



## Membership Covenant

### **A MEMBER OF THE WAY IS SOMEONE WHO:**

Agrees with the Doctrinal statement of the church. THAT MEANS;

We believe the Scripture, Old and New Testaments, are inspired by God and inerrant as they were originally given. (2 Timothy 3:16; 1 Corinthians 2:13)

We believe God has revealed Himself as one God existing eternally in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; distinguishable yet indivisible. (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)

We believe the Lord Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary and is the Savior of humanity. (Luke 1:26-35; John 1:18; Isaiah 7:14, 9:6)

We believe God created humanity in his image free from sin, but humans rebelled through Adam's sin and are born spiritually dead, with a sin nature and eternally separated from God. (Romans 5:12,18)

We believe Jesus Christ died on the cross as a substitutionary sacrifice for the sins of all people. He was buried and then resurrected on the third day appearing to his disciples. (1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Romans 4:25)

We believe in the salvation of sinners by grace through repentance and faith in the perfect and sufficient work of Jesus Christ crucified and resurrected, by which forgiveness of sins is granted. (Ephesians 2:8-9; Hebrews 9:12,22; Romans 5:11)

We believe Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, His exaltation as Heavenly High Priest and His personal, literal and bodily coming to earth again a second time to establish His Kingdom's reign. (John 14:2-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Hebrews 4:14)

We believe in the person of the Holy Spirit, His convicting and regenerating work, and abiding presence in the true believer. The Holy Spirit indwells all true believers and He has been sent to be the Comforter and Empowerer of the Christian Church, to enable believers to produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit and to experience the spiritual manifestations of the Holy Spirit for the common good of the Body, according to the scriptures. (John 16:13, Ephesians 4:7, Romans 12:6, Galatians 5:22, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11)

We believe that all Christians are called to a life of godly character, devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ and service to Him. (Ephesians 5:18; 2 Corinthians 6:14, 7:1)

We believe that the universal Church is a company of the called-out ones; it is the body of Christ where all believers join together to pursue the work of the ministry of Jesus Christ with Him as the Head. We believe that the local church is an autonomous group of believers who join their lives together by a covenant. The local church is governed by the scriptures and operates under the Lordship of Christ with Pastor-Elders leading the people toward faithfulness in Christ. The office of the Pastor-Elder is limited to men as qualified by the scriptures. (Ephesians 1:22-23, 1 Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-9 1 Peter 5:2-4)

We believe in water baptism by full immersion as a confession by the believer in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and an expression of faith and obedience to His command. (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:37-41, 19:1-6)

We believe in the breaking of bread, commonly called communion or the Lord's Supper, where bread and the cup are the symbols of celebration and remembering Jesus' sacrifice. (1 Corinthians 11:28-32)

We believe in Eternal Life for the believer and Eternal Punishment for the unbeliever who has rejected the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as Savior. (John 5:24, 3:16; Mark 9:43-50; 2 Thessalonians 1:9)

Has confessed Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. THAT MEANS: I have individually accepted (by a confession of faith) that the death and resurrection of Christ is the only means to achieve spiritual peace and relationship with God. (Rom 5:12,18)

I acknowledge that Jesus died a substitutionary death on my behalf. The death I deserve.

I have repented (asked for forgiveness) for my old lifestyle (my sins) and commit to walking with Jesus who is the only way to restore relationship with the Father. (John 3:16-18; Rom. 3:23-26).

Has been baptized in water. THAT MEANS Subsequent to my conversion I made a public declaration of my faith in Christ by choosing to be fully immersed in water as a picture of the death of my "old man of sin" and the resurrection of the "new man" that walks in holiness. (Col. 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21).

Submits to the leadership of the Elders. THAT MEANS: I understand that Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church which includes this local church and that Pastor - Elders in a local church are the highest form of human government in this church.

I know that church is not a democracy but lead by men appointed and recognized with the gifts of and grace for leadership. (Eph. 4:1-3; Heb. 13:7, 17).

I am convinced that these men carry weight and authority given by God and recognized by man.

I will do all that I can to aid them as they desire to guard me, guide me and provide government of my role at The Way and this includes submitting to their discipline. (Matt. 18:15-17; Ps. 141:5; 1 Cor. 5:1-5; 2 Cor. 2:5-8; Gal. 6:15, 8; 1 Tim. 5:20; 2 Tim. 2:25; Titus 1:9; 3:10-11; Heb. 12:5-11; Rev. 2:5-7, 1425)

These men are my primary protection when it comes to seeking counsel, perspective or aid in decision making.

I will commit to pray for them, their ministry and their family. (Heb 13:18)

Is not a member or in leadership of another church THAT MEANS That though I may occasionally attend, befriend or have relationships in and with other churches I agree that The Way is my spiritual home.

That the pastor - elders of The Way are the leaders I am choosing to be in submission to and allow them to speak into my life, decisions and behaviors. (Heb13:17)

Is faithful with their time (attendance) talents (service to the body) and treasures (money). THAT MEANS I will be faithful in attendance at the The Way services and prayer times.

I will actively and faithfully pursue a means of serving my church family through volunteering my time to assist with the various ministry and service opportunities. (Rom. 12:1-8)

I will ensure that I practice community through attendance and commitment to The Way events and specialized ministries. (Heb. 10:23-25)

I will faithfully and regularly contribute financially to The Way in a cheerful and biblical manner, (Tithes, offerings, alms and apostolic) thus enabling us to fulfill our mandate. (2 Cor. 8-9; 12:7-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11, Luke 11:42).

Will maintain the bonds of peace and unity. (Matt. 18:15-17; Gal. 6:1-5, 8; 1 Tim. 5:19-20; Titus 3:10-11; 1 Cor. 6:1-8, 2 Cor. 12:20)

Is actively maturing by taking personal responsibility to grow in the grace of Christ. THAT MEANS

I agree that the Bible is the final arbiter on all issues (Ps. 119; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). Even though The Way family and leadership are there to help me grow in my relationship with Jesus and the Holy Spirit, I alone am responsible for maintaining a healthy connection. I will be faithful in my times of personal bible reading / study and prayer / meditation. (Ps. 105:1-2; Ps. 119:97; Acts 2:42-47) By walking in the Grace of God, I will practice complete purity before marriage and will not participate in co-habitation or fornication. I will be completely faithful to my marriage partner

and agree that heterosexual marriage is the only God ordained form of marriage. I will abstain from defiling myself, my marriage, my marriage partner and this body by not engaging pornography or perversion. I will be vigilant to ensure that “I am not brought under the power” of activities that may be lawful but unhelpful. I will quickly access the Grace of God through confession and repentance to my community and/or its leaders should I fall in any of these areas. (2 Cor. 5:17; Job 31:1; Prov. 5; Rom. 13:12-14; 1 Cor. 6:9-7:16; Heb. 13:4; Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Cor. 8:7; Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:5; 1John 1:6-10)

Is committed to The Way’s mandated purpose. THAT MEANS I understand and adhere to the fact that The Way is called to their neighbors, neighborhood and the nations. I understand that there will be much time and resources focused on areas of mission beyond our city as we determine to fulfill our complete mandate. I embrace the apostolic call that requires ALL of God’s children to be “sent out” into their area of influence to make disciples of Christ. I realize that that means me. I recognize, that as a result, my leaders may not always be at our local gatherings as they will be in other national and international contexts fulfilling our mission. I know that the most effective way to reach the nations with the Good News of Jesus Christ is in partnership with other churches and other men gifted to the body as apostles, that share our mission, vision and values. (Ps2:8; 82:8; 86:9; Matt 28:19; Acts 13:2-6, 15:36, 1 Cor. 3:7-10)

### **AS YOUR ELDERS, THROUGH THE GRACE OF GOD, WE COVENANT THE FOLLOWING**

We will conduct ourselves and exercise our faith in a manner worthy of your followership and imitation. We will remain accountable to men recognized with and apostolic call for our personal and corporate decisions. (1 Cor 11:1, Phil 3:17, 1Tim4:12) We will continuously seek God’s will for this body as we pray, study the Word and respond to the Holy Spirit. (Acts 20:28, 1Peter 5:1-5) We as Elders and the leaders that are appointed will meet and continue to meet the biblical criteria for leadership. (1Tim3:1-13, 5:17-22, 1Pet5:1-4, Tit 1:59) We will be faithful in administering the full counsel of God, scripture in it’s entirety and guard against heresy and false teachings/teachers. (Acts20:27-31, Gal6:6, 1Tim5:17-18) We will care for you by encouraging, equipping and praying for you, we will enlarge your world by reminding you that Christ’s call is for the discipling of all nations. (Eph 4:11-13, Jas 5:14, 1 Thess 1:7-8) We will exercise church discipline when required to according to biblical principles. (Matt 18:15-20, 1 Cor. 5, Gal 6:1)

### **Unity Charter**

“If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like - minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and in purpose.” Phil 2:1 - 2

1) Because we believe that Christ reconciled us firstly to God, but secondly to one another in His body the church, we will make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit both between local churches and within our local church. Unity does not mean complete agreement or conformity.

Through the cross we can be united in diversity as we attain to the unity of the faith. (Eph 4:1-16)

2) We maintain unity primarily by speaking the truth in love to our neighbor, rather than speaking about them. We recognize that the tongue has the power of life and death, and acknowledge that the sinful nature has a tendency to avoid face to face communication and resort to gossip, malice and slander, which grieve the Spirit. (Eph 4: 16 -32)

3) We acknowledge that whether we take offense or cause offense, the initiative remains with us to go and seek peace. Forgiveness requires that we send our debtor away debt free, because we have been sent away debt free at the cross. (Matt 18:15-35, Matt 5:23-24)

4) We consider it a person's glory to overlook a minor offense, and that one who covers over an offense promotes love. Christian maturity means at times that we bear with one another, dealing with the offense alone with God. Overlooking an offense includes forgiveness, as well as resisting the urge to share the offense with others. (Proverbs 19:11, 17:9)

5) We also recognize that the gospel includes both pardon and a quest for reconciliation. While forgiveness may not ensure the restoration of a broken relationship to its original state, we heed the scriptural encouragement to 'be reconciled to your brother' (Matt 5:24)

6) We intend to eliminate gossip in this community, by neither initiating, nor participating in it. We will instead devote ourselves to a culture of encouragement and honor, which is the culture of heaven. (Jn 3:22)

7) We may hold opinions that are different from what is taught, but we will not be divisive by actively spreading dissension on issues of theology leadership or decision-making. We also honor the specific biblical warning not to entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. (1 Tim 5:19)

8) it is our conviction that initiating a lawsuit against a brother is unbiblical and against the interests of maintaining unity. Instead we will seek wise mediation within this church. (1 Cor 6:1-11, Matt 5:25,26)

9) While we embrace the use of social media in building church community, we will avoid the use of email, text messages, facebook or twitter in resolving conflict, acknowledging that face to face communication is best in resolving conflict.

10) We believe that a church united in diversity reflects and glorifies the Triune God, and brings his commanded blessing. We also see that a united community is good for the gospel. "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you have love one for another." (Psalm 133, Jn13:35)

