

The Membership Covenant of Oak Grove Baptist Church

What It Means to Be a Christian and a Member of Oak Grove Baptist Church (OGBC)

Being a Christian is more than identifying yourself with a particular religion or affirming a certain value system. Being a Christian means you have embraced what the Bible says about God, mankind, and salvation. As members of OGBC we covenant (mutually commit) with one another to affirm, believe, and live in accordance with the following core truths which affirm OGBC's belief in the Christian truths which have been held by the church throughout the ages and particularly since the Protestant reformation.

God Is Sovereign Creator: The Bible says we were created by the one true God (Yahweh) to love, serve, and enjoy endless fellowship with Him. The New Testament reveals it was Jesus Himself who created everything. Therefore, He also owns and rules everything.¹ That means He has authority over our lives and we owe Him absolute allegiance, obedience, and worship.

¹ John 1:3; Colossians 1:16; Psalm 103:19

God Is Holy: God is absolutely and perfectly holy; therefore He cannot commit or approve of evil.² God requires holiness of us as well. First Peter 1:16 says, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

² Isaiah 6:3; James 1:13

Mankind Is Sinful: According to Scripture, everyone is guilty of sin: "There is no man who does not sin," 1 Kings 8:46. That doesn't mean we're incapable of performing acts of human kindness. But we're utterly incapable of understanding, loving, or pleasing God on our own.³

³ Romans 3:10-12

Sin Demands a Penalty: God's holiness and justice demand that all sin be punished by death.⁴ That's why simply changing our patterns of behavior can't solve our sin problem or eliminate its consequences.

⁴ Ezekiel 18:4

Jesus Is Lord and Savior: Romans 10:9 says, "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved." Even though God's justice demands death for sin, His love has provided a Savior who paid the penalty and died for His church. Christ's death satisfied the demands of God's justice and Christ's perfect life satisfied the demands of God's holiness, thereby enabling Him to forgive and save those who place their faith in Him.⁵

⁵ 1 Peter 3:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 3:26

The Character of Saving Faith: True faith is always accompanied by repentance from sin. Repentance is agreeing with God that you are sinful, confessing your sins to Him, and making a conscious choice to turn from sin and pursue Christ and obedience to Him.⁶ It isn't enough to believe certain facts about Christ. Even Satan and his demons believe in the true God,⁷ but they don't love and obey Him. True saving faith always responds in obedience.⁸

⁶ Luke 13:3,5; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; Matthew 11:28-30; John 17:3; 1 John 2:3

⁷ James 2:19

⁸ Ephesians 2:10

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Having agreed with these truths we, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, covenant (mutually commit to) the following with one another:

Salvation and Baptism: That by grace through faith we have received Jesus Christ as the Lord, Savior, and, supreme Treasure of our lives, and upon public profession of our faith we were baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Doctrinal Unity and Followship: We will welcome, and test biblically, instruction from the Scriptures by the pastor(s) and other teachers of the church which accords with *Article II, Articles of Faith—What We Teach* (AOF), seeking to grow toward biblical unity in the truth. We will not be divisive to or teach anything contrary to Scripture or the AOF, and will submit to church leadership and be diligent to preserve unity and peace.

Stewardship: We will consistently contribute, as a good steward of God's blessings, such time, talent, and resources, in the measure that Gods prospers us, so that the ministry of local and worldwide spread of the gospel may continue.

Responsibilities: We will maintain family and personal devotions, educate our children in the Christian faith, and seek the salvation of our family and friends. We will diligently exercise self-control such that our lifestyle exhibits both true Christian love and personal holiness. We will seek God's help in abstaining from all substances, and practices which bring unwarranted harm to the body or jeopardize our own or another's faith.

Fellowship Loyalty: We will faithfully assemble with this body of believers for weekly services, striving to maintain unity, and doing all we can to stimulate love and good deeds in others as we seek to exercise our spiritual gifts in faithful service. We will commit to praying for the ministry here in this church, our brothers and sisters in Christ, the pastor(s) and deacons, and for the lost who need the Savior. That when we leave this church for righteous reasons, we will, if possible, unite with a like-minded church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant.

Accountability: We will be accountable to our brothers and sisters in Christ to adhere to this covenant and to likewise hold them accountable for the same, using all diligence to address concerns biblically and discretely. We will confess our sin to God and to fellow believers, repent and seek help to put our sin to death.

Church Discipline: We will follow the biblical procedures of church discipline where sin is evident in another, with the hope of bringing about repentance and restoration, and submit ourselves to discipline if the need should ever arise.

Scriptural Authority: We will submit to the authority of the Scriptures as the final arbiter on all issues.

This covenant will be read and affirmed upon admission of a new member(s).

We will use this covenant to evaluate our commitment to the body of OGBC on an ongoing basis and affirm our continuing conviction and purpose to adhere to it. We will notify the pastor(s) if at any time we can no longer commit to this covenant, or have concerns regarding OGBC.