

4 Journey to Membership

The Mission of God through His People: Restoration

Goals of the Membership Sessions

- Explore what it means to join and be a member of Restoration Covenant Church
- Emphasize our commitment to God's mission in the world
- Introduce the group of churches we are a part of (denomination)
- Take a deeper look at our congregation
- Increase the sense of belonging, ownership and commitment to Restoration
- Build and deepen friendships

Objectives for this Session

- Discover biblical reasons to join a church
- Become acquainted with Restoration's history, beliefs, values, mission purpose, strategies and dreams
- Explore what it means to be a member of a Restoration
- Consider deeper involvement in the mission and ministry of Restoration

Discussion Starter

Let's reintroduce ourselves. Pull out every card, coupon, etc. that represents you are a member somewhere or of something.

Why Join a Church?

A Christ-Honoring Reason

Christ loved the Church and gave his life for it. As we commit to the Church, we join Christ in that commitment. It helps us make a public declaration of a spiritual truth about our identification with Christ and other believers. *Mark 10:45, Luke 24:46-47, Heb. 10:25, Col. 2:19*

A Missional Reason

We are better together. We can accomplish more by joining with others than we would ever be able to accomplish on our own. *Matt. 28:18-20, Rom. 12:5-8, Acts 11:19-26, Eph. 2:10*

A Spiritual Growth Reason

It's part of the progression of faith. First we commit to Christ, and as part of that we further commit to Christ's family. Additionally, there are 39 "one another" commands in the New Testament about how to live life together. *John 13:34-35, 1 Cor. 12:14-22, Eph. 4:15-16*

A Biblical Reason

Membership is inferred from the New Testament. In one case the apostle Paul was so broken-hearted at the persistent and flaunted immoral behavior of a member that he instructed the Corinthians to expel him. You can't be expelled from something of which you are not an initiated member. It is also implied in Acts 6 and 1 Timothy where some leaders could choose others to minister or restrict the ministry of others. *Acts 2:44-47, Eph. 4:11-13 and 5:19-20*

A Cultural Reason

There is a current consumer religion in which, with no commitment to a congregation, people feel greater freedom to move from church to church. However, when hopping from church to church, people curtail their own growth. They never grow roots, and fail to see the kind of growth that can be produced by persevering. Public commitments cause us to review the depth of bonds, especially in tough times. *1 Cor. 12:22-26, Gal. 6:2, Phil. 1:29-30*

Choosing to Belong Here

When we choose to belong, we choose to wear an apron, not a bib; we choose to contribute to the work God has for Restoration.

Purpose - Why do we exist?

Restoration exists to be a community of people being restored by Jesus to bring hope to the world.

Vision - What do we want to see happen?

To see Christ's Restorative work transform suburban communities through the multiplication of Christ-centered churches, leaders and followers of Jesus.

Mission - What will we do?

Restoration exists to bring hope to a hurting world through a restored relationship with Jesus.

Values - What makes us unique?

- **Christ Centered:** We believe Jesus changes everything for everyone. Since Jesus restores us to God, we can live in Christ every day in all that we do. *Luke 9:23-24, 2 Cor. 5:14-15*
- **Authentic People:** We aren't perfect people and we don't pretend to be, so relax and be yourself and discover who Jesus really is. *John 1:38-39, 14:9*
- **Accepting Community:** We do not live our faith alone; we choose community and we welcome others with grace like Jesus did. *Luke 5:30-32, Luke 19:10*
- **Serving Humbly:** The Church exists for those not yet in it, so we generously send people out to share hope in Jesus Christ through words of truth and acts of love. *Mark 10:43-45, Isaiah 61:1*

Beliefs - What unifies us?

Our essential beliefs:

We believe that every person needs to confess Jesus Christ as Savior and commit to follow him as Lord.

We believe that the Bible, the Old and New Testaments, is the word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct.

We unite around these affirmations: —

We affirm the centrality of the word of God.

We affirm the necessity of the new birth.

We affirm a commitment to the whole mission of the church.

We affirm the church as a fellowship of believers.

We affirm a conscious dependence on the Holy Spirit.

We affirm the reality of freedom in Christ.

Pathways - What are the strategies to bring us closer to our vision?

- **Reaching up:** We create an a joyful and welcoming space to worship and encounter God through his Spirit and his word.
- **Reaching in:** We create authentic and safe environments where people can build authentic connections and relationships with each other and God to experience God's grace, truth and power.
- **Reaching out:** We step out to join with Jesus to bring hope to the broken places and people of our world by seeing and meeting the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of people.

Choosing to belong is not just agreeing with the vision, but contributing to the vision. Contributing means welcoming others, worshipping together and sharing in the work.

*It does not mean believing we will always agree,
but it means believing we have a future together.*

As members of Restoration, we commit, by God's grace and through God's Spirit, to attitudes and actions that encourage others to know and follow Jesus Christ, to contribute to God's mission for Restoration and support the broader mission of Jesus through our network of churches and in the world.

Our Member Covenant

Members of Restoration Covenant Church have signed the member covenant which describes the commitments from this church community to members as well as the commitments of members to this church community.

Discuss

There are many ways to contribute to God's mission through and with Restoration. Which are you most drawn to?

What are your thoughts about this lifelong journey and the ways in which we minister together to fulfill God's will?

What are your thoughts regarding the member agreement?

Does today's session raise any particular questions, concerns, fears or other feelings for you?

Decision to Become a Member

Yes! If you choose to become a member now...

Not now, not yet...