



Grace Church Membership Covenant 2024

Introduction

Grace Church is built on a pursuit of God and his presence based on a clear understanding of who God reveals Himself to be in his Word. We're seeking to be a people who joyfully orient our lives around following Jesus and fulfilling His Great Commission; endeavoring to love and disciple everyone we know and ultimately doing the same in at least one other nation among an unreached/least reached people group. For us, that's currently somewhere within the borders of the nation of Myanmar, as well as in Kurdistan (northern Iraq) and anywhere else that God may lead us.

The Grace Church Membership Covenant flows from our love for God, our love for the church Body that he has raised up in Central Michigan, and our love for those who have not yet come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ.

These materials have been created as a teaching document with three functions:

- To establish the theological basis for membership in the local church
- To clarify the biblical obligations and expectations for both the leaders of Grace Church and the individual members of the Grace Church Body
- To serve as a tool for reflection and growth toward holiness

What is the Church?

The church exists to display the glory of God to the world. Those who follow Jesus and become His disciples are invited into something much bigger than themselves. As His disciples, we are invited to be a part of God's redemptive purposes in the world (2 Cor. 5:16-21) and we're called to share in his holiness (Heb. 12:10).

In Ephesians 1:22-23, Paul says that God, having raised Christ from the dead and placed him far above all rule and authority, "put all things under his feet and made him head over all things *for the church*, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all." At Grace Church, we believe the church is made manifest to the world in two primary expressions. The first is the Universal Church (i.e. all believers everywhere), which is the Body of Christ throughout the world, and the second is the Local Church (i.e. local expressions of the Universal Church). We believe God works primarily through these local expressions to shine the light of the gospel into communities around the world.

In light of this reality, the commitment to become a "member" of a local church is about much more than consistent attendance or active involvement in the Church community. Church membership is a call to be involved in the redemptive work of God as he reconciles the world to himself through the forgiveness of his Son, Jesus Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Purpose of the Grace Church Membership Covenant

When a person enters into a relationship with God, they are committing to walk with God for the rest of their lives and to love him above all else. Based on both Jesus' teaching and the teaching throughout the New Testament, we believe a relationship with God also includes a relationship with, and a commitment to, other believers in a local church community. In essence, the decision to become a member at Grace Church is an affirmation of these two truths.

The purpose of the Grace Church Membership Covenant is:

- To join the Holy Spirit in forming an authentic Church community that reflects the love and unity that is shared between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- To clarify the ongoing blessings and responsibilities of membership
- To encourage consistency, accountability, love, and unity within the Church family
- To guide us in accomplishing God's call for the Grace Church family

Becoming a member at Grace Church *doesn't* mean that you will never fall short. It *does* mean that the desire of your heart is to fulfill each of the commitments outlined in this covenant to the best of your ability. We trust your commitment will be a blessing to your personal journey with Christ, as well as those around you.

What is a Covenant?

A covenant is generally defined as a written agreement or promise, usually between two or more parties. Within the Scriptures, we find a number of examples of covenants, some between God and man (Gen. 6, 9, 15; Ezek. 20; Hos. 2; Jer. 31; Matt. 26), while others are solely between men (1 Sam. 18; 2 Sam. 5).

On its simplest level, the Grace Church Membership Covenant is a commitment the members of Grace Church make to one another, before God, to pursue a growing relationship with God and to promote the health and well-being of this Church we love.

The Grace Church Membership Covenant contains many conditions that we believe are general Christian duties. For example, all Christians, whether they are members at Grace Church or not, are called to submit to the Scriptures, pursue holiness, steward their resources well, etc. Such requirements are universal duties for the Christ-follower, regardless of whether or not that person is a member of any local church. As such, this covenant is first and foremost an acknowledgement of general Christian duty, and a commitment to enter into those duties for God's glory and the good of this local Body.

“Called Out Ones”

The Greek word for “church” in the New Testament is “*ekklesia*,” which means “called out ones.” On a practical level, the church is an assembly, a gathering of God’s people who have come together to worship, pray, sit under the teaching of God’s Word, share in the Holy Spirit’s power, exercise their gifts, and seek him together. At Grace Church, we emphasize the following areas, in both teaching and practice, as “pillars” of a Christian life that honors God and reflects his glory to the world as his “called out ones.”

Prayer | Prayer is the foundation of everything we do at Grace Church. Jesus’ life and ministry flowed from an ever-deepening relationship with God the Father. Prayer is where we come face to face with God’s work in our own hearts. It’s where we confess our sin, discern God’s leading, and seek his guidance and blessing as we point people to Christ.

Holiness | We believe lives of true devotion to Christ are characterized by holiness. As Christ’s followers, we must no longer be conformed to the passions of our former ignorance but be holy in all our conduct (1 Peter 1:14-18). Because we worship and serve a holy God, we believe a life of effective ministry flows from a foundation of purity and holiness.

Forgiveness | Jesus taught about the church twice in the Gospel of Matthew, making it clear that (1) He would build the church (Matthew 16:18) and (2) those within the church would sin against each other (Matthew 18:15-20). Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 18 gives us a process for dealing with sin in a way that prioritizes the unity of the church. As Jesus’ followers, we are called to forgive one another and make every effort to pursue and maintain unity with each other.

Thanksgiving | Philippians 4:4-8 says, “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice...do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” Oftentimes, the anxiety we experience is rooted in the things we lack, whereas gratitude focuses our attention on all the ways we’ve been blessed. When we live from a place of gratitude, the peace of God guards our hearts and minds in Christ.

Love | Jesus said, “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34-35). As his disciples, we are called to love one another in ways that are selfless and sacrificial. When we do, we are simply following Christ’s example.

Outreach | In 1 Corinthians 2:4, Paul says his message and his preaching “were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power.” We want the same to be true of our gatherings and the ongoing ministry at Grace Church. We believe God has called us to reach out and share Christ with others. We also believe the Holy Spirit’s power for evangelism is closely related to each of the areas above and accompanies ministry that is rooted in a personal relationship with Jesus.

Generosity | Our love for Christ is expressed in our generosity toward God and others. In 1 Corinthians 4:7, Paul asks, “What do you have that you did not receive?” When we recognize God’s many blessings and faithful provision on our lives, our natural response is to give in a way that is faithful and sacrificial. Please see “What Membership Looks Like” on pg. 8 for more on the importance of financial giving.

One Body, Many Members

After Jesus died and rose from the dead, he appeared to his disciples over a period of 40 days (Acts 1:3). Jesus appeared to his disciples in a physical, resurrected body they could touch and see (Luke 24:36-43). He ascended into heaven with this *same* body and Scripture is clear that one day Jesus will come again (Acts 1:11). Like the disciples, one day we will see him as he is and be given resurrection bodies like his (2 Cor. 5:1-5). Until Christ returns, the church is Christ's physical, tangible "body" on earth (1 Cor. 12:27, Ephesians 1:22-23).

We are the Body of Christ. In 1 Corinthians 12, the Apostle Paul uses the imagery of a body to describe the interdependent relationship between all of the members of a local church. Here we are introduced to the Biblical concept of "membership" within the church. Just as the human body is made up of many individual parts that rely on each other to function properly, the Body of Christ requires the consistent contribution and engagement of each of its individual members. Paul emphasizes the following two points, both of which are essential to our understanding of what it means to be a functional "member" of a local church.

We need the Body of Christ. As Jesus' followers, we have been called to love and serve those around us, putting their needs before our own. In a world so often defined by individual pursuits, we must reject the lie that we don't need other people in our lives. As Scripture says, "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you,' nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you'" (1 Corinthians 12:21). As members of Christ's Body, we need each other.

The Body of Christ needs us. As Jesus' followers, we must not look at the similarities of others, especially those at similar stages of life or with similar gifts, and believe the lie that we're unnecessary to the life and health of the Body. As the Scriptures say, "If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,' that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,' that would not make it any less a part of the body" (1 Cor. 12:15-16). In this same context, Paul goes on to say that God "arranged the members in the Body, *each one of them*, as he chose" (1 Cor. 12:18). Every member has an essential role to play.

Statement of Belief

The following Statement of Belief represents the orthodox beliefs of the Church. While Church Members are not required to fully understand or be able to articulate all aspects of the Statement of Belief, the explicit rejection of any part disqualifies a person from membership at Grace Church. Revisions to the Statement of Belief in order to more clearly align with Scripture may be made at the sole discretion of the Team of Elders, with the understanding that such changes will be communicated to the Members of the Church.

I believe...

- » The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the Word of God, fully inspired, without error in the original manuscripts, and the infallible rule and final authority of faith and practice (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Psalm 19:7-11; Mark 13:31; John 20:31).
- » There is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, equal in power and glory; that this triune God created all and governs all (Genesis 1:1,26; Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6; John 17:3; Matthew 28:19-20; John 1:1-4; 1 Timothy 2:5).
- » In God the Father, who is infinite, personal, and perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love; that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of people; that He hears and answers prayer; that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ, and that He invites us to relate to Him, through Jesus, as a loving Father (Genesis 1:26; Psalm 45:6-7; Matthew 23:9; John 3:16-17; 1 Peter 1:3; Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:33-36; John 1:12-13).
- » In Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. I believe Jesus Christ is both fully divine and fully human. I believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings; His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people and His personal, visible return to earth to establish His kingdom (John 1:1-4,14,18; Hebrews 1:3, John 5:2-24; John 14:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Matthew 20:28; Ephesians 1:22-23; 1 Peter 2:21-25; Romans 5:6-11; Hebrews 7:25; Hebrews 9:28; Acts 1:11; Romans 6:9; 1 Timothy 3:16).
- » In the Holy Spirit, who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower for ministry all who believe in Christ; that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Jesus Christ and that he is an abiding Helper, Teacher, and Guide (Ephesians 1:11-14; John 14:16-17, 25-26; John 15:26; John 16:7-11; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:6, 6:19; Romans 8:16, 26-27; 1 Peter 1:2; Titus 3:5).
- » That all people are created by God in His image, but are sinners by nature and choice and are therefore under condemnation, and that God regenerates and baptizes by the Holy Spirit those who repent of their sins and confess Jesus Christ as Lord (Genesis 1:27; Genesis 3:6-24; Romans 5:12-19; Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:21-25; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 13; Ephesians 2:1-3).

- » In the free gift of salvation, that through Jesus' death on the cross my rebellion can be forgiven, and through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ I can be reconciled to God (Romans 5:1-2, 6-11, 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 2:4-8; John 3:16-17; Galatians 4:4-5; Romans 4:5; Colossians 3:1-5; Hebrews 2:14-16, Romans 8:37-39).
- » That my faith must demonstrate itself through conduct that is consistent with the Bible's moral standards of honesty, integrity, sexual purity, and a life of good deeds, as taught in Scripture (Galatians 5:19-23; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Tim. 1:9-11; 1 Tim. 3:2-7; James 1:22; James 3:13).
- » In the church, the living, spiritual Body of Christ, of which He is the Head and all regenerated persons are members. I believe Christ has called all believers to join together in autonomous local churches, which are the visible expression of His one Universal Church (Matthew 16:18; Matthew 18:17; Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:15-16; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Acts 2:42-47, Hebrew 10:23-25).
- » That the Lord Jesus Christ committed two ordinances to the church: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. I believe in believer's baptism by immersion in water and communion open to all believers who are walking in obedience to Christ. I believe that I am commanded to observe these two ordinances, but I do not depend on them for my salvation (Matthew 3:13-17; Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:37-41; Acts 8:36-38; Acts 10:44-48; Romans 6:4; Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20; Acts 2:41; 1 Cor. 11:27-28).
- » In the personal, visible appearing of Christ to earth and the consummation of His Kingdom; in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment and eternal blessing of the righteous, and the endless suffering of the wicked (John 14:1-4, 18, 28-29; Acts 1:6-11; Romans 8:34; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 24:23-27; 1 Corinthians 15:24-25; Revelation 20:11-15).

As stated previously, Members of Grace Church must affirm and adhere to this Statement of Belief.

Statement of Theological Distinctives

While the doctrines expressed in the Statement of Belief are recognized to be universal and primary within the Church, there are a number of secondary beliefs, referred to here as “distinctives,” that guide our teaching and practice.

While we understand that not all Christians hold these beliefs, we believe they are important and true as we understand the Scriptures and representative of our specific thumbprint as a church. Although complete agreement is not required for the sake of membership, it should be understood by all members that we will preach, teach, and counsel in accordance with these convictions.

1. *Prayer* emphasized before, during, and after everything we do.
2. *Anointed Worship & Teaching* in all our services.
3. Making the church particularly accessible to *5 to 25-year-olds*.
4. *Biblical Simplicity* in Church structure and function.
5. Seeking out, honoring, empowering, and unleashing people who are *Leadership Gifted* and walk in obedience to Christ.
6. *Risky Spontaneity and Flexibility* from week to week.
7. *Change for Change Sake*, as a catalyst for growth, as led by the Holy Spirit.
8. *Spiritual Gifts-Based* ministry that recognizes each person’s gifts even as they learn to bear the fruit of Christ-like character.
9. Passion for *Relating with Respect* to the un-churched while remaining unapologetically biblical in articulating our beliefs.
10. *Sacrificial Giving to one Common General Fund*, which includes opportunities to give toward financial goals for various projects.
11. Emphasis on *Parents’ Responsibility* for teaching spirituality to their children, and the Church’s commitment to partner with them in doing so.
12. Weekly rhythm of *Rest*.
13. *Church Planting* geared toward those 16-25 years old. This will be accomplished as God makes His timetable and leading clear.
14. A *Servant Spirit*, which flows from the example of Christ who came not to *be served*, but to serve and to lay his life down for many (Matthew 20:28).
15. Commitment to *Discipling Others* within the Body of Christ (2 Timothy 2:2).
16. *Reaching Generations and Blessing Nations* with the gospel and with works of service and compassion, embracing Jesus’ call to “go and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:18-20).
17. *Personal Purity and Holiness* as we walk with God and serve as a light to the world around us.
18. *Holy Spirit-Empowered Ministry*, which is characterized by the Holy Spirit’s conviction and power for daily living, as we well as for prayer, healing, deliverance, and prophetic ministry.

What Membership Looks Like

Members at Grace Church express their ongoing commitment to the Body of Christ in some practical and tangible ways. These areas reflect practices that we believe are essential for our members. We also encourage those who desire to become members at Grace Church to begin by committing to each of the areas below.

1. Participate in Sunday Gatherings Whenever Possible (Hebrews 10:24-25) – We encourage our members to prioritize our Sunday Gatherings and, whenever possible, to gather with the Body of Christ to worship on Sunday mornings. We believe the church is at its best when each member recognizes their God-given gifts exercises those gifts when the church is gathered.

2. Regularly Attend Prayer Meetings (Colossians 4:2-3) – Our Prayer Meetings are the life-blood of Grace Church and one of the truest expressions of who we are, and aspire to be, as God’s people. We believe these Prayer Meetings are both a catalyst for spiritual growth and a valuable opportunity to connect with the Body of Christ. Members are encouraged to find at least one day each week to attend a Prayer Meeting. Those who serve on Sundays are also encouraged to begin their morning with the Prayer Gathering at 7:30 AM.

3. Connect with Others through Regular Serving (John 13:12-17) – Based on Christ’s example and the teaching throughout the New Testament, offering our lives in service to others is one of the most natural and tangible ways we can express our love for Christ and desire to be his disciple. Members at Grace Church are encouraged to serve on a regular basis in a role where others can depend on them. We believe every member has a God-given role to play in the local church and that the church flourishes when each of our members are actively engaged in Body life.

4. Give Financially to the Work of God at Grace Church on a Regular Basis (2 Corinthians 9:6-11) – We teach that membership within the Local Church cannot, and should not, be separated from regular and sacrificial giving, which includes a tithe (10% of gross income), as well as regular giving that is above and beyond the tithe to support the ongoing work of the ministry. All members are encouraged to give sacrificially and in proportion to God’s provision and blessing in their lives (Deut. 16:7, 2 Cor. 8:11-12, Luke 6:38).

5. Grow and Mature through Ongoing Discipleship (Colossians 1:28-29) – As members of Christ’s Body, we are called to grow and mature in our faith together. This begins by finding others who walk with God and will speak into our lives and help us grow. As we mature in our faith, we also have a responsibility to entrust what we’ve learned to others and encourage them to do the same (2 Timothy 2:2). Discipleship is essential for the local church to build itself up in love (Ephesians 4:16) and Community Groups are one of the primary ways to engage with other believers during this season.

While we encourage members to participate in Body life in these ways, we also understand that many factors may limit and individual’s or family’s involvement during different seasons of life. These factors should in no way preclude God’s people from membership at Grace Church, nor should they be used a way to measure someone’s value or worth to this local Body. We trust each of our Members to seek the Lord and pursue involvement in whatever way(s) He leads them.

Process for Becoming a Member

Those who are new to Grace Church and who desire to become members should begin by committing to some central aspects of Body life at Grace: (a) Attending our Sunday Gatherings consistently, (b) Becoming a regular attender of our morning Prayer Meetings (where possible), (c) Exploring opportunities to serve and use their gifts somewhere within the Body, (d) Giving financially to the work of God at Grace Church on a regular basis, and (e) Growing and maturing through ongoing discipleship by learning from others within the Body who are further along in their faith, both in personal relationships and by being a part of gatherings like Community Groups, Men's Nights, Women's Ministry events, Young Church, and other special events.

After a period of more active involvement, the prospective member(s) should talk with their Community Group or ministry team leader, the Lead Pastor, or one of the Elders. Once the Elders and/or staff members are aware of their desire, they will arrange to meet with prospective member(s) to discuss their background and desire to become a member at Grace Church. Where prospective members have previous church background, the Elders and/or staff members involved may contact those in leadership, as well as additional references, from those churches. The Elders and/or staff members will also review the Membership Covenant materials with the prospective members.

If the Elder(s) involved feel the prospective member(s) will be a good fit at Grace Church, they will begin an 18-month period where the prospective members will join the Body of Christ at Grace Church as Provisional Members. The Grace Church family will be made aware of their step of faith and desire to be members.

During the 18-month period, Provisional Members are encouraged to grow in their connection to the Grace Church family and involvement at Grace Church through each of the ways listed above (Weekend Gatherings, Prayer Meetings, Serving, Giving, and Discipleship).

At the end of the provisional period, the Elders will meet with the Provisional Members to determine their next step in terms of membership. If the Provisional Members are feeling led to explore other local churches, our leaders will encourage them to go wherever they feel they'll be able to grow.

If the provisional period has provided clarity to both the Provisional Member(s) and the Elders that this is a good fit, the Elders will review the Membership Covenant materials with the Provisional Member(s) once again and welcome them as an integral part of the Body of Christ at Grace Church. The Grace Church family will be made aware of this exciting step and invited to rejoice with the new members of the Grace Church family.

Membership at Grace Church

Membership at Grace Church is participation in a family, a local expression of the universal household of God. All members are united to Christ and to each other through the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 8:9). Our “membership” in God’s family is expressed through our love for God, our love for God’s people, and our love for those who are not yet God’s people. Because the church is the tangible, physical representation of Christ’s Body on earth, Christians are called to display God’s glory in a manner worthy of him (Ephesians 4:1).

Membership at Grace Church is available to any believing and professing Christian who acknowledges and accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and who is willing to subscribe to the governance and policies of the Church, as established in our Bylaws and in these Membership Covenant materials, both of which may be amended from time to time. In addition, Members shall have satisfied all the requirements of membership as defined by the Team of Elders and outlined in our Bylaws, and Members shall have signed the Grace Church Membership Covenant for the current year, thus committing themselves to the responsibilities outlined herein.

Renewing Membership

Membership at Grace Church will be revisited on an annual basis and all members will be asked to review the Membership Covenant materials and sign an updated Membership Covenant each year.

Members who have been inactive for a period of one (1) year (as determined by means of regular attendance, giving, and service within the Body) will be removed from the list of active members. In these circumstances, it is the responsibility of the inactive member to communicate with the Team of Elders regarding their desire to remain a member of Grace Church. The absence of such communication will be understood by the Team of Elders to mean that the church member no longer desires to associate with Grace Church in a formal membership capacity.

A list of active members shall be maintained by the Team of Elders, who may review and update this list at any time.

Rescinding Membership

Membership at Grace Church can be rescinded by: (a) no longer renewing membership on an annual basis, (b) voluntary resignation of membership while in good standing, (c) death, or (d) a decision by the Team of Elders as a result of a disciplinary process. As stated in our **Church Discipleship & Discipline Guidelines**, members are discouraged from rescinding their membership while in the midst of either a formal or informal disciplinary process.

The Team of Elders reserves the right to disassociate any member by a majority vote of the Team of Elders.

Biblical Commitments of the Elders to the Grace Church Body

As shepherds and overseers of a local church, the Team of Elders is entrusted with leading, feeding, equipping, protecting, and caring for the Church Body and each of its members. Below is an overview of the Scriptural requirements for Elders and the commitment our Team of Elders has made to the Grace Church Body.

As Elders at Grace Church, we covenant to...

- » Appoint Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses, and staff members who serve in these offices according to the criteria assigned in the Scriptures (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- » Prayerfully seek God's will for our Church community and steward our resources to the best of our ability based on our study of the Scriptures and under the leadership of the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- » Care for the Church and seek its growth in grace, truth, and love (Matthew 28:16-20; Ephesians 4:15-16; Colossians 1:28; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- » Provide teaching and counsel from the whole of Scripture (Acts 20:27-28; 1 Timothy 4:16; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; Titus 2:1).
- » Equip the members of Grace Church for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:11-16; 2 Timothy 3:16-17).
- » Be on guard against false teachers and teachings (Matthew 7:15; Acts 20:28-31; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 1 John 4:1).
- » Lovingly exercise discipline when necessary for the glory of God, the good of the one disciplined, and the health of the Church as a whole (Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5; Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20).
- » Set an example as lead servants and join members in fulfilling the obligations and privileges of Church membership as stated below (Philippians 3:17; 1 Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:7-8; 1 Peter 5:3).

Biblical Commitments of Members to the Grace Church Body

Membership within a Local Church carries with it both privileges and responsibilities. In signing the Membership Covenant, Members affirm they have read the Membership Covenant materials and are willingly covenanting to the areas outlined below. The requirements of the Membership Covenant are not intended to be an addition to the biblical obligations of a believer. Rather, this document functions primarily as an accessible, yet non-exhaustive, explanation of what the Scriptures teach about the obedience that faith produces.

As a Member of Grace Church, I covenant to...

- » Pursue an active and growing relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ through regular Bible study, prayer, and fellowship with other Members of Grace Church, and the practice of spiritual disciplines (Luke 18:1; Acts 17:11; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Ephesians 5:1-21; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22).
- » Submit to the Scriptures as the final authority on all issues (2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21).
- » Follow the command of Jesus to be baptized (Acts 2:41; Acts 4:4; 1 Corinthians 12:13).
- » Live, speak, act, and serve in ways that promote and preserve unity within the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:1-3; Hebrews 12:14; Romans 12:18; Matthew 18:15-20).
- » Participate in the life of Grace Church by consistently attending Sunday Gatherings and Prayer Meetings, connecting with other believers on a regular basis through serving and Community Groups, and actively supporting the ongoing efforts of our leaders to grow deeper in our relationships with each other while also reaching out to those who are not yet God's people (Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:23-25; Titus 3:14).
- » Forgive those who sin against me (Ephesians 4:32; Matthew 6:14; Colossians 3:13).
- » Faithfully steward the resources God has given me, including my time, body, gifts, talents, finances, and possessions. This includes the regular financial giving of a tithe (10% of gross income), as well as regular giving that is above and beyond the tithe and is cheerful, sacrificial, and voluntary (Matthew 25:14-30; Romans 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 8-9; 1 Peter 4:10-11).
- » Submit to the Team of Elders and other Church leaders and esteem them highly in love because of their work (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:7,17; 1 Corinthians 11:1).
- » Confess sin to God and others on a regular basis and seek help when needed in order to put sin to death in my life (James 5:16; 1 John 1:6-7; Luke 8:17).

- » Walk in holiness, by God’s grace and through the power of the Holy Spirit, in all areas of my life as an act of worship to Jesus Christ. I will strive to put certain attitudes and actions to death, while trusting the Spirit to bring about new life and growth in all areas of my life (Rom. 8:1-14; Gal. 6:7-9; 1 Peter 1:13-19; Eph. 4:17-24). Below are a few examples of actions addressed in the Scriptures:
 - I will practice complete chastity unless married and, if married, complete fidelity within a heterosexual and monogamous marriage. Complete chastity and fidelity means, among other things, that regardless of my marital status, I will pursue purity and abstain from sexually immoral practices such as adultery, homosexuality, premarital sex, and pornography (Romans 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 6:15-20, 10:8; Ephesians 5:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4).
 - I will seek to preserve the gift of marriage and agree to walk through the steps of marriage reconciliation at Grace Church before pursuing divorce from my spouse (Matthew 19:1-12; Mark 10:1-12; Luke 16:18; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11). For the role of the Church in the process of divorce, see Paul’s concern for the resolution of legal matters within the assembly of the Church in 1 Corinthians 6:1-8.
 - I will refrain from illegal drug use, drunkenness, gossip and other sinful behavior as the Bible dictates (Romans 1:28-32, 13:13; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:18; James 3:3-18).

- » Submit to the ‘discipline’ of God (from which we derive the words ‘disciple’ and ‘discipleship’) through his Holy Spirit by:
 - Evaluating my own life on an ongoing basis, with the Holy Spirit’s help, to discern any areas where God is calling me to grow and change (1 Corinthians 11:28-32; 1 John 1:5-10).
 - Receiving input and exhortation when approached by fellow believers, even when it is delivered imperfectly (Ephesians 5:15-21; Proverbs 18:1; 1 John 1:8).
 - Following biblical procedures for Church Discipleship & Discipline where sin is evident in the life of another believer by praying for them and speaking the truth in love, in the hope that such discipline will bring about repentance and restoration (Matthew 18:15-20, Eph. 4:15; 1 Thess. 5:14).
 - Submitting to Church Discipleship & Discipline should the need ever arise (Matt. 18:15-20; Heb.13:17).

For more information, please email: elders@gracemp.org.



Membership Covenant 2024

With the guiding help of the Holy Spirit, I, the undersigned, affirm the following:

I am a Christian who has been saved from my sins by the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ.

I have been baptized as an outward testimony of my faith in Christ and desire to follow Him as His disciple.

I have read and understood the Grace Church Statement of Belief, as well as the core convictions and beliefs outlined in Article 1 of the Grace Church Bylaws, and I am in unreserved agreement.

I have read and understood the Grace Church Bylaws.

I have read and understood the Grace Church Discipleship & Discipline Guidelines.

I have read and understood the Membership Covenant materials. I joyfully and willingly commit to the teaching outlined in these materials, specifically the areas outlined in the Essential Practices of Membership and Biblical Commitments of Members to the Grace Church Body.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Phone Number