

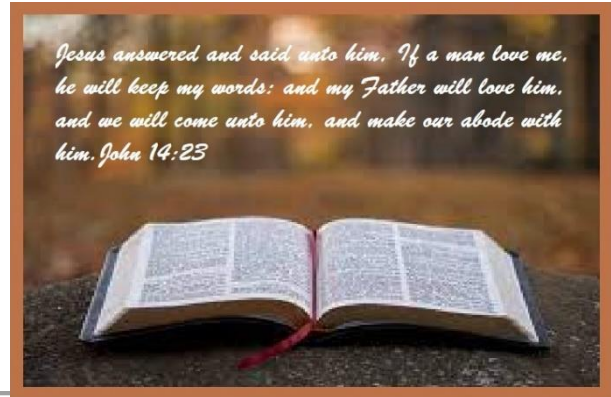
# Churches Under Christ Newsletter

June 1, 2022

**Page 1:** List of May, 2022 Ministry Publications

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## List of May, 2022 Ministry Publications

1. [May 1, 2022 Ministry Newsletter](#)
2. [Putting the Lighted Candle under a Basket: The Shame of Many "Unregistered" Churches \(Churches under Christ Alone\)](#)
3. [The three methods of trying to live the Christian life](#)
4. Revised and retitled the article, [A Biblical and Legal Analysis of the Helping Hand Outreach Publication, Why All Churches Should Be A 508\(c\)\(1\)\(A\).](#) The new title is [A Biblical and Legal Analysis of "How to Start a Church" by Helping Hands Outreach.](#)

To listen to the **501(c)(3) Song**:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Ob135YjeUU&feature=youtu.be>

## Highlighted May, 2022 Ministry Activities

**Note.** Only the most important ministry activities, and activities which deal with important matters concerning Bible trust operation, are included below. [Click here for links to archived Churches under Christ ministry Newsletters.](#) Matters worked on in April, 2022.

**Note.** See [Need Help?](#) for the Churches under Christ procedures for helping believers organize churches according to New Testament principles. There you will find an explanation of the initial mailing, Questionnaire 1, Questionnaire 2, etc.

1. Wrote and published the articles and essays listed above.
2. Received and reviewed Questionnaire 1 from a believer that desires to "start" a church. They now "run a ministry." They do not have a pastor at this time, and, per Questionnaire 1, they have not decided if they agree with this ministry on some fundamental matters. For example,

they have not decided if they agree that they will have no women in positions of authority over men. Disagreements on some fundamental doctrines foreclose the help of this ministry.

3. Received Questionnaire 2 from a Pastor of a church this ministry is helping with organization. I reviewed the questionnaire with notations on questions that were wrong or incomplete. We did a conference call with some of his trusted and mature members in which we went over Questionnaire 2. They had done a very good job in answering the Questionnaire, but we went over the few questions which were answered incorrectly or incompletely. I emailed the proposed documents with the standard paper with suggestions for execution. I also went over their completed, but not submitted, Form SS-4 requesting an EIN “for banking purposes only” for a trust bank account. There were a couple of corrections that needed to be made on that. I also discussed their question as to whether they could call their assembly “[Name of church] Ministry” as opposed to “[Name of Church] Church.”

The pastor was concerned about the term “church” since many confuse the building where people meet as being a church, and even one definitions in the 1828 Webster’s matched that. We added one clause to #2 on page 2 of the resolution to specifically address that. Thank the Lord. The entire sentence, with the clause added clause in red, reads, “The Lord Jesus Christ, through New Testament church doctrine, defines a church—a **local assembly of born-again believers, not a building where those believers meet**—as a spiritual organism (See, e.g., Ephesians 4, 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, 1 Peter 2.4-20), and gives the principles for organization, operation, purpose, doctrine, calling, and promise of a church which is built by Him and which is under Him alone;”

4. Talked with a pastor who went through StartChurch with help in church organization. His main concern was 501(c)(3) and 508(c)(1)(A) federal tax exemption. They have house churches all across the country. StartChurch charged \$3600. Part of that was helping get set up. He said the word of God is the foundation to all they believe. He is retired military. They searched for a church. They visited a lot of churches. He said there has to be more than the once a week 2 hour service. They would say like it or leave it. They would hear about fixing the parking lot a lot more than the Word of God. He says the Lord told him to start a ministry. We talked about “prophesying.” We were on the same page. He said he will read something from the Bible and they discuss it. As to the other home churches, they are autonomous. They help others start house churches. They learn of him through word of mouth. They may join the mentorship program and start home churches.

THEY HAVE A BOARD OF DIRECTORS. IF HE PREACHES SOMETHING WRONG, THEY DISCUSS IT AND HE CAN BE CORRECTED. StartChurch set them up like that. He wants to have a Bible honoring church. They have retreats each year and are looking to buy property to hold those retreats. Now renting for \$5,000 year cost.

I mailed him links to materials explaining federal tax exemption on churches, study lessons on the Bible trust relationship with property, and the history of the First Amendment.

After that, I sent him the initial mailing: The initial letter; the Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Additional Educational Materials, and Questionnaire 1. I included the following in the email to which these documents were attached: "Please read them carefully. The initial letter gives some information concerning the freedoms provided by the First Amendment, and also the state constitution. It also summarizes the steps and procedures utilized by this ministry. You can download Q1 and fill in your answers in Word, if you like. Or, you can print it out and fill in by hand. If the former, you can then attach it to an email to me. If the latter, you will have to either mail me a copy of scan it and attach it to an email. Feel free to call me at any time for any reason. Again, if you get a VM, I will return your call asap.

5. Email from a pastor who stated, among other things, "I have read through enough of your material that I am interested in getting your assistance. Here are some initial details based on the kinds of questions you request.... We are a small house ecclesia (church), but we fellowship online regularly with other small groups and individuals both nationally and internationally (England, Uganda, Australia, Greece). "[Name of church]" does have a "Declaration" signed by the founders, which is a simple statement of purpose. He said the church is not a corporation, a charitable or business trust, an unincorporated association, a 501(c)(3) or 508(c)(1)(A) tax exempt organization, etc.? Does the church or church corporation own or lease real estate? Does the church have a bank account, vehicles, or anything else in the name of the church? Does the church have employees? He said their main purpose was to get a bank account for donations and offerings to be distributed to others to meet needs of the poor (whether helping the poor locally, or our brethren in poorer situations like Africa). He stated, "Neither I nor any other members of the ecclesia do or will receive any type of salary or personal monetary support from the Ecclesia donations account. We have no intention at this time of the ecclesia owning any property, real or otherwise, although we may use the funds to rent facilities for conferences, outreach, or in use of ministry to the poor, or to provide goods or services to the poor. The main driver for getting in touch with you is that banks aren't willing to open a "church" account without a registration with the state as a "church." Like you, I am very much opposed to the idea of the state defining or dictating what we are as an ecclesia. If there are no such ramifications with registering with the state as there are with other legal issues (like 501/508, etc), then perhaps it is a moot point and I am making too big of a deal.

"What is your advice? Should I just get the registration and not worry because it is just a formality, or, should I continue the route of getting a trust? If the latter, I will need help with the details."

I replied via email: "We need to talk. You raise a lot of preliminary issues that must be addressed before we can determine whether this ministry can be of help to you. Call me. If I do not answer, please leave a message and I will return your call asap. After that, if it appears we can help you, the ministry uses a process which is outlined at:

<https://jeraldfinney.com/posts/need-help/>

"The word of God is the foundational authority of this ministry for all matters of faith and practice. 1 John 2:5 "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him." John 14:23 "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

We agreed that the Bible, the Word of God, is the basis for all matters of faith and practice. He had left me a message Fri. May 6. Discussed his questions etc. Explained that the ministry cannot help a church when the pastor is licensed by the state to perform marriages. Gave him an explanation of why and we talked about Bible principles, Ohio law (he said Ohio law makes common law marriage illegal), etc. We also discussed the church EIN. He said he has not used it bc the bank said the church has to be licensed by the state. I was impressed by his spirit and attitude. He said he will cancel the EIN and also get rid of the state license to perform marriages. I told him I will get the initial mailing to him asap.

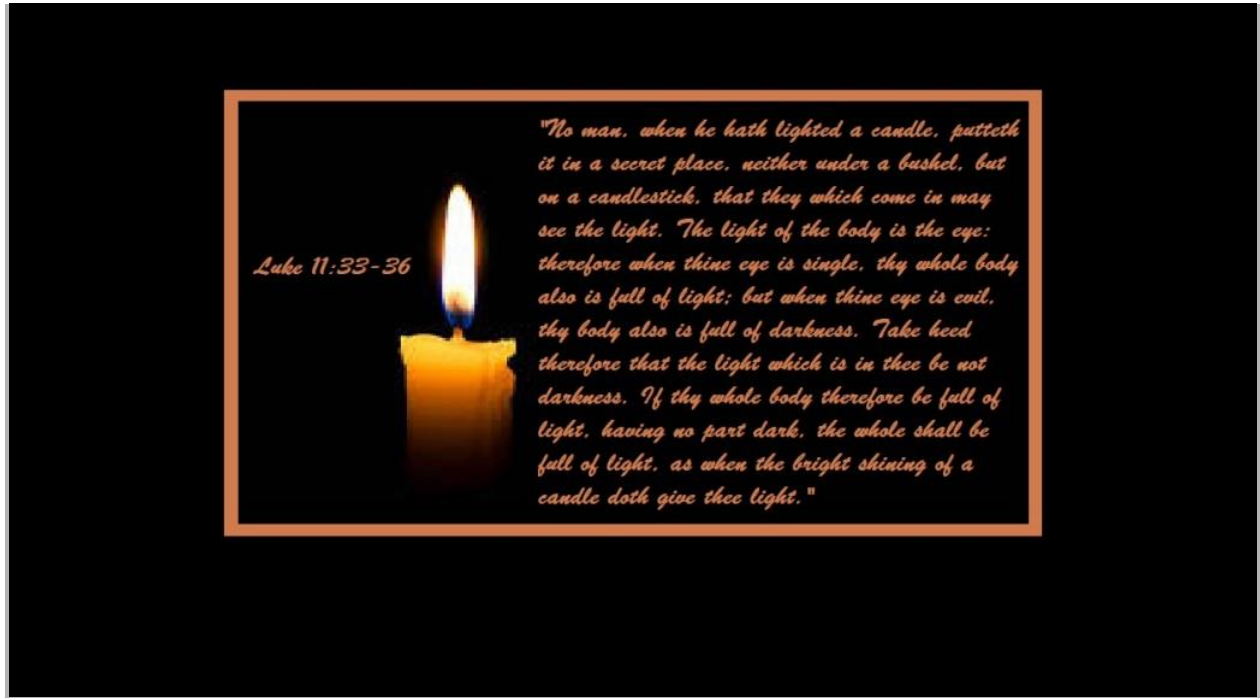
After talking with the pastor, corresponding via email, and going through the initial mailing, receiving back completed Questionnaire 1 and talking about it, it was obvious that this ministry could not be of help. For example, I learned that he, being out of the Pentecostal line, does not believe in the Trinity and also believes that baptism is part of salvation.

6. Revised and retitled the article, [A Biblical and Legal Analysis of the Helping Hand Outreach Publication, Why All Churches Should Be A 508\(c\)\(1\)\(A\).](#) The new title is [A Biblical and Legal Analysis of "How to Start a Church" by Helping Hands Outreach.](#)
7. Talked with Dr. [name of a lady] who has in incorporated ministry for 20 Or 30 minutes. I advised here that this ministry only helps "churches." Of course, we do not help churches with women pastors or officers.

Call from the father of a pastor I have known for years. I advised them on organizing a church several years ago. They never really practiced operating as a church under Christ alone although they executed documents. I advised him that they need to go through ministry procedures to get their organization in order. When I originally talked with them, the ministry had not refined the procedures for helping churches. He texted me that he would talk to his son about doing the new procedures and get back with me.

8. Published [The Shame of Many "Unregistered" Churches \(Churches under Christ Alone\)](#)
9. Went over a completed Questionnaire 1 with another pastor. He said he will send copies of corporate papers. Discussed proactively reviewing state non-profit corp. law, property tax exemption law and dealing with the state attorney general and county assessor (later after reviewing docs and law). Discussed the one corp. vehicle that has a mortgage and how to change the title and insurance. We discussed insurance on the property. He said he will get me copies of the corp. papers this week (probably by mail).
10. Published [The three methods of trying to live the Christian life.](#)

## Featured Article

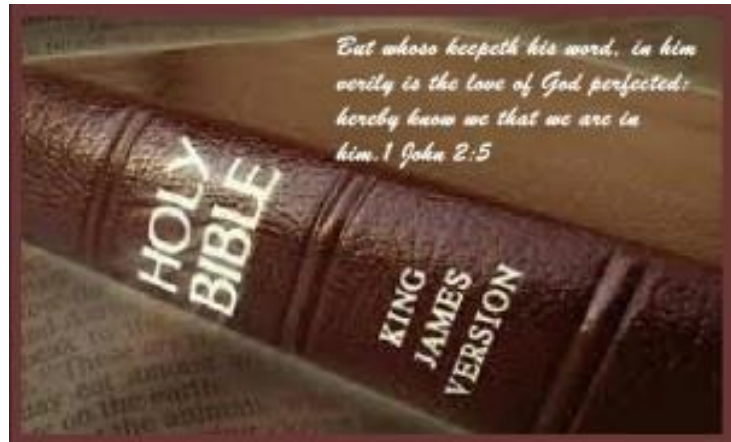


### PUTTING THE LIGHTED CANDLE UNDER A BASKET: THE SHAME OF MANY “UNREGISTERED” CHURCHES (CHURCHES UNDER CHRIST ALONE)

Jerald Finney  
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*“No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light. The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness. If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.” (Luke 11:33-36); See also, Matthew 5:14-5; Mark 4:21-22; Luke 8:16-18.*

According to God, what is a church that Jesus builds? I believe that Christ would like believers to know the answer to this question to which so much of His Word is devoted to answering. Not only does Christ wish believers to know the answer to this question, He wishes them to practice the answer and to shine the light of that truth upon the church, other churches, and the world. See, e.g. 1 Peter 2:9; 1 John 1:7. Matthew 5:14-16; Luke 1:79, 2:32, 8:16, 11:33-36, 12:3; John 3:19, 21, 8:12, 11:10; Acts 13:47, 26:18; Romans 13:12; 2 Corinthians 4:6; 2 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 5:8, 13; Colossians 1:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:5



The local church is preeminent to Christ. Christ lets us know how important the church is to Him. He tells us, for example, that:

- He purchased the church “with his own blood” (Acts 20:28);
- A church is espoused to Christ. “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:25-27).
- He wishes to be the only authority over His churches (See, e.g., Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18).

Are believers and churches ashamed to practice and declare God’s revelations and principles? The Apostle Paul certainly was not, starting with the” gospel of Christ,” “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth: to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16). But Paul’s dedication did not stop with declarations and actions concerning the gospel of Christ. Paul boldly proclaimed and taught all that God entrusted to Him. God committed to Paul the unfolding of the “doctrines of grace which were latent in the teachings of Jesus Christ. Paul originates nothing, but unfolds everything, concerning the nature and purpose of the law; the ground and means of the believer’s justification, sanctification, and glory; the meanings of the death of Christ, and the position, walk, expectation, and service of the Christian.”

God, by revelation, made known to Paul the mystery of the church (Ephesians 3:2-12). Paul wrote that complete revelation in His Epistles so that God’s children and churches “may understand” God’s knowledge concerning the churches. God’s Pauline epistles:

- “develop the doctrine of the church. In seven letters to Gentile churches (in Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse, and Thessalonica), the church, the ‘mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God’ (Ephesians 3:9), is fully revealed, and fully instructed as to her unique place in the counsels and purposes of God.”

Through the Pauline epistles:

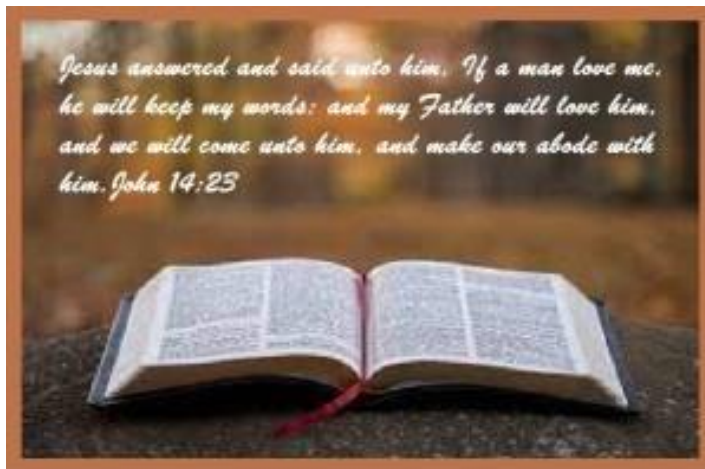


- “we know that a church is not an organization, but an organism., the body of Christ; instinct with His life, and heavenly in calling, promise and destiny. Through those epistles alone we know the nature, purpose, and form of organization of local churches, and the right conduct of such gatherings.”

Most pastors and other mature members of the churches that the Biblical Law Center and this ministry have helped to organize according to Christ’s will veil their light concerning church organization. They are ashamed of what they have done. They are unwilling to follow the example of the Apostle Paul. Some reasons for their reluctance include:

- Failure to study the doctrine and the application of the doctrine.
- Inability to teach or choice not to teach the doctrine.
- Fear of offending immature, disruptive, and/or prospective church members.
- Fear of offending other churches and pastors with whom they associate.
- Their agenda leaves no time for the study, teaching, and application of the doctrine.
- They teach again the “first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat” to new believers but forget that some “are of full age, even those who be reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” See Hebrews 5:11-6:3.

Both doctrine and application are emphasized in Scripture. Without wisdom (the right use or exercise of knowledge), knowledge has no effect and is useless or even counterproductive. Churches lose the power of, and cause unbelievers, to blaspheme God, resulting in salvation of fewer and fewer souls.



“He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him” (1 John 2:4-5). “Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14:23). The commandments are in the word of God, but they are not the word of God. The word of God is much more

than commandments. For example, within the word of God are principles. Bible church doctrine is extensive and comprehensive. It includes principles which God desires to be understood, taught, and practiced.

Christ said that He loved the church and gave Himself for it (Ephesians 5:25). He did not command that a church love Him, but obviously His word makes clear in His word that He wants every church to love Him. Love must be a choice; it cannot be commanded, as it was under the law. The law proved that commanding love does not produce love. Even those under the law chose to love

God because of their hearts, not because of the commandment. Believers should be diligent to remember that the love of God is perfected in those who keep His word.

Sin can be by commission. Sin can also be by omission: “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin” (James 4:17). We should all strive to be in God’s perfect will, which means trying to keep God’s word without omission.

Therefore, from this point on, all churches who wish the help of this ministry must, in advance, agree to shine their light by practicing the spirit and actions of the following excerpt from the Resolution to Adopt the Declaration of Trust.:

**“WHEREAS:** The church body of [Name of Church], a local New Testament church—in order to perpetually benefit, educate, and set an example for present and future members of [Name of Church], other churches, the general public, and the world—desires to execute and implement comprehensive documents which obey, glorify, and please God by, among other matters:

1. Declaring the New Testament Bible doctrines and principles upon which [Name of Church] relies for church organization under Christ and Him alone.
2. Declaring Bible doctrines and principles concerning church, state, and the God-ordained relationship between church and state.
3. Declaring the American legal basis upon which [Name of Church] relies for church organization under the authority of Christ and Him alone.
4. Declaring the elements of the irrevocable common law trust.
5. Defining the nature of the irrevocable common law trust, a relationship with property only, a non-legal entity which conforms to Bible doctrine, principle, and example.”

They must agree from their heart, because they love the Lord, that they will give copies of the trust documents to all past, present, and future church members or the heads of families. They must, in advance, desire and agree to make sure that all church members—past, present, and future—will be taught the Bible doctrine of the church and the application of that doctrine. They must desire to show their love for the Lord by putting their candles on a candlestick. If they choose not to agree to these matters, they have lost nothing. They are still free to execute their own organization as their heart leads. This ministry is here to help those who agree. “Can two walk together, except they be agreed” (Amos 3:3)?

Local churches who keep God’s word are to shine for all the world to see. When one puts a candle under a basket, the candle is hidden and lack of oxygen may extinguish the candle.

**Note.** This does not apply to churches who have already been helped by the Biblical Law Center or this ministry.

### [Bible Doctrine of the Church](#)