

SOUTHWEST CHURCH

Starting Point Part 1

The purpose of the **Starting Point Class** is to describe Southwest Church's basic beliefs, purpose, vision, leadership structure, and expectations of members. If you have not already done so, we hope the course will help you make a commitment to become a follower a Jesus and a member of God's family at Southwest.

Welcome to Starting Point!

We are grateful that you are interested in deepening your relationship with God. We are also glad that you are interested in learning more about Southwest Church. This class is the basic introduction to our church family. Since we have members from different church and non-church backgrounds, this class is designed to clearly explain who and what our church is. Starting Point is divided into the following two parts:

- Part One: What are basic beliefs (concerning a relationship with God) of Southwest?
- Part Two: What kind of church is Southwest?
 What is the purpose of Southwest?
 Who are the leaders of Southwest?
 What are the expectations of members at Southwest?

There is a lot of important material included in this notebook. Our prayer is that you will take the time to read these notes and more importantly the Scriptures listed. We will not have time during **Starting Point** to cover every point, but we will simply cover the highlights.

Please contact a ministry staff member if you have any questions concerning any of this material. Although God's word is perfect, we are very aware that this or any explanation of God's word is not perfect. We are committed to continuing to refine and revise this class to be an accurate and effective explanation of God's word.

Psalm 18:30 *God's way is perfect. All the Lord's promises prove true. He is a shield for all who look to him for protection.*

Psalm 19:7-9 *The instructions of the Lord are perfect, reviving the soul. The decrees of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.*

Romans 12:2 *Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.*

Philippians 3:12-14 *I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.*

James 1:25 *But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.*

PART ONE: WHAT ARE THE CORE BELIEFS OF SOUTHWEST?

1. GOD THE FATHER

God is the creator and ruler of the universe. One God has eternally existed in three distinct persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth... Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.
Genesis 1:1, 26-27 NIV

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
2 Corinthians 13:14 NLT

This letter is from Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. I am writing to God's chosen people who are living as foreigners... God the Father knew you and chose you long ago, and his Spirit has made you holy. As a result, you have obeyed him and have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ. May God give you more and more grace and peace.
1 Peter 1:1-2 NLT

2. JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He has coexisted with the Father throughout eternity. He became a human being through a miraculous conception. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered himself as a perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He arose from the grave after three days demonstrating his power over sin and death. He later ascended to be with the Father and to intercede on our behalf. We believe that it is through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ that we have salvation from our sins and the gift of eternal life.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
John 1:1-5, 14 NIV

And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness... For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body.
Colossians 2:6-7, 9 NLT

3. THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is also a distinct person, who has coexisted with the Father and the Son throughout eternity. He lives within every Christian from the moment of salvation. The Holy Spirit provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right.

But whenever someone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.
2 Corinthians 3:16-18 NLT

But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.) And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

Romans 8:9-11 NLT

4. THE BIBLE

We believe that the Bible is God's written word. The Bible was recorded by human authors, who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. We also believe that the Bible is relevant and applicable to our lives.

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 NIV

Above all, you must realize that no prophecy in Scripture ever came from the prophet's own understanding, or from human initiative. No, those prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit, and they spoke from God.

2 Peter 1:20-21 NLT

For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.

Hebrews 4:12 NLT

5. HUMAN BEINGS

People are created in the image of God and have tremendous potential for good, but all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called "sin." Sin separates people from God and causes many problems in life.

Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.

Isaiah 59:1-2 NIV

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 3:23 NLT

The person who sins is the one who will die. The child will not be punished for the parent's sins, and the parent will not be punished for the child's sins. Righteous people will be rewarded for their own righteous behavior, and wicked people will be punished for their own wickedness.

Ezekiel 18:20 NLT

The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:19-21 NIV

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23 NLT

6. ABOUT SALVATION

Jesus Christ is God's solution for our sins. Through him, we can experience God's forgiveness for our sins, receive God's Spirit, and be adopted into God's family forever. We believe that salvation is God's free gift to all who will respond in faith to his wonderful grace.

God's Grace. It is only by grace that anyone can have salvation.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9 NIV

For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people. **Titus 2:11 NLT**

About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”). **Matthew 27:46 NIV**

“He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.” For “you were like sheep going astray,” but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. **1 Peter 2:24-25 NIV**

7. HUMAN RESPONSE TO GOD’S GRACE

• **Believe.** We are called to put our faith in Jesus Christ as God’s Son and our Savior.
For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. **John 3:16 NIV**

Therefore, since we have been made right in God’s sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God’s glory. **Romans 5:1-2 NLT**

• **Repent.** We are called to demonstrate a change of heart and mind. (We decide to turn from a self-directed life to a Christ-directed life.)
From then on Jesus began to preach, “Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.” **Matthew 4:17 NLT**

Now repent of your sins and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped away. Then times of refreshment will come from the presence of the Lord... **Acts 3:19 NLT**

Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter. **2 Corinthians 7:10-11 NIV**

• **Confess.** We are called to verbally identify ourselves with Christ by confessing him as our Lord and Savior.
“Everyone who acknowledges me publicly here on earth, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. But everyone who denies me here on earth, I will also deny before my Father in heaven.” **Matthew 10:32-33 NLT**

If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. **Romans 10:9 NRSV**

• **Be Baptized.** We are called to visibly identify ourselves with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus by being baptized (immersed in water).
Therefore 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. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” **Matthew 28:19-20 NIV**

Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. **Acts 2:38-41 NIV**

As they rode along, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look! There’s some water! Why can’t I be baptized?” He ordered the carriage to stop, and they went down into the water, and Philip baptized

him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away. The eunuch never saw him again but went on his way rejoicing. Meanwhile, Philip found himself farther north at the town of Azotus. He preached the Good News there and in every town along the way until he came to Caesarea.

Acts 8:36-39 NLT

Comment: We practice and recognize the original, biblical form of baptism which is immersion in water. The New Testament word for baptize, *baptizo*, means “to immerse.” By being immersed in water in Jesus’ name we identify ourselves with his death, burial, and resurrection. We also follow the example and teaching of the Bible and baptize only intentional believers.

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

Romans 6:1-7 NIV

For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes.

Galatians 3:26-27 NLT

For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead.

Colossians 2:12 NLT

Comment Regarding Assurance: Christian denominations or groups have held differing views on whether a person is saved with or without baptism. We recognize that people who attend Southwest Church come from different backgrounds, and we believe it is not our place to judge a person’s salvation, as only God is the judge. However, we teach that all believers should experience the beautiful gift of baptism in order to follow Jesus, and thereby have the assurance of faith that comes from obedience to Christ.

We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. ... But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.

1 John 2:3, 5-6 NIV

8. THE LORD’S SUPPER

It is our practice to observe the Lord’s Supper (also known as Holy Communion, the Eucharist, or the breaking of the bread) during each *Weekend Celebration*. The bread and juice remind us of the body and blood of Christ offered up for our sins on the cross. Jesus Christ ordained certain practices, so that his believers could remember that in a *real* way he is always with them. Baptism is the ordained event that the individual is initially united in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Lord’s Supper is the ordained event to regularly renew that union with the risen Lord.

As they were eating, Jesus took some bread and blessed it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, “Take this and eat it, for this is my body.” And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them and said, “Each of you drink from it, for this is my blood, which confirms the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out as a sacrifice to forgive the sins of many. Mark my words—I will not drink wine again until the day I drink it new with you in my Father’s Kingdom.”

Matthew 26:26-29 NLT

For I pass on to you what I received from the Lord himself. On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and said, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way, he took the cup of wine

after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood. Do this in remembrance of me as often as you drink it.” For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord’s death until he comes again.

So anyone who eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord unworthily is guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. That is why you should examine yourself before eating the bread and drinking the cup. For if you eat the bread or drink the cup without honoring the body of Christ, you are eating and drinking God’s judgment upon yourself. That is why many of you are weak and sick and some have even died. But if we would examine ourselves, we would not be judged by God in this way. Yet when we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned along with the world.

1 Corinthians 11:23-32 NLT

9. ETERNITY (Comment: Due to time constraints, “Eternity” is covered in Starting Point, Part 2)

People were created to exist forever. We will exist either eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with God is eternal life. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence. We believe that a Christian can have confidence of his/her eternal salvation.

“Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am.

John 14:1-3 NLT

And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God’s glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering. Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later.

Romans 8:17-18 NLT

“Don’t be afraid of those who want to kill your body; they cannot touch your soul. Fear only God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

Matthew 10:28 NLT

He will come with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who don’t know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with eternal destruction, forever separated from the Lord and from his glorious power. When he comes on that day, he will receive glory from his holy people—praise from all who believe. And this includes you, for you believed what we told you about him.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 NLT

I have written this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know you have eternal life.

1 John 5:13 NLT

SOUTHWEST CHURCH

Starting Point **Part 2**

The purpose of the **Starting Point** is to describe Southwest Church's basic beliefs, purpose, vision, leadership structure, and expectations of members. If you have not already done so, we hope the course will help you make a commitment to become a follower a Jesus and a member of God's family at Southwest.

WHAT KIND OF CHURCH IS SOUTHWEST?

There are many different types of churches that claim faith in Jesus Christ. This multitude of different kinds of churches can be very confusing to an individual seeking a deeper relationship with God and an active participation in a community of believers.

Southwest Church is a **nondenominational church** that seeks to be true to the Bible. We believe that the Bible is God's word and is, therefore completely trustworthy. We have no creed other than the Bible, which is our ultimate rule and authority for everything we teach and do.

We are a **free church**, an independent congregation not associated with any denomination. We have chosen not to affiliate with any denomination or wear any denominational name that would divide us from other followers of Christ. Our desire is simply to follow Jesus Christ and encourage others to do so. While we are not the only Christians, we are Christians only.

Important Faith Principles For Southwest

- **In essential beliefs — we have unity.**

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.
Ephesians 4:4-6 NIV

- **In non-essential beliefs — we have freedom.**

Accept other believers who are weak in faith, and don't argue with them about what they think is right or wrong... Who are you to condemn someone else's servants? Their own master will judge whether they stand or fall. And with the Lord's help, they will stand and receive his approval... Yes, each of us will give a personal account to God. **Romans 14:1, 4, 12 NLT**

- **In all our beliefs — we show love.**

If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing.
1 Corinthians 13:2 NLT

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE, MISSION AND VISION OF SOUTHWEST?

Purpose Statement

Love God, Love People, Serve the Community, Share Jesus

Mission Statement

Following Jesus, Making Disciples

In 2014, the leadership of Southwest Church made a renewed commitment to discipleship, the practice of following Jesus. This focus has seen an increase in the number of baptisms, small groups, small group leaders, and greater church-wide spiritual maturity. Since we are keenly focused on discipleship, Southwest feels it is wise to have a consistent and clear understanding of what a disciple is. We find a blueprint in Matthew 4:19 when Jesus formally calls his first disciples.

Disciple

A disciple is someone who is 1) following Jesus, 2) is being changed by Jesus, and 3) is committed to the mission of Jesus.

“[Follow me], and [I will make you][fishers of people.]” -Matthew 4:19 NASB

Head

Heart

Hands

Vision Statement

Where lives are changed, families are strengthened, and purpose is found in Jesus

WHO ARE THE LEADERS OF SOUTHWEST?

Who are the leaders of Southwest?

We presently have four elders who provide spiritual leadership for the congregation. These four elders are **Neal Kennedy, Mike Myers, Cal Towne, and Lee Wagoner**. We plan to continue to add men, who meet the Biblical description found in **1 Timothy 3** and **Titus 1**, as they emerge within the life of the church.

We have a leadership team who serve in partnership with the elders to provide direction, cast vision and develop strategies to realize that vision. The leadership team consists of **Anna Bowman, Kyle Brockmeyer, Roger Hendricks, Theda Sampson, and Neal Kennedy** (as the elder representative). All of these individuals bring various talents and strengths to the leadership team.

We also have deacons providing leadership for ministries: **Gary Schrader** (Building and Grounds), **Mary Lou Pence** (Communion), **Tanya Trusty** (Women's Ministry), and **Ashley Beal** (Café).

Furthermore, we have a Finance Team which oversees cashflow and ensures financial solvency of Southwest. These team members are **Jamie Belanger** (Chairperson), **Ben Horvath** (Treasurer), and **Teri Parks** (Secretary).

Ministry Staff

Senior Minister: Roger Hendricks

Roger Hendricks has served 40 years in full-time Christian Ministry. He has a mathematics education degree from Purdue University, theology degree from Christian Theological Seminary (Indianapolis), and a Doctor of Ministry degree from Abilene Christian University (TX). Roger and his wife, Jayne, have been married since 1983, and have three married children and eight grandchildren: Anna (Husband: Kevin; Granddaughter: Jacqueline, Grandson: Cooper), Emily (Husband: Brian; Grandsons: Jesse & Leo); and Tom (Wife: Christina; Granddaughters: Aryn, Andi, Aden; Grandson: Alec), and one energetic dog (a Cavapoo named Pete).

Executive Minister: Andrew Beal

Andrew Beal works closely with the Senior Minister in strategy, vision implementation, organizational development and administrative duties within the church. Andrew holds both a Master of Divinity and a B.A. from Lincoln Christian University in Lincoln, Illinois. Andrew and his wife, Ashley, were married August 2019. They have two daughters, Audrey & Heidi.

Student Minister: Nick Schmahl

Nick Schmahl grew up in Ohio and then attended Ohio Valley University in West Virginia. He graduated from OVU with a degree in Bible along with minors in Youth Ministry, Greek, and Biblical Languages. Nick then served for seven years as a Youth Minister in Virginia. After working in West Virginia for more than a year as a bus mechanic and driver, Nick returned to full time ministry with Southwest Church in January 2026. As Student Minister, Nick leads ministry

efforts with students in grades 6-12. Nick and his wife, Cortney, have two children, Harrison and Hazel.

Interim Creative Arts Minister: Jessie Kelchner

Jessie Kelchner grew up in a ministry family as her Dad served as a Worship Minister for years. She has been a member of the Southwest Creative Arts Team for a number of years and began serving as the Interim Creative Arts Minister in January of 2026. Jessie and her husband, Marty, have three children: Jack, Lucy, and Kate.

Administrative Assistant: Teri Parks

Teri is our Administrative Assistant and Finance Secretary. She has lived most of her life in Springboro and has been with Southwest since the early days. Teri attended Wright State University and was a professional dancer/instructor. After retiring from dance, she studied Medical Administration. In her free time, Teri enjoys reading, spending time with family, and attending the many dance and musical performances of her daughter, Rachel.

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF MEMBERS AT SOUTHWEST?

The difference between “*attenders*” and “*members*” can be summed up in one word:

Commitment.

At Southwest we recognize the need for formal membership. We ask individuals seeking membership to Southwest to commit for 4 reasons:

A Biblical Reason: It enables the church leaders to provide proper spiritual guidance.

Obey your leaders and submit to them—for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account—so that they may do this with joy, not groaning; for this would be unhelpful for you.
Hebrews 13:17 NASB

A Cultural Reason: It is an antidote to our society.

We live in an age where very few want to be committed to anything . . . A job . . . a marriage . . . a family, etc. This attitude has even produced a generation of “church shoppers and hoppers.” Membership swims against the current of America’s “consumer religion.” Commitment to a church family is a very important decision. This commitment will help build character.

A Practical Reason: It defines who can be counted on.

Every team must have a roster. Every school must have an enrollment. Every business has a payroll. Even our country takes a census and requires voter registration. Membership identifies our church family.

A Personal Reason: It produces spiritual growth.

The New Testament places a major emphasis on the need for Christians to be active participants in “one another” relationships. A personal commitment to a specific church family provides each member a healthy mutual accountability, which leads to consistent spiritual growth.

What is expected of each member?

At Southwest we will not ask members to do more than the Bible clearly teaches. We only expect our members to do what the Bible expects every Christian to do. Some very basic responsibilities are spelled out in the Membership Covenant.

Southwest Leaders' Covenant

Proclaiming Jesus Christ to be Lord and Savior; and being held responsible before God for our ministries, we the leaders of Southwest Church make the following covenant with our church members:

We will protect the unity of our church by

* treating members with love and respect,

And now, a word to you who are elders in the churches. I, too, am an elder and a witness to the sufferings of Christ. And I, too, will share in his glory when he is revealed to the whole world. As a fellow elder, I appeal to you: Care for the flock that God has entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly—not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God. Don't lord it over the people assigned to your care, but lead them by your own good example. And when the Great Shepherd appears, you will receive a crown of never-ending glory and honor.

1 Peter 5:1-4

* speaking the truth in love,

Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.

Ephesians 4:15

* and yielding to Christ as the Head of the Church.

God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself.

Ephesians 1:22-23

We will accept responsibility for the life of our church by

* leading members to seek God in Scripture and prayer,

So guard yourselves and God's people. Feed and shepherd God's flock—his church, purchased with his own blood—over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as leaders... "And now I entrust you to God and the message of his grace that is able to build you up and give you an inheritance with all those he has set apart for himself."

Acts 20:28-32

* reaching out to the unchurched,

My ambition has always been to preach the Good News where the name of Christ has never been heard, rather than where a church has already been started by someone else.

Romans 15:20

* and providing a warm, welcoming atmosphere for those who visit.

But if all of you are prophesying, and unbelievers or people who don't understand these things come into your meeting, they will be convicted of sin and judged by what you say. As they listen, their secret thoughts will be exposed, and they will fall to their knees and worship God, declaring, "God is truly here among you."

1 Corinthians 14:24-25

We will serve the ministry of our church by

- * helping members discover their spiritual gifts and abilities,

That is why the Scriptures say, "When he ascended to the heights, he led a crowd of captives and gave gifts to his people."

Ephesians 4:8

- * providing biblical teaching to equip members for ministry,

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-13

- * and modeling what it means to be a servant of Jesus Christ.

But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant...

Mark 10:43

We will support the testimony of our church by

- * providing regular times of worship and fellowship,

And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven's Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place. And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God's house, let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water. Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.

Hebrews 10:19-23

- * using the resources God has given us to further the Kingdom of God,

"If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won't be honest with greater responsibilities. And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven? And if you are not faithful with other people's things, why should you be trusted with things of your own?"

Luke 16:10-12

- * and teaching the Bible faithfully.

Teach these things and insist that everyone learn them. Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity. Until I get there, focus on reading the Scriptures to the church, encouraging the believers, and teaching them.

1 Timothy 4:11-13

Southwest Member Covenant

Having confessed Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior; and having been immersed into the Body of Christ; and being in agreement with the Southwest purpose and mission, I want to make Southwest my church home. I hereby make the following commitments:

I will protect the unity of my church by

- * treating other members with love and respect,

You were cleansed from your sins when you obeyed the truth, so now you must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters. Love each other deeply with all your heart.

1 Peter 1:22

- * refusing to gossip,

Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.

Ephesians 4:29

- * and following my church leaders as they yield to Christ.

Dear brothers and sisters, honor those who are your leaders in the Lord's work. They work hard among you and give you spiritual guidance. Show them great respect and wholehearted love because of their work. And live peacefully with each other. Brothers and sisters, we urge you to warn those who are lazy. Encourage those who are timid. Take tender care of those who are weak. Be patient with everyone. See that no one pays back evil for evil, but always try to do good to each other and to all people.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-15

I will accept personal responsibility for the life of my church by

- * praying for its growth and outreach,

Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere. And pray for me, too. Ask God to give me the right words so I can boldly explain God's mysterious plan that the Good News is for Jews and Gentiles alike.

Ephesians 6:18-19

- * inviting and welcoming the unchurched,

Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them...Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically...When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.

Romans 12:9-13

- * and participating in the life of my church.

All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer...And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had... They worshiped 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 fellowship those who were being saved.

Acts 2:42-47

I will serve the ministry of our church by

- * discovering my gifts and talents,

Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us. Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other. In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

Romans 12:3-8

- * allowing God to use leaders and teachers to equip me for service,

Remember your leaders who taught you the word of God. Think of all the good that has come from their lives, and follow the example of their faith...Obey your leaders and submit to them—for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account—so that they may do this with joy, not [d]groaning; for this would be unhelpful for you.

Hebrews 13:7, 17

- * and ministering with a servant's heart.

"So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

John 13:34-35

I will support the testimony of my church by

- * attending faithfully,

Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

Hebrews 10:24-25

- * giving regularly and generously,

Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully"...Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God.

2 Corinthians 9:6-11; Malachi 3:6-12

- * and setting a clear example of godly living for my family, friends, and neighbors.

Then they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive in every way...Remind the believers to submit to the government and its officers. They should be obedient, always ready to do what is good. They must not slander anyone and must avoid quarreling. Instead, they should be gentle and show true humility to everyone.

Titus 2:10b, 3:1-2