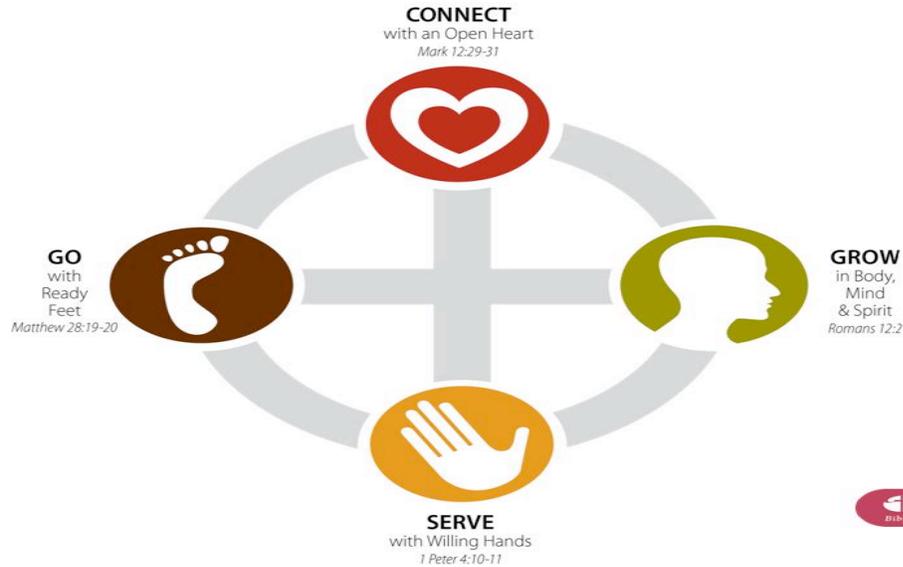


CONNECT WITH GOD'S FAMILY!



Connect Grow Serve Go is a simple strategy to enable God's people to fulfill their Kingdom roles as they seek to expand the "Kingdom of God!"

CONNECT urges you to worship, pray, fellowship, and relate to others in positive relationships at work, in the home, and in other settings. Spiritual fitness results when you connect with God, other believers, and those in your community.

GROW refers to learning and understanding more about God and His expectations of His people, which comes through Bible study. You grow by applying that knowledge to your everyday living.

SERVE describes the work you do inside your church. Your church is full of ministry and service opportunities. You serve by using your spiritual gifts, skills, and passions to glorify God. All of us must work together for the church to function as God intended.

GO moves you outside the church and into the community and the world. Evangelism and missions are ways to go into your community and the world in the name of Jesus Christ. It might be uncomfortable at first, but you will experience first-hand the difference Christ can make through you.

LEVEL 1 DISCOVERING CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Adopted and revised from Rick Warren by MorningStar Community Church!

WELCOME TO CONNECT, DISCOVERING CHURCH MEMBERSHIP!

We're glad you've chosen to find out more about MorningStar Community Church! This class is the basic introduction to our church family. Since we have members from many different church backgrounds, this class was designed to clearly explain who and what our church is all about.

THE BASICS FOR THIS CLASS

"...You are a member of God's very own family...and you belong in God's household with every other Christian." Eph. 2:19 (LB)

Key Truths:

1. The church is
2. God expects you to be of a church family.
3. A Christian without a church family is

THE GOAL OF THIS CLASS

•
**That I will commit myself to and to
the.....**

WHAT MAKES MORNINGSTAR COMMUNITY CHURCH A FAMILY?

Four things unite us:

- **Our Salvation** (What God has done for us)
- **Our Statement** (Why we exist as a church)
- **Our Strategy** (How we fulfill our purpose)
- **Our Structure** (When and where we fulfill our purpose)

Session One

Our Salvation

“For now we are all children of God through faith in Jesus Christ, and we who have been baptized into union with Christ are enveloped by Him. We are no longer Jews or Gentiles, or slaves or free men, or even merely men or women, but we are all the same — we are Christians; we are one in Jesus Christ.” Galatians 3:26-28 (LB)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

Most people live their entire lives without ever knowing “*WHY?*” They exist year after year with no idea of why they live or God’s purpose for their lives. The most basic question a person can ask is, “*What is the meaning of life?*”

Everyone wants to be happy. People try many ways:

- ...Some look for happiness by **acquiring possessions.**
- ...Some look for happiness by **experiencing pleasure.**
- ...Some look for happiness by **gaining prestige & power.**

But real happiness comes from understanding my _____.

I. WHY AM I HERE?

1. GOD MADE ME TO ME!

God says, “*I have loved you with an everlasting love!*” Jer. 31:3

*“Even before the world was made, God had already chosen us to be His through our union with Christ...**because of His love.** God had already decided that through Jesus Christ He would make us His children — this was God’s pleasure and purpose.” Eph. 1:4-5 (GN)*

2. WE WERE CREATED TOA PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AND TO MANAGE ALL OF THE REST OF GOD’S CREATION! THIS MAKES US SPECIAL!

“So God created human beings, making them in His image. He blessed them, and said,...live all over the earth and bring it under control. I am putting you in charge.” Gen. 1:27-28 (LB)

“God richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.” 1 Tim. 6:17

Jesus said, “*I have come in order that you might have life — life in all its fullness!*” John 10:10

3. WHEN WE KNOW AND LOVE GOD, AND LIVE IN HARMONY WITH HIS PURPOSE FOR OUR LIVES, IT PRODUCES TREMENDOUS BENEFITS IN OUR LIVES:

Clear Conscience
Rom. 8:1

Life & Peace
Rom. 8:6

Help with Weakness
Rom. 8:26

Purpose
Rom. 8:28

Confidence
Rom. 8:31

Security
Rom. 8:39

Power & Strength
Phil. 4:13

Fulfillment
Phil. 4:19

Freedom
John 8:32,36

II. WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Man has a natural desire to..... and to ignore God's principles for living.

"Look out for #1. Do your own thing."

"If it feels good, do it - regardless of what God says about it."

"It's my life and I'll do what I please!"

THE BIBLE CALLS THIS ATTITUDE:

"All of us, like sheep, have gone astray, and each of us has turned to his own way." Isaiah 53:6

Sin breaks our close relationship with God. It causes us to fear God and try to live our lives outside of His will.

"The trouble is that your sins have cut you off from God." Isaiah 59:2 (LB)

"All have sinned and fall short of God's glorious ideal." Romans 3:23

When our relationship to God is not right, it causes PROBLEMS in every area of our lives — marriage, career, relationships, finances, etc.

III. WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Jesus Christ said, *"I AM THE WAY, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father, except THROUGH ME!"* John 14:6

God Himself came to earth as a human being to bring us back to Himself. If any other way would have worked, Jesus Christ would not have had to come. The Way is a Person!

**JESUS HAS ALREADY TAKEN CARE
OF YOUR SIN PROBLEM!**

"The wages of sin is death, BUT the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 6:23
God did this for us because He loves us and wants us to know Him.

"God demonstrated His love for us in that while we were still separated from God by sin, Christ died for us." Rom. 5:8

God has already done His part to restore our relationship to Him. He took the initiative. Now He waits for each of us to individually accept what He has done for us.

IV. WHAT DOES GOD WANT ME TO DO?

1. THAT GOD HAS NOT BEEN FIRST PLACE IN YOUR LIFE AND ASK HIM TO FORGIVE YOUR SINS.

*“If we **confess** our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from every wrong.”*
1 John 1:9

2. THAT JESUS DIED TO PAY FOR YOUR SINS AND THAT HE ROSE AGAIN ON EASTER, AND IS ALIVE TODAY.

*“If you confess that Jesus is your Lord, and you **believe in your heart** that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”* Romans 10:9

“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name (Jesus) by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

3. GOD’S FREE GIFT OF SALVATION. DON’T TRY TO EARN IT.

*“For it is by grace you are saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the **gift of God** — not by works, so that no one can boast.”* Ephesians 2:8, 9

Our relationship to God is not restored by anything we do, but on the basis of what Jesus already did for us!

4. JESUS CHRIST TO COME INTO YOUR LIFE TO BE THE DIRECTOR (“LORD”) OF YOUR LIFE.

*“To all who **receive** Him, He gives the right to become children of God. All we need to do is to trust Him to save us. All those who **believe** this are reborn! — not a physical rebirth...but from the will of God!”* John 1:12-13

“Jesus says, ‘Listen! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in...’” Rev. 3:30

YOU CAN TAKE THESE STEPS BY PRAYING A SIMPLE PRAYER OF COMMITMENT TO GOD:

“Dear Jesus, thank you for making me and loving me, even when I’ve ignored you and gone my own way. I realize I need you in my life and I’m sorry for my sins. I ask you to forgive me. Thank you for dying on the cross for me. Please help me to understand it more. As much as I know how, I want to follow you from now on. Please come into my life and make me a new person inside. I accept your gift of salvation. Please help me to grow now as a Christian.”

“Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:13



I. WHY SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

1. TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE SET BY

“At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river.” Mark 1:9

2. BECAUSE CHRIST.....IT.

*“Jesus said, ‘Go then, to all people everywhere and **make them my disciples**, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and **then teach them** to obey everything I have commanded you.’”*
Matt. 28:19-20

3. IT DEMONSTRATES THAT I REALLY AM A.....

*“...many of the people who heard Him **believed** and were **baptized**.”* Acts 18:8

*“We know that we have come to know Him, if we **obey** His commands.”* 1 John 2:3

II. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BAPTISM?

1. IT ILLUSTRATES CHRIST’S AND RESURRECTION

“Christ died for our sins... He was buried...and He rose again.” 1 Cor. 15:3-4

*“For when you are **baptized**, you were **buried** with Christ, and in baptism you were also **raised** with Christ.”*
Col. 2:12

2. IT ILLUSTRATES MY AS A CHRISTIAN.

“When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun!” 2 Cor. 5:17

*“**By our baptism then**, we were **buried** with Him and shared His death, in order that, just as Christ was **raised from the dead...so also we may live a new life!**”* Rom. 6:4

Baptism doesn’t make you a believer — it shows that **you already believe**. Baptism does not “save” you, only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring — it’s the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart. *“For it is by grace you have been saved, **through faith**...it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.”* Ephesians 2:8-9

III. WHY BE BAPTIZED BY IMMERSION?

BECAUSE..... WAS BAPTIZED THAT WAY.

“As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water.” Matthew 3:16

EVERY BAPTISM IN THE WAS BY IMMERSION.

(Example) *“...then both Philip and the man went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water...”* Acts 8:38-39

THE WORD “BAPTIZE” MEANS TO..... WATER”.

The Greek word *baptizo* means “to immerse or dip under water”.

IT BEST SYMBOLIZES A BURIAL AND RESURRECTION!

The founders of denominations agree:

Martin Luther...“I would have those who are to be baptized to be entirely immersed, as the word imports and the mystery signifies.”

John Calvin...“The word ‘baptize’ signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church.”

John Wesley...“Buried with Him, alludes to baptizing by immersion according to the custom of the first church.”

IV. WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

EVERY PERSON WHO HAS IN CHRIST.

*“Those who believed and accepted His message were **baptized**...”* Acts 2:41

*“Simon himself **believed** and was **baptized**...”* Acts 8:13

*“But **when they believed** Philip as he preached the Good News...and the name of Jesus Christ, **they were baptized**, both men and women.”* Acts 8:12

At MorningStar, we wait until our children are old enough to **believe** and understand the true meaning of baptism before we baptize them. (Instead we dedicate our children to the Lord. Ask one of our pastors about this service).

CAN MY FAMILY BE BAPTIZED TOGETHER?

Yes! If each family member understands fully the meaning of baptism, and each one has personally placed his/her trust in Christ for salvation, we encourage families to be baptized at the same time.

However, it is important to remember that baptism is a *personal* statement of faith, not a family tradition. It is usually not wise to delay your baptism while waiting on other family members to accept Christ, particularly

children. This puts an undue pressure on them, and delays *your* obedience.

WHAT SHOULD I WEAR WHEN I AM BAPTIZED?

Women should wear shorts and a top that will not be seen through (modesty is important) rather than a swimsuit. Men may wear a t-shirt and shorts or a swimsuit. Bring a change of clothes, a towel, blow dryer, etc. and a plastic bag for your wet clothes.

WILL I HAVE TO SAY ANYTHING?

No. However, if you would like to say something, you can. At the beginning of the service, we will briefly explain the meaning of baptism. You will wait at the edge of the pool for your turn to be baptized. One of the pastors will introduce you, briefly lower you just under the water, and then you can leave the pool, dry off, and watch the others. Later you will be receiving a certificate of your baptism. We encourage you to invite all your relatives and friends to attend your baptism.

SPECIAL NEEDS?

All of our pastors will discuss any concerns or special circumstances you may have concerning baptism.

THE MEANING OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

Jesus never asked His disciples to remember His birth. But He did instruct them to remember His death and resurrection. He gave the church two visible symbols (called “*ordinances*”) as reminders of His death. These two ordinances are: Baptism and The Lord’s Supper. The Lord’s Supper is an object lesson that represents a great spiritual truth for believers.

I. WHAT IS THE LORD’S SUPPER? (1 COR. 11:23-26)

1. IT IS A..... .

“*The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, took bread...*” (vs. 23)

2. IT IS A..... .

“*...and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; eat it in remembrance of me.’*” (vs. 24)

3. IT IS A..... .

“*In the same way, He took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood; drink it to remember me.’*” (vs. 25)

4. IT IS A..... .

“*For whenever you eat the bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes back.*”

(vs. 26)

II. WHO SHOULD TAKE THE LORD’S SUPPER?

Only those who are already (Mark 14:22-26)

“For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment upon himself.” 2 Cor. 11:29

III. HOW DO I PREPARE MYSELF FOR THE LORD’S SUPPER?

“Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A person ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.” 1 Cor. 11:27-28 By...

1. Self-Examination

1 Cor. 11:27

2. Confessing My Sins

1 John 1:9

3. Recommitment

Rom. 12:1

4. Restoring Relationships

Matt. 5:23-24

IV. WHEN AND HOW OFTEN SHOULD WE OBSERVE THE LORD’S SUPPER?

Jesus never said when or how often believers should observe The Lord’s Supper.

Session Two

The MorningStar Statements!

WHY WE EXIST AS A COMMUNITY OF FAITH!

“Let there be real harmony among you so there won’t be any split in the church. I plead with you to be of one mind, united in thought and purpose.” 1 Corinthians 1:10 (LB)

The purpose of our church is summarized in a single sentence based on two key scriptures: **OUR PURPOSE:**

“**AS A KINGDOM FIRST CHURCH WE BELIEVE A GREAT COMMITMENT TO THE GREAT**

.....**AND THE GREAT**.....

WILL GROW A GREAT CHURCH!”

The Great Commandment: “Jesus said, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart...soul...and mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and Prophets hang on these two commandments.” Matt. 22:36-40

The Great Commission: “Jesus said, ‘Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and **teaching them** to obey everything I have commanded you.’ Matt. 28:19-20

- To “Love God with all your heart” is **“WORSHIP”**.
- To “Love your neighbor as yourself” is **“MINISTRY”**.
- To “Go...make disciples” is **“EVANGELISM”**.
- To “Baptize...” is to **“INCORPORATE INTO FELLOWSHIP”**.
- To “Teach them...all things” is **“DISCIPLESHIP”**.

MORNINGSTAR COMMUNITY CHURCH EXISTS:

1. To..... **God’s Presence (Worship)**
2. To..... **God’s Love (Ministry)**
3. To..... **God’s Word (Evangelism)**
4. To..... **God’s Family (Fellowship)**
5. To..... **God’s People (Discipleship)**

I. WE EXIST TO CELEBRATE GOD’S PRESENCE

WORSHIP:

“...The Father seeks worshipers...and His worshippers must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” Jn 4:23-24

Expressions of Worship

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| • Singing (Eph. 5:19) | “Celebration” | “Inspiration” | “Preparatio |
| • Commitment (Romans 12:1-2) | Psalm 122:1 | Isaiah 40:31 | Eph. 4:11-12 |
| • Praying (Ps. 95:6) | | | |
| • Hearing the Word (John 17:17) | | | |
| • Giving (1 Cor. 16:1-2) | | | |
| • Baptism (Romans 6:3-4) | | | |
| • Meditating (Hab. 2:20) | | | |
| • Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 11-23-26) | | | |

MorningStar’s Worship Style

II. WE EXIST TO DEMONSTRATE GOD’S LOVE

MINISTRY:

“By this shall all men know that you are my disciples — **that you have love for one another.**” John 13:35

1 John 3:16-17, Matt. 25:34-40, Heb. 13:16, Rom. 12:13

The heartbeat of MorningStar is our
Every member needs to be a part of one.

“Now God gives us many kinds of special abilities.. and there are different kinds of service to God (ministry)... **All of you together form the one Body of Christ and each of you is a separate and necessary part of it.**” 1 Cor. 12:4-5, 27 (LB)

At MorningStar...

- Every member is a: _____
- Every task is: _____
- Every member is a “10” in: _____

III. WE EXIST TO COMMUNICATE GOD’S WORD

EVANGELISM:

“His intent was that through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known...” Eph. 3:10

“Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. But who can ask Him to save them unless they believe in Him? And how can they believe in Him if they have never heard about Him? And how can they hear about Him unless someone tells him?” Rom. 10:13-14 (LB)

We believe our church must grow and..... at the same time.

“And the Good News of the Kingdom will be preached to the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and **THEN** the end will come.” Matt. 24:14

Unbiblical Excuses For Not Growing:

- “God isn’t interested in numbers.”
- “Our church wants quality not quantity.”
- “Large churches are impersonal”

IV. WE EXIST TO INCORPORATE BELIEVERS INTO GOD’S FAMILY

FELLOWSHIP:

God never meant for you to go through life all by yourself, all-alone. **He wants you to have a for support.**

“Jesus died for us so that we can live together with Him. So encourage each other and give each other

strength.” 1 Thess. 5:10-11 (NCV)

The Christian life is not a solo act. We should draw strength from each other. This is called **fellowship**.

The church serves as our extended family. *“You should be like one big happy family full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts.”* 1 Peter 3:8 (LB)

You need to understand that the church is not the place you go to. **It’s the family you belong to.**

V. WE EXIST TO EDUCATE GOD’S PEOPLE

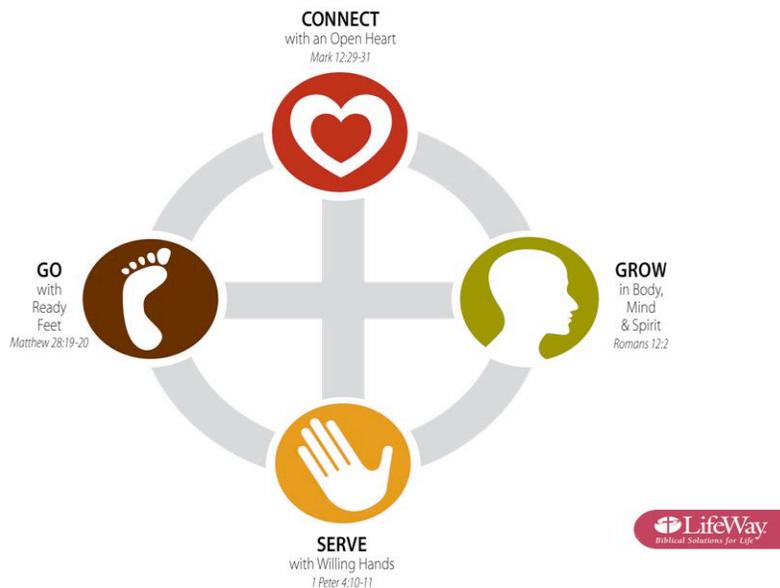
DISCIPLESHIP:

“Let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ **and go on to maturity...**” Heb. 6:1

“Grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter 3:18

“(God has given)...some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of ministry, so that the Body of Christ may be built up until we all...become mature...like Christ.” Eph. 4:11-13

“GROW” Discovering Spiritual Maturity #201



OUR STATEMENT OF FAITH

What We Believe

In essential beliefs — we have unity.

“There is one Body and one Spirit...there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of us

all...” Eph. 4:4-6

- **In non-essential beliefs — we have liberty.**

“Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters... Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls... So then each of us will give an account of himself to God... So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God.” Romans 14:1,4,12,22

- **In all our beliefs — we show charity.**

*“...If I hold in my mind not only all human knowledge but also the very secrets of God, and if I have the faith that can move mountains — but have **no love**, I amount to nothing at all.”* 1 Cor. 13:2 (Ph)

THE ESSENTIALS WE BELIEVE:

1. ABOUT GOD

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three personalities: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God.

Genesis 1:1,26,27, 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19;
1 Peter 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14

2. ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven’s glory and will return again someday to earth to reign as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

Matthew 1:22, 23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5; 14:10-30;
Hebrews 4:14,15; 1 Corinthians 15:3,4; Romans 1:3,4;
Acts 1:9-11; 1 Timothy 6:14,15; Titus 2:13

3. ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer a spiritual gift when they are saved. As Christians, we seek to live under His control daily.

2 Corinthians 3:17; John 16:7-13, 14:16,17; Acts 1:8;
1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16; Ephesians 1:13; Galatians 5:25;
Ephesians 5:18

4. ABOUT THE BIBLE

The Bible is God’s Word to us. It was written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because it is inspired by God, it is the truth without any mixture of error.

2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20,21; 2 Timothy 1:13;
Psalm 119:105,160, 12:6; Proverbs 30:5

5. ABOUT HUMAN BEINGS

People are made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. People are the supreme object of God's creation. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called "sin". This attitude separates people from God and causes many problems in life.

Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6a; Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:1, 2

6. ABOUT SALVATION

Salvation is God's free gift to us but we must accept it. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith.

Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8,9; John 14:6, 1:12; Titus 3:5;
Galatians 3:26; Romans 5:1

7. ABOUT ETERNAL SECURITY

Because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the true believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. If you have been genuinely saved, you cannot "lose" it. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and keeping power of God that gives us this security.

John 10:29; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25, 10:10,14; 1 Peter 1:3-5

8. ABOUT ETERNITY

People were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence.

John 3:16; John 14:17; Romans 6:23; Romans 8:17-18;
Revelation 20:15; 1 Cor. 2:7-9

OUR LIFESTYLE STATEMENT *What We Practice*

Beliefs are not worth much unless they are translated into actions. Based on what the Bible teaches, we feel very strongly about the following seven practices:

BIBLE AS OUR SOLE AUTHORITY

“The whole Bible was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and make us realize what is wrong in our lives; it straightens us out and helps us to do what is right.” 2 Tim. 3:15

Since God’s Word is the only completely reliable and truthful authority, we accept the Bible as our manual for living. Our first question when faced with a decision is “What does the Bible say?” We practice daily Bible reading, Bible study, and Bible memorization. The Bible is the basis for all we believe.

AUTONOMY OF EACH LOCAL CHURCH

“Christ is the head of His Body, the church. He is the source of the Body’s life...” Col. 1:18 (GN)

Christ is the recognized head of our church, not any person, group, or religious organization. While recognizing the value of associating and cooperating with other groups of Christians, we believe every local church should be self-governing and independent from any denominational control.

PRIESTHOOD OF EVERY BELIEVER

“Christ loves us, and by His death He has freed us from our sins and made us a kingdom of priests to serve God...” Rev. 1:6 (GN) “You are...the King’s priests...God’s own people, chosen to proclaim the wonderful acts of God.” 1 Pet. 2:9 (GN)

The Bible teaches that every Christian is called to “full time” Christian service, regardless of his or her vocation. We practice the truth that every believer is a minister by encouraging every member to find a place of service and ministry. Every believer has direct access to God through prayer Bible reading.

TITHING

“A tithe of everything you produce belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord.” Lev. 26:30

At MorningStar we practice tithing for the support of Christ’s body, the church, as God commands. We recognize that giving 10% of our income is the Biblical standard of giving.

IMMERSION

“For when you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ...” Col. 2:12 (GN)

We practice baptism by immersion under water — the way Jesus was baptized, and the way the Bible commands.

SPIRIT-LED LIVING

(Jesus said), “I am the Vine, you are the branches. If you abide in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; but apart from me you can do nothing.” John 15:5

We believe the only way possible to live the Christian life is by God’s power within us. So we seek to practice a daily dependence on God’s Spirit to enable us to do what is right. (Phil. 2:13, Eph. 5:18)

TELLING OTHERS ABOUT CHRIST

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” 1 Peter 3:15

It is the responsibility of every Christian to share the Good News with those with whom God brings us into contact. We practice personal sharing about Christ and inviting friends to church.

Session Three

THE MORNINGSTAR STRATEGY

(Paul) "I have been all things to all sorts of people that by every possible means I might win some to God. I do all of this for the sake of the Good News." 1 Corinthians 9:22-23
(Ph)



5 CIRCLES OF COMMITMENT

CORE: LAY MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH WHO ARE INVOLVED IN MINISTRY AND HAVE COMPLETED "SERVE"

COMMITTED: MEMBERS WHO ARE GROWING IN THEIR FAITH AND HAVE COMPLETED "GROW"

CONGREGATION: MEMBERS WHO ARE COMMITTED TO MEMBERSHIP AND HAVE COMPLETED "CONNECT"

CROWD: PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS YET BUT ATTEND ON A REGULAR BASIS!

COMMUNITY: EVERYONE WITHIN DRIVING DISTANCE OF OUR CHURCH THAT WE WANT TO REACH!

Morning Star's objective is to keep moving people toward the center by encouraging personal spiritual commitments. Specifically, we call people to four basic commitments:

Specifically, we call people to four basic



THE FOUR MORNINGSTAR COVENANTS:

1. THE MEMBERSHIP COVENANT.....CONNECT CLASS!

is a commitment to _____ and _____.

“You are members of God’s very own family...and you belong in God’s household with every other Christian.” Eph. 2:19 (LB)

“We are all parts of Christ’s Body, and it takes every one of us to make it complete, for we each have different work to do. So we belong to each other and need all the others.” Rom. 12:4-5 (LB)

2. THE MATURITY COVENANT.....GROW CLASS!

is a commitment to the _____ necessary for spiritual growth.

“Continue to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter 3:18

*“Take **the time and trouble** to keep yourself spiritually fit.” 1 Tim. 4:7 (Ph)*

3. THE MINISTRY COVENANT.....SERVE CLASS!

is a commitment to discovering and using my God-given gifts and abilities in _____ God and others.

“God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other...” 1 Pet. 4:10 (LB)

“There are different kinds of service to God...together you form the Body of Christ and each one of you is a necessary part of it.” 1 Cor. 12:5,27 (LB)

4. THE MISSIONS COVENANT.....GO CLASS!

is a commitment to _____ the Good News with others.

“...you will be my witnesses for me...to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8 (GN)

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do it with gentleness and respect...” 1 Peter 3:15

WHY DO WE HAVE THESE COVENANTS? WE BECOME WHAT WE ARE _____.

Session Four

THE MORNINGSTAR STRUCTURE!

1 Cor. 14:33,40

“For God is not a God of disorder, but of peace...Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.”

HOW OUR CHURCH IS STRUCTURED

The structure of the church should *not* be determined by culture, business practices, or even denominational traditions.

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH DETERMINES ITS STRUCTURE.

I. THE CHURCH IS A.....

“They continued steadily learning the teaching of the apostles, and joined in the fellowship...” Acts 2:42
(Ph)

A top priority in a fellowship is _____ and _____ .

“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” Eph. 4:3

“So let us concentrate on the things that make for harmony and the growth of our fellowship together.”
Rom. 14:19 (Ph)

ANY attitude that causes disunity is sin.

Col. 3:15, 1 Cor. 1:10, 2 Tim. 2:14, Pr. 17:14, 2 Cor. 13:11,
Phil. 1:27, 2:1-3, Col. 2:2, Phil. 4:2, 1 Peter 3:8, 1 Cor. 14:33,
John 13:34-35, 2 Tim. 2:23, Rom. 15:5-6, Rom. 12:16-18,
Col. 3:13-14, Ps. 133:1

IMPLICATION: A GOOD STRUCTURE PROMOTES UNITY AND DOWNPLAYS _____ .

1 Corinthians 11:17 -18 (NIV) *“¹⁷ I(Often) your meetings do more harm than good.*

¹⁸In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you . . .”

Congregational voting tends to _____! At MorningStar, the members vote on four things: *Annual Church Budget* *Purchase or Sale of Land and/or Buildings* *Calling the Lead (senior) Pastor* *Changes in Church Constitution*

II. THE CHURCH IS A.....

“You should be like one big happy family, full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds.” 1 Peter 3:8 (LB)

Gal. 6:10, Heb. 2:10-12, 1 Peter 4:17

SO WE OPERATE ON THE BASIS OF.....MORE THAN.....

*“Don’t reprimand a senior member of the church, appeal to him as a **father**. Treat the young men as **brothers**, and the older women as **mothers**. Treat the younger women as **sisters**...” 1 Tim. 5:1-2 (Ph)*

III. THE CHURCH IS A.....

1 Cor. 12:27, Eph. 5:23, Eph. 1:22-23, Col. 1:18, 2:19

We are a body — not a business!
We are an organism — not an organization!

THEREFORE, WE FUNCTION ON THE BASIS OF _____

*“Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We each have **different gifts** according to the grace given us.” Rom. 12:4-6*

In an organization, “maintenance” becomes the focus. But in an organism, “ministry” is the focus.

*“God gave...some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God’s people for **works of ministry**, so that the body of Christ may be built up...” Eph. 4:11-12*

OUR STRUCTURE

- **THE PEOPLE ARE THE “.....”.**
- **THE PASTORS ARE THE “.....”.**

IV. THE CHURCH IS A.....(Jesus’ favorite description of the church)

John 10:1-30, Matt. 26:31, Matt. 25:33

THEREFORE, IT IS CARED FOR AND LED BY

*“Jesus asked Simon Peter, ‘Do you really love me?’ ‘Yes Lord,’ said Peter. ‘Then **take care** of my sheep.’”*

John 21:16-17

Three different terms are used in the New Testament to refer to the *same* church leaders:

- “*POIMEN*”
- *PRESBUTEROS*”
- *EPISCOPOS*”

“*To the elders I say...Be shepherds of God’s flock, serving as overseers...*” 1 Pet. 5:1-2

“*Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. When they arrived he said to them... Guard yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be pastors of the church of God...*” Acts 20:17-18, 28

See also Titus 1:5-7, 1 Tim. 5:17

OUR AFFILIATION

We are associated with the Southern Baptist Convention, We *are* an independent church which coporates with others to reach our world.! Every SBC church is completely independent. There is no denominational control or hierarchy, as there are in most other denominations. Each church is self-governed and determines its own affairs.

For example:

- *Every SBC church chooses its own pastor*
- *Every SBC church owns its own buildings and assets*
- *Every SBC church determines its own programs*

At MorningStar we support three Baptist organizations.

- ***The Savannah Baptist Association (sbassociation.org)***

Affiliated with [the Southern Baptist Convention](#) and [the Georgia Baptist Convention](#), the Savannah Baptist Association is located in majestic Savannah, Georgia. We are comprised of 70 churches and missions throughout the Coastal Empire of Georgia. Our Churches are located in Chatham County, Effingham County, and Bryan County. Our goal is to work together to impact people for Jesus Christ and encourage them to enter into a personal, vibrant relationship with the Lord.

The Staff of the Savannah Baptist Association works with these 70 Churches and Missions in a variety of ways to encourage them in their work of missions and evangelism.

The Savannah Baptist Association 704 Wheaton St. Savannah, GA 31401

Phone: 912-232-1033

Fax: 912-236-5554

Office Hours Monday-Friday 9 AM - 5 PM

Email: savassociation@comcast.net

- *The Georgia Baptist Convention (gabaptist.org)*

Georgia churches that fellowship together with the goal of evangelizing our state

- *The Southern Baptist Convention (sbc.net)*

Since its organization in 1845 in Augusta, Georgia, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has grown to over 16 million members who worship in more than 42,000 churches in the United States. Southern Baptists sponsor about 5,000 home missionaries serving the United States, Canada, Guam and the Caribbean, as well as sponsoring more than 5,000 foreign missionaries in 153 nations of the world.

The term "Southern Baptist Convention" refers to both the denomination and its annual meeting. Working through 1,200 local associations and 41 state conventions and fellowships, Southern Baptists share a common bond of basic Biblical beliefs and a commitment to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the entire world.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME AS A MEMBER?

At MorningStar Community Church we never ask our members to do more than the Bible clearly teaches. We only expect our members to do what the Bible expects every Christian to do. These responsibilities are spelled out in the Membership Covenant.

THE MORNINGSTAR COMMUNITY CHURCH MEMBERSHIP COVENANT (Your Copy)

“Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and been baptized (or agree to be baptized), and being in agreement with MorningStar’s statements, strategy and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with/ reaffirm my commitment to this Community Of Faith. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

I. I WILL PROTECT THE UNITY OF MY CHURCH

- ...By acting in love toward other members
- ...By refusing to gossip
- ...By following the leaders

“So let us concentrate on the things which make for harmony, and on the growth of our fellowship together.”
Rom. 15:19 (Ph)

“Live in complete harmony with each other — each with the attitude of Christ toward each other.” Rom 15:5 (LB)

“Have a sincere love for your fellow believers, love one another earnestly with all your hearts.” 1 Peter 1:22 (GN)

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of our mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs...” Eph. 4:29

“Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you.” Heb. 13:17

II. I WILL SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MY CHURCH

- ...By praying for its growth**
- ...By inviting the unchurched to attend**
- ...By warmly welcoming those who visit**

“To the church...we always thank God for you and pray for you constantly.” 1 Thess. 1:2

“Go out into the country...and urge anyone you find to come in, so that My House will be full.” Luke 14:23 (LB)

“So, warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified.” Rom. 15:7 (LB)

III. I WILL SERVE THE MINISTRY OF MY CHURCH

- ...By discovering my gifts and talents**
- ...By being equipped to serve by my pastors**
- ...By developing a servant’s heart**

“Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you...” 1 Peter 4:10 (Ph)

“God gave...some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God’s people for works of ministry, so that the body of Christ may be built up...” Eph. 4:11-12

“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ...who took on the very nature of a servant...” Phil 2:3-4, 7

IV. I WILL SUPPORT THE TESTIMONY OF MY CHURCH

- ...By attending faithfully**
- ...By living a godly life**
- ...By giving regularly**

“Let us not give up the habit of meeting together...but let us encourage one another.” Heb. 10:25

“But whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ.” Phil. 1:27 (Ph)

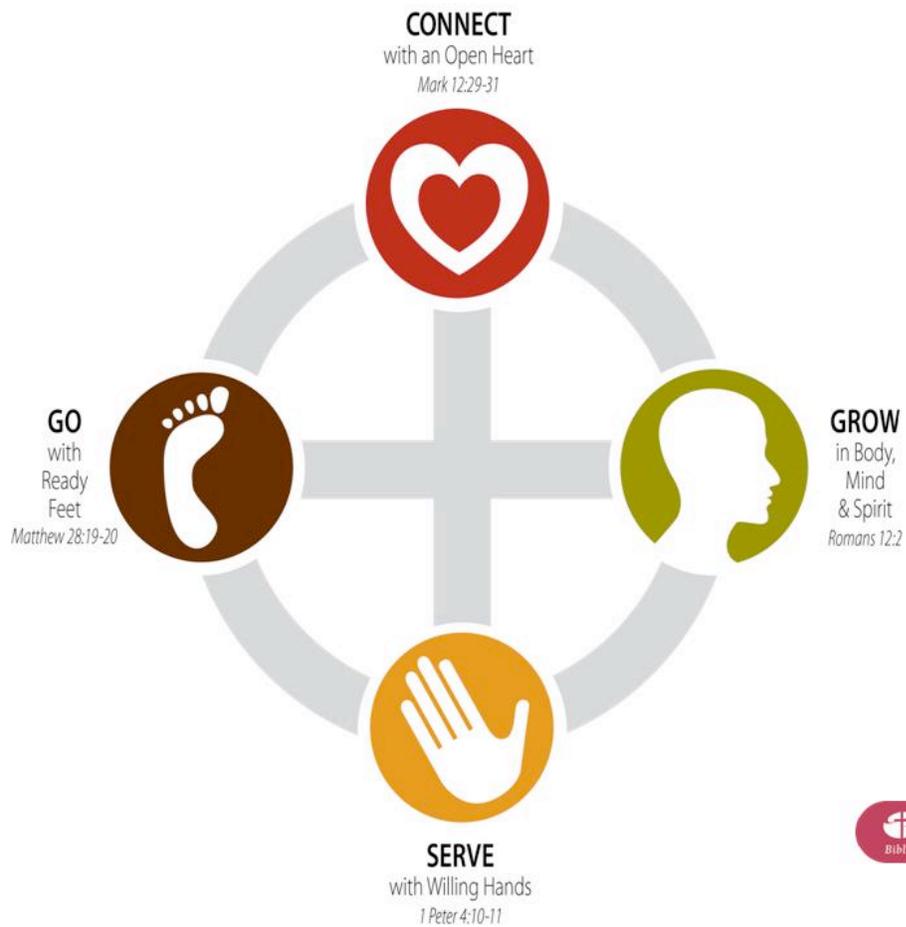
“Each one of you, on the first day of each week, should set aside a specific sum of money in proportion to what you have earned and use it for the offering.” 1 Cor. 16:2

“A tenth of all you produce is the Lord’s, and it is holy.” Lev. 27:30

WHAT NOW?

GO ON TO SECOND LEVEL!

AN OVERVIEW OF YOUR KINGDOM JOURNEY!



To **CONNECT** urges you to worship, pray, fellowship, and relate to others in positive relationships at work, in the home, and in other settings. Spiritual fitness results when you connect with God, other believers, and those in your community. To lead people to Christ and **membership** at MorningStar Community Church.

200 Level Seminars:

GROW refers to learning and understanding more about God and His expectations of His people, which comes through Bible study. You grow by applying that knowledge to your everyday living. To grow people to spiritual **maturity**.

300 Level Seminars:

SERVE describes the work you do inside your church. Your church is full of ministry and service opportunities. You serve by using your spiritual gifts, skills, and passions to glorify God. All of us must work together for the church to function as God intended. To equip people with the skills they need for **ministry**.

400 Level Seminars:

GO moves you outside the church and into the community and the world. Evangelism and missions are ways to go into your community and the world in the name of Jesus Christ. It might be uncomfortable at first, but you will experience first-hand the difference Christ can make through you. To enlist people to the worldwide **mission** of Sharing Christ.

WE'D LIKE TO GET TO KNOW YOU!
PLEASE FILL OUT THE NEXT PAGE AND TURN IT IN TO
YOUR INSTRUCTOR!

Fill Out (Please Print)

NameDate.....
Address.....
Home Phone.....Cell Phone.....Bus. Phone.....
Sex..... (M/F) Date of Birth /..... /.....

- Single
 Married
 Widowed
 Divorced

My occupation is.....

Business.....

I have the following expertise:.....

.....

I have not been active in a church for..... 1 yr..... 5 yrs.....10 yrs.....

I have been active in the following churches in the past:

<u>Yrs Involved</u>	<u>Name of Church</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Position of Service</u>

How would you describe your relationship to Christ?

- Seeker/curious
 Agnostic
 I'm not sure what I believe
 New Christian
 Committed Christian

 I've been a Christian for a while, but I need to grow closer

INFORMATION OF FAMILY MEMBERS

Spouse's Name.....Date of Birth.....

Does your spouse attend MorningStar?.....

Children:

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Birth Date</u>	<u>Lives w/You?</u>	<u>Attends MorningStar?</u>

Please give us feedback on this class: Circle one. 1-poor 5-ok 10-great

Communication of speaker 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Content of material..... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments.....

Would you recommend this class to others? Yes _____ No _____

THE MORNINGSTAR COMMUNITY CHURCH MEMBERSHIP COVENANT
[Sign Below for Church's Records]

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doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

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- ...By developing a servant's heart**

IV. I WILL SUPPORT THE TESTIMONY OF MY CHURCH

- ...By attending faithfully**
- ...By living a godly life**
- ...By giving regularly**

Name _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Phone _____

I am currently a member _____ I would like to join the church _____