

MEMBERSHIP

ENCOUNTER CHURCH is a family, adopted by God (Galatians 4:6-7; Ephesians 1:5). From Him we receive the privilege to worship Jesus together, serve in HIS Kingdom, and be HIS children. We care for each other, pray for each other, and serve together.

Guests are always welcome within our household. For those interested in transitioning from guest to family member, the membership process is your opportunity to learn more about us, and our opportunity to get to **know you**.

How to Become a Member at ENCOUNTER CHURCH:

The Membership Process:

1. **Participate in community:** All members of ENCOUNTER are expected to participate in a small group. To learn how to join a group, stop by the Welcome Center for more info.
2. **Learn what we believe:** Prospective members are required to take the commitment membership class to learn what ENCOUNTER church believes and ask any questions you may have.
3. **Affirm what we believe:** After completing the class, you'll be asked to complete a questionnaire about your relationship with Jesus and you'll also be asked to sign the annual commitment.
4. **Welcome to the family:** After you've committed and followed the steps above we will be excited to celebrate with you as an active participant in "Seeking HIS Kingdom First" in our community.

Annual Commitment

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." -Romans 12: 1-2

As Christians, we are members of God's household (Ephesians 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 us to do (Ephesians 2:10; 4:12). Our church holds its members in high regard; we expect them to be followers of Christ within our culture. God, in His sovereignty, placed us in this city, among these people, in this century, for a reason (Acts 17:26-27).

“For by the 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 members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them...” -Romans 12: 3-8

Being a member of our church is really about being 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 other Christ-followers, and loving those who do not yet follow Christ. 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 and deacons are covenanted to assist members first and foremost, to love and lead, provide counsel and aid, pray for, teach, and guide.

“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 Peter 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 (Ezekiel 20:44; 36:22; Psalm 76:11; Hosea 2:19-20; 3:1; 2 Timothy 2:13). The covenant includes a statement of faith, a statement of biblical doctrine, the obligations of the church to its members, and the obligations of members to the 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 (Ephesians 5:25).

Statement of faith

- I am a follower of Christ saved from the eternal wrath of God. It is by faith in Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior, through His death and resurrection, by which I am assured of eternal life. (John 3:16-18; Romans 3:23-26)
- I believe Jesus Christ is exactly who He claimed to be. (Isaiah 5:6; Matthew 26:64; Mark 14:62; Luke 22:70; John 4:25-26; 6:29; 8:58; 11:25-27; 14:6-7; 15:5)
- I have repented of my sins and have been made a new creation in Christ. (1 John 1:9; 2 Corinthians 5:17)

Statement of biblical doctrine

- I agree with the core beliefs of ENCOUNTER CHURCH.

- I understand the importance of submission to church leadership and will be diligent to preserve unity and peace; I will adhere to the church's position on primary theological issues, and I will not be divisive over secondary issues (Ephesians 4:1-3; Hebrews 13:7, 17).
- I agree that the sixty-six books of the Bible are the ultimate doctrinal authority on all matters (Is. 55:11; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Timothy 3:15-16; Hebrews 4:12).

Obligation of the church to its members

- We covenant that your elders and deacons will meet the criteria assigned to them in the Scriptures. (1 Timothy 3:1-13; 5:17-22; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4)
- We covenant to seek God's will for our church community to the best of our ability as we study the Scriptures and follow the Holy Spirit's leading. (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-5)
- We covenant to care for you and seek your growth as a follower of Christ, in part by equipping you for service (Ephesians 4:11-13) and praying for you regularly, particularly when you are sick. (James 5:14)
- We covenant to provide teaching and counsel from the whole of Scripture. (Acts 20:27-28; Galatians 6:6; 1 Timothy 5:17-18)
- We covenant to be on guard against false teachers. (Acts 20:28-31)
- We covenant to exercise church discipline when necessary. (Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5; Galatians 6:1)
- We covenant to set an example and join you in fulfilling the duties of church members. (1 Corinthians 11:1; Philippians 3:17; 1 Timothy 4:12)

My obligation to the church as a member

- I have read and understood the statement of faith 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. (Ephesians 4:1-3; Hebrews 13:7, 17)
- I covenant to submit to the Bible as the final authority on all issues. (Psalm 119; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- 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, service, and a life that glorifies Jesus. (Psalm 105:1-2; Psalm 119:97; Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:23-25; 2 Peter 1:3)
- I will be a good steward of the resources God has given me, including my time, talents, and treasure. (Proverbs 3:9-10; Romans 12:1-2; Galatians 5:22-26; Ephesians 4:1-16; 5:15-18) This includes regular financial giving, service, and participation in community that is sacrificial, cheerful, and voluntary. (Romans 12:1-8; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:7-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11)

- I will not function in leadership or as a member in another church family. (Hebrews 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. (Psalms 141:5; Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5; 2 Corinthians 2:5-8; Galatians 6:1-5 8; 1 Timothy 5:20; 2 Timothy 2:25; Titus 1:9; 3:10-11; Hebrews 12:5-11; Revelation 2:5-7, 14-25)
- I agree, by God's grace, to walk in holiness as an act of worship to Jesus Christ, who has saved me from my sins that I could live a new life. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

My commitment to the mission of the church

ENCOUNTER CHURCH Mission Statement: "Seeking HIS kingdom first"

I have read the mission statement of ENCOUNTER CHURCH and commit to live out this mission as a diligent, faithful disciple of Jesus. I agree that my identity is found in Him, my worship would be for Him, my fellowship would be through Him, and my interaction with the culture would be for His glory.

I understand that this covenant obligates me to the members of ENCOUNTER and is an acknowledgement of my submission to the elders of the church. I accept the responsibility to notify ENCOUNTER leadership if at any time I can no longer commit to this covenant, or if I have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding ENCOUNTER CHURCH.

Signature_____Date_____