

# NEW MEMBERS HANDBOOK

# WELCOME

Welcome to Now Faith Ministries! Because of the the commitment you have just made, which is to learn, to grow, and to give, we welcome you to our Community of Believers. We are excited about this opportunity to be used by God in preparing you to fulfill your purpose. This is the most serious point in your Christian walk.

We are here to give you support, time, and to share with you many things which may be helpful to you as a new member of this church. Please feel free to call on us with any questions or concerns you may have.

Because God gave His best, our desire is to give our best to you as well. Our church will grow and prosper when you agree to provide your best also. If you have any special needs, or if you are having any problems, we are here to help and support you.

Congratulations on your decision to make Jesus Lord of your life and for uniting with our church family.

Pastor Kia Brown Lead Pastor







Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1

# **OUR MISSION**

Now Faith exists to support and equip the followers of Jesus Christ to reach the lost, serve those in need, and display the love of Jesus Christ to all, both individually and as a body of believers.

Everything that Now Faith does is founded upon the Truth set forth in the Bible, which is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12).

We reflect the life of Jesus Christ by sharing the love of God, empowering people, and serving our church and community as we lift, honor, and praise God.

## **OUR VISION**

To reflect the life of Jesus Christ by sharing the love of God, empowering people, and serving our church and community as we lift, honor, and praise God.

## **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

- 1. Now Faith is a Christian body that is created by God, fashioned by Jesus Christ, and guided by the Holy Spirit to live in love.
- 2. Love is the very essence of God (I John 4:8), the highest priority of Jesus' life and ministry (Matthew 22:37-39), and the central virtue of life (I Corinthians 13:13).

# **OUR OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the Now Faith are:

- Discipleship reflecting the life of Christ
- Fellowship sharing the love of God
- Empowerment enable and equip the saints
- Service and Ministry serving our church and community
- Worship Lifting, honoring, and praising God

# **OUR CORE VALUES**

### A. Love

- 1. By living in love, we will grow closer to God and each other.
- 2. We believe that love is an action word that manifests itself through integrity, loyalty, honor, forgiveness, compassion, and respect. It is the heart of our core and the value that undergirds all that we are and all that we do.
- 3. We love God, others, and ourselves. As church leaders and members, we perpetually strive to will the good for others unconditionally and indiscriminately, remaining open to self-sacrifice.

### B. Spirituality

- 1. By living Jesus' example, His teachings, and ministries provide the map that guides us in our efforts to grow and live a spiritually whole life.
- 2. We believe the Spirit is the home of our relationship with God. Our minds and bodies are the home of the spirit. Spirituality is the act of nurturing, nourishing, and developing the temple of God.

### C. Growth

- 1. We want to grow spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally, and financially.
- 2. We believe that growth is a sign of life. We want to grow every guest, worshipper, member, and leader who encounters our church.

### D. Excellence

- 1. God has been too good and done too much for us not to offer our very best in service.
- 2. We believe that we should seek excellence in all of our endeavors for the Lord. Excellence does not equate to perfection - as Jesus Christ was the only perfect human to walk the earth.
- 3. Excellence is reached through diligent preparation and critical evaluation of all that we do. Additionally, our allegiance to excellence means we embrace professional and spiritual education, enlightenment, and development.

### E. Creativity

- 1. We embrace innovation, imagination, and experimentation in our messages, music, and our ministries.
- 2. We believe God provides each of us with our own unique gifts that enable us to offer a fresh contribution to the world.

### F. Impact

- 1. It is our sincere ambition to inspire, exhort, challenge, comfort, critique and support people for the better.
- 2. We believe that we are created to affect and have an effect on individuals, the community, and the world.

### GOVERNANCE

Now Faith is a Non-Denominational Ministry that is vested in its members. The membership retains the right of exclusive self-government without outside interference from or control by other church group's governmental bodies.

#### MEMBERSHIP

A. Requirements for perspective members of the Now Faith are:

- 1. Profession of faith and baptism.
- 2. Complete a new member's bible study course.
- 3. Statement of Acknowledgement and Commitment.
- B. Perspective members can join Now Faith by:
  - 1. During service extending their hand to God during the Moment of Decision .
  - 2. Completing a membership card and submitting to the church office.
  - 3. Submitting an application via the web site.

C. Inactivation of membership in Now Faith shall be initiated when a member:

- 1. Requests a letter of transfer to another church
- 2. Is dropped from the role due to lack of participation through extended,
- 3. continuous absences for reasons aside from illness or other excused
- 4. circumstances after a twelve-month period
- 5. Gives verbal or written notification
- 6.Death

### WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

Now Faith is a ministry where you can **receive**, **grow**, and **give**. You can expect:

A community where you can **receive** a Word that is transforming and worship that will uplift. You will receive preaching and teaching that is real, relevant and relational.

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17

A community where you can **grow** in God's Word and in relationship with other believers.

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

A community of opportunities where you can **give** your service, time, and talents for the kingdom of God.

" For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" Ephesians 2:10

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

Theologically, a Christian is someone who has received the Lord Jesus as Savior (John 1:12), trusts Him for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 4:12), has put no trusts in his own effort to please God, and repents from their on sins (Mark 1:15).

#### SALVATION

Salvation, simply means to be saved. Jesus, the Son of God, died on the cross for our sins (John 3:16-17). And then, three days later, Jesus rose from the dead so that both sin and death could be defeated once and for all. The difference between Christianity and all other world religions is that God gave the gift of salvation to us. This means that we never have to earn our own salvation and way into Heaven. It's given to us as a free gift! But, it is also up to us whether we accept that gift or not.

Accepting Jesus and Salvation is very simple: Romans 10:13 says *"whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."* "Whoever", that means you!

Pray this simple prayer to get started on your journey to getting to know Jesus. And if you already know Him, pray this prayer to renew your journey.

Lord Jesus, I confess my sins and ask for your forgiveness. Please come into my heart as my Lord and Savior. Take complete control of my life and help me to walk in Your footsteps daily by the power of the Holy Spirit. Thank you Lord for saving me and for answering my prayers. In Jesus' name, Amen.

### BAPTISM

After the repentance of sin and acceptance of salvation, we believe that you should be baptized as the lord Jesus commanded. Baptism is significant in that it represent that cleansing from sin that comes through faith in he Lord Jesus Christ. Water Baptism involves immersion in water and symbolically portrays the washing aways of our sins.

Have you been baptized?

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHURCH**

Our first priority to God is to have a personal relationship with Him. God wants us to love Him first and then to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

Jesus said "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." Matthew 22:37-40

God calls believers into fellowship with other believers in Christ. Believers are told to assemble together to encourage each other (Hebrews 10:24-25). In His instruction to His disciples, Jesus gives us the purpose of the church in what is known as the Great Commission.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and Io, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen." Matthew 28:19-20

Just as Christ loved believers - the Church, believers are to love one another (the church). There must be love among and between members of the Church. Christ set the example in this area by giving Himself for the Church. We as the church ought to give our time, talents and resources to the body of Christ.

The responsibility of the Church is to spread and share the good news of the gospel throughout the world. To that end members of the church have the privilege of serving God and their fellow man. Some of the basic responsibilities of church members are faithful attendance at church worship service, faith study and meditation on the Word of God, faithful witness of the Word of God and faithful stewardship.

# **YOUR PARTICIPATION**

### **Faithful Attendance**

There is joy in attending a church worship service with our friends, family, and loved ones. In our worship of God in the church, we shut out the noise and confusion of the world and listen for God' guidance. Through music, prayers, scripture reading, and the pastors' message, we feel the presence of God. The fellowship with other Christians will help encourage us to greater Christian devotion and service.

Jesus said "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." Matthew 18:20

### **Faithful Study**

The Christian faith is based upon the revelation of and from God that is found in the Bible. The Bible gives us instruction and hope (Romans 15:4), helps us to grow in the Christian life (1 Peter 2:2), and keeps us from sinning (Psalm 119:110). Therefore, it is imperative that we have a proper understanding of the Scriptures. The essential truths of the Scriptures are open for all to seek the message that God has for us personally. You will receive Biblical teaching that are real and relevant.

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15

### **Faithful Witness**

As Christians, we must carry the gospel to those outside the fellowship of the church and serve humankind in every area of need. Christians cannot be true to their Lord and remain silent about Him. We are dishonest with our family and friends if we withhold from them the best news in the world. Jesus commanded every believer to make disciples.

Our tithes provides for:

- The financial support of the total ministry operations of the church
  - Including the Women's & Children's Ministry and Future Youth Ministry
  - The management of all virtual software, equipment and subscriptions.
  - The financial support of the pastoral staff

If you aren't tithing, pray and seek God's wisdom. Then, step out on faith and *"try"* God. Begin consistently giving something until you can build your faith for 10% of our income.

### Offerings

"He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

Offering is voluntary giving beyond the tithe.

#### Keep In Mind When Giving:

- You are giving to honor God. It shows that we love and trust God and that we truly recognize Him as Lord over our lives.
- Your giving must be willing. The amount does not matter. Pray and seek God, He will guide you and lead you to the amount you should give. What matters is your attitude. God loves a cheerful giver; whose heart is in his giving. (2 Corinthians 8:12; 9:7)
- Your standard of giving, raises your standard of living. When you have a willing heart and mind to give, God will make sure to supple you with money to give. AND, He will increase what you give and the enlarge the harvest you receive from it! (2 Corinthians 9:10-11).

### Faithful Stewardship/Giving

Believers provide the financial assistance needed to support the ministry to sustain the operations of the church. When believers give to God He blesses us in return (Malachi 3:8-12; Luke 6:38, 2 Corinthians 9:7)

God has a plan for the financing of the work He has ordered the Church to perform - through tithes and offerings.

Tithe means the Tenth part, especially as offered to God. Tithing is a practice of obedience of returning 10% of your income to God. Originally, the tithe was given to the temple in the form of produce of livestock since this was the only real income the people had. As society shifted to a monetary exchange system, the tithe began to be paid in currency.

- Tithing is first mentioned when Abraham presented a tithe to the Priest-king of Jerusalem Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18-20).
- Jacob pledged to offer God a tenth of that God would bless him with (Genesis 28:20-22). What was his three-fold expectation?
  - God's presence "If God will be with me"
  - God's protection "will keep me in the way that I go"
  - God's provision "will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on"

Blessing of Obedience Regarding Tithing

Those that are obedient in tithing are blessed by God in return. According to Malachi 3:10-12, the benefits of tithing are:

- INCREASE
- BLESSINGS
- PROTECTION

For Christians, tithing is a a practice of obedience, faith, and worship given in recognition of the blessings that God has given to us. Jesus said "Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you." Luke 6:38 (NIV)

### **STAY CONNECTED**



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