

HOW DO I GET
CONNECTED
AT GRACE?

104



DISCOVER
GRACE

Discover Grace classes guide you to discover your redemptive purpose and live the life God created for you. Discover Grace is four classes:

101 How is Grace Church Unique?

102 How Did God Design Me?

103 How Do I Partner with the Mission and Vision of Grace?

104 How Do I Get Connected at Grace?



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HOW DO I GET CONNECTED AT GRACE CHURCH?

The C in our GRACE strategy stands for Connecting with other believers in an environment where you can know and be known. God made us to need each other. We're just way better together.

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread together in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. Acts 2:46-47

The phrase we like to use is biblical community. And it's basically God's plan for His Church.

"I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are My disciples." John 13:34,35

The way we love each other is still our brightest witness of the reality of Christ living in us. Honoring, forgiving, enjoying, preferring one another—that is totally countercultural right now.

In Matthew 24:12 Jesus said in the last days: "Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold."

And Paul expanded on it in 2 Timothy 3:1-4: "There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, boastful, proud, abusive, ungrateful, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited..."

The first church met in the temple (in a large group) and from house to house (in small groups). Even Jesus had His own small group of 12.

We believe that life change happens best in small groups.

In small groups there are opportunities to discuss more than just surface issues. It's a place you can be open and feel like you are with trusted friends.

This is where we get sharpened. The Bible says in Proverbs 27:17: "As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend."

In Ephesians 4:15,16 Paul adds the love aspect and he tells the church: "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."



At Grace there are several different types of groups.

- Some people prefer discussion-based groups, centered around a certain topic or study, guided by a facilitator.
- There are teaching type groups where a gifted teacher leads the group through a topic, usually followed by discussion and prayer.
- There are service type groups whose main emphasis is on serving both in the community and here at church. They meet and serve in places like food banks, Thrive (an organization for women) or Love the Lou (a ministry we support that helps inner city kids).



Photo by Priscilla Du Preez

- We also have in-house service groups that have formed around our serving teams, like our hospitality teams and GraceKids.
- We have age-related groups for teens, young adults and older adults.
- We have special interest groups whose focus can be around music, sports, photography or any number of other interests and hobbies.
- We have prayer groups which meet throughout the week to pray for a host of needs.
- Along with small groups we have a set of support/ recovery groups under our Anchor of Hope ministry. These help people who are dealing with serious issues. Examples include Overcomers, which is a 12 step group; Divorce Recovery; Dealing with Anxiety and Chronic Illness or Grief Share,

to help you through the loss of a loved one. You can find out more about this ministry by picking up an Anchor of Hope booklet at one of our info tables or viewing a copy on our website.

To make this easier, we even created a trimester system: Fall, Winter-Spring and Summer. We train leaders to realize that you have different interests at different seasons and stages of your life. So if you want to try a group for a semester to see whether it's a good fit, our leaders know to keep both an open front and back door, allowing people to switch groups without any judgment or stigma as needs require.



WHY MEMBERSHIP

At Grace Church we recognize the need to commit to membership for biblical reasons. Here are four of those reasons

1. Church membership is GOD's idea.

*God's family is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth.
1 Timothy 3:15*

You are members of God's very own family, citizens of God's country, and you belong in God's household with every other Christian. Ephesians 2:19

*In Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.
Romans 12:5*

*Each part gets its meaning from the body as a whole, not the other way around. The body we're talking about is Christ's body of chosen people. Each of us finds our meaning and function as a part of His body. But as a chopped-off finger or a cut-off toe we wouldn't amount to much, would we?
Romans 12:4-5*

In order for the church (the body of Christ) to serve God's purpose in this world, we must work together, staying connected to one another.

2. Christ is committed to the church.

*Christ loved the church, and He gave His life for it.
Ephesians 5:25*

"I will build My church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it." Matthew 16:18

3. The church needs you.

*If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts suffer with it. Or if one part of our body is honored, all the other parts share its honor.
1 Corinthians 12:26*

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. Ephesians 4:16

Membership identifies who can be counted on.

4. YOU need a church family!

Each one of you is part of the body of Christ, and you were chosen to live together in peace. Colossians 3:15

How wonderful it is, how pleasant, for God's people to live together in harmony! Psalm 133:1

Encourage one another daily... so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. Hebrews 3:13

We mature spiritually when we are connected and active parts of a church body.

The difference between "attendees" and "members" can be summed up in one word: COMMITMENT.

What is expected of me as a member?

At Grace Church we never ask our members to do more than the Bible clearly teaches.

These privileges and responsibilities are spelled out as you go through these classes, taking the Grace Membership Path. When completed, you will have a clear understanding of biblical membership and Grace Church's part in fulfilling Christ's mission. At this point, you can become a participating member.



Deuteronomy 14:2
YOU HAVE BEEN
set apart
& chosen
FOR HIS PURPOSE.

Photo by Gift Habeshaw

BECOMING A MEMBER

Grace Church Membership Covenant

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and being in agreement with the values and ideas presented in Discover Grace, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Grace Church family. In doing so, I make the following commitment to God and my fellow church members

1. I will protect the unity of my church by:

- Acting in love toward other members
- Refusing to gossip
- Following the leaders

So let us concentrate on the things which make for harmony, and on the growth of our fellowship together.
Romans 14:19

Live in complete harmony with each other—each with the attitude of Christ toward each other. Romans 15:5

Have a sincere love for other believers, love one another earnestly with all your heart.
1 Peter 1:22

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs. Ephesians 4:29

Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you. Hebrews 13:17

2. I will share the responsibility of my church by:

- Praying for its growth and health
- Inviting the unchurched to attend
- Warmly welcoming those who visit

To the church...we always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. 1 Thessalonians 1:1–2

“Go out into the country...and urge anyone you find to come in, so that the house will be full.” Luke 14:23

So, warmly welcome each

other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified. Romans 15:7

3. I will serve the ministry of my church by:

- Discovering my gifts and talents
- Using my God-given gifts to make a difference in the lives of others
- Developing a servant's heart

Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you. 1 Peter 4:10

So Christ Himself gave...pastors and teachers, to equip His people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. Ephesians 4:11-12

Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus...taking the form of a bondservant. Philippians 2:4-5, 7

4. I will support the testimony of my church by:

- Attending church and small groups faithfully
- Living a godly life
- Giving regularly

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Acts 2:42

Let us not neglect our meeting together...but encourage one another. Hebrews 10:25

But whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ. Philippians 1:27

TRUST PRAYERS

Use the TRUST Prayers while focusing on God's gift of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

T

Thank You Holy Spirit, I thank You for coming to live in me. Thank You for always being with me. I can't do anything without You.

R

Release Revelation Holy Spirit, reveal God's heart to me. Open the eyes of my understanding as I read Your Word.

U

Use Me Holy Spirit, use me to help others today. Use Your gifts and power through me to communicate God's love for them.

S

Strengthen Me Holy Spirit, rise up in me and strengthen my mind, will and emotions. Help me to draw from Your love, joy and peace.

T

Teach Me Holy Spirit, teach me in every area of my life. Show me how to live in ways that please You and that keep me in Your will and blessing for my life.

NEXT STEPS

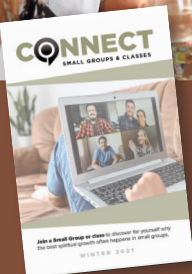
1. Fill out and turn in attendance sheet to get credit for this class.
2. Complete all four Discover Grace classes.
3. Read the Membership Covenant.
4. Fill out and sign the Membership Profile if you wish to become a member of Grace Church.

Membership at Grace Church is not about adding your name to a roster; it's about connecting with the people and the vision of the church. We would love for you to be a part.

CONNECT

What do you get when you hang out, discuss the Bible, pray together and support each other?

- Spiritual growth
- Lifelong friends
- Community



Stop by the Connect Table on your way to the Atrium and get plugged into a small group.

GRACE CHURCH

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APRIL 1, 2021 12:16 PM