



Our Membership Agreement

Updated March 20th, 2025

Thank you! We're excited that you're interested in membership at Water City Church.

We get it; for many Christians, church membership is the clear next step in solidifying a commitment to *their* church family. But for others, conversations around membership can stir questions like, "Why should I become a member?" or "What benefits does membership offer me?"

These are genuine questions and can stem from a lot of areas. For some, they're tied to a concern that membership is not found in the Bible. For others, past disappointments or hurt make them hesitant to embrace present vulnerability. For still others, membership can be seen as a lifeless social agreement where members agree to give their time, money, and energy to support an organization.

Unfortunately, if we're being honest, an increasing number of people are simply more comfortable remaining on the periphery rather than sacrificing their independence because it's easier. The Apostle Paul challenges that notion by writing, "I want them to be encouraged and *knit together* by strong ties of love" (Col 2:2a NLT). Membership resembles the metaphor of a wedding ring. Though neither is mentioned in the Bible, both have come to symbolize a life-giving *interdependence* in a tangible way.

While rarely taught, Galatians 6:10 says, "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, *especially to those who belong to the family of believers.*" God urges us to love everyone, instructing us to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. And we are reminded there's a subtle yet significant difference between "all people" and "those who belong to the family of believers."

Family is unique. It's looking at one another and saying, "*Come what may, with God's help and by God's grace, we're in this together, right?*"

Now, it's worth acknowledging that commitments around membership may be challenging at times. They require ongoing prayer, honest conversations, and self-reflection. With this in mind, Water City asks each member to prayerfully consider and then renew their Membership Agreement annually. We hope this will help cultivate healthy and engaged members at Water City.

Thanks again for considering membership at Water City Church. We warmly invite you to read through the following pages and thoughtfully and prayerfully reflect on your alignment with Water City's Mission, Essential Beliefs, and Core Values before making a commitment to membership.

OUR MISSION

Water City Church exists to help people to **find** and **follow** Jesus.

OUR ESSENTIAL BELIEFS

The Guiding Principle:

In beliefs **essential to salvation**, we have unity. In other important yet **non-essential differing beliefs**, we exercise freedom. While in **all things**, we practice charity – love and grace.

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

Acts 2:42

“Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters.”

Romans 14:1

“May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.”

Romans 15:5–7

THE ESSENTIALS

GOD

WE BELIEVE in one eternal God who is the Creator of all things. He exists in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. He is totally loving and completely holy.

FATHER

WE BELIEVE that God is more than an abstract force or cosmic energy. God is our heavenly Father, the infinite loving, Almighty Creator of Heaven and Earth.

JESUS

WE BELIEVE that the Lord Jesus Christ (as both God and man) is the only One who can reconcile us to God. He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless and exemplary life, died on the cross in our place, and his resurrection broke the power of sin and death, bringing us into true life.

HOLY SPIRIT

WE BELIEVE that, as promised, God has now given the Holy Spirit so that all Christians might live the holy and fruitful lives he intends for us.

THE BIBLE

WE BELIEVE that the Bible is God's Word. Inspired by the Holy Spirit and written by human authors, it is accurate, authoritative, and applicable to our everyday lives. It is meant to be learned and lived in community.

HUMANITY

WE BELIEVE that both men and women are made in the image of God. Originally created good and upright; however, because of voluntary disobedience toward God, called "sin," humanity fell and incurred not only physical but also spiritual death, separating each of us from God and His purposes for our lives.

SALVATION

WE BELIEVE that we are incapable of making things right on our own. In order to receive forgiveness and a new identity as sons and daughters of God, we must repent of our sins, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and submit to His will for our lives.

THE END OF THIS AGE

WE BELIEVE that one day, Jesus will return to judge the living and the dead, and each will go to their eternal reward - forever life in union with God or the final death, forever separated from God. In the age to come, the new heavens and the new earth will be revealed.

OUR CORE VALUES

BELONGING

Jesus starts his ministry by extending the invitation - "Come and follow me." These aren't empty words.

Whoever you are and wherever you come from, you are welcome.

While simply being together is not the endgame, we understand that **belonging frequently comes before believing**. Sadly, belonging is often withheld until belief can be demonstrated. We know that for some, faith in Jesus comes alive quickly, while for others, it develops gradually. There is no "one-size-fits-all" approach for the Good News of Jesus to take root in our lives. We are all in process.

STORY

Stories matter. Since the beginning, we've used stories to help make sense of the world around us.

Your story matters. Every part of it— not just the accomplishments or highlights, but also the disappointments and broken places. We believe that every single person, no matter how battered by life, is made in the image of God. Try as we may, however, we cannot rewrite our stories on our own. Thankfully, the "Author of Life" produces his best work when he reworks and incorporates our rough drafts into His grand story of redemption.

BECOMING

*God loves you. Right where you are. Just as you are.
and*

God loves you too much to leave you right where you are and just as you are.

Both of the above statements are true. The life of a Christian is marked by change. The Bible challenges believers to fix our attention and affection on Jesus. St. Clare of Assisi rightly reminds us, "*We become what we love and who we love shapes what we become.*" Each Christ follower is to cooperate with the mysterious work of the Holy Spirit - that of leading, convicting, refining, and renewing. We are like clay in the hands of the Master Potter, being lovingly shaped into the beautiful likeness of Jesus.

MOVEMENT

The life of a follower of Christ is marked by both *Orthodoxy* (correct belief) and *Orthopraxy* (proper action). In Scripture, we see multiple examples of Jesus exposing the religious leaders who took pride in knowing the “right answers” but failed to live by them. Instead, God’s desire has always been that we believe in what is good **and** act accordingly. “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8)

After sincere prayer and reflection, having embraced Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, being in alignment with the Mission, Essential Beliefs, and Core Values of Water City Church, and having completed the Discovery Class, I recognize the importance of membership and with God’s help will strive to: commit to the following as a member of Water City Church:

1. **I WILL STRIVE TO PROTECT THE UNITY OF MY CHURCH** by acting in love toward others, refusing to gossip, and praying for and following the church leadership.
2. **I WILL STRIVE TO SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MY CHURCH** by praying for its health and growth, inviting and welcoming others, giving generously, and consistently showing up.
3. **I WILL STRIVE TO SERVE IN MINISTRY WITH MY CHURCH** by discovering and using my gifts and talents, cultivating a servant’s heart, and identifying and helping to meet community needs.
4. **I WILL STRIVE TO LIVE IN A WAY THAT REFLECTS THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS** through my attitudes and actions.

Signature

Date

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Print Name

Date

Signature

(Approval and Date)
(For Church Records)