

COVENANT

I Will Serve in the Ministry of My Church

Series Spotlight: Church membership is a response to Christ's saving grace and a Church Covenant is the agreement among members to live together in that grace, helping one another follow Jesus.

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:10–11; Romans 12:3–8; Ephesians 4:11–16; Mark 10:42–45

Spotlight: God has gifted every believer to serve others, strengthen His church, and bring Him glory.

Summary: Following Jesus includes serving alongside His people. God has entrusted every believer with gifts to benefit others, and church membership gives us a family in which to exercise those gifts faithfully. As we discover our gifts and talents, receive equipping, find our place in ministry, and develop a servant's heart, we help our congregation grow in love and fulfill its mission. Our service depends on the gifting, strength and direction from God and helps connect people to life in Jesus.

Because Jesus has given 100% of Himself for us, we give ourselves to serve in the ministry of our church!

Serve because Christ first served you, and serve to give God glory.

Our church covenant moves us from saying, "This is where I attend," to saying, "These are the people with whom I follow Jesus and serve Jesus." Belonging brings both blessings and responsibilities. We receive encouragement, care, and instruction—and we offer those same blessings to others. Church is a place where your gifts can be used and needs can be met for the glory of God!

If every member served the way I serve, what would the ministry of our church look like?

While Jesus is our preeminent example in service, 1 Peter 4:10–11 provides significant guidance:

> **1 Peter 4:10-11**
> 10 God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. 11 Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

Peter places this instruction alongside prayer, love, and hospitality. Verses 7-9 Serving grows out of a life devoted to God and a genuine love for people.

I. Discover My Gifts and Talents

Recognize what God has entrusted to me.

- **Every believer receives a gift:** Everyone has something to contribute.
- **Every gift carries a responsibility:** We are stewards of what God entrusts to us.
- **Every act of service requires God's strength**: We depend on His provision.
- **Every ministry has one ultimate purpose**: God receives glory through Jesus Christ.

> **Romans 12:5–8**
> 5 We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other. 6 In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. 7 If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. 8 If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

Text "Gifts" to 228-265-5020 to take a spiritual gifts inventory.

A. God has given every believer something to contribute.

Spiritual gifts are expressions of God's grace that enable believers to serve and build up others. Your gift may look different from another member's gift, but it impacts the health of the whole congregation.

B. God's varied gifts meet varied needs.

A congregation needs this variety. Natural talents and learned skills are not identical to spiritual gifts.

C. Discovery happens through prayer and participation.

Ask:

- What needs do I notice?
- Where has my service helped others?
- What abilities do mature believers recognize in me?
- What happens when I try serving in a particular ministry?

A spiritual gifts inventory may guide service, but actually serving and the discernment and encouragement of others help confirm effectiveness.

Your gift is entrusted to you, but it is how you bless others!

Identify one gift, skill, or ability you could offer to strengthen someone else this week.

II. Be Equipped to Serve

Allow God and His people to prepare me.

> **Ephesians 4:11-13**
> 11 Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. 12 Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. 13 This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

A. Church leaders equip the congregation for ministry.
Ephesians 4 describes leaders preparing God's people to do His work. Pastors serve personally, and they also help members become faithful servants.

Healthy congregations grow as members learn to minister to one another.

B. Willingness must be joined with teachability.
Having a gift does not mean we have finished growing. We need biblical instruction, practical training, feedback, and accountability.

C. Equipping develops competency, character and confidence.
"Watch me. Work with me. Work while I watch you. Work and report to me. Lead others to watch you!"

Take one step toward preparation—attend training, ask for a mentor, or serve alongside someone experienced.

III. Find My Place in Ministry

Put what God has given me to work.

Ephesians 4:14-16

14 Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. 15 Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. 16 He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

Text "Serve" to 228-265-5020 to complete a form to serve and to see lists of serving opportunities.

A. The church is a body, and every member matters.
Paul's picture of the body challenges both pride and insecurity.

B. Ministry begins with real people and real needs.
In Acts 6, a need involving the care of widows required attention and faithful servants. Practical service helped protect the congregation's care and unity.

C. Faithfulness matters in visible and quiet service.
Teaching children, preparing meals, visiting the homebound, maintaining facilities, praying with someone, and welcoming guests all help people experience the care of Christ.
Faithful service includes organized opportunities and everyday acts of love between members.

D. Our place in service may change with our season of life.
Health, age, work, and family responsibilities impact how, when and where we serve. Some seasons call for receiving care; others allow greater involvement. Faithful stewardship is the goal.

IV. Develop a Servant's Heart

Serve with the attitude of Jesus.

Mark 10:42-45

42 So Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. 43 But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else. 45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.

A. Jesus is our example and our Savior.

Jesus washed His disciples' feet, and He gave His life as a ransom for many. His saving work is unique; His humility shapes how we treat others. Our service to others flows from the grace we have received in Him.

B. A servant values people above recognition.

A servant's heart asks, "Who needs help?" and "What will benefit them?" We learn to listen, accept ordinary tasks, share credit, and care for people who cannot repay us.

C. A servant depends on God's strength.

Peter specifically directs servants to rely on the strength God supplies. Prayer, rest, teamwork, and appropriate limits help us serve faithfully over time.

D. A servant seeks God's glory.

The purpose of service is that people encounter the grace of God through Jesus Christ

Our congregation's mission is "**Amplifying Hope Across the Coast by Connecting People to Life in Jesus."** As members serve, people experience Christ's care, believers grow stronger, and the congregation becomes better equipped to carry the gospel into our community and around the world.

1. Ask God and trusted believers to help identify what you can contribute.
2. Connect with a ministry leader and begin serving.
3. Ask Jesus to cultivate humility, love, and dependence on Him.

Because Jesus has served us with such grace, let us offer Him willing hearts and available hands.

Discussion Questions:

1. When you say, “This is my church,” how does your participation demonstrate a commitment to its people and its mission?

2. What spiritual gifts, natural talents, or learned skills might God use through you? What encouragement from others or experience in serving helps you recognize your gifts, talents or skills?

3. What most often keeps you from serving—uncertainty, fear, comparison, a crowded schedule, or something else? What faithful step could you take to begin serving?

4. In what areas do you need further equipping? Who could help you grow in both skill and spiritual maturity?

5. What need in our congregation has caught your attention recently? How might noticing that need lead you to a conversation or an act of service?

6. How do you respond when your service goes unnoticed, someone corrects you, or a task seems ordinary? What does your response reveal about your heart?

7. Considering your present season of life and capacity, what specific commitment will you make this week to begin or continue to serve faithfully in the strength God supplies?