

Gospel of Grace Membership Information

Why Church Membership?

While the words “church membership” are not found in Scripture, we believe that church membership is the best and most faithful way to obey the various teachings of the Bible concerning church life. A few of those reasons are given below.

- 1) When a person is saved by God’s grace, they are made part of the universal church. In a very real way it is right to say that there is only one true church and it is made up of all those who have born again. However, it is impossible for Christians to have ongoing fellowship with every Christian on the planet or even in a given city. Therefore, local churches are an essential place where Christians in a local community can live out their Christian lives together before God. Thus it is the birthright and privilege of every believer to be involved in a local church!

- 2) Christians are called to submit to church leaders while church leaders (i.e. pastors and elders) are told they will give an account for those in their care.

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you (Heb 13:17).

The implication is that a Christian must choose a church in which they will obey this command. Again, a Christian cannot obey every church leader in the world, so they must fulfill this in a local context. Further, church leaders need to have an understanding of who it is that are under their care and those for whom they will give an account to God. Church membership helps make all of this clear for everyone and helps to avoid misunderstandings.

- 3) Various verses in the New Testament call Christians to act in a particular way to “one another.”

Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor... Live in harmony with one another (Rom 12:10; 16).

Church membership allows believers to know with whom it is they are to carry out these commands. Membership is a commitment to fellowship with and accountability to a particular group of individuals as we live out the Christian life.

- 4) In the NT, there is evidence that local churches had lists of people who were part of their church (e.g. Acts 2:41, 47) . In instances where professing Christians (those who claim to be Christians) were acting in clear and unrepentant disobedience to the Lord, they were removed from the church (see 1 Cor 5:10-13 and Matt 18:15-20). This process is called “church discipline” and implies a common understanding of those who are in the church (i.e. members) and those who are not.

Qualifications for membership at Gospel of Grace Fellowship (GGF):

Here are a list of the requirements (taken from our by-laws) for a person to become a member at GGF.

1. A member must confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, testifying to being born again by the Holy Spirit, and walking in repentance and faith.
2. A member must have been baptized upon confession of his/her faith.
3. A member must be committed to fellowship, responsibility, and accountability within the local church.

Process for Membership at GGF

All candidates shall be considered for membership upon written or verbal request to an elder.

Upon acceptance of the request, the candidate shall meet with the Elders, seeking to gain as much understanding as possible concerning the teachings and practices of this church. The Elders shall also ask questions, giving the candidate opportunity to articulate their faith in Jesus Christ and their desire to be members of this fellowship. After this, the candidate and the Elders shall proceed with the membership reception process only if both parties can do so without reservation.

The membership shall be notified of the membership candidates' names at least three weeks prior to the proposed membership service.

If, during the evaluation period, an objection is brought to the elders by any member in good standing, the elders must investigate the allegation and withhold membership proceedings until the allegation has been cleared.

If there are no concerns prohibiting membership, the candidate shall be presented to the church membership during a membership meeting or public worship service. The new member will then be formally recognized with the right hand of fellowship.

What We Teach

It is important for you to be familiar with the doctrine we teach (found here: <http://weyburnchurch.com/who-we-are/our-doctrine>). Membership candidates should be aware of the teachings of Gospel of Grace Fellowship and will be given opportunity to voice any concerns or disagreements during the membership interview.

GGF Church Covenant

In the presence of this congregation, we confess Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, giving ourselves heartily to His service, and taking His word as the rule of our life. Having been united by faith to Him, we do now, as a Church of Christ, unite with one another in this Covenant.

We shall make a habitual practice of secret and corporate prayer and reading of the Scriptures, earnestly seeking therein the help of the Holy Spirit.

We, who are the heads of families, shall maintain the worship of God in our homes, and shall endeavor to lead our children, or others committed to our charge, to productive faith in Christ.

We shall attend regularly, as far as Providence permits, the public worship of God on The Lord's Day, and such other meetings of worship as the Church may appoint, and we shall observe together the ordinance of the Lord's Supper.

We shall walk together in brotherly love, with Christian sympathy and kindness, and shall admonish and help one another as may be needful. We shall not bring to the Church a complaint against any member for personal trespass or offense until we have taken the first and second steps pointed out by Christ in Matthew 18:15-17; thus we shall endeavor to settle all private offenses without publicity.

We shall aid as the Lord shall prosper us financially, in supporting a faithful Christian ministry among us, and in sending the Gospel to all nations; and as we have opportunity we shall seek by example and word to lead men to Christ.

We shall endeavor to live soberly and righteously and Godly in this present world, abstaining from whatever is unbecoming to the Christian character; and as baptism signifies our death to sin and resurrection to holiness, so we shall seek to walk in newness of life.