God as a part our spiritual family. It promises to be a great time together.

So let's get started!

What is God's intention for the local church?

From the beginning of time God's greatest desire was to express His love to those He created – and to have fellowship with them. In the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3) we read that God used to come and walk with Adam and Eve in the *“cool of the evening.”* Throughout history God has always sought out a people with whom He can share His love and through whom He can reach the world.

Isaiah 49:6 says: *“I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.”*

Today the spiritual family known as the **local church** represents the Body of Christ on the earth. Each church is a treasured possession of God. 1 Peter 2:9 says it this way:

“but you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

As you consider your role and commitment to Greenbrier Church consider these important truths. Belonging to a local church:

- Promotes **spiritual growth** and **character development** (Ephesians 4:16).
- Provides **protection** and **security** (Acts 20:28, I Peter 5:2).
- Provides a place for **authentic, accountable** relationships.
- Helps you discover your **unique calling** and God-given **gifts** that we call your S.T.O.R.Y.

- Provides a **leadership** structure to help you learn to live for God's glory and weather the storms of life.

“Obey your spiritual leaders and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they know they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this joyfully and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit.” (Hebrews 13:17)

How did Greenbrier Church come to be?

Greenbrier Congregational Christian Church was founded by Reverend Wally Gabel and a group of 31 people on January 29, 1981. Later that year, the church purchased the four acres of land on Volvo Parkway on which our church facility currently sits. By 1990 the church name was changed to Greenbrier Christian Fellowship, several building expansions were underway, and a church was planted in Florida. By 1993 a second Pastor, Bobby Hill was installed.

In November of 1995 the church had changed its name again, to New Life Christian Fellowship. The church was blessed with a season of growth, full-time missionaries were commissioned overseas and a multi-site strategy was launched to reach Hampton Roads. For the next nine years, New Life Christian Fellowship grew into a multi-site church, sent out an increasing number of short-term and long-term missionaries and began to grow. At the same time each of the multi-site congregations began to mature and were required by law to form their own legal church structures. It was a season of great favor and growth.

In 2005, after more than a year of prayer and discussion the elders of New Life Christian Fellowship @ Greenbrier made the bold decision to branch out on her own

and form a new local body of believers now known as **Greenbrier Church**. This decision was not made lightly or without a significant amount of prayer. We remain grateful and indebted to the pioneering leadership of Pastors Wally Gabel and Bobby Hill. Much of who we are today is a result of their labor of love and the foundations of worship, practical Bible teaching and missions that they laid.

Today we are led, not by a single leader, but rather through a **plurality of elders**. Greenbrier Church has forged a community that reflects its commitment to the glory of God and the expansion of His kingdom in Hampton Roads and throughout the world. Today, the **spiritual community** of Greenbrier Church is known by its' commitment to **Biblical teaching**, passionate and expressive **worship**, **Small Group** life, **global impact** and creative **outreach** to those in need. We summarize all we are and what we do in our mission: to **Glorify God**; to **Love His People**; and to **Expand His Kingdom**.

Who are we?

Perhaps the best way to describe the who, what, where, when, why and how of Greenbrier Church is to use the analogy of a house. The Psalmist teaches that

"Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain."

(Psalms 127:1)

Every house has:

- a **foundation**;
- a **framework** and
- **unique attributes** that make it distinct, but also
- help it **belong** to a larger community (it's what makes a house a home!)

Greenbrier Church is no different. We have a strong **foundation of doctrine**, **values** and a **mission** that helps us to be faithful to God's calling and to belong to His larger Body.

We believe that God loves both His universal church and every local church that honors Him and abides by His word. Jesus committed to build it when He said,

"I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not overcome it."

(Matthew 16:18)

Our Foundation:

We are an **historic, orthodox** spiritual community that bases its behavior on Jesus Christ and His Eternal Word. We have committed to three primary documents to help guide and shape our spiritual community:

The **Apostle's Creed**, our own **Standard of Behavior**, and **Statement of Faith**.

In a world full of pluralism, political tolerance and increasing universalism Greenbrier Church roots its identity and its doctrine in the:

Apostle's Creed

*I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.*

*I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,*

*was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*

*On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit,
God's holy and universal church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. AMEN.*

Many Christian communities throughout history have sought to **identify** themselves by:

- what they **value**,
- how they **behave** and
- with whom they **minister**.

We too, have also concluded that our own faith should be **measured** just as much by what we do and how we act as what we believe. Toward this end we have adopted a **Standard of Behavior**. It is the guiding principle by which all our ministry and spiritual life are measured.

Standard of Behavior

*We will base our lives on Jesus Christ and His Eternal Word.
In obedience to the Father and empowered by the Holy Spirit,*

*We will live in fellowship with others and be a witness of
His Kingdom that is both here and yet to come.*

We are willing to live for, suffer with and eventually rise like Jesus.

At the Core:

These three documents form the basis of our doctrine, offer a guideline for our values and help us define and focus on our mission. They weave into the fabric of everything we do, and who aspire to be.

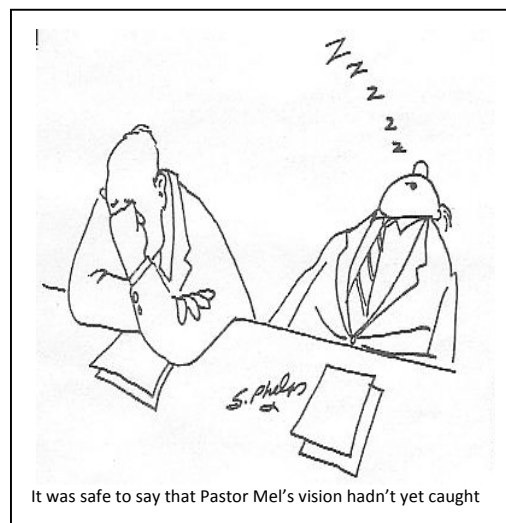
While these documents make our foundation strong it is our **mission** that provides the over-arching organizing principle from which everything in Greenbrier finds its purpose, function and strength.

Our **mission** is to:

1. **Glorify God;**
2. **Love His People;** and,
3. **Expand His Kingdom**

The Framework

The foundation of a house must be firm and immovable so that the framework, the part of the house that provides its shape



and interior dimensions, remains strong. Our framework, built on a strong foundation consists of a **Statement of Faith**, or doctrinal positions that is derived from the **Apostle's Creed**, values and behaviors that stem from our **Standard of Behavior** and a governing structure that is modeled after the NT era church. (Please take the time to read through our *Statement of Faith* and the detailed *Standard of Behavior* found in the "Background Documents" section of this manual.)

Church Government Structure

The last component of our church's framework is our church **leadership** or **government** structure. In keeping with the house analogy, our church leadership can be best understood from the perspective of a **large extended** family.

First, rather than being led by a single leader, Greenbrier Church is guided by a **plurality of elders** with two basic functions:

- **governance**, and
- overall **equipping** and **direction**.

The elders meet together each week for spiritual growth, accountability and help to guide our church on its spiritual journey. The **oversight** responsibilities of an elder (found in Titus, 1 and 2 Timothy) provide both governance (oversight) and an equipping (shepherding and caring) function. The position of a governing elder is responsible (liable) for the churches assets, its major directional and finance decision. The "safety net" or teaching team of elders provide a stable body of biblical equipping and a first option of spiritual counsel for our members.



The current Elder team is:

- Eric Watt
- Jim Parroco
- Brent VanNorman
- Michael Hartsfield
- Curtis Williams

Directional decisions for our church are made with a great sense of responsibility and accountability.

Issues are prayed over, filtered through the Word and processed with a healthy sense of deference, humility and unanimity.



What about disagreements?

Should there be a sense of **disagreement** or an impasse that arises, the elders have committed to:

- not **force** any issue,
- to **wait patiently** for further insight from the Lord ,and
- seek the **outside direction** and **spiritual counsel** from those to whom we are accountable.

Presently this position of outside authority for our local fellowship includes a number of men whose influence and authority help provide wisdom and counsel for our elders. At this time we recognize the need for a singular impartial advisor that can help provide clarity and direction, and also offer insight to help settle conflict as they may arise. Currently John Deal, from Richmond, VA, holds this position.

What role do the Pastors play?

The role of the **pastoral** and **management** staff for the church is charged with the responsibility to:

- **execute** and
- carry out the **directional plans**

laid out by the Elders. In this way there is a healthy balance of direction and execution. From time to time various task forces are also formed to provide support to the church staff and elders.

The next **level of leadership** at Greenbrier Church is comprised of a core of 60+ **volunteer** leaders who serve in the role of deacons and function as team coordinators for various aspects of Greenbrier's ministry. This includes:

- **small group** leaders,
- ministry **coordinators** of all age graded activity,
- **finance** committee members
- those who serve in **hospitality**,
- mobilize our body for **global impact**, and
- **local** outreach

We meet on a monthly basis for encouragement, vision casting and feedback.

How are big decisions made at Greenbrier Church?

Should any major directional decision arise within the Greenbrier Church, our “leadership core” would be invited into the deliberations for comments, expert assistance and, eventually, a sense of agreement from the Lord.

To some, these decision-making steps may seem long, arduous or circuitous, but we instead see them analogous to:

- a giant **extended** family
- having a lively **discussion**,
- **prayer**, and
- **agreement** over a meal.

It insures that we have full information, full disclosure with our leaders and an opportunity to learn and grow from one another.

What makes this House a Home?

After the foundation and the framework of a house are completed and secure, the next major “piece to the puzzle” are the unique distinctions, behaviors and ministries that take place. These ministries serve the “house” as a series of guiding activities that help continually focus the church on her vision, values and mission.

At Greenbrier Church there are three basic distinctions from which every activity is birthed, nurtured and grown:

- **Glorify God**
- **Love His People**
- **Expand His Kingdom**

Greenbrier Church exists to “**Glorify God**” in that our:

- **corporate** focus of worship,
- our **small group** life, and
- our individual **ministries**

are all centered on the person and work of Jesus Christ. Through our worship in song, our communion at the Lord's table, the ministry of the Word and our patience to wait on the gifts of the Spirit, Greenbrier Church seeks to be owned by and surrendered to the person and saving work of Jesus Christ.

We are also committed to "**Love His People**" through intentionally being God – centered in our relationships. We believe that the focus of our spirituality should extend beyond our times of corporate worship to include our **daily ministry** in the marketplace to which God has called us. We also place a high value on **non-formal ministry** that exists for every believer on the job, at school, in the neighborhood and with friends knowing that true discipleship grows from a place of Christ-likeness and godly mutual submission. Our **small groups** are the primary place where we learn and practice the priority of loving God's people.

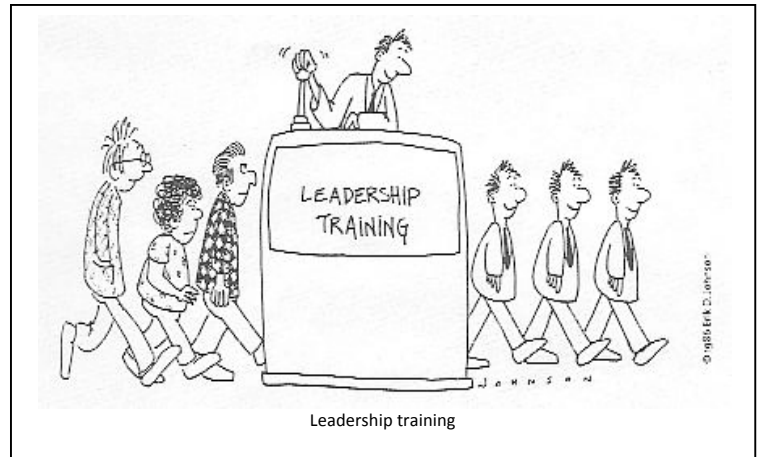
The last part of our mission statement: "**Expand His Kingdom**" is rooted in the announcement of Jesus "*the kingdom of God is here*" (Matt.4:17) and the ongoing ministry of His disciples in the NT. Many use the term, **apostolic**, which means "to be sent," primarily because Jesus Christ is both our Savior and our Sender. In John 17:18, He prayed to the Heavenly Father,

"As you sent me into the world, I have sent them in the world."

It is our **passionate purpose** to join the **mission of God** and "**Expand His Kingdom**" being sent from the strength of our spiritual family into the world. Expanding His Kingdom means that we take seriously the responsibility to:

- **care for**
- **mobilize**,
- **equip**, and
- send

every person to be an ambassador for Christ (2 Cor. 5:17-20) and to prioritize the needs of the orphans, widows and the unreached (James 1:27).



Finding Your “Fit”

As a spiritual family we are **missional** in that we seek to have the focus of our allegiance and the actions of our lives be about the singular mission of God. Knowing that each of us are uniquely called to belong to his body, we learn together to FLOW in God when we:

- **Follow** Jesus
- **Listen** to his Voice
- **Obey** the word
- **Walk** by faith

As a spiritual family, we also experience divine moments of intervention where God speaks to our leadership and commissions persons to fulfill a specific **calling**. We learn from Acts 13:1-3 and Acts 15:28 that this process must come with:

- a sense of **affirmation** in prayer to God, and
- in **conversation** with one another in leadership.

Too, in obedience to God’s mandate to **Expand His Kingdom** we:

- build teams to **serve the needs** of those around us
- send **teams** every year to the nations,
- **partner** with other churches globally to help make disciples and
- provide **spiritual leadership** and guidance to those serving among unreached peoples.

Building on our Strengths

Our commitment to Glorify God, Love His People and Expand His Kingdom as a community of believers is accomplished through **making disciples** of Jesus Christ, and commissioning our members to serve God in the **marketplace**.

We **gather** together every week (Hebrews 10:24) to worship God, to learn from the word and to **celebrate** what God has done. Our weekend services are filled with powerful **worship**, practical **teaching** and rich **fellowship**.

Our discipleship process extends beyond the big group **celebrations** and is both formal and non-formal in nature. We commit to “Love His People” by offering:

- Small Groups focused on **new believers**,
- **membership** seminars to help people discover their S.T.O.R.Y and find their fit in the body and then
- provide opportunities for **mentoring** and leadership **development**.

More than **70%** of our adults are learning together in Small Group Life. Small Groups play a major role in the life, growth and leadership development of Greenbrier Church. Following the pattern of the early church our Small Groups gather to:

- **love** and **serve** one another,
- **share life** together, and
- **pray** and **fellowship** with one another.

It is in the context of a Small Group that the dynamics of body life, evangelism, spiritual growth and equipping and the presence of Christ are evident.

“And all the believers met together constantly and shared everything they had. They sold their possessions and shared the proceeds with those in need. They worshipped together at the temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity – all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:44-47)

What about Children and Youth?

We also place a very high priority on the responsibility to raise up a generation of youth who are passionate, filled with a Christ-centered purpose and understand the mandate to both receive the blessings of God and to bless others with His goodness (Genesis 12:2-3). Our ministries to youth include **PowerKids** and **PowerTots** for children, **CrosStone** for Jr. High, and **Propel** for Sr. High.

Local Outreach

Each week teams of Greenbrier members gather to serve and love those whose needs have reached a point of crisis. We have a **food pantry**, **clothes closet**, a

ministry to the **homeless**, plus two strong targeted ministries that focus on establishing a church: the **SkatePark** Church, and **Geneva Mobile Home Park** Outreach.

Key Issues in Greenbrier Church Life

We consider Greenbrier Church a **spiritual family** more than an institution. Although we do have a **Constitution and Bylaws** (available on request) our primary guide for life is the **Holy Scripture**.

Just as every family has a structure and a sense of order that creates life so does Greenbrier Church. We prioritize the need to:

- **belong** to a local expression of Christ followers;
- **follow** the Apostle's Creed
- **believe** in our Statement of Faith and Standard of Behaviors, and
- **live** out our mission to Glorify God, Love His People and Expand his Kingdom in our every day lives.

Our Small Groups, volunteer leaders and elders help provide a biblically balanced and servant-minded spiritual authority that guides our spiritual family in the right direction. However, because we are all human, conflicts and disagreements arise from time to time. While we all hold to the values and behaviors in our Standard of Behavior, there are times when extra measures need to be taken to help resolve conflict. At Greenbrier Church we follow the pattern found in Matthew 18:15-17 as a guide for resolving conflict.

"If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the fault. If the other person listens and



confesses it, you have won that person back. But if you are unsuccessful take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses. If that person still refuses to listen, take your case to the church. If the church decides you are right, but the other person won't accept it, treat that person as a pagan or a corrupt tax collector."

In this way church discipline is focused on **restoration** and the **healing** of the body. But, if someone is unrepentant other opportunities are given for them to recognize their shortcomings and be restored and healed.

When is it right to leave a church family?

There are some who have used **unresolved conflict** as an excuse to leave a church. This is not God's way and never allows true healing to take place. There are, however, some guidelines to follow when considering leaving a local fellowship of believers. Acceptable reasons to leave a church include:

- **wrong** doctrine,
- **lack** of unity within the leadership,
- **sin** issues, or
- financial **mismanagemnt**

Should there come a time to leave a church it is important to do so properly. First, always discuss your feelings about the **potential** of leaving a church fellowship with those in spiritual authority in your life. You should **reason** your reasons with your **family** and with church **leadership** and depart with a **mutual sense** of the Lord's direction. Be careful to not depart because of unresolved offenses, a sense of consumerism or rebellion.

What about Worship?

In addition to honoring God's pattern of leadership in our church and focusing on the healing part of conflict resolution, we have also learned that following a **biblical** protocol of worship helps us to **learn** and **grow** together in Christ more effectively.

When we gather together we should expect the presence of the Lord! Believing that everything should be done **properly** and in **order** (1 Corinthians 14:40) we come together expecting that God will speak clearly **through** us for the benefit and **edification** of one another (1 Corinthians 14:26, I Corinthians 12:7).

Our worship experiences are God-**focused** and Christ-**centered**. While we believe that God desires to meet our needs, speak and minister to us, our priority in corporate worship is to

- **minister** to God, and
- give Him the **glory** that He deserves.

We believe in biblical worship that includes the beauty of song, instruments, readings and the gifts of the Spirit evident for the encouragement of one another.

To help us accomplish this without distractions there are a minimal amount of protocols that we have adopted:

- all instruments should be played from the **platform**,
- **flamboyant** dance is discouraged and
- singing in the Spirit is **encouraged**.

We also recognize that what might be appropriate in private devotional worship may not be appropriate in a larger family gathering.

We desire earnestly the **Spiritual Gifts** (I Corinthians 14:1) and welcome:

- words of wisdom,
- words of knowledge,
- prophecy,
- miracles,
- faith,
- healings,
- speaking in tongues,
- the interpretation of tongues, and the
- discernment of spirits (1 Corinthians 12:7-12).

We believe that these gifts should promote **peace** rather than distraction and point one another to Christ (I Corinthians 14:33, John 14, 16). Often times after a prophetic word or other gift is expressed one of the elders or pastors will provide affirmation and/or clarity for the benefit of the body.

What about Stewardship?

Another key issue in the life a local church is stewardship. At Greenbrier we value integrity and believe that we are all caretakers of the blessings and gifts that God has bestowed on us. This means that we are to use our **time, talent,** and our

treasure for God so that the body might be equipped; and so that God's name might be praised in all the earth. We provide many opportunities for every member to use their skills and gifts to glorify God and to serve His body.

We also practice in the principle of **tithing**:

"You have cheated me of the tithes and offerings due to me. You are under a curse, for your whole nation has been cheating me. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do so, says the Lord God Almighty, I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Let me prove it to you!"

(Malachi 3:8-10)

This is a clear promise of God's blessing when we give our tithe (10%) as an outward sign of inner commitment, a material surrender prompted spiritual surrender and a confirmation of God's controlling ownership in our lives.

Greenbrier Church Membership Covenant

1. In essentials unity, in non-essentials diversity, in all things love.

I believe and support all the basic doctrines as expressed in the Apostles Creed and the Statement of Faith and agree to avoid divisiveness as I walk out the truths of God's word and the Standard of Behavior with all grace and love.

2. Jesus is the Head of the Church.

I agree to maintain and take responsibility for my spiritual life in Christ Jesus, the head of the Church. I also agree that I am a member of the body of Christ at large, and will endeavor to be an ambassador of the Gospel through personal evangelism, and will demonstrate to the world the power of the unity of the body of Christ.

3. Without a Vision the People Perish.

I will do my part to see the vision, mission, and values of Greenbrier Church fulfilled by my prayers, participation and provision.

4. Remember the Leaders who Watch over You.

I will pray for the elders, pastors and servant leaders of the church. I will submit to them and honor them in Christ, and believe the best about them. I recognize their human frailty and extend grace to them by not placing unreasonable expectations upon them that would cause them to sacrifice their family life or spiritual integrity.

5. Every Member is a Minister.

I will support and participate in the ministries of the church especially in the areas that the Lord has called and equipped me to serve with my unique mix of gifts and talents -- my S.T.O.R.Y.

6. My Community, My Family.

I agree to be a meaningful part of the Greenbrier Church family by participating in a small group. I will also resolve conflict according to Matthew 18, speak the truth in love, speak well of others, and avoid gossip.

7. Biblical Stewardship is a Life Well-Spent.

I agree to support the church by being a generous giver as God blesses me with His abundance. By God's grace I agree to become a tithing member and recognize the principle of equal sacrifice in the stewardship of my time, talent and treasure.

Signature

Date

Discover Your S.T.O.R.Y

God's S.T.O.R.Y in a person's life is the creative DNA that sets them apart. It's what made Michelangelo to sculpt, Michael Jordan to play basketball and Beethoven to write music. It is the imprint of God's creative handiwork in our lives. Ephesians 2:10 tells us that we are:

"God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

The Bible teaches us that God has a book in heaven that records all of the times, events of your life. He has taken the time to plan them out and to make sure they 'fit' into something very special.

"All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be." Psalms 139:15-16

"The Lord looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men...He fashions their hearts individually; He considers all their works." Psalm 33:13,15

Because God made us unique and designed us to live for His glory, we find satisfaction **when** we use His imprint to please Him. Listen to what Paul says in his letter to the Ephesians and to the church in Philippi.

"It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for."
(Ephesians 1:11 MSG)

"God is working in you to help you want to do and be able to do what pleases Him." Philippians 2:13 (NCV)

God made you **unique**, to live for His **glory, everyday** in every **way**.

The best way to discover **how** God made you unique, **what** He designed you to do, and **where** He desires you to 'fit' into His body comes through uncovering seasons in your life when **success** has collided with **satisfaction!** We are going to take a look at those moments when your favorite conversations, activities, and successes all came together. It's a way of looking at God's good creation and finding the S.T.O.R.Y that He has made you to tell.

Max Lucado, in his book, "Cure for the Common Life," provides a detailed explanation of how to help us discover our unique S.T.O.R.Y. In this next section we are going to glean from his book a series of simple exercises to help us get the ball rolling. If you are interested in a more detailed look at this subject, I encourage you to read his book!

Discovering your S.T.O.R.Y and sharing it with others is the best way to describe God's handiwork in your life. Let's begin the process of our own discovery by listing out moments in our childhood, youth and adulthood where it all seemed to come together: a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment in doing something that we really loved to do. It could have been a great 15-minute memory or a memorable event:

- *I got to help Aunt Susie cook the Thanksgiving meal*
- *I played the trumpet in a band*
- *My first boss saw my hard work and promoted me*
- *I started my own business*
- *I built a fort*
- *I re-designed my kitchen*
- *I was a part of an incredible missions trip experience to Timbuktu*
- *Stayed under budget, on time and increased productivity*

I think you get the point, right? Just let your mind wander for the next 5 minutes and jot a short list of these “sweet spot” moments as a child, youth and as an adult. Don’t be embarrassed or modest in making this list, it’s all a part of making a careful exploration of who God has made you to be (Galatians 6:4) – *and you won’t be handing this in!*

One-Liners of Sweet Spot Experiences I remember are:

Childhood:

Youth:

Adult:

God has given all of us experiences that are worth remembering and building on. Our next task in finding the unique S.T.O.R.Y. that God has imprinted in each of us is to expand these “one-liner” experiences by adding descriptive details to the moment.

Here is an example:

One-Liner: I built a fort.

Details: As a kid I loved riding my bike into the woods with friends, exploring the unknown and blazing trails to a hidden fort. We would borrow our Dad's saws, clippers and other tools and set off an adventure. I liked organizing the team, handing out assignments and getting to work. It was such a great feeling at the end of the day to watch trails appear from the thick woods, use what we could find to construct a clear path and work hard to build a fort hidden deep in the trails of the forest.

What felt most satisfying to you? Blazing a trail with a team and building something we could be proud of.

Now its your turn! Take a few minutes and chart out the details of three quick "one-liner" stories.

Story #1

One-Liner:

Details:

What felt most satisfying to you?

Story #2

One-Liner:

Details:

What felt most satisfying to you?

Story #3

One-Liner:

Details:

What felt most satisfying to you?

Your S.T.O.R.Y

The next step is to unpack the three stories you just described by looking at God's S.T.O.R.Y written across the themes of your life. Here is a simple way to unpack how God has uniquely and carefully crafted you to "fit" into His body.

1. What are your **S**trengths? This is "how" you get things done! Circle the *verbs* in each of the stories above and then write them in the space below.

2. What **T**opics peak your interest? These are the subjects that you want to discuss with others. Underline the *nouns* in the stories above and then write them in the space below.

3. What are the **O**ptimal conditions/settings? This is the environment that sustains, energized and best fuels your success. Is it routines, crisis, adventure? Describe your perfect "scenario" from the stories above.

4. What about **R**elationships? Do you enjoy solo, teams, leading, following?

Make a short list from the stories above that capture your preferred relationship dynamic.

5. Where is that **Y**ES! When it all comes together in perfect satisfaction.

Describe these moments from the stories above.

Putting Your S.T.O.R.Y together

The themes in my S.T.O.R.Y show that God has put me together so that I love to
(insert your Strengths)

I particularly like to do that with *(insert your Topics)*

I work best in optimal conditions that include *(insert your Optimal conditions)*

And I am best when I'm in the role of *(insert your Relationships)*.

All these themes of my S.T.O.R.Y work together so that I can *(insert your Yes!)*

It is absolutely clear that God has called you to a free life. Just make sure that you don't use this freedom as an excuse to do whatever you want to do and destroy your freedom. Rather, use your freedom to serve one another in love; that's how freedom grows." Galatians 5:13

NAME: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

SMALL GROUPS I ATTEND: _____

AREA'S OF INTEREST: Women's Ministry ___ CrosStone (Jr. High Ministry) ___
Men's Ministry ___ Propel (Sr. High Ministry) ___
PowerTots (nursery) ___ Music Ministry ___
PowerKids (K-5-5th grade) ___ Outreach Ministry ___

(PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

Background Documents

Our Statement of Faith

1. Inspiration of Scriptures:

We believe the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, is inspired by the Holy Spirit and the final authority for our faith and life. *2 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 4:12*

2. God

We believe in one God revealed in three co-equal, distinct persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. *Matthew 3:16-17, 28:19-20; Ephesians 2:18*

3. Humankind

We believe God created humankind in His image. Because of the fall humankind has inherited a sinful nature and is a sinner, lost, undone, without hope and without God. *Genesis 3, Ephesians 2:1-2, Romans 3:23*

4. Divinity and Humanity of Christ

We believe that Jesus is the Messiah. He is God come in the flesh and is both divine and human. He lived a sinless life and through His death on the cross became the sacrifice for the sins of the world. *Ephesians 1:3-5; Romans 5:1-11; Acts 4:12; I Peter 1:18-19*

5. Bodily Resurrection

We believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. *Luke 24:38-43; John 20:24-29*

6. **Salvation**

We believe that the terms of salvation are repentance toward God for sin and a personal heart-felt faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, which results in being transformed into His image. This salvation is entirely by grace and not by works. *John 3:15-17, 14:6; Romans 3:23, 5:1; 8:28-29, 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:6-10; Acts 3:19-20*

7. **Church**

We believe that the church is Christ's spiritual body on earth today and is called to worship God in all we think and do. It consists of born-again believers and has both universal and local expressions. We believe the believer's baptism and fellowship at the Lord's Table honor the work of Christ and His church and should be celebrated regularly. *Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:38; 20:28, Romans 6:3-10; I Corinthians 10:14-17, 11:17-34*

8. **Evil**

We believe in the existence of evil and the church is called to resist the devil through submission to God. *James 4:7, Ephesians 6:10-16, I John 3:8*

9. **The end of time**

We believe in the visible, bodily return of Jesus Christ to this earth to judge the world and to claim His church for eternity. We believe in the bodily resurrection of His church and the creation of a new heaven and earth. We believe in eternal damnation for the lost and eternal bliss and service for the saved. *Matthew 13:40-42, 25:31-46; 2 Corinthians 5:10; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 1:7; John 14:1-3, Revelation 20:11-15, 21:1-22:5*

10. **Holy Spirit**

We believe the Holy Spirit to be the third person of the Godhead who is active in the world today. The Holy Spirit indwells and seals believers at

spiritual birth and produces holiness until they are ultimately reconciled with God through Jesus Christ. We believe the baptism in the Holy Spirit can be a subsequent experience and is available to all Christians to empower us to be witnesses. We believe in and encourage the use of all the gifts of the Spirit for the common good of the body of Christ. *John 14:16-17; 20-22; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; Galatians 5:22-25.*

Standard of Behavior Reference Guide

In addition to our Statement of Faith, Greenbrier Church includes, as a part of the framework of our “spiritual” house, a detailed behavioral guide and Scripture reference for our Standard of Behavior. This standard of Behavior is the “**how to**” of our **mission** statement. The details of this Standard provide the accountability structure for how we should act toward one another and live in front of the world.

To Glorify God

1. We base our lives on **Jesus Christ** and His **Eternal Word**.

<i>Matthew 22:37-40</i>	Each day we will follow the words of Scripture that instruct us to: “ <i>Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.</i> ”
<i>I John 1:9</i>	Because we are lost and cannot find our way, we believe that “ <i>if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.</i> ”
<i>Romans 12:1-2</i>	We choose to “ <i>offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God as a spiritual act of worship.</i> ” We will no longer conform to the behaviors and lifestyles of this world, but will instead be “ <i>transformed by the renewing of our minds.</i> ”
<i>Matthew 16:24</i>	To follow our Savior we must “ <i>deny ourselves and pick up our cross.</i> ” We recognize that on our own we do not have the strength to live pure before God, and declare to our Lord that we will “ <i>seek you with all our hearts; do not let us stray from your commands. We have hidden your word in our hearts so that we might not sin against you.</i> ”
<i>Psalms 119:9-11</i>	

Philippians 2:5-11

We choose to follow in the steps of Jesus who humbled himself on this earth. *“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: who, being in the very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.”*

Love His People

2. We live in **fellowship** with others showing **deference** to one another and **demonstrating** the love and gifts of the living God.

Matthew 20:26-28

We choose to prefer others to ourselves following the words and life of Jesus: *“Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*

Romans 12:9-18

We will honor the Lord with our behavior and our conversation. *“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”*

Ephesians 4:11-12

We belong to God’s family through the sacrificial blood and eternal grace of Jesus Christ and joyfully submit to those God has placed in authority over us. We believe the purpose of leadership is to serve and equip others to become like Christ. *“He gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.”*

John 13:34-35

God has given us the responsibility to generously demonstrate His love toward each other. Jesus said: *“Love one another as I have loved you. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*

Romans 12:5-8

We humbly ask the Father to use us as instruments so that others may experience His abundant blessings. *“So in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.”*

I Corinthians 12:7-11

God desires His purposes to be plainly evident so that the community of believers would all benefit. *“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.”*

I Corinthians 14:26

We gather together in the name of the Lord with an expectation that God will speak through each of us for one another. *“Everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church.”*

Expand His Kingdom

3. We will be a **witness** to His world sharing both the words and deeds of His **Kingdom** and anticipating His soon coming return.

- Acts 1:4,8* Jesus instructed His disciples to be filled with the Holy Spirit before they were to go and make disciples of all ethnic peoples. *“Wait for the gift my Father has promised...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*
- Matthew 28:19-20* Jesus instructed His followers to *“go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”*
- Luke 10:1-11* The Lord sends his followers ahead to the places and people where He is about to go. When we hear his voice we are to completely obey, not coveting anything of our own, and declare *“peace to each house. If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to you. Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you. Heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘the kingdom of God is near you’.”*
- 1 John 3:8* The proclamation of the kingdom must follow the life and message of Jesus Christ, who came to destroy evil. *“The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work.”*
- Isaiah 58:6,7* Our lives must be lived in humility and kindness before those whose lives have been broken. We are to *“loose the chains of injustice, set the oppressed free, share our food with the hungry and provide shelter and clothing to the poor.”*
- Isaiah 58:8-9* It is only then that we can expect that our *“light will break forth like the dawn, and our healing will quickly appear; our righteousness will go before us, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.”*
- Matthew 24:14* We eagerly await the literal return of our Savior. He has promised that when *“the gospel of the Kingdom has been preached in all the world as a testimony to all nations, the end will come.”* We will work each day to see this become a reality and when the signs of the times point to His return, we will *“stand up and lift up our heads, because our Redemption is drawing near.”*
- Luke 21:28* Come quickly, Lord Jesus!

4. We are committed to **live** like, **suffer** with and **rise** with Jesus. We prayerfully promise to:

Psalm 116:14

- **Seek the Lord** by hiding His word deep within our hearts so that we might not sin against Him.
- **Worship Our God** in self-denial by offering our bodies as living sacrifices so we will not be conformed to the pattern of this world.
- **Serve in deference** to others so they might receive the gifts and love of God in Christ.
- **Accept, honor and except the gifts** given by God so that God's people might be prepared for service and that the Body of Christ might be built up.
- **Be His Witness**, empowered by His Spirit so that those in the world might hear and see His salvation.
- Live our lives as those eagerly **waiting the coming** of our Savior, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, so those who hear will join us in welcoming the return of our King.