

SESSION 3: **A COMMON STRATEGY**

THE MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

The membership covenant is a commitment to **Christ** as Lord and Savior and to the **St. Johns Presbyterian Church Family**.

You are members of God's very own family... and you belong to God's household with every other Christian. Ephesians 2:19 (TLB)

We are all parts of Christ's Body, and it takes every one of us to make it complete, for we each have different work to do. So we belong to each other and need all the others. Romans 12:4-5 (TLB)

WE BECOME WHAT WE ARE COMMITTED TO

I. A BIBLICAL REASON: CHRIST IS COMMITTED TO THE CHURCH

"...Christ loved the church, and he gave his life for it." Ephesians 5:25

II. A CULTURAL REASON: IT IS AN ANTIDOTE TO CONSUMERISM

We live in an age where few want to be committed to anything...a job...a marriage...our country. This attitude has even produced a generation of "church shoppers and hoppers." Membership swims against the current of America's "consumer religion." It is an unselfish decision. Commitment always builds character.

III. A PRACTICAL REASON: IT DEFINES WHO CAN BE COUNTED ON

Every team must have a roster. Every school must have an enrollment. Every army has an enlistment. Membership identifies our family.

IV. A PERSONAL REASON: IT PRODUCES SPIRITUAL GROWTH

The New Testament places a major emphasis on the need for Christians to be accountable to each other for spiritual growth. You cannot be accountable when you're not committed to any specific church family.

At St. Johns we never ask our members to do more than the Bible clearly teaches, we only expect what the Bible expects every Christian to do. These responsibilities are expressed in the Membership Covenant.

ST. JOHNS MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

"Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and been baptized, and being in agreement with St. Johns' statements, strategy, and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the St. Johns' church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:"

I WILL PROTECT THE UNITY OF MY CHURCH FAMILY

- By acting in love toward other members
- By refusing to gossip
- By following the leaders

So let us concentrate on the things which make for harmony, and on the growth of our fellowship together. Romans 15:19 (PH)

Live in complete harmony with each other - each with the attitude of Christ toward each other. Romans 15:5 (TLB)

Have a sincere love for your fellow believers, love one another earnestly with all your hearts. 1 Peter 1:22 (GN)

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs... Ephesians 4:29

Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you. Hebrews 13:17

I WILL SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ST. JOHNS

- By praying for its growth
- By inviting the unchurched to attend
- By warmly welcoming those who visit

To the church ...we always thank God for you and pray for you constantly. I Thessalonians 1:2

Go out into the country... and urge anyone you find to come in, so that My House will be full. Luke 14:23 (TLB)

So, warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified. Romans 15:7 (TLB)

I WILL SERVE THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST AT ST. JOHNS

- By discovering my gifts and talents
- By being equipped to serve by my pastors
- By developing a servant's heart

Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you. I Peter 4:10 (PH)

God gave... some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God's people for works of ministry, so that the body of Christ may be built up... Ephesians 4:1-12

Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ... who took on the very nature of a servant... Philippians 2:3-4, 7

I WILL SUPPORT THE MISSION OF ST. JOHNS

- By attending faithfully
- By living a godly life
- By giving regularly

Let us not give up the habit of meeting together... but let us encourage one another. Hebrews 10:25

But whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ. Philippians 1:27 (PH)

Each one of you, on the first day of each week, should set aside a specific sum of money in proportion to what you have earned and use it for the offering. 1 Corinthians 16:2

A tenth of all you produce is the Lord's, and it is holy. Leviticus 27:30

FUTURE COVENANTS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AT ST. JOHNS

St. Johns' objective is to keep people growing in their relationship with God through Jesus Christ by encouraging personal spiritual commitments. Specifically, we call people to four basic covenants:

1. THE MATURITY COVENANT ...

is a commitment to **the essential habits** necessary for spiritual growth.

Continue to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 3:18

*Take the time and trouble to keep yourself spiritually fit. 1 Timothy 4:7
(Ph)*

2. THE MINISTRY COVENANT...

is a commitment to discovering and using my God-given gifts and abilities in **servicing** God and others in the church.

God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other...

There are different kinds of service to God... together you form the Body of Christ and each one of you is a necessary part of it. 1 Corinthians 12:5, 27 (LB)

3. THE MISSION COVENANT...

is a commitment to **share the Good News with others.**

*...you will be my witnesses for me ... to the ends of the earth. Acts 1:8
(GN)*

Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do it with gentleness and respect ... 1 Peter 3:15