



## Grace Church Membership Covenant

### Introduction

Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect (Rom. 12:1-2).

As Christians, we are members of God's household (Eph. 2:19) called to function, participate, and minister in a particular place within the body of Christ. A healthy body requires that each member does its part well. A healthy church requires the same: members who are sacrificially committed and well equipped to do the works of service that God has prepared in advance for them to do (Eph. 2:10; 4:12). Grace Church holds its members in high regard;



we expect them to lead as missionaries of the gospel to the culture. God, in his awesome sovereignty, placed us in this community, among these people, in this century, for a reason (Acts 17:26-27).

For by Grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually member one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them (Rom. 12:3-8).

Being a member of Grace Church is really about being a part of a family. All members are disciples of Jesus, unified by their identity in Christ. This unity is expressed in the way they collaborate in loving God, loving their fellow Christians, and loving non-Christians. Members who enter into a covenant with their local church are called to a higher degree of responsibility and service. At the same time, the elders, deacons, and staff are covenanted to assist members first and foremost, to love and lead, provide counsel and aid, and pray for, teach, and guide them.

Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace (1 Pet. 4:8-10).

### What is a covenant?

A covenant is a promise by which we obligate ourselves to one another in such a way that the obligation of one party is not dependent on the faithfulness of the other (Ps. 76:11; Ezek. 20:44; 36:22; Hos. 2:19-20; 3:1; 2 Tim. 2:13). The Grace Church covenant includes a statement of faith, a statement of biblical doctrine, the obligations of Grace Church to its members, and the obligations of members to Grace Church. Though the covenant does define the relationship between members and the church, it is first and foremost a promise made to God as a commitment to his glory and his bride, the Church (Eph. 5:25).



## Statement of Faith

1. **THE WORD OF GOD** - We believe the Bible (the sixty six books of the Old and New Testaments) to be the inspired, infallible Word of God, inerrant in the original writings, complete as the revelation of God's will, sufficient for salvation, and the supreme and final authority in all matters to which they speak.
2. **THE TRINITY** - We believe in one God, Creator and Sustainer of all things, eternally existing in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that they are equal in every divine attribute, and that they execute distinct and harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence, and redemption.
3. **GOD THE FATHER** - We believe God the Father is Spirit, infinite, personal, sovereign, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. He is just and concerns himself mercifully in the affairs of humankind, hears and answers prayer, and saves from sin and death all who come to him through Jesus Christ.
4. **JESUS CHRIST** - We believe that Jesus Christ is God's eternal Son, and has precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections as God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. He is not only true God, but true Man, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. We believe in His sinless life, His substitutionary atonement, His bodily resurrection from the dead, His ascension into heaven, His priestly intercession on behalf of His people, and His personal, visible, pre-millennial return from heaven.
5. **HOLY SPIRIT** - We believe in the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. We believe in His work in regeneration, sanctification, preservation and intercession. His ministry is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and implement Christ's work of redeeming the lost and empowering the believer for godly living and service.
6. **HUMANITY** – We believe that mankind, in the persons of Adam and Eve, was created in the image of God, without sin, and enjoyed unimpaired fellowship with the LORD; but, by voluntary transgression, man fell into sin thus marring the image of God in human beings and condemning the race to eternal separation from God. Being alienated from God and having suffered the corruption of his nature, man is unable to please God apart from God's saving grace through faith in Christ Jesus.
7. **SALVATION** - We believe in salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation is based upon the sovereign grace of God, was purchased by Christ on the cross, and is received through faith apart from any human merit, works, or ritual. We believe salvation results in a restored relationship with God and righteous living, good works, and proper social concern.
8. **THE CHURCH** - We believe the Church Universal is the spiritual body of which Christ is the Head and is composed of all persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, regardless of denomination. The membership of this local body expresses itself as Grace Church Seattle. We believe the Lord Jesus gave us two ordinances: believers' baptism by immersion and emersion and the Lord's Supper.
9. **POLITY** – We believe in the autonomy (separation of Church and State) of the local church under the Headship of Jesus Christ who assigns under-shepherds (Elders/Pastors) to lead through prayer, preaching and teaching, maintaining doctrinal purity, oversight, shepherding, discipling and discipline, and modeling right relationships. We believe deacons / deaconesses are to assist the elders in ministry. We recognize the Body of Christ is composed of interdependent members, each uniquely gifted by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of building up the body. Therefore, each member should seek to identify, develop and utilize his/her spiritual gifts in service to Grace Church by the giving of time, talents, and treasures.
10. **CHRISTIAN CONDUCT** – We believe that the essential accompaniment of a genuine saving relationship with Jesus Christ is a life of holiness and obedience, attained by believers as they repent and submit to the Holy Spirit and the authority of God's Word.
11. **LAST THINGS** - We believe Jesus will come again to judge the living and the dead. God will raise to life the lost and the saved, the lost unto eternal separation from God in hell and the saved in Christ unto eternal life in His Kingdom, which will have no end.



### **Statement of Biblical Doctrine**

- I agree with the core beliefs of Grace Church that are expressed in the Grace Church Statement of Faith.
- I understand the importance of submission to church leadership and will be diligent to preserve unity and peace; I will adhere to Grace Church's primary theological issues, and I will not be divisive over secondary issues (Eph. 4:1-3; Heb. 13:7, 17).
- I understand that Grace Church doctrine is also communicated and specified through various channels, such as sermons, published materials, and other writing distributed by Grace Church.

### **Obligation of Grace Church to its Members**

- We covenant to associate with the Conservative Baptist Northwest and other local, likeminded churches.
- We covenant that your elders and deacons will meet the criteria assigned to them in scriptures (1 Tim. 3:1-13; 5:17-22; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).
- We covenant to seek God's will for our church community to the best of our ability as we study Scriptures and follow the Spirit (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-5).
- We covenant to care for you and seek your growth as a disciple of Christ, in part by equipping you for service (Eph. 4:11-13) and praying for you regularly, particularly in time of need (James 5:13-16)
- We covenant to provide teaching and counsel from the whole of Scripture (Acts 20:27-28; Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:17-18).
- We covenant to be on guard against false teachers (Acts 20:28-31).
- We covenant to exercise church discipline when necessary (Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5; Gal. 6:1).
- We covenant to set an example and join you in fulfilling the duties of church members (1 Cor. 11:1; Phil. 3:17; 1 Tim. 4:12).

### **My Obligation to Grace Church as a Member**

- I have read and understand the Grace Church doctrinal statement and will not be divisive to its teaching. I also understand the importance of submission to church leadership and will be diligent to preserve unity and peace (Eph. 4:1-3; Heb. 13:7, 17).
- I covenant to submit to the authority of Scripture as the final arbiter (Psalm 119; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). I agree that Christians are prohibited from bringing lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes, however, I acknowledge that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander (1 Cor. 6:1-8 & Eph. 4:31-32).
- I will maintain a close relationship with the lord Jesus through regular Bible reading, prayer, fellowship, and practice of spiritual disciplines. My relationship will be evident through my participation in weekly worship services, communion, Grace Church community, service, a life that glorifies Jesus (Ps. 105:1-2; 119:97; Acts 2:42-47; Heb. 10:23-25; 2 Pet. 1:3).
- I will steward the resources God has given me, including my time, talents, and treasures (Prov. 3:9-10; Rom. 12:1-2; Gal. 5:22-26; Eph. 4:1-16; 5:15-18). This includes regular financial giving, service, and participation in community that is sacrificial, cheerful, and voluntary (Rom. 12:1-8; 2 Cor. 8-9; 12:7-31; 1 Pet. 4:10-11).
- I will not function in leadership or as a member in another church family at the same time I am a member of Grace Church (Heb. 13:17).



- I covenant to submit to discipline by God through his Holy Spirit, to follow biblical procedures for church discipline in my relationships with brothers and sisters in Christ, to submit to righteous discipline when approached biblically by brothers and sisters in Christ, and to submit to discipline by church leadership if the need should ever arise (Ps. 141:5; Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5; 2 Cor. 2:5-8; Gal. 6:1-5, 8; 1 Tim. 5:19-22; 2 Tim. 2:25; Titus 1:9-16; 3:9-11; Heb. 12:5-11; Rev. 2:5-7, 14-25). See Grace Church discipline document for additional details.
- I agree, by God's grace, to walk by faith offering the members of my body as a living sacrifice holy and pleasing to the Lord as an act of worship to Jesus Christ, who has saved me from my sin so that I could live a new life (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 2:20 & 5:22-25).
- I will practice complete chastity before marriage and complete fidelity in heterosexual marriage between one man and one woman by abstaining from practices such as cohabitation, pornography, homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, incest, fornication, adultery, bestiality and attempts to alter one's gender by appearance or surgery (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 1 Cor. 6:9, 12-19; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4).
- I will refrain from illegal drug use, drunkenness and other sinful behavior that conflicts with Scripture, the shepherding of my elders/pastors, and the Holy Spirit's leading (John 16:7-15; 1 Cor. 8:9-13; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 4:30; & Heb. 13:17).
- Should I sin in such a manner, I agree to confess my sins to Christian brothers or sisters and seek help to put my sin to death (Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:5; 1 John 1:6-10) and repair broken relationships (James 5:13-20).

**GRACE CHURCH** exists to **LOVE** God & people, **PROCLAIM** Christ, **BUILD** community, **EQUIP** the saint, **MULTIPLY** ministers, and missionally **SEND** out followers of Christ to be the Church wherever we are.

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Adopted in part from *On Leadership*, Mark Driscoll,