

Resource List for Independent Study

Thank you for taking the time to study these two aspects of our church model. This resource list offers individual and group study/discussion guides, podcasts, articles, books, and sermons that represent a wide range of views. Brief descriptions are included to help you select resources that will expand your own perspectives. Below you will find sections covering:

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Most of these resources were recommended by people who belong to NSCBC! There is a lot here - *and* there is plenty we had to leave out. If you are seeking a resource to address a particular question, don't hesitate to ask a pastor, elder, or expanded process team member for suggestions. Please note: Church staff, elders, and expanded team are not endorsing or commending these resources but offering them to support your engagement with a range of views.

How to Understand and Interpret the Bible

One intended outcome for this process is to deepen our understanding of Scripture and theology and that we embrace discipleship as a goal. These resources outline approaches for reading and interpreting the Bible.

Resource	Author / Compiler	Format	Brief Description
<i>Resources that provide a helpful place to start are shaded in blue:</i>			
The Paradigm Series	Bible Project	Articles Podcast series Study notes	Resources explore how the Bible is designed, how it was put together, a basic paradigm for how to read the Bible drawn from within the Bible itself, and how to read passages that are especially challenging.
How (Not) to Read the Bible	Bible Project	Podcast	Interview with author Dan Kimball on his book <i>How (Not) to Read the Bible</i> and the question, "What do we do with the passages in the Bible that are really difficult?"

How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth	Gordon Fee & Douglas Stuart	Book	An accessible book by biblical scholars covering topics ranging from how to choose a good translation to understanding different genres of biblical writing. They aim to help readers accurately understand what different parts of the Bible meant for ancient audiences and their implications for us today.
The Blue Parakeet	Scot McKnight	Book	New Testament scholar Scot McKnight wrote this accessible book aiming to highlight how Scripture transcends culture and to help readers understand it as an ongoing story they are summoned to enter and to carry forward.
How (Not) to Read the Bible	Dan Kimball	Book	Pastor and educator Dan Kimball wrote this accessible book as a guide for addressing challenging questions and making sense of more difficult Bible passages.
Interpreting the Bible	Berkeley Michaelson	Book	Scholarly resource published in 1963 that offers a deep dive into hermeneutics, or interpreting the Bible.

How Do We Engage in this Process as a Church

We are aiming to distinguish between the unchanging core of the gospel and aspects of church governance that may be adapted. We want to find a faithful path forward rather than trying to achieve universal agreement. The following resources explore Christian approaches to fostering unity amid diversity.

Resource	Author / Compiler	Format	Brief Description
<i>Resources that provide a helpful place to start are shaded in blue:</i>			
2025 Governance Report	NSCBC elders and expanded process team	Report	A report on the views and experiences of our congregation, aiming to foster understanding of one another as we make decisions about our model. Page 13 outlines our goals for the process.
Beliefs, Governance, Culture, Values	NSCBC	Webpage	On three separate tabs, this webpage has NSCBC's vision and purpose, culture and values, beliefs, and a link to our governance model.
Gospel-Centered Community	Tim Chester	Video + Short Outline	Pastor and theologian Tim Chester discusses how the gospel shapes a community. The talk is an accessible introduction to Christian community and the outline highlights the differences between a community of performance and a community of grace; it is a NSCBC Gospel OS resource.

Category Confusion	John Ortberg	Article	This accessible article, also used in NSCBC's Gospel OS, explains the difference between bounded set church communities and centered set church communities.
Kingdom-Centered Prayer	Tim Keller	Article	Also a Gospel OS resource, this article describes the "corporate, intense, prevailing prayer—not for personal needs, but for the presence and reality of God among his people" that has characterized spiritual awakenings throughout history.
Pursuing God's Will Together	Ruth Haley Barton	Book	Written by a spiritual director and not-for-profit leader, the book aims to help church boards and other Christian leadership teams embody practices that support wise discernment.
Centered-Set Church: Discipleship and Community without Judgmentalism	Mark Baker	Book	A theologian and educator, Baker aims to present an alternative approach for nurturing Christian community that avoids <i>both</i> the tendency to draw lines around what it means to be "a good Christian" <i>as well as</i> the tendency to erase all the lines in favor of a vague and inoffensive faith.

Baptism and Church Membership

In addition to deepening our understanding of the Bible and theology, we aim to honor our history and discern what is most effective for our local context. These resources explore baptism and church membership models.

Resource	Author / Compiler	Format	Brief Description
<i>Resources that provide a helpful place to start are shaded in blue:</i>			
Q & A on Baptism	NSCBC elders and process team	Q & A	Brief responses to questions about NSCBC's denominational affiliation and baptism practices.
Exploring Scripture Together Guides - Baptism & Membership	NSCBC pastoral staff	Bible reading & discussion guides	This 3-part study guide was developed for the Exploring Scripture small groups on baptism and membership. The guides can be used individually, as a family, or with others. Sessions will be added weekly as the groups use them.
The Meaning of Baptism in the Bible	Bible Project	Article	This article explores baptism as a pattern throughout the Bible, as part of a series of articles that explore the life of the church.

Interview with NT Wright on Baptism	Bible Project	Podcast	An episode in the Bible Project <i>Exodus Way</i> series, this podcast interview with scholar NT Wright explores baptism across the Bible.
Can You Be a Member of the Body of Christ Without Being a Member of a Local Church?	Paul Sadler	Article	A brief blog post by a pastor examining the nature of belonging in the body of Christ and arguing that becoming a member of a local church is the most basic step in expressing unity with the body.
Baptism and Church Membership in a Post-Denominational Context	Stanley Grenz	Article	Baptist pastor and theologian Stanley Grenz argues for believer's baptism as a Baptist church's sole practice while recommending flexibility and discernment in welcoming those baptized as infants into membership.
Do Infant Baptisms Count?	Joe Rigney	Article	This article highlights the tensions arising from holding clear convictions on the proper mode and timing for baptism while acknowledging that genuine believers may hold differing views. He lands on the perspective that "valid but improper" baptisms are sufficient for membership in a local church.
Baptism in the Early Church: A Baptist Response	Gavin Ortlund	Video	Gavin Ortlund, Baptist pastor and Fuller Seminary professor, discusses key points from his article responding to the Reformed paedobaptist belief that infant baptism is a continuation of infant circumcision in the Old Testament.
Why Baptism is Required for Church Membership	The Gospel Coalition	Article	This post provides an interview with the author of <i>Going Public</i> , the book listed below, and will be helpful to those interested in exploring his perspective but unable to read the full book.
Going Public: Why Baptism is Required for Church Membership	Bobby Jamieson	Book	A mid-level book provides theological exploration of the relationship between baptism and church membership within Baptist ecclesiology and arguing for believer's baptism as a prerequisite for joining a local church.
It Takes a Church to Baptize	Scot McKnight	Book	This book aims to make a biblical case for infant baptism for readers coming from a tradition that baptizes adults only, and emphasizes the role of families in the formation of faith. While NSCBC is <i>not</i> considering infant baptism as a practice, this book provides insight into the views of those who do not wish to be re-baptized.

Women in Church Leadership

In addition to deepening our understanding of the Bible and theology, we aim to grow in understanding and love for one another, honoring our distinct perspectives and experiences. These resources explore a wide range of views and history, including how different approaches to organizing ministry support the church in fulfilling its mission and vision.

Resource	Author / Compiler	Format	Brief Description
<i>Resources that provide a helpful place to start are shaded in blue:</i>			
Exploring Scripture Together Guides - Women & Eldership	NSCBC pastoral staff	Bible reading & discussion guides	This 4-part Bible study guide was developed for the Exploring Scripture small groups focused on women and eldership. The guides can be explored individually, as a family, or with others. Sessions will be added weekly as the groups use them.
Women in Church Leadership – a Summary of the Main Positions	NSCBC elders	Outline summary	NSCBC elders put together a summary outline of the key viewpoints delineated in the resources they have read to date.
Two Views on Women in Ministry	Zondervan Counterpoint Series	Book	A mid-level resource aiming to summarize the primary views held by evangelicals in a point-counterpoint format; helpful as an introduction to the landscape.
Women in Ministry: Four Views	Bonnidell Clouse and Robert Clouse	Book	Similar to the book above titled “two views,” this book offers a “lay of the land,” with a more descriptive approach.
Was Paul for or Against Women in Ministry?	Craig Keener	Article	Accessible academic article originally published in Assemblies of God’s <i>Enrichment Journal</i> ; a deep dive into Paul’s writings and concluding they do not restrict women from ministry today.
Neither Complementarian nor Egalitarian: A Kingdom Corrective	Michelle Lee-Barnewall	Book	This mid-level academic resource critiques both of the primary views and claims to move the discussion beyond stalemate through fresh biblical exegesis for our cultural situation, presenting an alternative approach rooted in a corporate perspective and on kingdom values.
Introduction to the Contemporary Gender Debate	Ron Pierce	Video Lecture	This 50-minute lecture is an introductory class at Biola University that shares the key ideas, ministry leaders, and history of egalitarianism and complementarianism. It also provides a framework for healthy, edifying discussion and debate on these topics.

NSCBC Sermons on Genesis 1:26-31 ; 2:18-25 ; Ephesians 5:18-6:9	NSCBC	Sermons	Recent NSCBC sermons on key passages for understanding women in ministry; these links include discussion guides with sermon audio and video.
Evangelicalism's Strong History of Women in Ministry	Timothy Larson	Article	This article, from a journal that publishes reformed Christian writing, summarizes modern church history relevant to the discussion on women in leadership and ministry.
Complementarian at Home, Egalitarian at Church? Paul Would Approve	Gordon Hugenberger	Article	An accessible and conciliatory article written by a biblical scholar and pastor aiming to find common ground between Christians with different views.
Women and the Nature of Ministry	Walter Liefeld	Article	This mid-level academic article poses questions to help people with different views better understand one another and hold more productive conversations as they study the Bible together.
Should Women Preach?	Ellie Weiner and Dani Treweek	Podcast	Former NSCBC member and Bible scholar Ellie Weiner discusses biblical passages including 1 Timothy 2 and 1 Corinthians 11, providing nuanced interpretations from multiple viewpoints.
The Meaning of Head , Part 1	John McKinley & Michelle Lee-Barnewall	Q & A Article	In this article, theology professor John McKinley interviews his colleague, Michelle Lee-Barnewall, about the historical, cultural, and linguistic meanings of the head-body metaphor used in Ephesians and 1 Corinthians.
What Does "Head" (Kephālē) Mean in Paul's Letters?	Preston Sprinkle	Article	Biblical scholar, speaker, author and co-founder of the Center for Faith, Sexuality & Gender, Preston Sprinkle examines the options for understanding the word "head" in Paul's letters.
1 Timothy 3:1-7: For Men Only?	James Pruch	Article	This article examines Paul's list of qualifications for overseers/elders in 1 Timothy 3 with a focus on understanding how the original Greek has been translated and concluding that the passage does not prevent women from serving as elders.
Paul's Qualifications for Church Leaders	Marg Mowczko	Article	This article explores the qualifications for church leaders in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 considering what characteristics Paul had in mind and concluding the passages do not restrict women from serving.

<u>A Study of 1 Timothy 2 in the Modern Church</u>	Don Carson / The Gospel Coalition	Audio and transcripts	New Testament scholar and founder of The Gospel Coalition speaks to the importance of creation order within complementarian theology and why restrict the role of elders to men.
<u>The Role of the Elder</u>	Don Carson / The Gospel Coalition	Sermon + Transcript	This sermon takes a deeper and broader dive into the qualifications for elders in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, as well as other relevant passages and historical context on first century church leadership.
<u>First Timothy 2:12, The Ordination of Women and Paul's Use of Creation Narratives</u>	Jack Davis	Article	This accessible scholarly article examines whether Paul's appeal to the creation narrative naming Adam and Eve in 1 Timothy 2:13-14 implies a universal principle prohibiting women from church leadership, as well as other key questions about interpreting this passage.
<u>She Desires a Noble Task</u>	Jim Reiher / Christians for Biblical Equality	Article	This article examines the connection between 1 Timothy 2 and 3. The author concludes that 1 Timothy 3:1 ("whoever aspires to be an overseer/elder desires a noble task") may have been directed at the women in 1 Timothy 2 whom Paul instructed to learn before taking on a church leadership role.
<u>Why I Am a Complementarian</u>	Colin Smothers	Article	An accessible article from a director for the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood offers his personal rationale for his commitment to the theological stance that men and women are equal in dignity but have distinct, complementary roles in marriage and the church.
<u>Women's Service in the Church: The Biblical Basis</u>	N.T. Wright	Conference paper	This is a transcript of a talk or conference paper presented by biblical scholar NT Wright summarizing readings of New Testament passages pertaining to the ministry of women.
<u>Together in Ministry</u>	Rob Dixon	Book	For those interested in the practical dynamics of collaboration, this book offers a roadmap naming ten attributes of ministry partnerships between men and women that are both personally satisfying and missionally effective. Each attribute is rooted in research findings and biblical examples, along with benefits, barriers, and practical next steps for growing their teams in an intentional way.

<u>Tell Her Story: How Women Led, Taught and Ministered in the Early Church</u>	Nijay Gupta	Book	New Testament scholar Nijay Gupta aims to present an accessible exploration of the lives of women in the New Testament, including Phoebe, Priscilla, Junia, and Nympha.
<u>The Making of Biblical Womanhood</u>	Beth Allison Barr	Book	This accessible book by a church historian presents relevant church history aiming to provide wider context and move modern, American conversations about women's roles beyond the typical two opposing views.
<u>Women and God</u>	Kathleen Nielson	Book	This is an accessible, warm, and practical book that outlines an approach to ministry uplifting the equal dignity and value of men and women, while affirming distinct roles within marriage and the church.
<u>God's Good Design</u>	Claire Smith	Book	A New Testament scholar offers this accessible book that explores key biblical texts related to gender roles within the church and the home, advocating that men and women are equal in value but have distinct, God-ordained roles.
<u>Jesus, Justice and Gender Roles</u>	Kathy Keller	Book	A clear and concise book presenting Keller's personal journey and theological study and asserting that men and women have distinct, God-ordained roles that, when embraced, lead to personal fulfillment and reflect divine order.
<u>Men and Women in the Church: A Short, Biblical, Practical Introduction</u>	Kevin DeYoung	Book	This concise and accessible book draws from biblical texts to present an argument for distinct roles for men and women in church and family life, while addressing pastoral, practical implications, common questions and objections.
<u>Gender Roles and the People of God</u>	Alice Mathews	Book	An accessible, entry level read for a group; offers historical and sociological content alongside theology.
<u>Man and Woman, One in Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Paul's Letters</u>	Philip Payne	Book	An academic book that offers exegetical analysis of Paul's message about gender and relationships and making a case that Paul's instructions are consistent and coherent within the rest of his theology.
<u>The Danvers Statement</u>	Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood	Position paper	This position paper published in 1987 articulates a biblical rationale for distinct gender roles within the church, family, and broader society. It is historically significant as a founding document for the complementarian movement within evangelical Christianity. For those curious, it was written in

			Danvers Massachusetts. The Council continues to publish resources advocating for complementary gender roles in the church and home. See CBMW's searchable resource list .
Men, Women, and Biblical Equality	Christians for Biblical Equality	Position paper	This position paper published in 1989 articulates a biblical rationale for gender equality in all areas of life, including ministry and leadership. It is historically significant as a founding document for the egalitarian or mutualist movement within evangelical Christianity. It was signed by a few people who belonged to NSCBC. Christians for Biblical Equality continues to publish resources advocating for mutuality between men and women in ministry. See CBE's searchable resource list .
Scriptural Support for Women in Ministry and A Wesleyan View	Wesleyan Church	Article + Statement of Belief	These document the biblical foundation for the Wesleyan stance on women in ministry, examining the arc of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. This may interest those curious about how a denomination with many similarities (and some important differences!) approaches the matter.
Statement and four-part video lecture series	Bridgetown Church (Oregon)	Position paper and video	Bridgetown Church conducted a process similar to ours, resulting in a statement and teaching series explaining their conclusions.
Announcement to church and paper on process, study of Scripture and conclusions	Bent Tree Church (Texas)	Position paper and video	Bent Tree Bible Fellowship conducted a process similar to ours, which resulted in an announcement to the church and a paper to capture where they landed.