

NCF Church Body Life

Introduction:

Calling: The great calling of the church is to make visible the invisible-to display on earth the glory of God through Christ. The task of the church is “to make known the manifold wisdom of God.” Eph. 3:9-10

The calling of the church is to declare in word and demonstrate in attitude and deed the character of Jesus Christ who lives within His people. We are to declare the reality of a life-changing encounter with a living Christ and to demonstrate that change by an unselfish, love-filled life.

The Apostle Paul states it this way, “I beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling which you have been called.” Eph. 4:1-2

The primary calling of the church is to **exalt God, evangelize the lost and edify the saints.** 1 Pet. 2:9

It is important that as we meet together that we recognize we are called to understand one another. We are to forbear one another, to pray for one another, to forgive one another, to be kind, tenderhearted, not holding grudges, not being bitter, resentful, or hateful toward each other.

Goal: A Spirit of Unity! Not Uniformity.
(see list of “one anothers”)

BODY LIFE: GOAL IS MATURITY

Scripture: Acts 2:42-47
Acts 1:8, Rom. 1:16
Eph. 4:1-16
Rom. 8:29

Growth = Knowledge + Obedience + Time

How do I serve (or where)?

1. Within the NCF community and also the community in which you live.

A. Serving in the little things Luke 16:10-12
B. Serving in Relationships One anothers

Fellowship with one another
Love one another

1 John 1:7
John 13:34-35

Members of one another	<i>Rom. 12:5</i>
Devoted to one another	<i>Rom. 12:10</i>
Outdo one another in showing honor	<i>Rom. 12:10</i>
Rejoice with one another	<i>Rom. 12:15</i>
Weep with one another	<i>Rom. 12:15</i>
Have same mind toward one another	<i>Rom. 12:16</i>
Do not judge one another	<i>Rom. 15:7</i>
Accept one another	<i>Rom. 15:7</i>

Counsel one another	<i>Rom. 15:14</i>
Greet one another	<i>Rom. 16:16</i>
Wait for one another	<i>1 Cor. 11:33</i>
Care for one another	<i>1 Cor. 12:25</i>
Serve one another	<i>Gal. 5:13</i>
Bear one another's burdens	<i>Gal. 6:2</i>
Be kind to one another	<i>Eph. 4:32</i>
Forgive one another	<i>Eph. 4:32</i>
Submit to one another	<i>Eph. 5:21</i>
Bearing with one another	<i>Col. 3:13</i>



Encourage one another	<i>1 Thess. 5:11</i>
Build up one another	<i>1 Thess. 5:11</i>
Stir up one another	<i>Heb. 10:24</i>
Be hospitable to one another	<i>1 Pet. 4:9</i>
Minister gifts to one another	<i>1 Pet. 4:10</i>
Be clothed with humility toward one another	<i>1 Pet. 5:5</i>
Do not speak evil against one another	<i>James 4:11</i>
Do not grumble against one another	<i>James 5:9</i>
Confess your faults to one another	<i>James 5:16</i>
Pray for one another	<i>James 5:16</i>

SPIRITUAL GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES (individual and corporate)

Worship, Fellowship, Ministry, Training, Outreach

- *Sunday School
- *Corporate Worship: Preaching/Teaching God's Word
Presentation of the Gospel
Prayer/Share
Praise
- *Make Disciples
- *Church-wide Bible Studies
- *One on One Bible Studies
- *Small Group Discipleship
- *Individual or Family Counseling
- *Adult Retreats

- *Youth Retreats
- *Guest Speakers: Missionaries
 Special Interest Groups
 Individual Testimonies

SPIRITUAL EXPRESSION/INVOLVEMENT

Church Sacraments (ordinances)

1. Water Baptism
2. Communion

Food/Fun/Fellowship Goal: To build mutually reciprocal relationships.

1. Activities: Volleyball, softball, camping, campfires, pig pickin's, bowling, roller skating, white water rafting are few examples.
2. Covered Dish Meals

Service: **Responsibility or Voluntarism?**

10 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. 1 Pe 4:10-11

Another word we will search in vain to find in Scripture is “volunteer.” The word “volunteer” makes it sound like Christians have an option whether or not to serve. But the Lord speaks to believers in terms of responsibilities and obligations based on that which He has invested and empowered into them. The use of our gifts should be a joyful responsibility and a reasonable service. We are to serve with the strength God gives us for the good of others. We are to discern our gifts and use them fully. And we are to use them even in their early stage as directed by church leadership. If we wait until we ‘feel’ fully qualified, service may never transpire. The practice of your gifts and ‘trial runs’ often reveal your true purpose in serving the church family.

SPIRITUAL CORRECTION:

Goal: Loving Restoration

15 “If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. 16 “But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. 17 “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. Mt 18:15-17

6:1 Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Ga 6:1

Church Discipline is to be exercised in a patient, loving and caring manner. The word 'discipline' has the idea of putting oneself under the tutelage of another. When a Christian refuses to repent, he is asked to leave the loving and spiritual care of the church in hopes that he will see the great loss he has experienced and return a repentant person.

As outlined in Mt 18 we find several clear steps:

Go to the blatantly sinning brother in love and privacy, encouraging him to repent, perhaps several times.

If he refuses, take one or two witnesses with you to verify the sin and that biblical principles are being followed.

If he refuses, bring the matter to the church (always the church leadership first). All along the brother should be encouraged to repent.

If the leadership confirms a public repentance is required and the brother refuses, the church is involved and instructed to refuse to have fellowship with the brother until he repents.

when repentance occurs, the church must publicly, completely and immediately grant full forgiveness and restoration to the church family.

There should be no rush to judgment. The goal is always restoration. Other things to consider:

Confidentiality and earnest prayer at each step

The sin must be a clear violation of scripture, not a vague complaint.

Leadership determines the degree of discipline in proportion to the sin

The approaching brother must search his heart and go in humility

The church must be consistent and not show partiality

Be discreet as possible and avoid needless details

It must be practiced in reverence for God and not the fear of man

NEW COVENANT MEMBERSHIP

Purpose

Though you will search the Scriptures in vain for the word “membership,” God truly views each of his children as members of one another that make up the whole body of Christ.

*4 For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, **and individually members one of another.** Ro 12:4-5*

Membership is a convenient and popular term to describe our church relationships and commitments. We are called to identify with the “household of God” and the “confession” of the church.

*14 I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; 15 but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the **household of God**, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. 16 By **common confession**, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory. 1 Ti 3:14-16*

Scriptural Understanding of Covenant

1. The New Covenant

Heb. 8:6

A. The Promise of the New Covenant:

Jer. 31: 31-34 “Behold, days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Judah.”

1. I will be their God – forgiving their iniquity and remembering their sin no more.
2. They shall be my people – God wants not only to forgive sin; He wants a people for His own possession.

B. The Response to the New Covenant:

Our response to the new and living way – *Heb. 10:16-25*

1. The Lord:
Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith.
2. One Another:
 - A. Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds.
(Heb. 10:24)
 - B. Let us not forsake our own assembling together. *(Heb. 10:25)*
 - C. Let us encourage one another.

“love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength” and “our neighbor as ourselves”.

God’s Covenant Community

Community: Shared Life in Christ

Community is the very essence of the church, and the lifestyle of the Kingdom of God. NCF is community.

Acts 2:42 describes “koinonia” or Fellowship.

We believe that small groups, bible study or discipleship groups are a critical aspect of the community and lifestyle of New Covenant Fellowship.

- a. Enables God to work His principles into each of us in a personal way.
- b. Insures that personal care is taking place.
- c. Builds relationships with each other.
- d. Helps us apply the present teaching in practical ways.
- e. Enables individuals’ gifts and ministries to be identified and used.
- f. Equips and allows individuals to serve.
- g. Encourages praise, worship, prayer, outreach, spiritual growth, training, and development.

We must always keep in mind that the community of believers consists of Christians of all levels of maturity. Consequently, we are commanded to *“forbear our weaker brother”* and *“be patient with all men”*.

Commitment/Membership at NCF

A. Commitment is initiated by God.

1. The Holy Spirit places us in the body as He desires. *1 Cor. 12:18, 28*
2. It is our responsibility to recognize where the Holy Spirit is placing us.

We must: Submit this decision to the Lord; what is the witness of your heart?

Is God knitting you to the people at NCF?

Can you cooperate with and submit to the leaders here? (*Heb. 13:17*)

Do the Elders bear witness before the Lord that this is where you belong?

B. New Covenant Fellowship believes that every believer is called to sacrifice.

Heb. 12:15-16; John 15:12-17

BECOMING A MEMBER

Membership is open to all who are committed to Jesus Christ, who know and agree to embrace our values, priorities, vision and beliefs and who sense a calling by the Holy Spirit of God to identify as a part of this local expression of the Body of Christ.

Members bear the responsibility and privilege of serving not only the kingdom of God, but also this Fellowship of Believers.

1. Becoming a Committed Member:

- a. Commitment first to Jesus Christ as Savior.
- b. Complete the Membership/Orientation classes.
- c. Express a reasonable confidence that the Holy Spirit is leading you to join NCF.
- d. Participate in an induction on an assigned date.

2. Commitment of our Life Style

- a. Fellowship: we encourage personal and group bible studies.
- b. Service: Have a willingness to serve by sharing personal lives, time and talents in service for the common good. *Gal. 5:13-14, 6:6-10, Rom. 12:6-8*
- c. Regular attendance: We expect regular (not perfect) attendance at the major meetings, ie. Sunday morning worship services and special meetings and services. *Heb. 10:23-25*
- d. Stewardship: NCF members agree that God loves a cheerful giver and that the tithe (10% of their gross income) should be given cheerfully out of love and obedience to God in support of the ministries of the church. *Prov. 3:9; Mal. 3:10-11; 2 Cor. 9:6-15*

The Lord owns everything and we are His stewards. He expects us to invest in His kingdom in faith, to shrewdly manage what He places in our care and to be generous in supporting His cause in the world and in our local church family. We will be held accountable in the day of reckoning. God will bless those who handle their finances with wisdom to His glory.

3. Personal Responsibilities/ Goals:

- To guard your soul through personal study, devotion and obedience to God
- For men and/ or parents to lead their families and loved ones to Christ and into regular family worship. God deserves the worship of your family. *“But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord” Josh 24:15*
- To honor your marriage in such a way that it reflects the love of Christ for his bride, the church.
- To work heartily as unto the Lord in your home, job and all you do. *Col 3:22-24.*

4. General Covenant Encouragement

We believe that we should engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to help each other in sickness and trouble; to cultivate faith and hope; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation.

We must walk in Christian love and truth and glorify God by being the “salt and light” in this Fellowship and in the community in which we are placed. We must make every effort to be *“conformed into the image of God”* and develop the character and nature of our Lord Jesus Christ.