CCMSB Charismatic Statement∗

December 2024

**Core Values of CCMSB**

CCMSB is an non-denominational church based on the Bible. Scripture is the only divinely inspired and infallible Word of God, and the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct (2 Tim 3:16-17; 1 Thess 2:13; 2 Pet 1:19-21; 1 Tim 4:12-13; Jas 1:21-25). Thus, the Bible is the primary source for us to understand and interpret the work of the Holy Spirit.

**Position Regarding Charismatic Practice**

Given that members of CCMSB are drawn from many different cultures, nationalities, and denominations, there are differences of outlook on some matters, including charismatic practice. In matters that are not fundamental to the gospel, members respect each other's personal convictions, refrain from propagating a particular point of view as the only right interpretation, and abstain from promoting a point of view which might cause offense to other members.

At the same time, the church leaders bear the responsibility to resolve diverging viewpoints on the ministry and experience of the Holy Spirit, and to give the congregation appropriate spiritual direction, based on the Bible.

Recognizing that the operations of the Holy Spirit are many and varied, this statement focuses on basic principles and practical guidelines applicable within our church community.

1. Theological Basis

All God the Father's blessings are made ours in Christ His Son, and all are ministered to us by His sovereign Spirit, as they are made known to us in His Holy Word. We want to know, to enjoy, and to teach all the blessings of all three Persons of the Godhead, as Scripture reveals and prescribes these blessings.

CCMSB emphasizes the essential and creative work of the Spirit of God in regeneration: without the Spirit of Christ, a person "does not belong to Christ" (Rom 8:9). We believe in the continuous sanctifying work of the Spirit enabling us to grow in grace and holiness until we are conformed to the image of Christ (Rom 8:29). The church also recognizes that God in His sovereign dealings with His people may grant them a crisis experience or experiences subsequent to conversion, resulting in clear advance in spiritual life or empowerment in ministry.

We all need the constant empowerment of the Holy Spirit. We long to manifest in abundance all the fruit of the Spirit, and to develop to the full those gifts of the Spirit which He has sovereignly given to each of us to exercise for the building up of the Body (Eph 4:7; 1 Cor 12:7; Rom 12:6; 1 Pet 4:10).

In New Testament times, while the gift of tongues was one of the gifts of the Spirit, neither the gift nor speaking in tongues was an indispensable evidence of the baptism with the Spirit. The gift of tongues was given by the Spirit sovereignly to whom He willed (1 Cor 12:11) and therefore not everybody could or did speak in tongues (1 Cor 12:29,30). The Scripture also teaches: “Do not forbid speaking in tongues. But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way” (1 Cor 14:39,40).

The biblical doctrine of the Body of Christ teaches our oneness and calls us to do our utmost to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace: there is only one Body, one Head, and one Spirit (Eph 4:3,4,15). Therefore we must never so emphasize any one interpretation of Scripture or any particular experience of divine grace that it causes strife and division among fellow believers.

2. Principles

The church recognizes and accepts that members hold differing views on the ministrations of the Holy Spirit and the use of spiritual gifts. Thus the following principles are put forward to help us maintain our unity in Christ and our openness to the leading of His Spirit.

a. CCMSB does not endorse any teaching that requires distinct or particular experience(s) of divine grace subsequent to conversion as normative for all believers.

b. The church affirms that spiritual gifts are available to all believers under the sovereign grace of God and through the work of the Spirit. All members at all times are encouraged to seek a deeper working of the Holy Spirit in their lives and ministries.

c. While we recognize that members differ theologically concerning certain manifestations, we affirm our basic unity in our desire to know God, to receive His blessings, and to experience the power of His Spirit in both holiness and ministry. We also affirm our unity in the Body of Christ and in our desire to practice the gifts of the Spirit.

3. Guidelines for Practice

Recognizing the differences in belief and practice among us, the following guidelines are designed to preserve our unity in Christ and our cooperation in ministry for the glory of God, the progress of our work, and the enrichment of our fellowship.

a. We affirm that no one experience, methodology, or technique holds the key to spiritual vitality or to ministry breakthrough.

b. The public function of spiritual gifts is to edify the Church and to evangelize those who do not believe (1 Cor 12:7; 14:1-25; Eph 4:7-13). In public we shall exercise gifts in keeping with the biblical requirements of discernment, orderliness, self-control, the preservation of unity in love, and, in the case of tongues, with interpretation (1 John 4:1-3; 1 Cor 14:26-33).

c. We recognize that members of the church will differ in their understanding of Scripture concerning revelatory gifts and their practice. If a member believes that he/she has a word of revelation to share with a group, discernment and humility are facilitated by the use of introductory expressions such as "I believe that what God is saying to us in this situation is this...." Such word of revelation must be for the purpose of edification, and should never contradict the Bible. Those who exercise these public gifts will submit their teaching for evaluation by church leadership (1 Cor 14:29).

d. With respect to manifestations such as healing and miracles, we recognize their special value as expressions of the power and compassion of God. At the same time, we acknowledge the possibility of raising false expectations and of spurious claims of healing. We look for God to work always through the preaching of the gospel of Christ and in the salvation of those who believe (1 Cor 1:22-25; Rom 1:16-17; Eph 6:19-20), and sovereignly in the healing of the sick and in the exorcism of demons as needed. At the same time, we look to Him to confirm His message and His messengers at His discretion and in the ways that He deems best (Heb 2:3-4; Matt 7:20-23; Acts 4:29-31). We affirm, in word and deed, that power belongs to God and not to us. As channels of sovereign, divine power, we do our utmost to avoid giving the impression that power derives from the use of particular techniques, or that God can be manipulated for selfish ends. Where God answers prayers in a dramatic way, we welcome it as an act of sovereign grace; where He does not, we do not question personal integrity.

e. With respect to “deliverance ministry,” the symptoms of psychological or psychiatric conditions often overlap those of demonization; consequently, diagnosis is best conducted by a team of spiritual and therapeutic counselors. Given that Scripture never affirms or illustrates the exorcism of demons from Christians, caution is advised before resorting to such remedy. Experience is not self-interpreting: where ministry leads to emotional catharsis or spiritual liberation, the prior condition should not simply be attributed to demonization without clear confirming evidence.

f. With respect to emotional expression or ecstatic behavior, the manifestations themselves are neither evidence for nor against the spiritual nature of the experience. Rather, spiritual renewal is evidenced by lasting increase and deepened joy in devotion to God and in service of others. We should all pursue ongoing renewal, whether or not it is attended by expressive manifestations.

g. In the interests of unity and to avoid unnecessary offense to fellow church members, we ask our members, when teaching about spiritual gifts (or any other issue where there is difference of opinion), not to present as the only admissible view what may reasonably be capable of a different interpretation among Bible-believing Christians.

In order to preserve harmony and stability within the church, and in order to avoid misunderstanding regarding the position of the church on this issue, no member may organize meetings or promote teachings that may cause controversy. Members are asked to seek the approval of church leadership before organizing meetings with outside speakers.

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∗ The statement adapts and modifies from CBCGB Charismatic Statement (2006).

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance provided. All changes reflect the convictions and practices of CCMSB alone.