THE ORCHARD CHURCH MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

The Orchard Church Membership Covenant is meant to communicate our love for the church body and its individual members whom we hope will experience the fullness of joy which is found in the presence of the Lord.



BIBLICAL OBLIGATIONS OF THE ORCHARD CHURCH
Elders to The Orchard Church Body

As shepherds and overseers of a local church, elders are entrusted with protecting, leading, equipping and caring for the corporate church body and her individual members. The following is a rather extensive overview of the requirements for elders as spelled out within the Scriptures.

The elders covenant...

- To ensure that elders, deacons, and staff members who serve in these offices, walk accordingly to the criteria assigned to them in the Scriptures (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- To prayerfully seek God's will for our church community and steward her resources to the best of our ability based on our study of the Scriptures and following of the Spirit (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- To care for the church and seek her 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).
- To 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).
- To equip the members of the church for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:11-16).
- To be on guard against false teachers and teachings (Matthew 7:15; Acts 20:28-31; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 1 John 4:1).
- To 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).
- To set an example and join members in fulfilling the obligations of church membership stated below (Philippians 3:17; 1 Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:7-8; 1 Peter 5:3).

BIBLICAL OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS TO THE ORCHARD CHURCH

As those who have experienced the grace of a life changed by the gospel of Jesus Christ, we have the opportunity to reflect the character of Christ through the pursuit of certain attitudes and actions and the rejection of others. The Scriptures refer to this reality as "living by the Spirit" (Rom. 8). The requirements of the Membership Covenant are in no way intended as 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.

I covenant...

- To submit to the authority of the Scriptures as the final authority in my life (Psalm 119; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21).
- To pursue the Lord Jesus Christ through regular Bible reading, prayer, fellowship and other spiritual disciplines (Luke 18:1; Acts 17:11; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Ephesians 5:1-21; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22).
- To follow the command and example of Jesus by participating in the ordinances prescribed to His Church:
  - By being baptized by immersion after my conversion.
  - By regularly remembering and celebrating the person and work of Christ through communion.
- To regularly participate in the life of The Orchard Church by attending weekly worship gatherings, engaging in Christ-centered community and serving those within and outside of this church (Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:23-25; Titus 3:14).
- To steward the resources God has given me including time, talents, spiritual gifts and finances. This includes regular financial giving, service and participation in community that is sacrificial, cheerful and voluntary (Matthew 25:14-30; Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 1 Peter 4:10-11).
- By God's grace through the power of the Holy Spirit, to walk in holiness in all areas of life as an act of worship to Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:13-16, 4:1-3). This means I will strive to put certain attitudes and actions to death while growing in love and good deeds through the Spirit. Below are a few specific examples of actions addressed in the Scriptures:
  - I will practice abstinence from sexual activity unless married and, if married, complete fidelity within heterosexual and monogamous marriage. I will pursue moral purity and abstain from sexually immoral practices such as homosexuality 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 refrain from illegal drug use, drunkenness, gossip and other sinful patterns and practices as the Bible dictates (Romans 1:28-32, 13:13; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:18; James 3:3-18).
- To take seriously the responsibility of Christian freedom, especially actions or situations that could present a stumbling block to another (Rom. 14:14-23; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13).
- To practice biblical correction by:
  - Following the biblical procedures for loving correction where sin is evident in another—the hope of such correction being repentance and restoration (Gal. 6:1).

    - Receiving loving correction when approached biblically by fellow believers (Psalm 141:5; Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; Hebrews 12:5-11).
- To do the following when I sin:
    - Confess my sin to God and when appropriate to fellow believers (James 5:16).
    - Repent and seek help to put my sin to death (Romans 8:13; Colossians 3:5; James 5:16; 1 John 1:6-10).
- To pray for and follow the leadership of the elders and other appointed leaders of the church, and to diligently strive for unity and peace within the church (Ephesians 4:1-3; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:5).
- To do the following should I leave the church:
    - To notify a staff member or elder.
    - To seek another church with which I can carry out my biblical responsibilities as a follower of Jesus Christ.

I understand and agree to the responsibilities of elders to members and members to the congregation.

