

ELEMENT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Why Church Membership?

Church membership is the believer's deepest level of commitment to the church. At Element Church, we believe that membership creates a unified church body that helps us accomplish Jesus's command of, "go into the world and preach the Good News to everyone."

Requirements for Church Membership:

- Must be willing to commit to the Leadership Values and Expectations.
- Must profess to be a born-again believer in Jesus Christ & have been baptized into the faith
- Aligned with, and not teaching against any spiritual, moral, or leadership values and expectations, along with our core and committed beliefs.
- Must show evidence of being a functioning member of Element Church through serving with your time, talent, and treasure, seeking unity with one another, praying for the church, its people, and its leaders, and building up the church through my words and deeds.
- Must be 12 years of age or older.

How We Operate:

Every church has a certain structure, a way it operates. We aren't saying that this is the only way to do church, or even the *right* way, but it is the way we operate here at Element.

- We are a part of a denomination called the Evangelical Church of North America.
 - To learn more, visit the website at www.theevangelicalchurch.org
- We are a staff-led church, with its primary leader being the **Lead Pastor**.
- The Lead Pastor serves on the **Lead Team**, which is made up of seven pastors and ministry directors on staff.
 - This team meets monthly to make decisions for the church and to keep a pulse on the health and effectiveness of the ministry.
 - Lead Team runs day-to-day operations of the church including, but not limited to:
 - Hiring staff
 - Establishing annual budgets
 - Giving vision to the various ministries of the church
 - Determining programs
 - Planning events
 - Expanding ministries
 - The Lead Pastor selects the Lead Team, and the Lead Team is accountable to the Lead Pastor.
- Accountability is very important in making this model work. For that reason, we have a local **Leadership Council**, made up of lay leaders in the church. The Leadership Council:
 - is nominated by the Lead Team and voted on by the members of Element Church following our annual members meeting each year.
 - has no less than five (5) and no more than seven (7) volunteer leaders and members in the church, and they serve on a one (1), two (2), or three (3)-year term before they must take a minimum of a one (1)- year sabbatical before being asked to serve again.
 - receives monthly financial and ministry updates from the church and meets quarterly to provide accountability, insight, and wisdom to the Lead Pastor and Lead Team.
 - approves the annual budget submitted by the Lead Team for the upcoming year.
 - monitors the spiritual, emotional, and physical health and well-being of the Lead Pastor and his family.
- The Lead Pastor and church are also accountable to our **denomination** through the Board of Ministry and the Western Conference of the Evangelical Church.
 - Were there to be any moral, ethical, or theological issues that needed to be addressed, the denomination serves as the umbrella for those needs.
 - In such a case, the Leadership Council would serve as the liaison between the congregation, the pastor in question, and the denomination.
- Each year, an annual members meeting is held where new members are added, and existing members must re-affirm their commitment.
 - At this meeting, we celebrate and recap the previous year while casting vision for the one to come.
 - Members also cast a vote of confidence in the Leadership Council that has been nominated.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

We believe that all Christian doctrines are important; however, we don't treat all of them the same. Our Core Beliefs are one's in which all of Orthodox Evangelical Christianity adhere. Our Committed Beliefs are one's we have strong opinions on and are committed to a particular position. However, we recognize there is a wide range of understandings on these beliefs, and we seek to respect and extend grace to all who hold to them.

Core Beliefs:

- Jesus is Lord: (Acts 4:12; John 1:14; Matthew 1:23)
 - We believe that Jesus is Lord and that salvation is only given through faith in Him.
- Salvation through Faith: (Ephesians 2:8-9; Hebrews 7:26-28)
 - We believe that people are saved by the grace of God through their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We cannot save ourselves. Saving faith requires repentance from sin and genuine belief in Jesus as Lord.
- The Holy Trinity: (Genesis 1:1; John 1:1, 14, 18; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 3:14)
 - We believe the Scriptures declare that God is One, yet He exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit. All three persons of the Trinity are co-equal and co-eternal.
- The Authority of Scripture: (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21)
 - We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God and is our guide and final authority on Christian living.
- Final judgment: (2 Corinthians 5:8; Revelation 20:11-15)
 - We believe that mankind is appointed once to die and then to be judged by God. For the believer, eternity will be spent with God in our glorified and perfected bodies. For the unbeliever, eternity will be spent in separation from God, completely cut off from His presence.
- The Return of Christ: (Matthew 24:30-31, 1 Thessalonians 4:15b-17,)
 - We believe Jesus will return again for those who believe in Him and will fulfill all prophecies about His final victory over all evil.

Committed Beliefs:

- The Pre-Destination of the Individual: (John 3:16; Romans 3:23-26; 1 Timothy 2:3-4)
 - We believe God lovingly predestines and desires all people to be saved. However, we also believe God has given humanity the free will to choose or reject this gift of salvation through Christ.
- The Security of the Believer: (Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 10:26-31; Galatians 6:1)
 - We believe that the believer is secure in Christ as they walk in loving obedience to Christ. We do not believe someone can flippantly "lose" their salvation; however, we do believe that someone can forfeit their salvation through continual unrepentance of deliberate sin; or through a willful denial of Christ and the faith.
- The Filling of the Holy Spirit: (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; Romans 8:1-4; 1 John 3:3)
 - We believe the primary evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit is an indwelling power to live righteously and to love as Jesus did. We believe that God is the giver of all spiritual gifts and we do not practice, pursue, or promote any one particular gift as greater than another.
- The Time of Christ's Return: (Matthew 24:36)
 - We believe Jesus is returning; however, the timing of His return is unknown by anyone but God the Father. We do not hold to a specific end-times theology as a church.
- The Lord's Supper: (1 Corinthians 11:17-34)
 - We believe communion or the Lord's Supper is to be received in remembrance of the sacrifice of Jesus. The communion elements themselves do not offer forgiveness but point us to Jesus who alone can save. We celebrate communion monthly at Element Church.
- Baptism: (Romans 6:1-4)
 - Baptism is an outward sign of an inward work that Christ has done. It is the public declaration of our faith in and allegiance to Jesus, and is to be celebrated after a personal decision to believe in and follow Jesus.

* For more information or clarification on what we believe, please contact the church to speak with one of our pastors or to request a full statement of faith.

LEADERSHIP VALUES & EXPECTATIONS

Using Scripture, our vision, and our core values as a guide, these are the expectations that the Element Church Lead Team believes those who are Christians, and especially those who are serving in Christian leadership or membership should be determined to pursue. In every area of life, we should desire to live above reproach, pursuing godliness and holiness according to the Word and Way of God. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of “do’s and don’ts”, but a starting point for us in our discipleship journey.

Vision: We exist to guide people to experience life to its fullest, connect into meaningful relationships, and make a lasting impact.

A place to call “Home”: We will love people for who they are so we can lead them to where they need to be. (Luke 5:31-32)

We will treat, welcome, and value each person the same regardless of appearance, background, belief, race, or ethnicity. We will promote unity and harmony within our church family and the greater Church family as well, seeking healthy and Biblical conflict resolution as needed.

If only for the one: We do all we can to reach as many as we can celebrating every one. (Luke 15:7)

We will make evangelism a priority in our life, starting with regularly inviting people to experience Jesus through our weekly worship experiences. We will pray for the lost and also pray that God will open doors with those around us to share our faith, telling the story of what Jesus has done for us.

Better Together: We become the most like Christ when we are connected together through Christ. (Romans 12:4-5)

We will make corporate worship and small group community a priority in our life, knowing that our connection to the body plays a vital role in the discipleship process. We will be champions for and celebrate every department, ministry, and team in our church, knowing that we can do more together than apart.

It Matters...: No matter how you serve in the church, it matters for you and it matters for the church. (Colossians 3:23)

We will be committed to serving in God’s Church on a regular volunteer team, and as we can in other outreach events. Using the gifts and abilities God’s given us, we will be consistent and loyal to our team and leaders, communicating clearly our needs and availability for serving.

Leading the way in generosity: We serve a radically generous God so we will be radically generous people. (Proverbs 11:25)

We will pursue to honor God financially through the Church with the best and first part of what He’s given us, making a full tithe (10%) our goal as we seek to honor Him. We will prayerfully consider each act of generosity to the Church and to our community, above and beyond our tithe, desiring to be known as generous people.

Obedience is our success: Our success will not be determined by outcome but by our obedience to God. (Galatians 1:10)

We will seek to model for those around us a life of modesty, decency, and purity when it comes to our speech, dress, substance use, personal health, entertainment, sexuality, and daily living. We will make the daily pursuit of God through His Word and prayer a priority, letting Him guide us into all Truth as it pertains to the standard of purity in every aspect of life.

FULL STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe... the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God. It is the complete revelation of His will for salvation and the only unailing rule of faith and practice for the Christian life. (*2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21*)

We believe... in one God who is creator of all things. He exists eternally in three persons: the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, and these three are of equal dignity and power. (*Genesis 1:1; John 1:1, 14, 18; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14*)

We believe... in the deity of Jesus Christ as fully God and fully man; His miraculous conception; virgin birth; sinless life; substitutionary death on the cross; resurrection of His body; ascension to the right hand of God the Father; and His imminent return. (*Acts 17:3; Hebrews 2:16-17; John 1:14; Isaiah 7:14; 1 Cor. 15:3-8; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Timothy 2-5; Rev. 20:11-15*)

We believe... in the Holy Spirit as proceeding from and is one Being with the Father and the Son who: convicts the world of sin; leads men to the Gospel and into fellowship with God; He comforts, encourages, sustains, empowers, sanctifies and guides each believer into all truth. (*John 15:26-27; John 14:16-17; Acts 5:3,4; John 16:8-11; John 16:7, 12-13; John 14:26*)

We believe... that man was created BY and made FOR God; that through Adam's initial disobedience, man has inherited a sinful nature that leads to acts of disobedience. These acts result in spiritual death as a consequence; and that, because of this separation, man is in need of divine intervention and salvation. (*Ephesians 2:1; Romans 3:10-18, 23; Genesis 6:5; Psalm 51:5; John 3:3-7*)

We believe... the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins and that all who believe in Him are declared righteous because of His sacrificial and substitutionary death and are, therefore, in right relationship with God. (*John 19:30; Hebrews 7:26-27; 9:26; 10:12*)

We believe... in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, who indwells all believers thus enabling and empowering them to live their new life in Christ. That God is able and does fill entirely the heart of the believer who seeks the fullness of His Holy Spirit. This deeper work of grace is conditioned upon full surrender and faith. It results in a new power to love God with our whole heart and our neighbors as ourselves as we continue surrendering to the Lordship of Jesus every day. (*Genesis 1:1; John 1:1, 14, 18; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14*)

We believe... that good works themselves do not save us, but are the necessary fruits of the new birth and therefore serve as evidence that we are converted just as a tree is discerned by its fruit. That it is possible to forfeit one's salvation by falling into deliberate, unrepentant sin, and if one remains in this state, to be finally lost. However, by the grace of God and through repentance and faith, the backslider can be restored to righteousness and true holiness. (*Ephesians 2:10; Galatians 2:16; James 2:16-17; Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 10:26-31; Galatians 6:1*)

We believe... in the sacrament of water baptism as a public declaration of faith for those who have come to know Christ and intend to follow Him. (*Mark 1:9; Matthew 28:19-20; 1 John 2:3*)

We believe... in the sacrament of communion (Lord's Supper) as directed by Christ to be done in remembrance of His sacrifice for us. That communion itself does not offer remission of sins but points us to the One who does, Jesus. (*Luke 22:19-22; 1 Cor. 11:23-29; Acts 2:38-42*)

We believe... in the bodily resurrection of everyone who has lived, an everlasting blessedness and reward in Heaven for those who have received God's forgiveness and followed Christ, and an everlasting punishment, separation from God, for those who have rejected His forgiveness and have not followed Christ. (*John 5:22; 2 Cor. 5:8-10; Isaiah 35:8-10; Rev. 20:11-15*)