

Membership at OakCreek Bible Church

WELCOME!

We'd like to thank you for your interest in OakCreek Bible Church! This document is intended to share with you the idea of "membership" at OakCreek Bible Church and to help you understand how God is at work among and through us. It is the desire of OakCreek Bible Church to see the Children of God participate in the work of God so that "the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:12-13)." We invite you to partner with us in bringing the gospel of Jesus Christ to desperately needy people in Dickinson/League City and around the world!

Membership IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In his letter to the Philippians, Paul wrote: "I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Jesus Christ."(Philippians 1:3-6)The Philippians were more than converts of the apostle Paul they were partners in the gospel working together in its proclamation. They were co-laborers in the gospel mission together, working in a variety of ways as they sought both to defend and confirm the gospel. The term partner implied an active involvement in this ministry. Their membership did not consist of a collection of names on a roll rather it was a group of followers of Christ who labored together in the common cause of building the church and assisting in the proclamation of the Gospel. Membership meant using the varied gifts God had given each of them for the purpose of accomplishing the mission God has given the church (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:18-20).

Membership in the New Testament is implied in the Book of Acts. The early church kept record of those who were saved and baptized (Acts 2:40-41) since the number was "around 3000". Those baptized believers "devoted themselves to the apostle's teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayer." (Acts 2:42). Thus the baptized believers were taught what they were supposed to do as a community and that they were to submit to the apostles. Therefore, it seems there were expectations for becoming a member or partner, which certainly included faith in Christ, baptism, partaking of communion, and commitment to the body of believers (Acts 2:41-42). Furthermore, the terms "the whole congregation" (Acts 6:5), the "whole church" (Acts 15:17), or "the elders of the church" (Acts 20:17) suggest recognizable church membership. There were elders who were recognized, which also implies there were recognizable members who followed their lead (Heb. 13:17).

The exercise of church discipline also lends to the idea of church membership. In Matthew 18:17 the last part of the discipline process was for a member's sin to be reported to the "church". The church is not a building or even those in the building during a Sunday morning service. The visible church is the called out believers who are baptized and following Christ in how they live their lives. All born-again believers are members of the universal church, which God alone knows. But a local church should have high standards for those who will agree to be part of the discipline process of fellow believers.

Membership AT OakCreek BIBLE CHURCH

Membership at OakCreek Bible Church provides the following:

1. A tie both to the global Body of Christ and to the local Body of Christ called OakCreek Bible Church. This link to the Body must not be underestimated as it is God's design for believers to serve Him as part of a community committed to God's Kingdom purposes.
2. A commitment by OakCreek Bible Church to do everything we can to protect you and prepare you for God's greatest pleasure as you serve Him.
3. The authority and protection of the pastor and elder that will pray consistently for your needs and your ministry.
4. The right to vote on the calling of a lead pastor, the affirmation of elders, our annual budget, future constitutional amendments, and purchasing/selling of property more than \$10,000.
5. OakCreek is a legal corporation and the members own the corporation.

Membership at OakCreek Bible Church requires the following:

1. Trust in Jesus based upon His work on the cross, apart from their good works, for the promise of forgiveness and eternal life.
2. Consistent participation in at least one ministry and/or life (home) group. Exceptions due to extenuating circumstances can be made by request from the pastor or elder(s).
3. Regular financial support to the ministry of OakCreek Bible Church.
4. Agreement with the doctrinal statement.
5. Willing submission to the leadership of the pastor-elders of OakCreek, who are affirmed by the Members for the purpose of spiritual oversight.
6. Willing submission and participation in church discipline and conflict resolution according to the principles of Matthew 18:15-18.

GROWING AS A MEMBER

"I always pray with joy because of your Membership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:4b-6) Critical to growing as a Member in the gospel is the continued spiritual growth in your own life and personal walk with God. Members are active day by day - living for Christ in their homes, with their families, with their friends, and in their work. Central to their lives is regular Bible reading and prayer – listening to God as he speaks to us in His Word and speaking to Him in return is the core of the Christian life.

As a Member of OakCreek Bible Church, you join a group of people who gather together to grow together by hearing from the Bible about how they may:

- Love and serve God more

- Give praise to God for Jesus' death and resurrection
- Become better equipped to carry out the purposes of God in this world
- Learn to care for each other better
- See their lives become more like Jesus

We encourage one another in these things so that we will be experiencing growth in our lives as Christians. In public and in private settings, we seek to become more like our Lord, to repent of sin, to be Godly in the way we relate to others, and to bring forth in our lives the fruit of His Spirit. We seek to make biblical decisions concerning the way we handle our families, our finances, and all decisions affecting our lives.

SERVING AS A MEMBER

Members are servants of Christ and as such, give of their time and energy to ensure that the body of Christ is built up in love, so that we may all attain unity in the faith with the knowledge of the Son of God. At OakCreek Bible Church, there are people serving in music, in assimilation, in set-up, outreach, life (home) groups, children's ministry, and other ministries. As you get to know the people who are at OakCreek Bible Church we believe you will be deeply encouraged by the example given by many as they serve others.

Across all ages, income levels, academic achievements and backgrounds the gospel of Jesus Christ has profoundly changed many – as we trust it will continue to change you.

In addition to our time and energy, our financial support of the work of God at OakCreek Bible Church is a very important part of Membership. To recognize God as our provider and to give of what He has given to us that it may go to the spread of the gospel is a special and joyful privilege for His people.

JOINING AS a member AT OakCreek BIBLE CHURCH

How about you? Do you understand what it means to have a relationship with God through Jesus Christ? Does that relationship exist for you? Would you like to join in the Membership of the gospel at OakCreek Bible Church? If so, we would love to have you partner with us in the exciting work to which God has called His church. Please fill out the form below. Then a pastor or elder or an appointed person by the pastor/elder(s) will meet with to discuss becoming a member with OakCreek. Be prepared to share you relationship with God, baptism after conversion, and commitment to being a member at OakCreek.

I am interested in becoming a member with OakCreek Bible Church:

- I trust the Lord Jesus Christ for the free gift of eternal life and forgiveness.
- I want to be committed to and involved in God’s work in the world through OakCreek Bible Church.
- I have been baptized after becoming a believer in Jesus Christ.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

Email _____

PHONE _____

My relationship with God and why I am saved. _____

When and where I was baptized after becoming a believer _____

SIGNED _____

DATE _____

- I am already committed to a ministry. Which ministry? _____
- I would like information about ministries in which I could help.
- I would like to find out more about my spiritual gifts.

* As of right now we have only one pastor (Mike Bauer), but as we grow we intend to affirm more elders who meet the biblical qualifications. Mike presently receives oversight from an oversight team consisting of the pastor of Trinity Fellowship (Bob DeGray) and two area pastors, Mark Swirsky (Hope Fellowship) and West Brazelton (Grace Bible Church).