

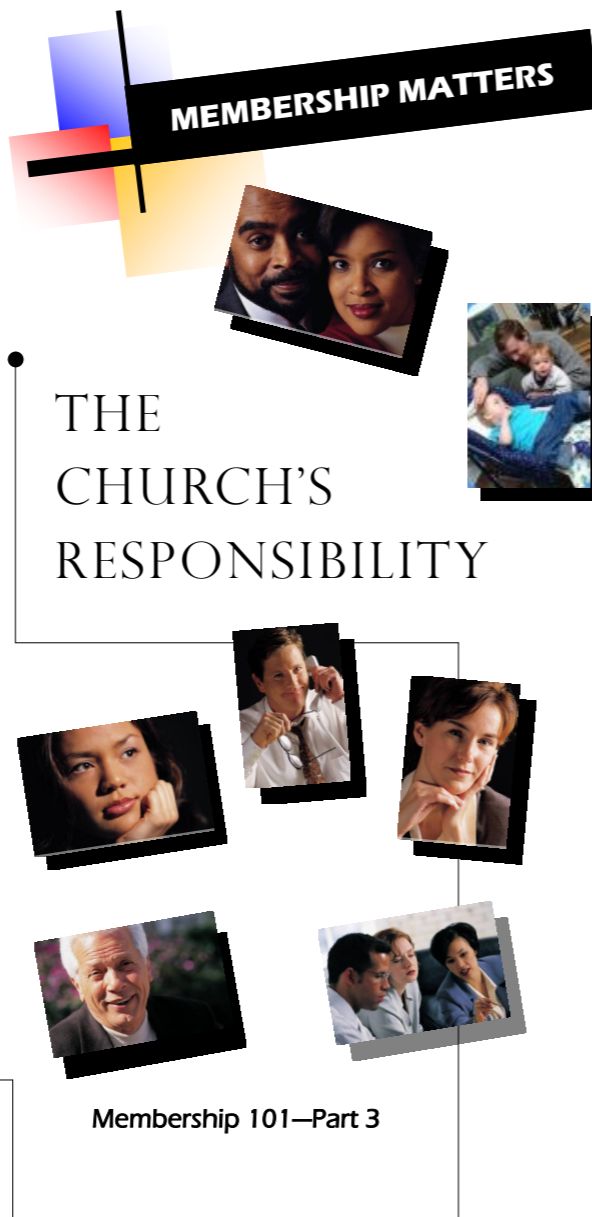
WHEN SHOULD YOU CALL FOR HELP?

- When you are sick, or someone in your family is ill. This is especially true when you or a loved one is in the hospital, or plans to go into the hospital.
- When you have a special prayer need of any sort.
- When you feel that you need spiritual counsel. You may need a "listening ear," someone you can talk to without fear of ridicule, or being scolded or shamed.
- When you are faced with major life-decisions. It is essential for us to be "covered in prayer" when making decisions that will affect our future, or the future of our family.

WHO SHOULD YOU CALL FOR HELP?

- Call your Care Leader. This contact is essential in order to help those closest to you in church to know of your need.
- Call your Ministry Department Leader.
- Call your Pastors. Our Pastoral Staff stands ready to listen, pray, and then act on your need.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS



THE MISSION

AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHURCH

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20).

Jesus Christ gave His Church—this body of spiritually transformed believers—a responsibility to carry out. The Church's mission is to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God and make disciples throughout the world, teaching them exactly what Jesus taught (Matthew 24:14; 28:19-20).

The work of the Church continues; it did not cease when the original disciples died. At first it was the job of the apostles, however, the Church's mission has passed to each generation of God's people. Jesus promised to be with His followers as they accomplished that work until He returns at the end of the age (verse 20).

Paul said Christ sent him into the world "to open [people's] eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me" (Acts 26:18).

Paul also said: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes . . ." (Romans 1:16). The gospel is God's message of how salvation will be brought to mankind—starting with His Church.

The Church plays many roles in the bringing of salvation to the world. It stands as the light of the world (Matthew 5:14). It is the household or family of God (Ephesians 2:19; 1 Peter 4:17, NIV). It is the mother who nurtures God's sons

and daughters (Galatians 4:26). It functions as the "pillar and ground of the truth" in a spiritually confused world (1 Timothy 3:15).

The Church: The Body of Christ

Jesus Christ told His followers to go into all the world, making disciples of all nations and teaching people God's way of life. This takes cooperation and organization. To effectively describe the organized functioning of the people of God, the apostles used the analogy of the human body.

"Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of [languages]" (1 Corinthians 12:27-28, NIV).

Directing the work of the Church as its living Head is Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:18). To emphasize how dependent the Church is on His leadership and inspiration, Jesus compares Himself to a vine: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). The success of the Church is dependent on the power and inspiration it receives from Jesus Christ.

Functions within the Body of Christ are established by Him "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-12, NRSV).

Paul tells us that "there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone" (1 Corinthians 12:4-6, NRSV).

Spiritual leadership in the Church

Among the gifts Christ gives His Church are gifts of spiritual leadership: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (Ephesians 4:11). They are entrusted with the responsibility of teaching, nourishing, protecting and building the Church. Godly character and exemplary spiritual qualifications are required of those entrusted with spiritual leadership (1 Timothy 3:1-10; Titus 1:5-9).

These are to lovingly shepherd God's flock (John 21:15-17) so that all members of this spiritual body may "come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13).

They are to lead the people of God to work together in unity—to love, respect and support each other. "But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honour to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other" (1 Corinthians 12:24-25, NIV).

Those who are led by Jesus Christ recognize a common Spirit in each other—the very Spirit of God, which makes them the people of God.

It should lead them to work together in unity to accomplish the mission Christ gave the Church as its ministry when He said: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the

Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you . . ." (Matthew 28:19-20).

THE CHURCH'S RESPONSIBILITY

The Church that Christ built is that special body of people who, led by God's Spirit, obey His commandments and are zealously committed to accomplishing the commission Jesus Christ gave them.

The Church will be there for You.

In this world there are many uncertainties. The process of growing and aging are good examples. "Things" happen.

When those "Things" happen to us, we need help. Help from family should always come first. But there is another source of help. It is the church.

The Bible tells us that the church is like the human body with all its various parts. The Word teaches us that when one part of the body suffers the whole body suffers.

When the days come when you will need someone to come and sit with you or a loved one; when it happens that sorrow, and even death comes to your home, the church will be there.

The Church will Care for You.

In order for us to understand this concept we must accept the fact that the "church" is not some inanimate object. It is not a building, or a place. It is people. The church is made up of people who truly care for one another. When in need—Care will come your way through someone—through the Church.

When Life's Most Critical Times Come, the Church will be there.

When new life comes, when life ebbs away, when life is interrupted, that is when the church will shine. These are times when the ministry of the church is most valuable to us.

The Church as a Nursery

When Jesus spoke of being "born again" He was most certainly referring to something "new." It would mean beginning over. It would mean that we will become as "babes" in Him.

The Church is the place where we can move through Christian infancy safely. Patience and love is in order when it comes to caring for the "new ones" in the faith.

The Church as a Provider

As mentioned above, when the most pressing of times come to us, the church will stand ready to provide those things needed most. It might involve a meal, or a series of meals being delivered to your home in time of sickness. It might even be a "hand up" financially when pressing times come to us. But these and other means of natural assistance are not the greatest provisions of the church.

God, through people, will intervene in supernatural ways to bring about a change in your circumstances. The support that comes from the church will be best exemplified through the prayers and empathetic expressions of caring by the people of the church.

The Church as a Facilitator

One of the primary roles of the church is to provide an atmosphere, and the opportunity for the different giftings and talents of the individual to develop. This church is a "practice field" for the discovery and development of the skills that a Christian will need when responding to the Master's command to "Go and make disciples."

The Church—A Safe Place

One of our greatest aspirations as a church is to make sure that you and your family find a safe haven in the midst of a stormy world. We consider it an honor from God for Him to send people to us that need shelter. Children who come to us will discover loving and caring people waiting for them in their classrooms, and in their activities. Young people will experience the determination of a staff of people who truly believe that there is a treasure inside of each young person that is just waiting to be discovered and released.

HELP US HELP YOU

Our church is a "Family Place." We do not profess to be all-in-all to the family, but we are striving to see that every age group within the family receives the attention needed to prosper in their Christian life.

Our church is "on the grow!" As our numbers grow so does the challenge for us to keep up with that growth. One of the ways that we can make sure that you and your family's needs are met is for you to become a part of "what's going on at church." Here are a few suggestions that will help us help you:

1) Be a "Regular Attender." The more you attend church the more we will get to know you, and you will get to know us better.

2) Enroll in one of our Christian Education or Sunday School Classes.