

Every Member Ministry

Ahead of your meeting: Have your groups read through the 12 reasons why church membership matters (page 27/28) as well as the activities we engage in at GCC page 24/25) There's also some additional info on what membership entails (pages 25/26/27) and some blog post links about every member ministry. (all found below)

Most of the session 7 is about discussing and brainstorming ways members can get involved at GCC.

- Take some time to discuss or think of ways that on-going ministries could be enhanced. Is there a way that you, or your group can use gifts/talents at GCC? Have you been involved in ministries/activities in another church that could work at GCC, or something you'd like to try?
- Is there a ministry that needs to be started?
- Have you noticed someone who might fit well in a particular ministry and have you encouraged them to step up?
- Discuss any projects/activities your group could develop in a community where members can serve together.

Some possible activities: *park evangelism, helping a school/teacher clean at the end or beginning of school year, community yard cleanup, have a 'block party', serve at a soup kitchen/food bank, fundraise for missions support...*

Twelve reasons why church membership matters (taken from Leeman, p 79-81)

- 1) It's biblical. Jesus established the local church, and all his apostles did their ministry through it. The Christian life identified in the New Testament is essentially 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 (as indicated in Acts). You want to be part of the church because that's who Jesus came to rescue and reconcile to himself.
- 3) It's a pre-requisite for taking the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is a remembrance for the gathered church, that is, for its members (see 1 Cor. 11:20, 33). And every true believer wants to take the Lord's Supper.
- 4) 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 card-carrying Jesus representative before the nations. You want to be an official Jesus representative.
- 5) It's how to declare one's highest allegiance. Your membership is a public testimony that your highest allegiance belongs to Jesus. You want to display to others that "I am with Jesus."
- 6) It's how to embody and experience the family of God. It's within the accountability structures of the local church that Christians live out what it means to be the "body of Christ," the "temple of the Spirit," the "family of God." You want to experience the interconnectivity of Christ's body, the spiritual fullness of his temple, and the safety, intimacy and shared identity of his family.
- 7) It's how to serve other Christians. Membership helps you to know which Christians in your community 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).

8) It's how to follow Christian leaders. Membership helps you to know which Christian leaders in your community you are called to obey and follow. It allows you to fulfill your biblical responsibility to them (see Heb. 13:7; 17).

9) 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).

10) 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).

11) 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 exercised over us (see John 14:15; 1 John 2:19; 4:20-21).

12) It builds a witness and invites others to take note of what is happening. Membership puts the 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 local church offers a unique and distinctive loving society, which catches the attention of others.

Every member ministry

Church membership will hopefully bring a sense of ownership in our church. Active members are what we are seeking. As you invest in the body, as you pray, as you minister and as you give financially, you will enrich the body and bring glory to Christ. We encourage members to be more than consumers, to immerse themselves fully within different aspects of body life. Rather than thinking only about what you can get out of church, ask yourself what you can give to the church. Taking responsibility for different aspects of church life conveys that you have truly grasped the Gospel and demonstrates your willingness to advance God's Kingdom in our community and in bringing glory to God.

Church members are an integral part of the body of Christ. The church body can be viewed as an organism consisting of many interconnected parts that are all needed to sustain body function and life. In this context members will use their spiritual gifts and natural abilities to serve and build up the body to promote its health and wellbeing (1 Cor. 12: 7; 1 Cor. 14: 12; 1 Peter 4: 10). You are unable to

fulfill your obligations to fellow believers and to church leaders without being vitally connected and actively involved in a local church. Likewise, other Christians cannot fulfill their obligations to you without the local church. It is imperative that church members engage in church ministry and service that builds up the local body of Christ.

GCC has adopted the biblical imperative of “every member ministry” as expressed in Ephesians 4: 12-13. The ministry of building up the body of Christ is a collective undertaking that requires the full and active engagement of every member that Christ has placed into a local body. Each member has an important role to fulfill, which if not carried out will cause the body to suffer in some way (1 Corinthians 12:12–27).

Activities we engage in at GCC

Sunday worship services. Worship services consist of Christ and gospel focused singing, prayer, bible readings and preaching. Sermons are careful expositions of books of the bible (recent sermon series have focused on Galatians and Genesis).

Sunday school exists for children, youth and adults. It is offered before the morning worship service. Children and youth classes are overseen by a Sunday School superintendent. A Sunday School Committee exists to direct and provide oversight to Sunday School programming. Adult Sunday School is taught primarily by church elders.

Grace Groups. These small groups generally meet every second week. Members and church adherents come together to study the bible, to share, encourage each other in Christian living, pray together and enjoy fellowship times. There were 9 Grace Groups as of February 2019.

Mid-week prayer groups. Mid-week prayer meetings are held at the church, in Lethbridge and Vauxhall and online.

Church fellowship meals. Once a month, following the morning worship service, a church potluck is held in the church gymnasium. People are encouraged to bring a main dish and either a salad or desert. This is a time for fellowship and an

opportunity to meet and get to know people in the church. Church Grace Groups are assigned to set up, clean up and take down for each potluck.

Various other programs exist including: **VBS, ladies bible study, informal one-on-one discipleship sessions, youth group, bible quizzing, men's social events, evangelism, digital ministry, building committee . . .**

Once church membership has been obtained, we encourage new members to enter the life of church service and use their spiritual gifts to build up the body.

A police check is required before members can serve in children and youth ministries.