

Refuge Membership Covenant

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus... let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith... Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together...but encouraging one another..."

-Hebrews 10:19-25

Purpose

When we become Christians by believing in Jesus and repenting from our sins, we are brought into a new relationship with the triune God of the universe. When this happens, we are made sons and daughters of the Most High – we are adopted into the family of God.

All of God's children are called to love God and obey his commands. As we walk with him throughout our earthly lives, we grow in our knowledge of who he is and what he has accomplished in Christ on our behalf. During our lives, we also experience the transforming power of the Holy Spirit as he conforms us to the image of Christ and helps us live in light of our new identities. We do not do this alone; God gives us a Christian family where we can grow in our faith, receive encouragement and correction, practice the Christian disciplines, grow in loving and serving others, and gather to worship together. This family is the church and every believer is commanded by Scripture to participate in one of her local expressions.

This covenant is our way of formally recognizing our commitment to one another and clarifying our understanding of what this commitment should look like. This covenant is not a contract. It is not a promise of perfection. Rather, it is an affirmation that we are in agreement concerning:

- Core Christian doctrines
- The calling on all believers to be active participants within the lives of God's people
- Our intentions regarding how we will strive to love and serve the members of Refuge

Refuge Elders Covenant

The elders at Refuge willing covenant with all members to exercise their biblical calling, with the help of the Holy Spirit by committing to the following:

1. We covenant to lovingly care for you and seek your growth in Christ (Heb. 13:17; I Thess. 5:12)
2. We covenant to provide teaching and counsel from the Scriptures (Gal. 6:6; I Tim. 5:17-18), and that this teaching will span the whole counsel of God's Word (Acts 20:27-38)
3. We covenant to help you in times of need (Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35; James 2:14-17)
4. We covenant that elders and deacons will meet the criteria assigned to them in the Scriptures (I Tim. 3:1-13; 5:17-33; Titus 1:5-9; I Peter 5:1-4)
5. We covenant to pray for you regularly, particularly when you are sick (James 5:14)
6. We covenant to be on guard against false teachers (Acts 20:28-31)
7. We covenant to exercise church discipline and guidance with humility and care (Matt. 18:15-20; I Cor. 5; Gal 6:1)
8. We covenant to help you become equipped to serve Christ (Eph. 4:11-13)
9. We covenant to seek God's will for our church community to the best of our ability as we study the Scriptures and follow the Spirit (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:1-5)
10. We covenant to set an example in fulfilling the duties of membership (1 Cor. 11:1; Phil. 3:17)

11. We covenant to provide counsel and care to all who call Refuge home, but to make the care of our members a priority when we are limited by resources, time, or capacity.

Refuge Membership Covenant

(please sign and turn in this page)

I willingly enter into MEMBERSHIP at Refuge and, with the help of the Holy Spirit, commit to the following:

1. I am a Christian who has been saved from my sins by the grace of Jesus Christ.
2. I have been baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in obedience to the Scriptures and as a testimony of my identification with Christ and His body.
3. I will submit to the authority of the Scriptures as the final standard of belief and practice.
4. I will submit to the leadership and authority of the elders, trusting that they labor for my good. As flawed men, I understand they will often err and I will bring my questions and concerns in a gracious and peaceable way.
5. I will continue growing in my relationship with God through: regular times in the Scriptures, regular times of personal and corporate prayer, and regular fellowship with believers.
6. I will work to cultivate meaningful spiritual relationships with the people of Refuge for our mutual encouragement and care. I will also reject any actions or motives that could disrupt the unity of this people, such as: non-attendance, gossip, division, slander.
7. I will attempt to faithfully and sacrificially steward the resources God has given me - including my time (serving), talents (skills and abilities), and treasures (finances).
8. I have read and understand Refuge's "Core Beliefs" as outlined in Doctrinal Statement. I affirm my own personal belief in these doctrines and recognize that I will be removed from membership if I ever come to hold a *settled conviction* against any of these doctrines.
9. I have read and understand Refuge's vision and values as outlined in Refuge Essentials binder and agree to support the mission of Refuge.
10. I am aware of Refuge's church discipline practices as outlined in Consent to Shepherd and agree to abide by the beliefs and practices outlined there. I understand that this document is a helpful guide but that each situation requires much wisdom and care as discipline is specifically implemented.
11. I will not function in leadership or as a member in another church family without first withdrawing my membership from Refuge.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____