

# Membership at Bishop Creek Community Church



## ***WELCOME!***

If you are new to us because you have recently become part of Bishop Creek Community Church, or if you are a long-time friend, welcome! This document is intended to share with you the idea of membership at Bishop Creek Community Church and to help you understand how God is at work among and through us. You will read here of many of the features of this work, with the aim of enthusing you for being a part of it, so that together we may be involved as members in bringing the gospel of Jesus to desperately needy men and women, boys and girls, in Bishop and around the world. Our desire is to partner together with Him in reaching His world with the great news of the Lord Jesus Christ!

## ***MEMBERSHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT***

We have deliberately chosen the term membership because the New Testament talks about Christians being not only members of the body of Christ, but also engaged members in the ministry of the gospel. Paul says, *"But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the Body, just as He desired"* (1 Corinthians 12:18), and, *"The whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love"* (Ephesians 4:16).

The Body of Christ is to be one, and its efforts are of a corporate nature; "For the body is not one member, but many" (1 Corinthians 12:14). Members are divinely placed with the expectation that they are part of the Gospel endeavor. The term member implies an active involvement in this ministry. Membership does not consist of a collection of names on a roll who do nothing together, rather it is a group of followers of Christ who labor together in the common cause of building the church and assisting in the proclamation of the gospel. Membership means sharing in the world mission (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:18-20), and using the varied gifts God had given to each of them for this purpose.

## ***MEMBERSHIP AT BISHOP CREEK COMMUNITY CHURCH***

In the late summer of 1999, some folks from Bishop had a desire to see a church start in their town that was committed to the proclamation of the gospel. After much prayer and the support of other members in ministry, Bishop Creek Community Church was formed. Built on a commitment to the final and divine authority of the Bible and to the teaching and preaching of the whole Bible, it is the vision of Bishop Creek Community Church:

"To glorify God by proclaiming our Savior the Lord Jesus Christ,  
in prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit,  
so that everyone will hear His call to repent, trust and serve Christ in love,  
and be established in the fellowship of His disciples while we await His return"

This is a very clear statement of our ongoing task of living as Christians – a task that unites the members of Bishop Creek Community Church, as it did the believers in the first century, in the common cause of the proclamation of the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Generally speaking, membership at Bishop Creek Community Church provides for two things:

First, as we are affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church of America, Bishop Creek Community Church is congregationally governed. Although many decisions will be made by the elder board, there are many important decisions that will be made by vote of the congregation – including the calling of pastors, the approval of elders, the approval of members, the approval of annual budgets, constitutional amendments, and matters of real estate. Having such decisions made by the members of Bishop Creek Community Church works to ensure that the individuals who will be responsible for making such decisions are committed to both the Lord Jesus Christ and to His work through Bishop Creek Community Church. We are a Body.

Second, becoming a member ties us to a body of believers, and to a cause that is bigger than us all. We join in membership with men and women across the world who love Christ, and are committed to His work, and accountable to His Word and His people. We join a membership that is not merely a collection of names, but rather a group of followers of Christ who labor together in the common cause of preaching the gospel by proclaiming the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ!

So, we ask those who wish to be committed to the work of the gospel at Bishop Creek Community Church to consider being members with those already involved.

### *GROWING AS A MEMBER*

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

Critical to growing as a member in the gospel is the continued growth in your own life and walk with God, and an identification and usage of your gift. Members are active day by day – living for Christ in their homes, with their families, with their friends, and in their work. Central to their lives is regular Bible reading and prayer – listening to God as he speaks to us in His Word, and speaking to Him in return is the core of the Christian life.

As a member of Bishop Creek Community Church, you join a group of people who gather together that they may grow together by hearing from the Bible about how they may:

- Love and serve God more
- Give praise to God for Jesus' death and resurrection
- Become better equipped to carry out the purpose of telling the world about Jesus
- Learn to care for each other better
- See their lives become more like Jesus

We encourage one another in these things so that we will be growing in our lives as Christians. In public and in private we seek to become more like our Lord, to repent of sin, to be godly in the way we relate to others, and to bring forth in our lives the fruit of His Spirit. We seek to make biblical decisions concerning the way we handle our families, our finances, and all decisions affecting our lives.

### *SERVING AS A MEMBER*

Members are servants of Christ and as such give of their time and energy to ensure that the Body of Christ is built up in love so that we may all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God. At Bishop Creek Community Church, there are opportunities for people serving in music, in clerical work, in set-ups, hospitality, missions, teaching, cooking and caring for the sick, children's workers, publications and communication. The list continues to grow and is very long – and there is plenty of room for you! As you get to know the people who *are Bishop Creek Community Church* we believe you will be deeply encouraged by the examples of many in being the servants of others. Across all ages, income levels, academic achievements and backgrounds the gospel of Jesus Christ has profoundly changed many – as we trust it will continue to change you.

We strongly affirm the Holy Spirit has given each of us spiritual gifts to benefit the Body of Christ and His mission (1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, Ephesians 4, 1 Peter 4). We would ask you to prayerfully consider what your gifts are and how you can utilize them for the glory of God here at Bishop Creek Community Church in building up the Body.

In addition to our time and energy, our financial support of the work of God at Bishop Creek Community Church is a very important part of membership. To recognize God as our provider and to give of what He has given to us that it may go to the spread of the gospel is a special and joyful privilege for His people.

### *JOINING AS A MEMBER*

How about you? Do you understand what it means to have a relationship with God through Jesus Christ? Does that relationship exist for you? Would you like to join in the membership of the gospel at Bishop Creek Community Church? If so, we would love to have you member with us in the exciting work that God is doing and will continue to do. Fill out the final page of this form and call the church office at 760-872-7188 to speak with our pastor. If you have questions about any of these things, or are unsure about your relationship with God through Christ, please call our church office. We would love to talk with you and answer any questions you may have.

## THE STATEMENT OF FAITH OF THE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH OF AMERICA (2008)

The Evangelical Free Church of America is an association of autonomous churches united around these theological convictions:

### **God**

1. We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.

### **The Bible**

2. We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

### **The Human Condition**

3. We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled and renewed.

### **Jesus Christ**

4. We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus-Israel's promised Messiah—was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.

### **The Work of Christ**

5. We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.

### **The Holy Spirit**

6. We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

## **The Church**

7. We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.

## **Christian Living**

8. We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.

## **Christ's Return**

9. We believe in the personal, bodily and premillennial return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.

## **Response and Eternal Destiny**

10. We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace. Amen.

# Membership at Bishop Creek Community Church



I want to be a member of Bishop Creek Community Church:

- I acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Saviour.
- I want to be committed and involved in God's work in the world through Bishop Creek Community Church.
- I have read and understand the Statement of Faith of the Evangelical Free Church of America.

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-MAIL** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNED** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

Pray, and then talk with an elder of Bishop Creek Community Church about how you can be involved. It may be that you have ideas about a new ministry that needs starting, or you just want to serve wherever you are needed. Talk with us about it.

Please contact me about how I can be involved in the work of Bishop Creek Community Church.