

# SOUTHLAKE BAPTIST CHURCH

## Southlake Baptist Church Membership Understanding

Welcome to Southlake Baptist Church. This Membership Understanding outlines our church's purpose, governance, and responsibilities of both leaders and members. Our goal is to foster spiritual growth and unity in the grace and truth of Jesus Christ.

**The Purpose of the Church** The Church exists to glorify God (Revelation 4:11) and involves believers in His redemptive work. Despite the fallen state of creation (Genesis 3), the gospel promises renewal and restoration, culminating in Christ's return. The Church plays a key role in God's plan (2 Corinthians 5:17-20), inviting believers to participate in this divine narrative. The Church is the gathering of the redeemed, described as the household of God (Ephesians 2:19), the bride of Christ (Revelation 21:2, 9), and the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). Just as body parts rely on each other, church members depend on one another's unique gifts (Romans 12:3-8). Membership means active involvement and mutual support within the church family.

**We Are Family** Joining Southlake Baptist Church means becoming a faith family united in a shared mission of leading people to meet, know and follow Jesus. Members are expected to live out the gospel, reflecting Christ's unity and love for God and others (Ephesians 4:1).

**We Hold Shared Beliefs** We affirm the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 as our shared understanding of biblical doctrine. By becoming a member, you affirm your agreement to be faithful with this Statement of Faith.

**An Elder-Led Church** Southlake Baptist Church follows the elder-led model of church government, which we believe aligns with the New Testament pattern for church leadership to provide oversight, protection against false teaching, and to bring diverse gifts and wisdom to discussions.

**Member Obligations** As members, changed by the gospel of Jesus Christ, we reflect His character through our actions and attitudes, guided by Scripture.

1. **Submit to Scripture:** Acknowledge the Bible as the ultimate authority. *1 Thessalonians 2:13 And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers. (ESV)* (See also Psalm 119; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:19-20).
2. **Pursue Jesus:** Engage in regular Bible reading, prayer, fellowship, and spiritual disciplines. *Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. (ESV)* (See also Luke 18:1; Acts 17:11; Ephesians 5:1-21; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22).

3. **Participate in Ordinances:** Be baptized post-conversion and regularly celebrate the Lord's Supper. *Acts 2:41–42 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. (ESV)*
4. **Engage in Church Life:** Attend weekly services, join in biblical community, and serve others. *Hebrews 10:24–25 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (ESV)* (See also Acts 2:42–47)
5. **Steward Resources:** Give time, talents, gifts, and finances cheerfully and sacrificially. *2 Corinthians 8:2–3 for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, (ESV)* (See also Matthew 25:14–30; 2 Corinthians 8:9; 1 Peter 4:10–11).
6. **Walk in Holiness:** Live a holy life, abstaining from sinful behaviors like sexual immorality, illegal drug use, drunkenness, and gossip. *Romans 12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (ESV)*(See also Romans 13:11–14; 1 Corinthians 6:15–20; Ephesians 5:3).
7. **Honor Marriage:** Maintain chastity if single and fidelity if married; seek reconciliation before considering divorce. *1 Corinthians 7:10–11 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. (ESV)*(See also Matthew 19:1–12).
8. **Exercise Christian Freedom Responsibly:** Avoid actions that could lead others into sin. *1 Corinthians 8:9 But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. (ESV)*(See also 1 Corinthians 8:1–13).
9. **Submit to Discipline:** Follow biblical procedures for discipline, aiming for repentance and restoration. *Ephesians 5:21 - submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. (See also Matthew 18:15–20; Hebrews 12:5–11).*
10. **Confess and Repent:** Confess sins to God and others, seek help to overcome sin. *James 5:16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. (ESV)* (See also 1 John 1:6–10).
11. **Strive for Unity:** Submit to church leadership and work towards unity and peace within the church. *Ephesians 4:3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (ESV)* (See also Ephesians 4:1–3; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:5).

## Statement of Understanding

I understand the importance of submission to church policy and will diligently work to preserve unity and peace within the church body. I agree to affirm the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 as our shared understanding of biblical doctrine and this Membership Understanding.

Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_