

## I. The Privileges and Responsibilities of Members of a Christian Congregation

“God is love” (1 John 4:8) and His love continually moves Him to bless the members of His church with physical and spiritual gifts (1 John 3:1; James 1:17). In return for all of these undeserved blessings, we love Him with all our heart (1 John 4:19) and we show that love with the lives that we live. The exercise of such love we acknowledge to be both a privilege and a responsibility. Some of the privileges and responsibilities to be noted are the following:

- A. Our God has given us His Word, the one thing needful (Luke 10:42), which alone can save our souls and tell us how to live a God pleasing life (2 Timothy 3:15-17). Consequently, members of His church will consider it a distinct privilege and responsibility to:
  1. Hear and receive the Word of God by faithful attendance at public worship services (Hebrews 10:25; John 8:47; Psalm 122:1).
  2. Study God’s Word regularly through personal Bible reading and study, and through group Bible study opportunities offered by the church (Colossians 3:16; Luke 11:28; 1 Peter 2:2).
  3. Bring up their children in the training and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4).
- B. Our God has given us two sacraments: Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, which are means that our Lord uses to bring His grace to us. Consequently, members of His church will:
  1. Have their children baptized early in life, for “baptism now saves you” (1 Peter 3:21).
  2. Frequently partake of Holy Communion (1 Corinthians 11:23-26), if they are recognized as such who are able to properly examine themselves (1 Corinthians 11:28).
- C. Our God has given us the privilege and responsibility of being managers (stewards) over a certain portion of His “estate” and assures us that He will graciously bless a faithful management (2 Corinthians 9:6). Therefore members of His church will, under grace:
  1. Utilize God’s gifts for Christian ministry and works of service to the Lord and to their fellow men (1 Peter 4:10-11; Romans 12:6-8).
  2. Strive to share the Good News of the work of Christ with unbelievers through personal witnessing, and the support of the church’s mission in the community and the world (Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 8:4).
  3. Cheerfully and regularly devote a generous portion of their possessions, time, and abilities to the Lord for the support and furthering of the congregation’s ministry (2 Corinthians 9:6-11).
  4. If eligible, become voting members and regularly attend the voters’ meetings and lend the congregation their counsel and aid (Hebrews 10:25).
- D. Our God has implanted in believers the new self, who desires to and is able to live righteously (2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:24). Consequently, members of His church will:
  1. Not persist in obvious acts of the sinful nature (Galatians 5:19-21), but lead a Christian life in words and actions (Galatians 5:22-23).
  2. When they have erred, permit themselves to be admonished and corrected as brothers and sisters (Matthew 18:15-18).
  3. Refuse to hold membership in any organization whose teachings and practices conflict with the Word of God, and also refuse to practice church fellowship with any with whom fellowship does not actually exist (John 5:23; 8:31-32; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Romans 16:17).

I understand that these are my privileges and responsibilities as a Christian and as a member of a Christian congregation, and I intend to gladly fulfill them all, as God gives me grace and strength.

## II. The Responsibilities of a Christian Congregation Toward Its Members

As a member of this Christian congregation, you declare agreement with the teachings and practices of the Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church. You also declare your desire to receive the ministry of this congregation. It is the will of the Lord that Christians gather together for mutual edification and spiritual growth (Hebrews 10:24-25) and for carrying out the Lord's commission (Matthew 28:19-20). It is the solemn obligation and intent of this congregation to minister to all its members with Christian love and concern. Among the responsibilities of a church's ministry to its members are to provide:

- A. Regular and ongoing opportunities for orderly corporate worship, and for the mutual encouragement edification which these worship services offer.
- B. Christian baptism in accordance with Christ's institution.
- C. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper on a regular basis, in accordance with its institution by Christ.
- D. Christ-centered Bible classes for all ages, to enable each member to grow in faith and in the knowledge of the truth.
- E. Training for Christian ministry (service).
- F. Varied opportunities to serve the Lord with the gifts He has given for Christian service.
- G. Careful and accurate handling and stewardship of all offerings and congregational finances in the interest of God's kingdom, with full accounting to all members.
- H. Visitation and ministry of comfort when sick, hospitalized, unable to attend worship, or at the loss of a loved one.
- I. Christian counseling for the family or individual.
- J. Assistance with each member's personal devotional life by offering scripturally sound devotional materials.
- K. Ongoing information about the entire work (including ministry and finances) of the Lord through the congregation and the Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- L. Christian wedding services in accordance with good Christian order and guidelines established by the church.
- M. Christian burial in accordance with the teachings of Scripture and the guidelines established by the church.

Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church hereby pledges itself to provide to you a Christian ministry of love as outlined above, as God gives us strength and grace.

On behalf of the congregation,

Pastor Mark Rohrback