Membership 101

Discovering Church Membership

A class for anyone ready to make Guthrie Grove their church home: our salvation, our statement, our strategy, and our structure.

Guthrie Grove
CHURCH OF GOD OF THE ABRAHAMIC FAITH

WELCOME TO MEMBERSHIP 101

DISCOVERING CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

We're thrilled you've chosen to take this class. We view this as a big step towards spiritual maturity. This class is designed to help you better understand:

- God's desire for you
- Ways to express your faith
- Why our church exists
- Unique features about our church
- How you fit into the purposes
- What our church believes

THE BASIS FOR THIS CLASS:

> *"... You are a member of God's very own family... and you belong in God's household with every other Christian."*
> *Ephesians 2:19 (LB)*

Key Truths:

1. The church is a _____

2. God expects you to be a _____ of a church family.

3. A Christian without a church family is an _____

CLASS GOALS

1. For you to form a commitment to _____

2. For you to form a commitment to the _____ family

THE MEMBERSHIP CLASS introduces us to four areas:

1. Our _____ (What God has done for us)

2. Our _____ (Why we exist as a church)

3. Our _____ (How we fulfill the purposes of the church)

4. Our _____ (How we organize our ministry)

MEMBERSHIP 101

Our Salvation

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:26-28

Most people live their entire lives without ever knowing "WHY?" They exist year after year

with no idea of God's purpose for their lives. The most basic question a person can ask is, "What is the meaning of my life?"

Everyone wants to be happy. People try many ways:

- Some look for happiness through friendships
- Some look for happiness through wealth & possessions
- Some look for happiness through “pleasure” experiments
- Some look for happiness through popularity & power

But real happiness comes from understanding my _____ in life.

I. WHY AM I HERE?

1. God made me to _____ Him!

> *“God says, "I have loved you with an everlasting love!" Jer.31:3*

> *"Even before the world was made, God had already chosen us to be His through our union with Christ... because of His love, God had already decided that through Jesus Christ He would make us His children - this was God's pleasure and purpose.” Ephesians 1:4-5 (GN)*

2. We were created to _____ a personal relationship with God and to _____ all the rest of God's creation! This makes us unique!

> *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it." Genesis 1:27-28*

> *"God richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment." 1 Tim.6:17*

3. When we know and _____ God, and live in harmony with His purpose for our lives, it produces tremendous benefits in our _____ .

Clear Conscience	Life & Peace	Help with Weakness
Romans 8:1	Romans 8:6	Romans 8:26
Purpose	Confidence	Security
Romans 8:28	Romans 8:31	Romans 8:39
Power & Strength	Fulfillment	Freedom
Phil. 4:13	Phil. 4:19	John 8:32,36

This is the kind of lifestyle God intends for us to live!

> *Jesus said, "I have come in order that you might have life - life in all its fullness!" John 10:10*

If this is true, why aren't most people really happy?

II. WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Humanity has a natural desire to be the _____ and to ignore God's principles for living.

This ignorance to God's way of living is communicated in our words and lifestyle:

- "Look out for #1"
- "I want what I want, when I want it."
- "Do your own thing."
- "If it feels good, do it! Who cares what the Bible has to say about it?"
- "It's my life and I'll do what I please!"

The Bible calls this attitude _____ .

Sin is a biblical word that means “to miss the mark.”

Key word: _____

> *"All of us, like sheep, have gone astray, and each of us has turned to his own way." Isaiah 53:6*

> *"If we say that we never sin, we are only fooling ourselves, and refuse to accept the truth." 1 John 1:8*

Sin breaks our close relationship with God. Sin separates us from God and causes us to live our lives outside of His will.

> *"The trouble is that your sins have cut you off from God.” Isaiah 59:2 (LB)*

> *"All have sinned and fall short of God's glorious ideal.” Romans 3:23*

It looks like this...



All the best attempts in the world won’t get you to where you need to be. Many people say things like:

- "My mother was a Christian so..."
- "I’m a really good person.”
- "I'll give up all my bad habits."
- "I'll work real hard and earn it."
- "I go to church all the time.”

The result of these attempts is worthless. The Bible teaches us that our attempts lead to DEATH. A relationship with God is NOT based on anything you DO.

> *"There are ways that SEEM right to man, but they only end in death." Proverbs 16:25*

When our relationship to God is not right, it causes PROBLEMS in every area of our lives: friendships, school, parents, jobs, financeS, etc.

III. WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

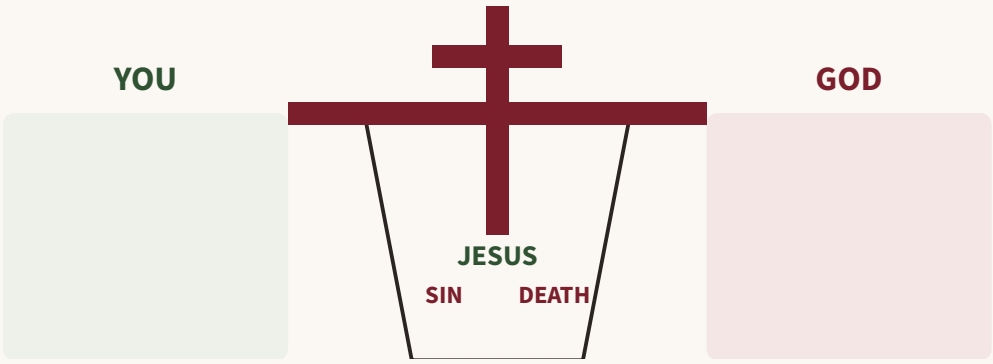
> *Jesus said, "I AM THE WAY, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father, except THROUGH ME!” John 14:6*

If any other way could work, there would be no need for Jesus. “The Way” is through the person of Jesus! And if ALL roads lead to God, then how can so many world religions contradict each other?

> *"The wages of sin is death, BUT the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 6:23*

JESUS HAS ALREADY TAKEN CARE OF YOUR SIN PROBLEM WHEN HE DIED ON THE CROSS!

> *For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, [6] who gave himself as a ransom for all men--the testimony given in its proper time. 1 Tim. 2:5-6*



WHY DID GOD SEND JESUS TO DIE IN YOUR PLACE?

God did this for YOU because He loves YOU and wants YOU to know Him.

> *"God demonstrated His love for us in that while we were still separated from God, by sin, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8*

God has already done His part to restore our relationship to Him. He took the initiative to invite us into relationship. Now He WAITS for each of us to individually ACCEPT what He has done for us.

IV. WHAT DOES GOD WANT ME TO DO?

1. _____ that God has not been first place in your life and ask Him to forgive your sins.

> *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9*

2. _____ that Jesus died to pay for your sins and that he rose again and is alive today & is coming back to establish the Kingdom of God.

> *“That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” Romans 10:9*

> *"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name (Jesus) by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12*

> *But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Acts 8:12*

3. _____ God's free gift of salvation. Don't try to earn it.

> *"For it is by grace you are saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2:8-9*

Our relationship to God is not restored by anything we do, but on the basis of what Jesus already did for us!

4. _____ Jesus Christ to come into your life and be the director (Lord) of your life.

> *"to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision… but born of God." John 1:12-13*

> *[Jesus says,] "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in." Rev. 3:20*

5. Seal your decision by being _____

> *"Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:36-38*

IF YOU BELIEVE YOU _____!

6. Live your life _____ and _____ to God

> *But the fruit of the Spirit Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Galatians 5:22-23*

> *"If we live by the Spirit let us also walk by the Spirit of God." Galatians 5:25*

You can begin taking these steps by praying a simple prayer of commitment to God. It might be something like this...

> "Dear God, thank you for making me and loving me, even when I've ignored you and gone my own way. I realize I need you and I'm sorry for my sins. I ask you to forgive me. Thank you for allowing your Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for me. Please help me to understand it more. As much as I know how, I want to follow you from now on. Please come into my life and make me a new person inside. I accept your gift of salvation. Please help me to grow as a Christian."

> *"Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved" Romans 10:13*

God has no grandchildren, only children. Each person must make his or her own commitment to Christ. It's bigger than your parent's decision.

After you make a commitment to trust Jesus, you enter into a life-long relationship with

God as a Christian. A Christian (Christ's-one) then attempts to learn more about:

- God,
- His character
- His desires for your life and lifestyle

Many of the actions mentioned in the Bible will be discussed later, but two specific actions we will discuss in this class are _____ and _____ which is normally referred to as _____ at Guthrie Grove.

I. WHY SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

1. To follow the example set by _____.

> *"At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan [River]." Mark 1:9*

2. Because Christ _____ it.

> *"go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." Matthew 28:19-20*

3. It demonstrates that I really am a _____

> *"Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized." Acts 18:8*

> *"We know that we have come to know Him, if we obey His commands." 1 John 2:3*

4. It is a _____ to the world and fellow believers that you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior.

> *"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. Mark 16:15-16*

II. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BAPTISM?

1. It illustrates Jesus' _____ and resurrection.

> *"Christ died for our sins… he was buried… he was raised on the third day" 1 Corinthians 15:3-4*

> *"having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead." Colossians 2:12*

2. It illustrates my _____ as a Christian.

> *"We were… buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead… we too may live a new life." Romans 6:4*

Baptism doesn't make you a believer; it demonstrates that you already believe. It's important to understand that baptism does not "save" you. You are "saved" only by your faith in Jesus.

> *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith... it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2:8-9*

Baptism is like a wedding ring -- it's the outward symbol of the commitment you make in your heart.

BAPTISM IS AN OUTWARD SIGN OF AN _____ COMMITMENT.

III. WHY BE BAPTIZED BY IMMERSION?

1) Because _____ was baptized that way.

> *"As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water." Matthew 3:16*

2) Every baptism in the _____ was by immersion.

> *(Example) "Then both Philip and the [man] went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water..." Acts 8:38-39*

3) The word "BAPTIZE" actually means "to _____ water."

4) Immersion best symbolizes a _____ and resurrection!

> *"if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" 2 Corinthians 5:17*

IV. WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

1) Every person who has _____ in Christ.

> *"Those who believe and accepted His message were baptized..." Acts 2:41*

> *"Simon himself believed and was baptized..." Acts 8:13*

> *“But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” Acts 8:12*

Belief always PRECEDES baptism. Believe first, baptized second. It’s no use baptizing someone who doesn’t believe. And on the other end of the spectrum, belief isn’t really belief if you refuse to be baptized.

????? A GREAT QUESTION?????

What if I was baptized as an infant?

Some churches baptize infants. At Guthrie Grove we don’t. We only baptize those who have made a decision to believe in Christ’s death as the payment for their sin. In the Bible, men and women were baptized following their belief in Jesus.

The custom of infant baptism began about 300 years after the Bible was completed. It’s a ceremony intended to emphasize a commitment between the parents and God on the behalf of the child. During this ceremony, the parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make his/her own personal confession of Christ.

At Guthrie Grove, we have a dedication service if requested for infants and children that emphasize the parent’s role in raising a child to follow Christ.

Therefore, if you were baptized as a baby, we encourage you to be baptized by immersion as a believer.

V. WHEN SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

As soon as you have _____ !

> *"Those who believe... were baptized... that day!" Acts 2:41*

> *“Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.” Acts 8:35-38*

There is no reason to delay. As soon as you have decided to receive Christ into your life, you can and should be baptized. If you wait until you are "perfect" you'll never be ready.

While baptism is a one-time experience, Jesus gave us another action that is intended to

continue throughout the life of the Christian. It’s called the Lord’s Supper, and it’s a powerful way for Christians to remember and celebrate what God did for us in the life of Jesus.

I. WHAT IS THE LORD'S SUPPER? (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

1. It is a _____

> *"... and when he had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; eat it in remembrance of me.'" (vs. 24)*

2. It is a _____

> *"In the same way, He took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; drink it to remember me.'" (vs. 25)*

3. It is a _____ of faith

> *"For whenever you eat the bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes back." (vs. 26)*

4. It is a _____ to the world and fellow believers.

II. WHO SHOULD TAKE THE LORD'S SUPPER?

Only those who are already _____

(see Mark 14:22-26)

> *"For if you eat the bread or drink the cup unworthy, not honoring the body of Christ, you are eating and drinking God's judgment upon yourself." 1 Corinthians 11:29*

III. HOW DO I PREPARE MYSELF FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER?

> *"Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A person ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup." 1 Corinthians 11:27-28*

You prepare yourself by...

1. Self-examination

> *"Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord." 1 Corinthians 11:27*

2. Confession of sins

> *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" 1 John 1:9*

3. Recommitment

> *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God -- this is your spiritual act of worship.” Romans 12:1*

4. Restoring relationships

> *"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you; leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.” Matthew 5:23-24*

IV. WHEN AND HOW OFTEN SHOULD WE OBSERVE THE LORD'S SUPPER?

The Bible nowhere instructs when or how often we should take communion. First Corinthians 11:23–26 gives instructions for communion: This passage gives all the instructions we need to perform the rite of communion and to understand the significance of what we are doing. However, it does not give a specific time. At Guthrie Grove we take communion once a quarter. Both Sunday morning and Sunday night, as we gather together.

MEMBERSHIP 101

The Guthrie Grove Touchstone

"I appeal to you... in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought."

1 Corinthians 1:10

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Why We Exist As A Church

The purpose of our church is summarized in a simple phrase:

"Preparing People for God's Coming Kingdom."

The Great Commandment:

> *"Jesus said, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart... soul... and mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and Prophets hang on these two commandments.'" Matthew 22:37-40*

The Great Commission:

> *"Jesus said, 'Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.' " Matthew 28:19-20*

What's it mean to live this out in our lives?

1. To "Love the LORD" is called _____

2. To "Love your neighbor" is called _____

3. To "go and make disciples" is called _____

4. "Baptizing them" leads to _____

5. To "teach them" is called _____

I. WE EXIST TO CELEBRATE GOD'S PRESENCE

WORSHIP: Expressing _____ to God

> *"Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only." Matthew 4:10*

> *"…worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks… and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." John 4:23-24*

To worship in spirit means to worship in _____

To worship in truth means to worship in _____

The Bible doesn't give us a preferred style of worship. When you're choosing a church you need to find one that worships in love and truth.

Other Ways We Worship

- Singing (Ephesians 5:19) Commitment (Romans 12:1-2)
- Praying (Psalm 95.6) Hearing the Word (John 17:17)
- Giving (I Corinthians 16:1-2) Baptism (Romans 6:3-4)
- Meditating (Habakkuk 2:20) Lord's Supper(I Cor.)11:23-26)

Our Worship Style

"Celebration"

> *I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord." Psalm 122:1*

Key Word: _____

"Inspiration"

> *... but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." Isaiah 40:31*

Key Word: _____

"Preparation"

> *It was [God] who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up." Ephesians 4:11-12*

Key Word: _____

II. WE EXIST TO COMMUNICATE GOD'S WORD

EVANGELISM: _____ the good news

> *"His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms" Ephesians 3:10*

> *"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?" Romans 10:13-14*

Why Our Church Must Never Stop Growing

1. Because God _____

> *"The Lord is… patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9*

[also see 2 Corinthians 5:14, Luke 15:3-10, Matthew 9:12-13]

2. Because we're commanded to _____

> *"'Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full." Luke 14:23*

> *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8*

Our Jerusalem is: _____

Our Judea is: _____

Our Samaria is: _____

Ends of the earth is: THE _____

3. Because growth is _____

> *"Under Christ's control, the whole body is nourished... and grows and God wants it to grow" Colossians 2:19 (GN)*

> *Jesus said, "I will build my church." Matthew 16:18*

Unbiblical excuses for not growing:

- “God isn't interested in numbers”
- “Our church wants quality not quantity”
- “Large churches are impersonal”
- “We like our group small”

We believe our church must grow _____ and _____ at the same time.

1. Larger means we will _____

2. Smaller means we will build _____

3. We grow larger through _____

4. We grow smaller through _____

> *“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” Matthew 24:14*

III. WE EXIST TO EDUCATE GOD'S PEOPLE

DISCIPLESHIP: _____ spiritually

> *"Let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity...” Hebrews 6:1*

> *"Grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter 3:18*

> *“It was [God] who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.” Ephesians 4:11-12*

IV. WE EXIST TO DEMONSTRATE GOD'S LOVE

MINISTRY: Meeting _____ with love

> *“By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." John 13:35*

[See also: 1 John 3:16-17; Matthew 25:34-40; Hebrews 13:16; Romans 12:13]

The “heartbeat” of Guthrie Grove needs to be _____ ●

- Every member needs to Know Grow and Go in discipleship. There are 13 points

we want every GG member to _____. These 13 points are how you _____ as a

disciple of Christ. These 13 points are how we _____ into the community.

1. YAHWEH: God is	2. Revelation: God's word
3. Creation: God makes	4. Image: God loves
5. Broken: God judges	6. Covenant: God pursues
7. Messiah: God's answer	8. Cross: God restores
9. Resurrection: God saves	10. Church: God's mission
11. Worship: God transforms	12. Gifted: God gives

13. Kingdom: God reigns

> *"There are different kinds of [spiritual] gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord…. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it." 1 Corinthians 12:4-5, 27*

At Guthrie Grove…

1. Every member is a _____

2. Every task is _____

3. Every member is gifted in _____

> *"Each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." 1 Corinthians 12:7*

> *"Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us. Each of us is to exercise them accordingly" Romans 12:6*

Statement of Faith

God

- There is only one God, the Father. He is one person and is a literal (corporeal) being – almighty, eternal, immortal and the Creator of all things (Gen. 1:27; Deut. 6:4; I Cor. 8:6; I Tim. 1:17).

Jesus

- Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, born of the virgin Mary. He did not exist prior to his birth and he was tempted in all points like as we are and yet without sin (Mat. 6:16; Luke 1:30-35; I Tim. 2:5; Heb. 4:15).

Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is God's divine power and influence manifested in God's mighty works and in ● the lives of His people. The Holy Spirit is not a person (Acts 1:9; Eph. 4:30).

Man

Man was created a mortal being, subject to death and through disobedience fell under the ● condemnation which is death in which man's life and consciousness cease and man returns to dust. The grave (Sheol, Hades, hell or pit) is the abiding place of the dead, both righteous and wicked until the resurrection (Gen. 2:7; Job 17:16; Psa. 146:3-4; Ecc. 9:5-10; Rom. 5:12; Rev. 20:13-14).

Jesus' Death and Resurrection

- Jesus Christ died upon the cross for the sins of the world, was buried and arose from the grave immortal on the third day. Through the shedding of Christ's precious blood, God's plan of redemption was affected (I Cor. 15:3-4; Heb. 9:12; I Pet. 1:18-19).

Jesus' Second Coming

Jesus will return to the earth literally, visibly and personally to raise the dead in Christ and to ● change the living saints to immortality (Zech. 14:4; Matt. 24:30; Acts 1:10-11; I Cor. 15:51-54; I Thess. 4:13-18).

Coming Kingdom of God

At Jesus' second coming the Kingdom of God will be set up as a literal everlasting kingdom ● throughout the entire earth with Christ as king and his immortalized saints as co-rulers with him (Dan. 2:35-44; Dan. 7:27; Luke 1:32-33; Luke 19:11-15; Rom. 8:17; II Tim. 4:1; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 20:6).

Abrahamic Covenant

- The Abrahamic Covenant will be literally fulfilled in Christ, Abraham's seed. The land promised to Abraham and his seed will be the eternal inheritance of the saints.

Conditions of Salvation

The conditions and obedience of salvation are: hearing the gospel, belief, repentance, ● confession, baptism (immersion), living a holy life

Eternal Life

Eternal Life is: ●

- Eternal life on earth will be the future reward of the Christian.

- The Bible teaches that the wicked will be literally destroyed in the lake of fire which is the second death.

Nation of Israel

- The Bible teaches that the nation of Israel will be restored as the Kingdom of God and will be head of all nations. Christ himself will occupy the throne of his father David in Jerusalem.

Source of Temptation

- The source of temptation is from within man himself – his deceitful, wicked heart, his sinful flesh. The terms “devil”and “Satan” are not referring to a supernatural, personal being but are a personification of the adverse principle in the world.

Church of God

The Church of God is the only scriptural name for that body of baptized believers who have ● been called out from among the nations through obedience to the gospel plan of salvation. Christ is the Head of the Church; and the nature, work and government of the church are set forth in the new Testament.

Law of the Land

- We, owing allegiance to Christ, the earth’s rightful king, under the present government are but aliens, subject to the laws of the country and faithfully obeying these laws, refraining only from that which commands to take part in war, strife, of conflict leading to the taking of life which we hold to be against the law of God. But that we may live quiet and peaceable lives following out as far as possible to the command to “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men Rom. 12:17.”

Statement of Lifestyle

Principles to Guide Our Lives

Principles are not worth much unless they are translated into actions. Based on what the Bible teaches, we feel very strongly about the following ten life principles:

1. The Bible is our ONLY authority

Since God's Word is the only completely reliable and truthful authority, we accept the Bible as our manual for living. Our first question when faced with a decision is "What does the Bible say?" We encourage people to practice daily Bible reading, Bible study, and Bible memorization. The Bible is the basis for all we believe.

> *"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17*

2. The _____ church is autonomous

Christ is the recognized head of our church, not any person, groups, or religious organization. While recognizing the value of associating and cooperating with other groups of Christians, we believe every local church should be self-governing and independent from any denominational control.

> *"And he is the head of the body, the church…" Colossians 1:18*

> *"Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior." Ephesians 5:23*

3. Every believer has a _____

The Bible teaches that every Christian is called to 'full time' Christian service, regardless of his or her vocation. We practice the truth that every believer is a minister by encouraging every member to find a place of service and ministry. Every believer has direct access to God through prayer and Bible reading.

> *"To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father--to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen." Revelation 1:5-6*

> *"you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God" 1 Peter 2:9*

4. _____

At Guthrie Grove we encourage tithing for the support of Christ's Body (the church) as God commands. We recognize that giving 10% of our income is the Biblical standard of giving. The Bible teaches this is part of our worship (honoring God) and should be done with a cheerful heart. The attitude is more important than the amount.

> *"'A tithe of everything… belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord." Leviticus 27:30*

> *"Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7*

5. Baptism by _____

We practice baptism by immersion under water. It's the way Jesus was baptized, it's the way the Bible commands, and it best symbolized our burial with Christ & being raised to a new life as a Christian.

> *"Having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead." Colossians 2:12*

6. Allowing the Holy Spirit to guide our _____

We believe the only way possible to live the Christian life is by God's power acting within us. So we seek to practice a daily dependence on God's Spirit to enable us to do what is right.

> *"for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose." Philippians 2:13*

> *"Do not get drunk on wine…. Instead, be filled with the Spirit." Ephesians 5:18*

7. Sharing our _____ with others

It is the responsibility of every Christian to share the Good News of the Kingdom and Jesus Christ with those whom God has brought us into contact. We practice personal sharing about Christ and inviting friends to church.

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

8. _____

God desires to have a relationship with each one of us, and the only way relationships grow strong is through communication and time spent together. Prayer is how we talk with God and spend time with him – sharing our joys and concerns with Him and looking for His will for us.

> *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." Philippians 4:6*

9. _____

It is important for the church to be unified in spirit. Satan will do whatever he can to cause division and strife among God's people, because then we lose our credibility (witness) in the world. Our love and unity shows the world we are Christians and that our faith is genuine.

> *"Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification." Romans 14:19*

> *"By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." John 13:35*

10. _____

Worship means honoring God. We do this corporately every Sunday in our weekly worship service, but it's more than just singing. Worship also means living a life that honors God, making decisions that honor Him, prioritizing our relationships, finances, & schedules in a way that makes Him our first priority.

MEMBERSHIP 101

The Guthrie Grove Strategy

(Paul) "I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel that I may share in its blessings."

1 Corinthians 9:22-23

Our Mission & Strategy

Care - To demonstrate God's love, creativity, power and _____ to His children.

Reach - Through the power of His Holy Spirit our mission is to _____ past ourselves to those who God has placed around us.

Offer - To provide an atmosphere to encounter and know God in worship and _____ ourselves as a living sacrifice.

Support - To identify, train and _____ believers who carry the ministry of the local church into the world.

Serve - We desire to see our members become more like Christ by _____ each other, the church and the community together.

To lead people into growing relationships with Jesus Christ…

by creating environments where people are encouraged & equipped to…

1. Pursue an _____ relationship with God

2. Grow _____ within the church

3. Develop _____ within the world

When we think about "church" at Guthrie Grove, we don't want to be just another church.

So we have to ask, "How will we become a church that matters to people?" We believe there are seven principles that will keep us on track as a church. We call them our 7 Core Values. Our Core Values help us communicate and live out our purpose & mission as a church. And we live out our Core Values through a simple strategy.

OUR CORE VALUES

1. Strategic _____

Strategic service is allowing our corporate mission & strategy to determine our individual place of service. Every Christian has certain gifts, talents, & abilities that God expects them to use to benefit the church. We want to be a church where people feel free to invite their friends & neighbors. But that can only happen when members ask, 'In light of what God has called us to corporately, what do you need me to do individually?"

> *"In those days when the number of disciples was increasing… widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."*

> *So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith." Acts 6:1-4, 7*

Strategic Service is applying my _____ and

_____ to the place of greatest demand

Our Core values do 3 things…

1. _____ environments

Why Are We So Passionate?

1. We believe there really is a _____

2. We believe the Bible is relevant for _____

3. We believe the _____ is God's Plan A

2. _____ people to lead those environments

3. _____ people in those environments

2. Caring _____)

This happens in a church where people genuinely connect are both encouraged and challenged in their relationships with God and each other. We want to be a relational church which breeds healthy relationships in which people feel encouraged & safe to explore their relationship with God.

> *"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer…. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." Acts 2:42-47*

> *Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds." Hebrews 10:23-24*

Why a Caring Community Matters

1. It creates natural _____

2. It creates a natural sense of _____

3. It ensures people are _____ for

Why Do Small Groups Matter?

1. _____ happens in the context of small groups

2. We tend to separate our internal _____ life

from our external _____ life

3. Your relationship with God is _____,

it was never meant to be _____

Advantages of Small Groups

1. It gives us a _____ for people we invite to church

2. It gives us a place to _____ safely

3. It gives potential to _____ more people

3. _____ Discipling

A disciple works alongside another in order to learn all the 'teacher' knows, so they can duplicate the teacher's work in another environment, or replace the teacher in the current environment. In the Bible we never see Jesus doing ministry alone, because he was less concerned about success in ministry than about succession. He expects the same from us. You are not responsible to know everything about your area of ministry, but you are responsible to pour what you do know into the life of another. How does this process work? It's actually very simple…

> *"Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth."Follow me," Jesus said to him, and Levi got up, left everything and followed him." Luke 5:27-28*

> *"One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles." Luke 6:12-13*

Intentional Discipleship

1. A disciple is someone who has learned what you've learned,

so _____ can do what _____ do

2. Intentional discipling motto: _____ yourself

How Can I Disciple Someone?

1. _____ and _____

2. _____ and _____

The limits to our church's growth & impact are not facilities, money or buildings, but _____.

4. Relevant _____

"Relevant" means using what is cultural to say what is timeless. We can allow the culture to drive us, we can ignore the culture, or we can strategically use the culture for God's purposes. At Guthrie Grove, we choose to use the culture strategically to communicate God's timeless message of hope. That means being flexible with what is cultural and focusing on what is timeless, so we never assume what worked yesterday will work today. We measure success by what is happening relationally, not just organizationally.

> *[God] "wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth." 1Timothy 2:4*

> *"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation…. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him and through him to reconcile to himself all things… by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross." Colossians 1:15, 19-20*

> *"Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." Matthew 9:35-36*

Jesus As Our Model

1. Jesus came to build a _____ to God

2. Jesus came to turn on a _____ to truth

To Stay Relevant We Must…

1. Distinguish between what is _____ and what is timeless.

2. Never assume what worked _____ will work today.

3. Communicate for _____ , not just for information.

5. Intimacy with _____

"Intimacy" means being fully known and fully accepted. That's the kind of relationship we want each member of Guthrie Grove to develop with their Heavenly Father. However it's scary to be fully known, because we fear rejection. As your relationship with God gets more personal, you will become more accountable. And we often don't want to give up control of our lives in that way. That's why the Bible pictures Jesus as 'standing at the door' of our hearts wanting to come in. It's up to us to 'let him in.' One of our values is helping people continually work at developing a close relationship with God through his Son, Jesus.

> *[Jesus], "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in" Revelation 3:20*

> *“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." Revelation 21:1-4*

Rather than develop intimacy, we’ve settled for _____

> *All this I have told you so that you will not go astray. They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me. ~John 16:1-3*

How to Build Intimacy

Results of Being Religious

1. Religious people become _____

2. Religious people become _____

3. We become a stranger to his _____ and his _____

4. We become a stranger to his _____

1. Intimacy with God requires _____

2. Intimacy with God requires _____

3. Intimacy with God requires _____

6. _____ Evangelism

The transition from unbelief to faith in Christ is always a process of questioning, dialogue, and discovery, eventually leading to belief. Our role is simply to partner with God in this process. We at GG encourage a culture of Investing, Inviting, Including, and Igniting as we prepare for the Kingdom of God

Our Evangelism Motto: _____

INVEST- We invest in people all the time. Invest in family, friends, and work colleagues, even strangers. Sometimes we invest in them thru our time, money, support. We usually make a significant life-changing decision only after a process of thinking,

dialogue, and investigation. The apostle Paul explains the common biblical metaphor of sowing and reaping.

> *"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow." 1 Corinthians 3:6-8*

INVITE- Invite people that you have invested into a church event or worship service. We should invite because of how much more the church and the individual believer can accomplish in partnership. We should invite because it mirrors the pattern of the early church.

> *How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? Romans 10:11*

INCLUDE- Include them in events or worship services. Getting them into church

doesn't mean they will become Christian. When we come into a service we know what's going on, where to go, where to take our kids, and when we are to leave. When new visitors come, they don't know and that can be confusing. You need to spend time with them, sit with them, explain why we do the things we do, and continue to invest in them, and introduce them to the pastor and others.

> *"Do you understand what you are reading?" And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" Acts:;30-31*

IGNITE- God works in all of us to do great things. When we are in Him, He ignites a

fire within us. When we share our faith God goes to work and takes your fire and ignites what you have invested in. We are called to be "light to the world". So let's ignite others. We ignite others by sharing our faith and His coming Kingdom. When we ignite others we essentially take our light and light their unlit candle.

> *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8*

We invest in relationships day to day, so that we might eventually invite them to church with us. This is simply being intentional about getting involved in relationships to promote what's important to us – our faith and our church. In other words, it means becoming a trusted friend for the sake of eternity.

> *"Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law… so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law… so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings." 1 Corinthians 9:19-23*

Relational Evangelism means investing in a

_____ friendship for the sake of _____

Why We Need You As Partners

1. As long as you're investing in your friends, our _____ will stay on the right course

2. As long as you're investing in your friends, your _____ will stay in the right place

> *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matthew 6:21*

7. Biblical _____

There is a difference between seeing the Bible as 'authoritative' and submitting to its authority. Submitting to it's authority means allowing it's principles to guide your decisions relationally, financially, professionally, socially… every area of your life. When a church abandons the Scripture as its authority, it results in all kinds of organizational problems. But a church's commitment to Scripture is only as firm as its members' commitment to Scripture, so the strength of our church depends on your commitment to the Bible's authority.

> *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:17-19*

Biblical Authority means the Bible is our authority

Jesus as Our Example

1. Maximum freedom is found _____ God's authority

2. Jesus lived under the authority of _____

> *"By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me." John 5:30*

3. Jesus lived under the authority of _____

> *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." Matthew 5:17*

4. When you venture outside God's boundaries, you always _____ freedom

The Challenge for Our Church

1. We must say _____ things

in _____ ways

2. You cannot have grace & forgiveness without acknowledging _____

3. There is a difference between "believing in" and _____ to."

4. The church must show _____ and _____

OUR STRATEGY

Ministry Environments

At GG our strategy is to provide environments that facilitate healthy growth. We understand that God has called the church to express His Kingdom to the world. The challenge is tremendous and the rewards are eternal. At GG we strive to share the Kingdom by:

_____ a safe environment for your kids to grow into Christ

_____ unchurched visitors feel welcome and comfortable

_____ a sense of community through effective small groups

_____ intentional on the timing and topics of sermons and bible studies

_____ together with seasoned and new believers

_____ Sunday morning worship services that impact people all week

_____ ministry teams that work together strategically

_____ programs that meet the needs of both the community we are in and the church body

_____ an educational program designed to assist our people into a mature relationship in Christ

_____ leaders to get involved and equipping everyone to share in these environments

Each environment should encourage building…

Four Key Principles

1. _____

> *"So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love*

abides in God, and God abides in him." 1 John 4:16

2. _____

> *And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day*

approaching. Hebrews 10:24-25

3. _____

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God[a] may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17

4. _____

> *I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to 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

> *Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Colossians 4:5*

From there it’s all about relationships and the work of God. So we want to do the best we can to create an environment where people clearly understand how they can grow to spiritual maturity and develop deepening relationships.

OUR BODY LIFE

> *“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 12:4-6*

Our weekly activities:

Sunday School - Classes for all ages Sunday mornings led by various teachers Sunday Morning Service - Service held in the sanctuary, which is meant to uplift, challenge, convict, and worship God Sunday Evening Service - Adult class held in the social hall, and a youth gathering for kids all ages Prayer Chains - Pray for those who have a prayer request or praise

Visitation - A ministry of friendly members who would love to visit at your request Bible Studies - Bible studies are offered for all ages Wednesday evening BYF (Berean Youth Fellowship) - Youth gathering held Wednesday evening, which is meant to engage and develop the youth Music - Opportunities for people to sing during Sunday Morning Service through choir, youth choir, ensemble, youth praise team, specials, etc.

Our annual events:

Christmas Program - Celebrating the birth of our Savior Vacation Bible School - A week long bible school held in the evenings for the kids in the community Thanksgiving Program - A program to focus on being thankful and celebrating Thanksgiving Day SE camp - Week long camp for kids ages 3rd grade and up held at a retreat in Blowing Rock, NC Fall Retreat - Weekend retreat for kids ages 8th grade and up held at a retreat in Blowing Rock, NC Ski Retreat - Weekend retreat for kids ages 8th grade and up held at a retreat in Blowing Rock, NC Everybody's Birthday - Celebrating everybody's birthday together as a church Men's Retreat - Weekend retreat for men at the Bonclarken Conference Center in Hendersonville, NC Women's Retreat - Weekend retreat for women at the Bonclarken Conference Center in Hendersonville, NC See You at the Pole - Join the nation in prayer at a local school Praise in the Park - Picnic at Sadler's Creek State Park Fall Festival - A fun festival to invite the community to

Other opportunities and events:

Missions - Support world-wide missions through LHI (Lord's Harvest International) Sisters Act - Ladies enjoy this monthly event while also helping in various community projects Bereavement Meal Teams - Provide dinner and support to the families of members on the day of the funeral Church Softball - support or join our church softball team Marching for Missions - Focus on missions in the month of March Men's Breakfast - Meets every first Saturday of the month in a time of fellowship and bible study First Sunday - All of the children sunday school classes meet on the first Sunday of each month

MEMBERSHIP 101

The Guthrie Grove Structure

"He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built."

Luke 6:48

I. OUR HISTORY

The Guthrie Grove Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith was organized by Elder Enoch M. Anderson and a few other people who were interested in the gospel message on August 12, 1896. It was founded on the purpose of mutual aid in Christian growth and service and in Biblical research and comprehension, for Christian instruction and edification, and for the more effectual preaching of the gospel "to every creature" within the radius of our influence.

Mr. David Guthrie gave the church one-half acre of land on which to build a house for worship. The congregation since has purchased additional land to include a parsonage and cemetery, plus future expansion.

The congregation has gone from meeting under a brush arbor and several additions and remodeling to meet the needs of a growing congregation. Even today, the congregation considers future expansion as the work that was begun almost a hundred years ago continues to bear fruit.

The congregation not only chose the Biblical name Church of God to be identified with the Church of God General Conference in Oregon, Illinois, but has used the additional phrase "Abrahamic Faith."

The precious promises made to faithful Abraham have meant much to us. The Apostle Paul tells us in Galatians 3: 16, 26,27, 29 that we are Abraham's seed.

We continue to preach the gospel of the kingdom and the soon return of Abraham's offspring, Jesus Christ, as found in 2nd Timothy 3:14, 15

II. OUR AFFILIATION

Guthrie Grove Bible Church of God belongs to a Conference of cooperating churches known collectively as the Church of God General Conference. In the past, the name 'Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith' was used. The Churches of God in many parts of the world form a unique segment of the religious world with which you should be familiar. While small in size, its contribution to Biblical understanding has been great. In many ways its leaders have pioneered a reawakening in the understanding of Bible truths that were long hidden in the darkness of human traditions.

What the Church of God is NOT

The Church of God is not a 'Reformation' church. It does not trace its origin to the Reformation of the

Middle Ages, nor to Reformation leaders. The Church of God has its taproots in the Word of God and not in the revolt of the church.

The Church of God is not a 'founded' church. That is, it was not established by any one leader. It does not trace itself back to any individual other than Christ. It has no prophet or prophetess, nor a single founder. It has had outstanding leaders in its past history, but it did not radiate out from any one person.

The Church of God is not a 'splinter' church. That is, it did not break off from any older, established denomination. While the family tree of many churches shows them as branches of other denominations and those denominations as branches from others, etc., the Church of God was never so affiliated.

Where the Church of God Began

The Church of God as it is known today came into being as small groups of individuals in England and North America, who through personal Bible study, became convinced of the doctrinal truths that are set forth as the Statement of Faith. In most cases, these groups and their leaders did not even know of the existence of the others. In the mid-1800's, however, some of the leaders such as Joseph Marsh in Rochester, NY, and the Wilson family who migrated from England to Geneva, IL, and other leaders in various states (TX, MN, IA, PA)

began to publish papers which gained wide circulation. Through these publications the small groups of Bible students and individuals around the country became aware of each other and began to exchange correspondence. Circuit preachers visited back and forth among these various local groups and new churches soon grew up in other places.

Over a period of years, groups of churches formed state and regional conferences. A national organization was instituted in Philadelphia in 1888, which met again in 1889. However, because of strong convictions relating to congregational rights and authority, the national body ceased to function until 1921, when the present General Conference was formed at Waterloo, IA. In 1931 a building was purchased in Oregon IL to house the headquarters' offices, a small print shop, and a bible college. In 1990 the entire operation was moved to the Atlanta Georgia area. The corporate name today is Church of God General Conference with its headquarters in McDonough, GA, a suburb of Atlanta.

Guthrie Grove Church of God is a member of a regional conference within the national organization called the South East Conference. It consists of churches in South Carolina. We meet twice a year at Fall and Spring Conferences (hosted by local churches) for fellowship, sharing of progress, and working cooperatively for God's Kingdom.

What the Church of God Is

Churches of God are congregational in government, thus they maintain complete local independence. There is close cooperation, however, in the maintaining of publishing facilities, the operation of Atlanta Bible College, and the mission efforts of the Church of God in India, Mexico, Peru, Africa, Russia, and the Philippines. Delegates from each church meet annually to determine denominational plans and policies and elect officers, who serve on a board of directors. There are established professional standards for pastors, and there is also cooperation in the creation of Sunday School curriculum and coordinating a national youth ministry.

Members of the Church of God accept the Bible as the supreme and literal standard of faith. They strongly emphasize the second coming of Christ, when Jesus will establish a literal Kingdom of God on earth that will originate in Jerusalem, where Christ will rule as Messianic King. The Church of God believes that the promises made to Abraham will be fulfilled in the church and in the faithful of Israel through Christ.

Choosing a Church

1. People no longer choose a church based on _____

2. People choose a church that meets their _____

What Does Denominational Independence Mean?

1. There is no denominational _____

2. We choose our own _____)

3. We own our _____

4. We determine our _____ & _____

Advantages of Affiliation

1. It allows us to identify with other Christians around the world

known for their commitment to the _____

2. It shows we are not a personality _____

3. It allows us to support new churches and mission work we could not do _____

III. WHAT IS A CHURCH?

1. The church is a _____

a. Fellowship is what we _____ and what we _____

> *"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." Acts 2:42*

b. Our priorities should be _____ and _____

- without these, we're NOT a church
- attitudes that cause division are SIN, because they destroy the Fellowship

> *"Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." Ephesians 4:3*

c. Good structure promotes unity and downplays _____

> *"May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." John 17:23*

2. The church is a _____

We want to operate on _____ rather than rules

> *"Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity." 1Timothy 5:1-2*

3. The church is a _____

The church has been _____ and _____

4. The church is a _____

> *"The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ."1 Corinthians 12:12*

a. We need to function on _____ and _____ .

> *"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others' faithfully administering God's grace in its*

various forms." 1 Peter 4:10

b. If we stress ORGANIZATION, then _____ becomes the focus

c. If we stress GIFTEDNESS, then _____ becomes the focus

> *"You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God." Acts 8:21*

4. The church is a _____

a. Pastors are the shepherds of the _____

> *"Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood." Acts 20:28*

b. Shepherds are there to _____

c. Shepherds are there to _____

IV. MEANING OF MEMBERSHIP

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MEMBER

The difference between "attenders" and "members" can be summed up in one word:

COMMITMENT

At Guthrie Grove we recognize the need for a formal membership. We ask you to commit to membership for 4 reasons:

1. A _____ Reason: Christ is committed to the church.

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

2. A _____ Reason: It is a unique commitment in our society.

We live in an age where very few want to be committed to anything – school, job, marriage, a relationship, or our country. This attitude has even produced a generation of "church shoppers & hoppers." Membership swims against the current of America's

"consumer religion" that switches groups for any reason. Membership is an unselfish decision. Commitment always builds character.

> *"They did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will." 2 Corinthians 8:5*

3. A _____ 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 of believers who can be counted on in our attempt to fulfill our purpose.

> *"You are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household" Ephesians 2:19*

> *"You are no longer strangers to God… but you are members of God's very own family… and you belong in God's household with every other Christian." Ephesians 2:19*

4. A _____ Reason: It encourages spiritual growth.

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

> *"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." Ephesians 5:21*

V. WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME AS A MEMBER?

At Guthrie Grove we never ask our members to do more than the Bible clearly teaches. We only encourage our members to do what the Bible expects every Christian to do. These responsibilities are spelled out in the Membership Commitment.

The Guthrie Grove Membership Commitment

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

1. I WILL PROTECT THE UNITY OF MY CHURCH…

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

> *"Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification." Romans 14:19*

> *"have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart." 1 Peter 1:22*

> *"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." 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 of no advantage to you." Hebrews 13:17*

> *"Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." Colossians 3:13*

2. I WILL SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MY CHURCH

- By praying for it's growth
- By inviting the unchurched to attend
- By warmly welcoming those who visit

> *"We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers." 1 Thessalonians 1:2*

> *"Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full." Luke 14:23*

> *"Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God." Romans 15:7*

3. I WILL SERVE THE MINISTRY OF MY CHURCH

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

> *"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others" 1 Peter 4:10*

> *"It was [God] who gave… some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up" Ephesians 4:11-12*

> *"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. You attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who… but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant" Philippians 2:3-5, 7*

4. I WILL SUPPORT THE LIFE OF MY CHURCH

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

> *"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another" Hebrews 10:25*

> *"Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ." Philippians 1:27*

> *"Now about the collection for God's people… On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income" 1 Corinthians 16:1-2*

> *"Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7*

> *"the Lord will be my God… and of all that you give me I will give you a tenth." Genesis 28:21-22*

As Your Own Reminder:

Signed _____ Date _____

GUTHRIE GROVE CHURCH

Membership Form

Three Requirements

1. Have you been baptized by immersion (under water) after you committed your life to Christ?

☐ Yes

When? _____

Where? _____

☐ I want to be baptized at Guthrie Grove

2. Have you completed Membership 101?

☐ Yes Date _____

3. Do you desire to abide by the Guthrie Grove Membership Commitment?

☐ Yes, I do!

Please sign your name and date.

_____ _____

Signed Date

Welcome to our family!