



REDEMPTION CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

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SECTION 1 / BELIEFS

In this first section we look at the core foundational beliefs that we hold to at Redemption. John Frame states, "Theology is the application of God's word to our lives in all situations." In other words, what we believe will shape how we live. By entering the covenant relationship of membership, you affirm the Doctrine and promise to not be divisive regarding the Biblical Convictions and Open-Handed Issues.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. The Scriptures

The Scriptures are true, authoritative, and sufficient.

We believe the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, are the inspired Word of God, without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of his will for the salvation of mankind, and the final authority for all Christian faith and life (Psalm 19:7-11; John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

2. The Trinity

There is one true God who eternally exists in three distinct persons: Father, Son, And Holy Spirit.

We believe there is one God, eternally existing in three Persons; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. These persons are equal in being, power and glory, and they are identical in essence. Each member of the Godhead possesses all the same attributes and perfections. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-6; Isaiah 46:9-10; Psalm 139:1-24; Matthew 10:29-31; Matthew 28:19; John 1:1; John 17:3; Acts 17:24-28 1 Corinthians 8:4-6; 1 Timothy 2:5; Titus 2:13).

3. The Glory of God

All things exist for the glory of God.

Everything that exists, visible and invisible, exists by God, through God, and for God. Everything God has done, is doing, and will do is for His glory. Consequently, all humanity exists to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. (Romans 11:33-36; Psalm 19:1; Psalm 62:7; Psalm 105:3; Psalm 115:1; Luke 2:14; Colossians 1:16; Colossians 1:27; Revelation 19:7)

4. God the Father

God the Father is eternal, Infinite in His attributes, and sovereign over all things.

We believe in God the Father; an infinite, personal Spirit, who is perfect in all His attributes. We believe that God the Father not only created the world but also now upholds, sustains, governs, and providentially directs all that exists and that he will bring all things to their proper consummation in Christ Jesus to the glory of his name. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of people, that he hears and answers prayer, and that he saves from sin and death all who come to him through Jesus Christ. (Isaiah 40:1-48:22; Isaiah 46:10; Psalm 104:1-35; Matthew 10:29-31; 28:19; John 3:16; 4:24; Acts 17:24-28; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 1:9-12; 4:4-6; Hebrews 1:1-3; Revelation 1:4-6).

5. God the Son

Jesus Christ is the Eternal Son, Co-Creator of the universe, and the substitutionary sacrifice for our sins.

We believe that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, the eternal Word made Flesh, truly God and truly man, that he was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, and offered himself as a substitutionary sacrifice for sinners. By his blood shed on the cross he satisfied the wrath of God, obtained for us eternal redemption, the forgiveness of sins, spiritual adoption as sons and daughters, life everlasting, and defeated the powers of darkness. He was raised bodily on the third day and ascended to the right hand of the Father, there to make intercession for the saints (Isaiah 53:1-12; Matthew 1:18-25; John 1:1-18; Romans 8:34; 1 Corinthians 15:1-28; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:10-14; Ephesians 1:7; Philippians 2:6-11; Colossians 1:15-23; 2:15; Hebrews 7:25; 9:13-15; 1 Peter 2:24-25; 1 John 2:1-2).

6. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is eternally God who brings conviction of sin, applies salvation, and empowers the believer to live a life that honors God.

We believe that the Holy Spirit is fully God, equal with the Father and Son. The primary ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit also convicts unbelievers of their need for Christ and imparts spiritual life through regeneration (the new birth). The Spirit indwells, sanctifies, leads, illumines, and graciously empowers for godly living and service all who come to faith in Christ. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ baptizes believers in the Holy Spirit, in whom also we are sealed for the day of redemption. Subsequent to conversion the Spirit desires to fill, empower, and anoint believers for ministry and witness. We believe the Holy Spirit gives gifts to believers for the purpose of equipping the church for effective ministry. These gifts are to be eagerly desired, faithfully developed, and lovingly exercised according to biblical guidelines (Matthew 3:11; John 1:12-13; 3:1-15; 15:26-27; 16:7-15; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 1:13-14; 5:18; Romans 12:3-8; Romans 14:1-33; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31).

7. The Sinfulness of Humans

All humanity, though created in the image of God is sinful by both birth and action - Christ excluded.

We believe God made man—male and female—in His own image, as the crown of creation so that man might glorify Him through enjoying fellowship with Him. In consequence of his disobedience, Adam's posterity are born subject to sin and moral corruption, and are therefore by nature and choice the children of wrath, justly condemned in the sight of God, wholly unable to save themselves or to contribute in any way to their acceptance with God (Genesis 1:1-3:24; Psalm 51:5; Romans 3:9-18; 5:12-21; Ephesians 2:1-3).

8. Salvation is by grace through faith.

We believe that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. We believe salvation involves the redemption of the whole person, and is offered freely to all who surrender to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by his own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. (John 1:12-13; 6:37-44; 10:25-30; Acts 13:48; 16:30-31; Romans 3:1-4:25; 8:1-17,31-39; 9:1-23; 10:8-10; Ephesians 1:4-5; 2:8-10; Philippians 2:12-13; Titus 3:3-7).

9. The Church

The church is the bride of Christ and God's means for communicating the gospel to the whole world.

We believe that the Church is the Bride of Christ and is comprised of all believers in every age. The Church is also God's primary instrument through which he is fulfilling his redemptive purposes in the earth. We believe that God has called the Church to preach the gospel to all nations, and especially to remember the poor and to minister to their needs through sacrificial giving and practical service. We also affirm the priesthood of all believers and the importance of every Christian being joined with and actively involved in a local community of the saints (Isaiah 58:6-12; 61:1; Matthew 16:17-19; 28:18-20; Luke 4:18; 21:1-4; Acts 2:17-18,42; Galatians 2:10; Ephesians 3:14-21; 4:11-16; 1 Timothy 6:8; Hebrews 10:23-25; 1 Peter 2:4-5,9-10).

10. The Return of Jesus

Jesus Christ will return as King of Kings and he will Judge the living and the dead.

We believe in the imminent, glorious, visible, and triumphant appearing of Christ when he returns to the earth as King of Kings. We believe that after Christ returns, he will bring about the ultimate defeat of Satan, the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment, and the eternal blessing of the righteous. At that time, the Kingdom of God will be completely fulfilled in the new heavens and the new earth, in which righteousness dwells and in which he will be worshipped forever (Matthew 25:46; John 5:25-29; 1 Corinthians 15:1-49; 2 Corinthians 5:1-10; Philippians 1:19-26; 3:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11; 2 Thessalonians 1:3-12; Revelation 19:1-21; Revelation 20:11-15; 21:1-22:15).

BIBLICAL CONVICTIONS

While all theology is practical, the following issues deal specifically with the nature, organization, and functioning of the church. We have chosen to place them in their own section, distinct from the broad theology outlined in the Statement of Faith section above.

1. CHURCH DISCIPLINE Statement

Church discipline is the process of confronting sin to achieve repentance and restoration. It is also intended to prevent unrestrained sin from spreading to others and protect the honor of Jesus Christ. The informal process of church discipline happens any time a believer confronts another believer about his or her sin and encourages repentance. The formal process of church discipline typically begins when the individual in sin is unwilling to repent over an extended period of time. Therefore, most formal church discipline is not as much about the sin as it is about the hard-hearted unwillingness to repent for sin. The process of church discipline concludes when the believer either repents or is formally removed by the elders from participating in the church. Additionally, those who intentionally stir up divisions in the church should be disciplined with greater swiftness.

Key Points

- A. The Bible does not allow the church to tolerate willful, unrepentant sin.
- B. God gives church leadership authority to carry out public discipline if necessary.

Scripture

- A. Galatians 6:1 / Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.
- B. James 5:19–20 / My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.
- C. Matthew 18:15–17 / If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.
- D. 1 Corinthians 5:1–7 / It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole

lump? Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

- E. Romans 16:17 / I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them.
- F. Titus 3:10 / As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him

2. PASTOR/ELDER LED CHURCH GOVERNMENT Statement

The consistent pattern throughout the New Testament is that each local body of believers is shepherded by a plurality of qualified, male pastors/elders. Simply stated, this is the only pattern for church leadership given in the New Testament. Pastors/elders are called to a number of specific duties, including: prayer and Scripture study, caring for the people in the church, equipping the church to do ministry, giving an account to God for the church, living exemplary lives, preaching and teaching, praying for the sick, and teaching sound doctrine and refuting error.

Key Points

- A. Redemption is led and governed by a plurality of qualified male elders.
- B. Redemption is not a congregational-led church with member voting. Decisions are made by the elders with counsel.

Scripture

- A. 1 Timothy 3:1–7 / The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.
- B. Titus 1:6–9 / If anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.
- C. Acts 20:28 / Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.
- D. 1 Peter 5:2–4 / Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.
- E. Hebrews 13:17 / Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.
- F. 1 Timothy 5:17 / Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.

3. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER Statement

We believe that baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordained by the Lord Jesus himself. The former is connected with entrance into the new covenant community, the latter with ongoing covenant renewal. Together they are simultaneously God's pledge to us, divinely ordained means of grace, our public vows of submission to the once crucified and now resurrected Christ, and anticipations of his return and of the consummation of all things.

At Redemption, we practice "believer's baptism," believing that baptism is appropriately administered only to those who give a thoughtful profession of faith in Jesus Christ. In other words, we believe that baptism should come after faith in Jesus, rather than before. For this reason, we will not baptize infants or small children that are unable to make a thoughtful profession of faith. We understand that some within our church family may have different convictions about the value of infant baptism. Therefore, we will not necessarily exclude from membership those who do not agree with our position on baptism and refuse to be baptized as believers, though we do expect that they have a theologically defensible reason for holding to infant baptism and that they will not allow this non-essential issue to cause division in the church.

Key Points

- A. Baptism is the sign of initiation into God's family.
- B. The Lord's Supper (Communion) is the sign of covenant remembrance for followers of Jesus Christ.
- C. While both are commanded in Scripture, neither Baptism nor the Lord's Supper, are necessary for salvation.
- D. At Redemption we practice "believer's baptism" by full submersion.

Scripture

- A. Matthew 28:18–20 / And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."
- B. Romans 6:3–5 / Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.
- C. Matthew 26:26–28 / Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.
- D. 1 Corinthians 11:23–26 / For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying,

“This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

4. DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE Statement

The Bible gives two legitimate grounds for divorce and/or remarriage: adultery and desertion by an unbelieving spouse. It is important to note that although God allows for divorce in these two situations, he never commands us to divorce and he never communicates that divorce is best. What about those who have already been divorced? Does the Bible allow for remarriage following a divorce? Paul answers this question in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, saying that in cases of unbiblical divorce the individual should either remain unmarried or pursue reconciliation.

Every person is different and every situation is unique. This reality does not in any way negate the prohibitions and principles given in the Bible, but it does require wisdom and discernment to appropriately apply the principles to a given situation. Therefore, we would recommend that those who are concerned about their situation meet with a pastor, elder or leader to receive personal care and biblical direction.

Finally, our convictions about divorce and remarriage lead us to a few important applications as a church. In order to preserve healthy marriages, we will require pre-marital counseling as a prerequisite to being married by a Redemption pastor, we will offer counseling and equipping to help strengthen marriages, and we will initiate church discipline on individuals or couples who are pursuing an unbiblical divorce. As a result of these convictions, we will not conduct remarriages for those who were unbiblically divorced as believers and we will not allow individuals to hold key leadership positions in the church if they initiated an unbiblical divorce.

Key Points

- A. There are two Biblical reasons for divorce: adultery and desertion.
- B. Divorce is never the best option; reconciliation is always preferred.
- C. Redemption requires pre-marital counseling in order to be married by a Redemption pastor. Redemption offers counseling for couples and will initiate church discipline on individuals or couples who are pursuing an unbiblical divorce.
- D. Redemption will not conduct remarriages for those who were unbiblically divorced.
- E. Redemption will not allow individuals to hold key leadership positions in the church if they initiated an unbiblical divorce.

Scripture

- A. Malachi 2:15-16 / Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. "For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless."
- B. Matthew 5:32 / But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.
- C. Matthew 19:8-9 / "Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery."

- D. 1 Corinthians 7:10-16 / To the married I give this charge (not I, but the Lord): the wife should not separate from her husband (but if she does, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and the husband should not divorce his wife. To the rest I say (I, not the Lord) that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace. For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?

5. OPEN-HANDED ISSUES

The following are issues that we consider “open-handed,” meaning that while individuals within our leadership and church may have convictions about them, they are secondary issues and freedom should be given within our church to hold different beliefs as long as the beliefs remain within the spectrum of biblical Christianity.

We have simply named the issues below and given a clarifying statement to ensure that we are clear about what we would not consider to be within the spectrum of biblical Christianity.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

While we believe “spiritual gifts” to be an open-handed issue, we do not believe that the gift of tongues (or any other individual spiritual gift) is required as an evidence of salvation.

END TIMES

While we believe “end times” to be an open-handed issue, we do not believe that Jesus has already returned. We anticipate his future coming.

CREATION

While we believe “creation” to be an open-handed issue, we do not believe in atheistic or naturalistic evolution.

Section 2 / An Acts 29 Member Church

As a member of the Acts 29 network, we affirm and pursue the distinctives and values of the Acts 29 Network. By entering the covenant relationship of membership, you embrace the distinctives of Acts 29.

Acts 29 Member Church

Redemption is a member of the **Acts 29 church planting network**. As members of Acts 29, we adhere to the **theological distinctives, vision, and values** of Acts 29.

Acts 29 Distinctives

1. We are passionate about gospel centrality.

We believe the gospel is the good news of what God has graciously accomplished for sinners through the sinless life, sacrificial death, and bodily resurrection of his Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, namely our forgiveness from sin and complete justification before God; this gospel is also the foundation for our confidence in the ultimate triumph of God's kingdom, and the consummation of his purpose for all creation in the new heavens and new earth.

This gospel is centered in Christ, is the foundation for the life of the Church, and is our only hope for eternal life; this gospel is not proclaimed if Christ's penal substitutionary death and bodily resurrection are not central to our message.

This Gospel is not only the means by which people are saved, but also the truth and power by which people are sanctified; it is the truth of the Gospel that enables us to genuinely and joyfully do what is pleasing to God and to grow in progressive conformity to the image of Christ.

The salvation offered in this gospel message is received by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone; no ordinance, ritual, work, or any other activity on the part of man is required in order to be saved.

(Mark 1:1; Luke 24:46-47; John 3:16-18; Romans 1:16-17; Romans 1:18-25; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; 2:2; 15:1-4; 2 Corinthians 4:1-6; 9:13; Galatians 1:6-9; Ephesians 1:7-10; Colossians 1:19-20; 2 Timothy 1:8-14; 2 Peter 3:11-13 Jude 3-4; Revelation 21:1-22:21)

2. We enthusiastically embrace the sovereignty of God's grace in saving sinners.

We affirm that God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, not on the basis of foreseen faith but unconditionally, according to his sovereign good pleasure and will.

We believe that through the work of the Holy Spirit, God will draw the elect to faith in his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, graciously and effectually overcoming their stubborn resistance to the gospel so that they will most assuredly and willingly believe.

We also believe that these, the elect of God whom he gave to the Son, will persevere in belief and godly behavior and be kept secure in their salvation by grace through faith.

We believe that God's sovereignty in this salvation neither diminishes the responsibility of people to believe in Christ nor marginalizes the necessity and power of prayer and evangelism, but rather reinforces and establishes them as the ordained means by which God accomplishes his ordained ends.

(John 1:12-13; 6:37-44; 10:25-30; Acts 13:48; 16:30-31; Romans 3:1-4:25; 8:1-17,31-39; 9:1-23; 10:8-10; Ephesians 1:4-5; 2:8-10; Philippians 2:12-13; Titus 3:3-7; 1 John 1:7,9)

3. We recognize and rest upon the necessity of the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit for all of life and ministry.

The Holy Spirit is fully God, equal with the Father and Son, whose primary ministry is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ; he also convicts unbelievers of their need for Christ and imparts spiritual life through regeneration (the new birth).

The Spirit permanently indwells, graciously sanctifies, lovingly leads, and empowers all who are brought to faith in Christ so that they might live in obedience to the inerrant Scriptures.

The model for our reliance upon the Spirit and our experience of his indwelling and empowering presence is the Lord Jesus Christ himself who was filled with the Spirit and entirely dependent upon his power for the performance of miracles, the preaching of the kingdom of God, and all other dimensions of his earthly ministry.

The Holy Spirit who indwelt and empowered Christ in like manner indwells and empowers us through spiritual gifts he has bestowed for the work of ministry and the building up of the body of Christ. Although there are different understandings in our network of the nature and function of these gifts, we all recognize that they are divine provisions central to spiritual growth and effective ministry and are to be eagerly desired, faithfully developed, and lovingly exercised according to biblical guidelines.

(Matthew 3:11; 12:28; Luke 4:1, 14; 5:17; 10:21; John 1:12-13; 3:1-15, 34; 14:12; 15:26-27; 16:7-15; Acts 2:14-21; 4:29-30; 10:38; Romans 8:9; 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-13; 12:28-31; 14:1-33; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Galatians 3:1-5; Ephesians 1:13-14; 5:18)

4. We are deeply committed to the spiritual & moral equality of male & female and to men as responsible servant-leaders in both home and church.

Both men and women are together created in the divine image and are therefore equal before God as persons, possessing the same moral dignity and value, and have equal access to God through faith in Christ. Men and women are together the recipients of spiritual gifts designed to empower them for ministry in the local church and beyond. Therefore, women are to be encouraged, equipped, and empowered to utilize their gifting in ministry, in service to the body of Christ, and through teaching in ways that are consistent with the Word of God.

Both husbands and wives are responsible to God for spiritual nurture and vitality in the home, but God has given to the man primary responsibility to lead his wife and family in accordance with the servant-leadership and sacrificial love characterised by Jesus Christ. This principle of male headship should not be confused with, nor give any hint of, domineering control. Rather, it is to be the loving, tender and nurturing care of a godly man who is himself under the kind and gentle authority of Jesus Christ.

The Elders/Pastors of each local church have been granted authority under the headship of Jesus Christ to provide oversight and to teach/preach the Word of God in corporate assembly for the building up of the body. The office of Elder/Pastor is restricted to men.

(Genesis 1:26-27; 2:18; Acts 18:24-26; 1 Corinthians 11:2-16; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Timothy 2:11-15; 3:1-7; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Peter 3:1-7)

5. We embrace a missionary understanding of the local church and its role as the primary means by which God chooses to establish his kingdom on earth.

The church has a clear biblical mandate to look beyond its own community to the neighborhood, the nation, and the world as a whole; thus mission is not an optional program in the church but an essential element in the identity of the church.

We are called to make Christ known through the gospel and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to bring his lordship to bear on every dimension of life.

The primary way we fulfill this mission is through the planting of churches that plant churches and the training of their leaders. Our aim is that Jesus Christ would be more fully formed in each person through the ministry of those churches God enables us to plant around the world.

We also believe we are responsible neither to retreat from our culture nor to conform to it, but with humility, through the Spirit and the truth of the gospel, to engage it boldly as we seek its transformation and submission to the lordship of Christ.

(Isaiah 52:7; Matthew 10:5-25; 28:18-20; Luke 4:18-19; 24:46-47; Acts 28:31; Romans 10:14-15; 2 Corinthians 10:4-5; Galatians 2:10; Ephesians 3:10; 4:11-16; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; Hebrews 10:23-25; 1 Peter 2:4-5, 9-10)

Acts 29 Values

1. Church-Planting Churches

We will be a family of church-planting churches.

That is why Acts 29 exists. Our focus is not simply on our own congregations, but on the work of God through the gospel of Jesus Christ, making his name famous to the ends of the earth. In the DNA of all Acts 29 churches should be a deep and driving desire to see churches planted across the world, all of which are defined by theological clarity, cultural engagement and missional innovation.

We are a family of churches that are theologically aligned and philosophically diverse, and we pray that the Spirit would keep us all deeply submitted to the word of God and walking in a glad submission to the Spirit. Acts 29 is not a theological club where churches and church planters gather around theological alignment without the desire or resolve to plant other like-minded churches. At our core, we are a church-planting family. May the Spirit draw those who share this passion so we see myriads of people who are far from him, reconciled to him through Christ.

2. Holiness and Humility

We will be known for holiness and humility.

Our desire is that our family will be comprised of godly, sacrificial and mature men and women:

- Men and women who would gladly lay down any and all of their liberties if it would serve the cause of Christ in greater ways
- Men and women who don't seek conflict but also aren't afraid of it
- Men and women who treasure Christ and his gospel above all

3. A Diverse and Global Community

We will be a radically diverse and global community.

It is a joy and privilege to be involved with and learn from brothers and sisters from different cultural, ethnic and economic backgrounds. We also want to press into and learn from those who differ from us in practice, philosophy and culture; especially those from different parts of the world. Our desire is to find the Spirit of God working among us so much so that we see more of his glory in and through a bold ethnic harmony that reveals God's infinite worth and the power of the gospel in a visual and captivating way.

Ethnic harmony and global diversity are integral to what it means to be explicitly Christian. The Scriptures teach that there are two races—the race of the first Adam and the race of the Last Adam. It is only 'in Christ' that we are able to realize this identity. Our different cultures carry individual history, traditions and legacies, but the gospel transcends them and captures them for Christ, making us a new people, the family of God. We continue to value what is good and right in our cultures while gladly submitting to our new family as adopted sons and daughters – co-heirs with Christ Jesus.

4. Praying For Conversions Through Evangelism

We will pray for conversions through evangelism.

"I need to tell you about Jesus, when do you want to do that?" Words as simple as those can affect eternal change, bringing the spiritually dead to life in Christ. Witnessing the salvific work of the Holy Spirit creates in us an insatiable desire to see more and more of the same. This is why we are serious about evangelism and praying for conversions.

This can not simply be realized by preaching sermons that are evangelistic, but rather it is a holistic approach to evangelism. We desire churches filled with those who model personal evangelism by sharing the gospel as boldly in their neighborhoods as they do in their congregations. We desire churches filled with those who long and yearn for salvations and experience godly frustration when they are not happening. We desire churches filled with those who believe in the sufficiency of the Scriptures and in the power of the Spirit to break the hearts of the most hardened of people in their cities. We desire churches filled men and women who see their relationships with neighbors, co-workers and friends as opportunities to love supremely by praying for and sharing the best news in the universe with them. We desire churches filled with men and women who love the saving work of God so much that it would lead them to the ends of the earth, proclaiming and living out the gospel until all that will know, know.

May the Spirit protect and guide us, and may he draw many to Jesus, not only in our churches but also in and in all those churches where Christ is preached, loved and served.

Section 3 / Membership Covenant

REDEMPTION LEADERSHIP'S COVENANT PROMISE

With the help of the Holy Spirit, the church leadership at Redemption covenants the following:

1. *We commit ourselves to lovingly caring for you and seeking your growth in Christ (Heb. 13:17; 1 Thess. 5:12).*
2. *We commit to provide teaching and counsel from the Scriptures (Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:17-18) and that this teaching will span the whole counsel of God's Word (Acts 20: 27-28).*
3. *We commit to helping you in times of need as your needs are made known. (Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-35; James 2:14-17).*
4. *We commit to strive to meet the criteria assigned to elders in the Scriptures. We acknowledge that will be held accountable to the Word of God through the members and elders of Redemption (1 Tim. 3:1-13 & 5:17-22, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Peter 5:1-4).*
5. *We commit to pray for you regularly, particularly when you are sick (James 5:14).*
6. *We commit to exercise church discipline when necessary for your restoration, joy, and unity within the church (Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5; Gal.6:1).*
7. *We commit 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; 1 Peter 5:1-5).*
8. *We commit to set an example and join you in fulfilling the duties of a church member (1 Cor. 11; Philip. 3:17; 1 Tim. 4:12).*

Signature: _____

Date: _____

REDEMPTION MEMBER'S COVENANT PROMISE

With the guiding help of the Holy Spirit, I, the undersigned, covenant the following:

1. *I am a Christian who has been saved from my sins by the grace of Jesus Christ. I have been, or intend to be, baptized to give testimony of my identification with the body of Christ and obedience to the Scriptures.*
2. *I have read the STATEMENT OF FAITH section and can affirm my agreement with the church's beliefs.*
3. *I have read and understand the BIBLICAL CONVICTIONS section of Redemption (Church Discipline, Pastor/Elder Led Church Government, Divorce and Remarriage, and Open Handed Issues). I agree not to be divisive on these issues. I also understand the importance of submission to church leadership and will be diligent to preserve unity and peace (Hebrews 13:7; Ephesians 4: 1-3).*
4. *I will endeavor to maintain a close relationship with the Lord through regular personal Bible reading, prayer, fellowship and practice of the other biblical spiritual disciplines. I commit to using the spiritual gift(s) God has given me for the building up of the church, both at Redemption and universally (1 Peter. 4:10-11; Romans 12:1-8; 1 Cor. 12: 7-13).*
5. *My journey in Christ will be evident through my regular participation in the corporate worship services and consistent involvement in a biblical community (Psalms 119:97, 105: Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:23-25).*
6. *I will strive to properly manage the resources God has given me, including my time, body, gifts and talents, attitudes, finances and possessions (Eph. 5:15-18; Romans 12:1-2; Eph. 4:1-16; Gal. 5:22- 26; Proverbs 3:9-10). This includes regular giving to Redemption that is both sacrificial and cheerful (2 Corinthians 8 and 9).*
7. *I covenant to have friendly Christian relationships with brothers and sisters in Christ from other churches, but I will not hold membership to another church or consistently serve, regularly attend, or function in a leadership position in another church family (Heb. 13:17).*
8. *I covenant to follow the biblical procedures of church discipline and submit myself to discipline if the need should ever arise (Matt. 18:15-17; Gal. 6:1-5).*
9. *I covenant to submit to the authority of the Scriptures as the final arbiter on all issues (Psalm 119: 2 Tim. 3:16-17).*
10. *My responsibility will be to notify the Redemption leadership if at any time I can no longer commit to this covenant, or if I have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding Redemption.*

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Affirmed by: _____

Membership Policy for Leaders

Based upon our convictions regarding membership, we have the expectation that those who are in a leadership role at Redemption be covenant members of the church.

Membership allows us to operate from a common foundation, bringing unity and clarity through which we can grow and be effective. If our leaders are not unified in mission, doctrine, and values, we will inevitably face unnecessary conflict, confusion, and frustration as we do the work of the ministry together. But a common foundation allows for a diversity of gifts to flourish and for the church to function as a body with many unique members working in harmony.

Who is considered a leader?

Not all leaders have titles. There are many individuals that shape culture and influence lives at Redemption without formal recognition. What's more, everyone is called to exhibit positive leadership at some point and in some context, whether in the home, at work, or in the church.

As it relates to this policy however, we are strictly concerned with those who are formally recognized by the pastors/elders of Redemption as leaders over specific aspects of ministry. This includes, but is not limited to individuals who:

- Teach the Bible
- Lead Ministry Teams
- Lead Students
- Lead Groups (Gospel Communities)

Why is membership essential for leadership roles?

Leaders, above all, need to be committed to the mission, doctrine, and values of the church. The church's pastors and elders are tasked with the responsibility of shepherding the church body, overseeing the congregation, and protecting the church from error, false teaching, and division. Membership provides a means by which the pastors and elders can assess whether potential leaders are committed and on the same page.

Leaders need support. Requiring leaders to be members empowers them to do their ministry knowing that they are legitimately representing the church's leadership and have the full support and affirmation of the pastors and elders.

Leaders need accountability. Requiring leaders to be members strengthens the church's ability to pursue discipline should a leader begin to stray from the faith. This should not be taken as a threat. Rather, it should bring comfort to those who desire the church to be faithful.

APPENDIX A : HOW TO LEAVE A CHURCH WELL

You may be joining Redemption from another church in which you were either a member or heavily involved. In addition, the time may come when it's necessary for you to leave Redemption to join a community elsewhere. Because we value commitment and investment in the church, we believe strongly that the transition from one church to another is a significant event. However, in our experience, few people really do this well, which often leads to hurt feelings, misunderstandings, unmet expectations, and a lack of unity in the overall body of Christ that dishonors Jesus.

We have compiled the five steps below in order to help you walk through the transition process well for the sake of your own health and the health of the body.

1. Have a good reason for leaving.

Before you go, evaluate whether your reasons are good, legitimate, and God-honoring. The reasons that people leave churches are many. Some are good, some are bad, and many are hard to discern. Check your pride in the decision. Ask yourself whether you are running from conflict or reacting to unrealistic expectations. If your reasons are good, go. If not, stay. If you are unsure, it would be wise to seek good counsel from godly friends or church leaders who can help you think through the process.

2. Communicate your decision to leave with the appropriate leaders.

If you're an active part of the church, leaders will need to know you're leaving. If you are serving, communicate it to your ministry team leader. If you are in a Gospel Community, communicate it to the leader. If you are connected to an elder or pastor, communicate your decision to them. Personal communication is preferable to written communication, but make sure you communicate.

3. Tell these leaders the truth about why you're leaving.

If you have legitimate reasons to leave then you have nothing to hide or worry about. If the reasons for leaving will sting church leadership, deliver it in the spirit of Proverbs 27:6, "Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses." Scripture commands us to "speak the truth in love" (Eph 4:15). God may use your reasons for leaving to help the church or its leaders. "Exit Interviews" can be immensely helpful to leadership, who are accountable to receive truth with humility. Whatever you do, don't just leave without telling your leaders.

4. Appropriately transition or conclude your ministry commitments.

If you've been an active part of ministry, your role will need to be transitioned. Hopefully you've been training and developing somebody to take your place anyway. But if you haven't, give your leaders an appropriate time to find others to serve in your capacity. This period shouldn't drag on, but you also should not just drop the ball on the people you've committed to.

5. Leave graciously.

Ray Pritchard writes, “[Leaving] graciously means you refuse to speak evil of those who remain in the church. Look forward, not backward. Focus on your new church, not your old one. Think carefully before you speak about your former congregation. Don’t say anything that could be remotely construed as criticism. Even casual comments could stir up needless controversy. Let the Golden Rule guide all your comments public and private.”

Conclusion

If you’ve read this material and realize that you didn’t leave a church well in the past, it might be wise to circle back to seek forgiveness and reconciliation. If you have gossiped or stirred up division, you should make it right, apologizing not only to the leaders of that church but also to the people to whom you gossiped.

In the end, remember that Jesus loves both the church you’re leaving and the one you’re going to. His blood was shed for both. Both churches are part of his bride. Do his bride the honor of leaving well.