

Exploring Providence Part 4: The Church Covenant

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- [0 : 00] All right. Any questions on our church attitude or how these values play out? Any questions on that?! Be clear? All right. Then let me go over our church covenant, which we have a whole blank slide, but I will read it to you.
- I will read our church covenant to you. And what we'll do is when this is all over, if you're not on base camp, let me know.
- We'll get you on base camp. But if you are on base camp, I will add you to a group that has our church covenant that has any resources and is an opportunity to fellowship within people who are either fresh to Providence or exploring Providence.
- So we'll get you on that base camp group and you can read the church covenant there. But let me read it to you guys and then I'll talk about next steps.
- So church covenant commitment. I will worship the Lord both privately and corporately, rejoicing in his grace and giving thanks to the Father for the sacrifice of his son, Jesus, and for the benefits that sacrifice purchased, especially forgiveness of sins and eternal life, and for the gift of the Holy Spirit who empowers us to believe and live a life that glorifies God.
- [1 : 18] Two, I'll devote myself to the study of Scripture and to prayer, both privately and in group contexts. I'll submit to the authority of the Scriptures as the final arbiter on all issues.
- Third, I'll devote myself to growth in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who is seeking to become more Christ-like as I apply the Scriptures to my life. Fourth, I will live together with my brothers and sisters in love and will seek only their good by establishing relationships that promote holiness and discipleship.
- Fifth, I'll be vigilant to guard the welfare and joy of my brothers and sisters, admonishing anyone whose practice of sin requires it. And I'll humbly receive admonishment from my brothers and sisters when my sin requires it.
- Six, I'll extend the grace of forgiveness to others just as the Lord has forgiven me. Seven, I'll support the Church's doctrine and practice of Church discipline.
- Eight, I will care for my brothers and sisters in Christ as needs arise. I'll strive to use my spiritual gifts for the building up of Providence Community Church. Nine, I'll be diligent to preserve the unity of the Church.
- [2 : 29] Therefore, I'll support the statement of faith of Providence Community Church and not be divisive. I will affirm the leadership that God has appointed and I'll reject all opportunities to hear or speak gossip and slander.
- Ten, I will serve the Church's ministries and mission by regularly and sacrificially and cheerfully giving of my time, gifts, and money. Eleven, I will seek to spread the glory of God by proclaiming the Gospel both in word and deed to those within my sphere of influence who do not yet believe.
- Twelve, I will actively seek regular biblical fellowship with my brothers and sisters and neglecting to meet together with them in corporate worship and in care groups. And thirteen, I will, if I move from this place, be united with some other church where I can carry out the spirit of this agreement and follow the teaching of God's word.

So, that's the Church Covenant. That is what you would be committing to by becoming a member of Providence. I think you probably see a lot of the connections in the Church Covenant to everything we talked about throughout this class.

We talked a little bit, you know, how do we live out the Church Covenant a bit? But this really encapsulates, as a member of Providence, this is what we hold ourselves to and expect of our members.

[3 : 47] So, any questions on that? Okay, then next steps. Next steps. What do we do now that we've attended Exploring Providence Community Church?

You know, we've come here a few times. We want to explore more and get to know more. What do we do? So, first of all, let me get you guys all the written church membership material.

There's a whole lot more that you can explore and read. This is kind of like the foundation, the basic stuff. But there's more if you're interested to read and learn more. And it's all in that Basecamp group.

So, there's a Church Covenant of the Basecamp group. There's a link to a bunch of materials that are in Medium, off of Medium.com, where we just published some materials that you can read some more about.

Like, the Covenant talks about church discipline. What does that mean? The Covenant talked about forgiveness and peacekeeping.

[4 : 49] You know, granting forgiveness to people. So, what does that mean? All this stuff can be found within the Basecamp group that I can get you guys on. Second, just encourage you guys to attend on Sundays.

You know, hear the preaching a number of times. Experience the worship. Experience the fellowship. And see, is this where God's calling me to? Is this where we believe God's calling me to?

Third, we talk about this. Highly encourage you to find a community group. Find a community group. Get plugged in. Get to know some more people within the church on a personal level.

Identify and get plugged into a community group. Fourth, dig into men's and women's ministry. Dig into men's and women's ministry. Attend on a fourth Wednesday.

Or, for the ladies, attend on a second Wednesday. We have Bible study then. Or go to the Cinco de Mayo get-together tomorrow. You know, have a good time.

[5 : 47] And fellowship. And just rub shoulders and get to know and fellowship with the members of the church. And then, I guess that's fifth. If you desire membership, if you do want to become a member, request a membership interview.

Low pressure. Casual conversation. Discussion. We want to hear, you know, how did you become a Christian? How did God save you? We want to hear about your experiences at the church so far.

What do you think of Sunday meeting? Have you gotten plugged into a community group? How are you serving so far? All those kinds of questions that you can expect at a church membership interview.

In addition to, like, where did you go to church before? And is everything, you know, do you leave that church okay? And do you need any support or talk through that? Things like that. And then, once you've gone through the interview process, you say, yes, I want to commit myself to this church covenant.

And to this body of believers, Providence Community Church. Then we will welcome you on a Sunday morning as a member of this church. Sometimes we do it, you know, in groups.

[6 : 57] Sometimes we'll do it, you know, a one-off welcome. Like, last week we welcomed a family because it was just an opportunity to do that. But sometimes we'll do it in groups.

Sometimes we'll do it in individual people or couples. So those are the steps. Review the written church materials. Attend on Sunday. Get involved with the community group.

Get involved with men's and women's ministry. Start serving. Request a membership interview. And then, if you believe that this is where God is calling you to, become a member. So, that's what I've got.

What? We've been talking a little bit throughout it. Are there any questions so far? Anything that wasn't clear or you want to know more about? Anything else before I close out in prayer? Okay.

All right, good. You guys are great. Great. I've appreciated, like, the head nod and the smiles throughout. Like, that's really helpful to me just to hear that you guys are tracking and engaging with what I'm sharing. That's very helpful to me.

[8 : 01] Appreciate you guys' time. Like, it's Sunday afternoon at, like, you know, 110. You guys would stay after and trust us to watch your kiddos and all that kind of stuff.

And that you'd invest the time to learn about the church. And I hope you were served. And you at least know more about the church near Providence. So, let me pray.

Go from there. Dear Jesus, we... Jesus, we thank you. We thank you that we are saved.

Lord, thank you that you live the perfect life, righteous life, died on the cross, rose from the grave, so that our sins can be forgiven and can be freed from the sins and empowered to live a life for you.

Lord, I thank you for the church. I thank you that you provided a community in which we can know you and be discipled and disciple others for your glory, for our joy.

[9 : 10] Lord, I thank you for these folks who got to come out and hear about our church, hear about Providence Community Church. I just pray that you would bless them. Just bless them, flourish their relationship with you.

Amaze them with grace. Lord, bless their times in your word and in prayer. And pray that as long as they are coming here at Providence, that you would bless their fellowship.

And they would just experience your presence, experience your care. And they would just experience you and know you better by the time here. I pray that you give them wisdom to determine if this is the church you believe that they are calling, that you are calling them to.

So we thank you for today. Pray your blessing on the rest of our day today and our week ahead. Jesus.