**Membership at Grace EFC**

Greetings!

We are pleased that you have expressed interest in becoming a member of Grace Evangelical Free Church. We are excited about what God is doing in and through the family of Grace, and we would love for you to become part of it.

**Why Membership?**

We understand that people have different understandings about membership and what the Bible actually has to say about becoming a member of the local body. While you will not find the verse “become a member” in the Bible, we believe that there is an association with the local body that implies a deeper level of commitment that we think is best carried out through the process of membership.

1) **It has a Biblical foundation.** Jesus established the local church and all the apostles did their ministry through it. The Christian life in the New Testament is church life. Christians today should expect and desire the same.

2) **The church is its members.** To be “a church” in the New Testament is to be one of its members (read through Acts). And you want to be part of the church because that’s who Jesus came to rescue and reconcile to himself.

3) **It’s how to officially represent Jesus.** Membership is the church’s affirmation that you are a citizen of Christ’s kingdom and therefore a representative of Jesus before the nations.

4) **It’s how to declare one’s highest allegiance.** Your membership on the team, which becomes visible when you wear the “jersey,” is a public testimony that your highest allegiance belongs to Jesus. Trials and persecution may come, but your only words are, “I am with Jesus.” “I am part of the team.”

5) **It’s how to embody and experience biblical images.** It’s within the accountability structures of the local church that Christians live out or embody what it means to be the “body of Christ,” the “temple of the Spirit,” the “family of God,” and so on for all the biblical metaphors (see 1 Cor. 12). And you want to experience the interconnectivity of his body, the spiritual fullness of his temple, and the safety and intimacy and shared identity of his family.

6) **It’s how to serve other Christians.** Membership helps you to know which Christians on earth you are specifically responsible to love, serve, warn, and encourage. It enables you to fulfill your biblical responsibilities to Christ’s body (for example, see Eph. 4:11‐16;

25‐32).

7) **It’s how to follow Christian leaders.** Membership helps you to know which Christian leaders you are called to obey and follow. Again, it allows you to fulfill your biblical responsibility to them (see Heb. 13:7; 17).

8) **It helps Christian leaders lead.** Membership lets Christian leaders know which Christians they will “give an account” for (Acts

20:28; 1 Peter 5:2).

9) **It enables church discipline.** It gives you the biblically prescribed place to participate in the work of church discipline responsibly, wisely, and lovingly (1 Cor. 5).

10) **It gives structure to the Christian life.** It places an individual Christian’s claim to “obey” and “follow” Jesus into a real‐life setting where authority is actually exercised over us (see John 14:15; 1 John 2:19; 4:20‐21).

11) **It builds a witness and invites the nations.** Membership puts the alternative rule of Christ on display for the watching universe (see Matt. 5:13; John 13:34‐35; Eph. 3:10; 1 Peter 2:9‐12). The very boundaries which are drawn around the membership of a church yield a society of people which invites the nations to something better.

 **How to become a member?**

We welcome all those who are interested in becoming a member of Grace Church to complete a Membership application. The application asks you some basic questions about your relationship with Jesus Christ and your desire for a relationship with the local body of believers, that being Grace Church. It’s not a test! It’s simply our attempt to get to know you a little better and begin to understand where you are in your spiritual journey so that we might help you grow in your relationship with Christ and with his body.

We will also ask you if you agree with the Biblical beliefs of Grace Church. Don’t worry. You may or may not understand all of the points of doctrine, but we are interested in if you understand those things that we believe are fundamentally important to understand about the Bible and the work of Christ. It’s ok if you don’t necessarily agree with a certain point of the doctrinal statement. Just explain how your belief differs and we can have a good discussion about how that impacts our unity in the body.

What you believe is important, but how we live and function together is also important. We are also asking you to sign a membership covenant, which expresses your intent to practice the Biblical principles that we believe.

**Grace Church’s responsibility to you:**

1. To provide support through accountability in your journey with Christ.
2. To provide opportunities for you to use your gifts in ministry.
3. To provide you with opportunities for growth and training.
4. To pray for you – seeking God’s will for your life.
5. To treat you as an important member of the family.

 **Your responsibility to your church family (Covenant of Membership):**

 We believe membership is a commitment to be a part of the family, and as a family member, you agree to:

1. I will protect the unity of Grace Church,

 by acting in love toward other members

 by seeking to be a peacemaker

 by following the leaders

2. I will share in responsibility for the health and growth of Grace Church,

  by praying for its continued health and growth

 by inviting the unchurched to attend services and events run by the church

 by warmly welcoming those who visit

 3. I will serve in the ministry of Grace Church,

 by discovering my gifts and talents

 by being willing to be trained and equipped

 by developing a servant’s heart

4. I will support to the best of my ability the cause, community, and corporate life of Grace Church,

 by attending worship services faithfully

 by living a godly life

 by giving financially regularly

 **Membership Application**

 **(one per person)**

 Name \_Email

 Address

 City State Zip \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Home phone\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Carrier\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Occupation \_\_

 Birth date Marital Status Anniversary \_\_

 Children \_\_

Birthday(s) \_\_

Have you been baptized? YES\_

NO

 Have you read the statement of faith of Grace EFC and agree with it? \_

If no, please explain:

Have you read the constitution and by‐laws and agree to abide by them?

If no, please explain: \_\_

I agree to fulfill, to the best of my ability, the expectations of the Membership Covenant.

Signature of applicant Date \_



Recommended \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Not Recommended \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Tabled \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature (s) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Pastoral signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Interview**

 (Completed by Elders)

Name of applicant \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of interview \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Elders completing interview \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Steps toward assimilation:*

What Life Group are you connecting them to?

What ministry or area of service are you connecting them to?

Are they currently in a discipleship relationship or interested in being in a discipleship relationship?

Are there any follow up needs or anything that the office/staff/pastors should know?

Which elder/individual is following up with them to ensure they are assimilated into the church body?