

# Matthew's Table

## Church Covenant

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*I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 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. (Romans 12:1-2, ESV)*

As Christians we are members of God's household (Eph 2:19) called to function, participate, and minister in a particular place within the body of Christ. A healthy body requires that each member does its part well. A healthy church requires the same: members who are sacrificially committed and well equipped to do the works of service that God has prepared in advance for them to do (Eph 2:10; 4:12). Matthew's Table holds its members in high regard; we expect them to give sacrificially of their time, talents, and treasure in order to lead as missionaries of the gospel to the culture. God, in his sovereignty, placed us in this city, among these people, in this century for this reason (Acts 17:26-27).

*For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. (Romans 12:3-8, ESV)*

Being a member of Matthew's Table is really about being part of a family. All members are disciples of Jesus, unified by their identity in Christ. This unity is expressed in the way we collaborate in loving God, loving fellow Christians, and loving non-Christians. Members who enter into a covenant with their local church are called to a higher degree of responsibility and service. At the same time the leadership of Matthew's Table are covenanted to the membership to love, to lead, to pray for, to teach, and to guide.

*Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace. (1 Peter 4:8-10, ESV)*

A covenant is a promise by which we obligate ourselves to one another in such a way that the obligation of one party is not dependent on the faithfulness of the other. The Matthew's Table covenant includes a statement of faith, a statement of biblical doctrine, a rule of life, the obligations of Matthew's Table to its members, the obligations of members to Matthew's Table. Though the covenant does define the relationship between members and the church, it is first and foremost a promise made to God as a commitment to his glory and his bride, the church (Eph 5:25).

### *Statement of Faith*

- I am a Christian saved from the eternal wrath of God by faith in Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior, through the death and resurrection, by which I am assured eternal life.
- I have repented of my sins, believe the Gospel, and have been made a new creation in Christ.
- In obedience to Scripture, I have been baptized to personally identify with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, and to publicly demonstrate my commitment as a disciple of Jesus.

### *Statement of Biblical Doctrine*

- I agree with the core beliefs of Matthew's Table as expressed in the Baptist Faith and Message, 2000.
- I will adhere to Matthew's Table's position on primary theological issues, and I will not be divisive over secondary issues.
- I agree that the sixty six books of the Bible are the ultimate authority on all matters making the biblical text is the foundation of our Church, ever reminding us to place its principles before personalities.

### *Rule of Life*

- *We Will Be Authentic:* In a world of hyper-reality, themed environments, false celebrity, and fake experience, we will live out the promise of being genuine, authentic and real. We will forge a new way by fashioning a community of honesty, openness, hospitality, and genuine love.
- *We Will Serve a Cause Greater than Ourselves:* We will not throw ourselves headlong into the standard operating system of the world by being primarily concerned about our own needs. Rather we promise to band together in order to fashion a community of love and service.
- *We Will Create a Missional Community:* We will hold out the promise that it is possible for humans to unite with others, offer their individual gifts, learn from each other, and share a commitment to a common task.
- *We Will be Generous and Practice Hospitality:* Beyond conventional hospitality, we promise to create space that allows for people to be who they are, accepted where they are as they begin to desire to become whole in Christ.
- *We Will Work Righteously:* We promise to do everything, including the most secular work, as an expression of being sent by God as ambassadors of his Kingdom in the world.

### *Obligation of Matthew's Table to its Members*

- We covenant to seek God's will for our church community to the best of our ability as we study Scripture and follow the Spirit.
- We covenant to care for you and seek your growth as a disciple of Jesus, in part by equipping you for mission and praying for you regularly.
- We covenant to provide teaching and counsel from the whole of Scripture.
- We covenant to be on guard against false teachers.
- We covenant to exercise church discipline when necessary.
- We covenant to set an example and join you in fulfilling the duties of church members.

### *My Obligation to Matthew's Table as a Member*

- I have read and understood the Matthew's Table doctrinal statement and will not be divisive to its teaching.
- I covenant to submit to the authority of Scripture.
- I will maintain a close relationship with Jesus through regular bible reading, prayer, fellowship, and the practice of spiritual disciplines. My relationship will be evident through my participation in weekly worship services, communion, and a life that glorifies Jesus.
- I will steward the resources God has given me, including my time, my talents, my treasure. This includes regular financial giving, service, and participation in God's mission that is sacrificial, cheerful, and voluntary.
- I will not function as a member in another church family.
- I agree, by God's grace, to walk in holiness as an act of worship to Jesus who saved me from my sin so that I could live a new life. I will exemplify the highest moral commitment. I will refrain from such things as profanity, gambling, drunkenness, dishonest gain, illegal drugs, pornography, sexual immorality, and any and all behaviors which might cause Christ to grieve and others to stumble. I will regard this as an essential part of my development, not as an imposition or restriction.

*My Commitment to the Mission of Matthew's Table*

Matthew's Table Mission Statement: Driven by the mission of God, we seek to make disciples by living out the promises we make. This manifests itself in the form of corporate worship, embodying missional community, and taking ownership of our responsibility as a part of God's church.

I have read the mission statement of Matthew's Table and commit to live out this mission as a diligent, faithful disciple of Jesus, that my identity would be in him, my worship would be for him, my fellowship would be through him, and my interaction with the culture would be for his glory.

I understand that this covenant obligates me to the members of Matthew's Table and is an acknowledgement of my submission to the church. I accept the responsibility to notify the leadership of Matthew's Table if at any time I can no longer commit to this covenant, or if I have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding Matthew's Table.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_