Discovering Church Membership

NEW LIFE TRAINING
CLASS 101

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Welcome To Discovering Church Membership

We’re glad you’ve chosen to find out more about Val Verde! This class is the basic introduction to our church family. Since we have members from many different church backgrounds, this class was designed to clearly explain who and what our church is.

Discovering Church Membership is divided in four sessions and is taught by our pastor, Brent Stancil, who has been Senior Pastor of our church since July of 1997.

The Basics For This Class

(Ephesians 2:19) “...ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God.”

Key Truths:

1. The church is a Family.
2. God expects you to be a Member of a church family.
3. A Christian without a church family is an Orphan.

The Goal Of This Class

That I will commit myself to Christ and to the Val Verde Family.

What Makes Val Verde A Family?

Four things unite us:

- Our Salvation (What God has done for us)
- Our Statements (Why we exist as a church)
- Our Strategy (How we fulfill our purpose)
- Our Structure (How we are organized to fulfill our purpose)
Session One

Our Salvation

(Galatians 3:26-28) “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”
What Does It Mean To Be A Christian?

Most people live their entire lives without ever knowing “WHY?” They exist year after year with no idea of why they live or God’s purpose for their lives. The most basic question a person can ask is, “What is the meaning of life?”

Everyone wants to be happy. People try many ways:
...Some look for happiness by acquiring possessions.
...Some look for happiness by experiencing pleasure.
...Some look for happiness by gaining prestige & power.

But real happiness comes from understanding my PURPOSE in existing.

I. Why Am I Here?

A. God made me to **Glorify** him!
   (Revelation 4:11) “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

B. God made man in his **own image**. This allows man to have a special relationship with God.
   (Genesis 1:26) “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.”

C. When man is in a right relationship with god there is great benefit for the individual
   1. Clear conscience- (Romans 8:1) “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”
   2. Peace- (Romans 8:6) “For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.”
   3. Help with Weakness- (Romans 8:26) “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”
   4. Purpose- (Romans 8:28) “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”
   5. Confidence- (Romans 8:31) “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?”
   6. Security- (Romans 8:39) “Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
   7. Power and Strength- (Philippians 4:13) “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”
   8. Fulfillment- (Philippians 4:19) “But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”
   9. Freedom- (John 8:32) “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make
you free.”
(John 8:36) “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”

II. What’s The Problem?

Man has violated God’s law and in many cases does not even know he is guilty before God.

“Look out for #1. Do your own thing.” “If it feels good, do it - regardless of what God says about it.” “It’s my life and I’ll do what I please!”, are all attitudes that man has toward himself.

The Bible calls these attitudes: **Sin**.

(Isaiah 53:6) “All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way.”
(1 John 1:8) “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”

In reality before God we are lying, stealing, covetous, murderous, adulterers, because we have violated God’s laws.

*Exodus 20*

We have broken our relationship with God by our sin. Therefore we will never know true happiness without restoring that relationship.

(Isaiah 59:2) “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God.”
(Romans 3:23) “For all have sinned and come short of glory of God.”

When our relationship to God is not right, it causes **PROBLEMS** in every area of our lives such as our marriages, careers, relationships, finances, etc.

**WHEN PEOPLE HAVE PROBLEMS, THEY OFTEN TRY MANY DIFFERENT WAYS OF COPING INSTEAD OF TURNING TO GOD.**

(Proverbs 16:25) “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”
(James 1:14) “But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.”

People try to justify themselves by many means.

- “My mother was a Christian so...”
- “It doesn’t matter what you believe, just be sincere.”
- “I’ll give up all my bad habits.”
- “I’ll work real hard and earn it.”
- “I’ll be religious and go to church.”

III. What’s The Solution?

Jesus Christ said in (John 14:6), “I AM THE WAY, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by ME.”
God Himself came to earth in human form to seek and to save lost man. If any other way would have worked, Jesus Christ would not have had to come. The Way to God is through a Person not through religion.

**JESUS HAS ALREADY TAKEN CARE OF YOUR SIN PROBLEM BY DYING ON THE CROSS, BEING BURIED, AND RISING AGAIN!**

God did this for us because He loves us and wants us to know Him.

(Romans 5:8) “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

God has already done His part to restore our relationship to Him. He took the initiative. Now He waits for each of us to individually accept what He has done for us.

**IV. What MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?**

A. **Understand** that you are a sinner and are separated from God because of your sins.
(Romans 3:10) “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:”
(Romans 3:23) “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”;
(Isaiah 53:6) “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

B. **Accept** the fact that as a sinner you will give an account for your sin before God and pay the price for your sin in hell.
(Ezekiel 18:4) “Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.”
(Romans 6:23) “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”
(Hebrews 9:27) “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:”
(Revelation 20:14-15) “And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. [15] And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

C. **Believe** that Jesus died to pay for your sins, was buried, and that he rose again and is alive today.
(Romans 1:16) “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”
(Romans 10:9) “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”
(Acts 4:12) “Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.”

D. **Receive** God’s free gift of salvation. Don’t try to earn it.
(Ephesians 2:8-9) “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.”

Our relationship to God is not restored by anything we do, but on the basis of what Jesus already did
for us!

E. **Invite** Jesus Christ to come into your life and save me.

(John 1:12-13) “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born…of God.”

(Revelation 3:20) “Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”

**If you are serious about wanting a personal relationship with Christ you must be willing to turn from your sins to the Lord Jesus Christ:**

“Dear Jesus, I realize that I am sinner both by nature and by choice. I understand that as a sinner I should pay my own price for sin in hell. But I believe that you died on the cross, were buried for three days, and rose again paying the debt I owe. I am asking you to forgive me of my sins and save me.

(Romans 10:13) “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the lord, shall be saved.”
The Importance of Being Baptized

I. Why Should I Be Baptized?

A. Because Christ Commands it.
(Matthew 28:19-20) “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

B. To follow the example set by Christ.
(Mark 1:9) “And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.”

C. It demonstrates that I really am a Believer.
(Acts 18:8) “…many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.”
(1 John 2:3) “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.”

II. What is the Meaning of Baptism?

A. It illustrates Christ’s Death, Burial, and Resurrection.
(1 Corinthians 15:3-4) “Christ died for our sins... He was buried...and He rose again.”
(Colossians 2:12) “Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.”

B. It illustrates my New Life as a Christian.
(2 Corinthians 5:17) “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new.”
(Romans 6:4) “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life!”

Baptism doesn’t make you a believer — it shows that you already believe. Baptism does not “save” you, only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring — it’s the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart.

(Ephesians 2:8-9) “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God : not of works lest any man should boast.”

III. Why Be Baptized By Immersion?

A. Because Jesus was baptized that way.
(Matthew 3:16) “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water...”

B. Every baptism in the Bible was by immersion.
(Acts 8:38-39) “…and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip...”

The word “Baptize” is a transliteration of the Greek word baptizo means “to immerse or dip under.”
C. It best symbolizes a burial and resurrection!

The founders of denominations agree:

Martin Luther- “I would have those who are to be baptized to be entirely immersed, as the word imports and the mystery signifies.”

John Calvin- “The word ‘baptize’ signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church.”

John Wesley- “Buried with Him, alludes to baptizing by immersion according to the custom of the first church.”

IV. Who Should Be Baptized?

Every person who has Believed in Christ.

(Acts 2:4) “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized...”

(Acts 8:13) “Simon himself believed also: and...he was baptized...”

(Acts 8:12) “But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”

At Val Verde, we wait until our children are old enough to believe and understand the true meaning of baptism before we baptize them. Some churches practice a “baptism of confirmation” for children. This ceremony is for many what they consider Christian or Bible baptism. This custom began about 300 years after the Bible was completed. This is different from the baptism talked about in the Bible, which was only for those old enough to believe. “Confirmation” is not baptism. The purpose of baptism is to publicly confess your personal commitment to Christ, therefore only someone who has been born again may partake of the ordinance. At Val Verde, it is a membership requirement that every member must have been baptized the way Jesus demonstrated, even though many of us were “confirmed” as children.

V. When Should you be baptized?

A. As soon as you have believed!

(Acts 2:41) “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls!”

(Acts 8:35-38) “Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God. .”

There is no reason to delay. As soon as you have decided to receive Christ into your life, you can and should be baptized. If you wait until you are “perfect”, you’ll never feel “good enough”!

B. Can my family be baptized together?
Yes! If each family member understands fully the meaning of baptism, and each one has personally placed his/her trust in Christ for salvation, we encourage families to be baptized at the same time. It is a wonderful expression of commitment. Young children who wish to be baptized are asked to meet with our pastor for a pre-baptism conversation.

**However**, it is important to remember that baptism is a personal statement of faith, not a family tradition. It is usually not wise to delay your baptism while waiting on other family members to accept Christ, particularly children. This puts an undue pressure on them, and delays your obedience.

C. What should I wear when I am baptized?
We provide baptismal robes that are very modest. The robes come in many sizes and are available for men, women, and children. You need to bring a change of undergarments and a comb or brush. Towels are provided.

D. Will I have to say anything?
Yes. At the beginning of the baptism service, the person baptizing you will briefly explain the meaning of baptism. You will wait at the edge of the pool for your turn to be baptized. Pastor Stancil or another member of our staff will assist in you in the water. The Pastor will ask you if you have received Jesus Christ as your personal Savior any you will have to give testimony of your conversion. Later you will be mailed a certificate of your baptism. We encourage you to invite all your relatives and friends to attend your baptism.

(Acts 8:36-38) “And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.”

E. Special Needs?
Any person who has special needs will be assisted by a staff member so that you can be baptized.
The Lord’s Supper and its Meaning

Jesus never asked His disciples to remember His birth or life, but He did instruct them to remember His death, burial and resurrection. He gave the church two visible symbols which we call ordinances as continual reminders of His death burial and resurrection. These two ordinances are: Baptism and The Lord’s Supper. The Lord’s Supper is an object lesson that represents several great spiritual truths for believers.

I. What the Lord’s supper is not!

A. It is not Transubstantiation.

This is the Roman Catholic view of the Lord’s Supper. It means “a change of substance”. They teach that a miracle takes place as the priest consecrates the bread and wine. The bread and wine become the flesh and blood and the divinity of Christ. The Communion offered in the Mass is the offering again of Christ. They teach that this offering is a “true proper and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead.”

(Hebrews 10:12-14) But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

B. It is not Consubstantiation.

This view holds that, while the elements of bread and wine remain the same substance, the body and blood of Christ is present in the elements during the Communion service. This was observed by those breaking with the Catholic Church in the early days of the Reformation. The Lutherans, Anglicans and the Episcopalian generally observe it. Many that hold this view are willing to reject the view that the Communion service is the sacrifice of Christ. However, great spiritual significance is attached and one is never really separated from transubstantiation.

C. It is not The Reform View.

This view arose during the Reformation, it was Calvin who taught that Christ is present in the Communion and those who participate enjoy the entire person of Christ. Some type of spiritual “grace” is communicated to the participant. While this view rejects the literal presence in the elements, it does make the Communion service a means of receiving something special from the Lord. Those who hold to this view, as well as to transubstantiation and consubstantiation, will observe this in private with individuals believing it will supply some grace to the sick, dying, and those in trouble.

II. What Is The Lord’s Supper? (1 Cor. 11:23-26)

A. It is a Simple Act with great Spiritual Meaning.

(1 Corinthians 11:23) “…the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread...”

B. It is a constant Reminder.

(1 Corinthians 11:24) “…and when he had given thanks, he brake it and said, ‘Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me.’”

C. It is a Symbol or Picture.
(1 Corinthians 11:25) “After the same manner also, he took the cup when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me”

D. It is a **Statement of Faith**.

(1 Corinthians 11:27) “For as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death till he come”

### III. Who Should Take The Lord’s Supper?

Only those who are already **Believers**.

(Mark 14:22-26) And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

(1 Corinthians 11:29) “For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.”

Some churches practice “closed” communion, while others practice “open” communion, while some practice what we term “close” communion. Closed communion simply means in order to partake of the Lord’s supper you must be a member of the church. Open communion means that any person who names the name of Christ regardless of their doctrine or practice may participate in the Lord’s supper. We at Val Verde Baptist Church tend to practice close communion which simply means you do not have to be a member of our church to join us in the Lord’s supper, but you should be a member of a church of like faith and practice. As the Lord’s supper is an individual matter between the person and the Lord, we pray that those who partake of it understand the seriousness of the ordinance.

### IV. How Do I Prepare Myself For The Lord’s Supper?

(1 Corinthians 11:27-28) “Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.”

A. Self Examination-

(1 Corinthians 11:27) **Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.**

(1 Corinthians 10:21) **Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table, and of the table of devils.**

B. Confession of Sin-

(1 John 1:9) **If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

(Jeremiah 3:13-15) **Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD**
thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD. Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

C. Recommitment to Christ-
(Romans 12:1)  I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

D. Restoring of Relationships-
(Matthew 5:23-24) Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.
Session Two

The Val Verde Statements

(1 Corinthians 1:10) “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”
Our Purpose Statement

Why We Exist As A Church

The purpose of our church is summarized in a single sentence based on two key scriptures:
“Val Verde Baptist Church exists in order to bring people to a **Personal Relationship** with Christ as savior and to **Teach** them how to follow Christ!”

We believe that a great commitment to the Great Commandments and the Great Commission will build a fellowship of believers, in this local church, that will bring honor and glory to God.

The Great Commandment: (Matthew 22:36-40) “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets”

The Great Commission: (Matthew 28:19-20) “Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

OUR FIVE PURPOSES:

- **Exalt the Saviour**- “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.” is worship.

- **Evangelize the Sinner**- “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations,” is Evangelization.

- **Encourage the Saved**- “baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:” is to incorporate into fellowship

- **Equip the Servant**- “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:” is discipleship.

- **Edify the Saint**- “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” is ministry.

Val Verde Exists:

I. **We Exist to Exalt the Savior**-
Worship: Bringing Glory and Honor to GOD. Literally to kiss towards, or give worth to.

(Matthew 4:10) “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”
(John 4:23-24) “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall
worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.
God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”

Expressions of Worship
- Singing (Ephesians 5:19)
- Commitment (Romans 12:1-2)
- Praying (Psalm 95:6)
- Hearing the Word (John 17:17)
- Giving (1 Corinthians 16:1-2)
- Baptism (Romans 6:3-4)
- Meditating (Habakkuk 2:20)
- Lord’s Supper (1 Corinthians 11-23-26)

II. We Exist to Evangelize the Sinner
Evangelism: Sharing The Good News

(Romans 10:13-14) “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.
How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?”

A. Because GOD LOVES PEOPLE

(2 Peter 3:9) “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”
(1 Timothy 2:3-4) “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”

B. Because GOD COMMANDS US TO REACH OUT

(Luke 14:23) “Go out into they highways, and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.”
(Acts 1:8) “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

C. Because GROWTH IS GOD’S WILL

(Matthew 16:18) “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Unbiblical Excuses For Not Growing:

“God isn’t interested in numbers.”
“Our church wants quality not quantity.”
“Large churches are impersonal”

III.  **We Exist to Encourage the Saved**

Baptism and Church Membership- The first steps of obedience after a person is saved.

(Acts 2:41) “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”
(Acts 2:47) “Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

IV.  **We Exist to Equip the Servant**

Discipleship: Helping believers grow spiritually

(2 Peter 3:18) “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”

(Ephesians 4:11-13) “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:”

Church Attendance Sunday Morning, Evening, and Wednesday evening, Sunday School, New Life Training, and One on One Discipleship are some of the ways we help people grow spiritually.

V.  **We Exist to Edify the Saint**

Ministry: MEETING NEEDS WITH LOVE

Everybody has a Hurt or Need.

(John 13:35) “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” 1 John 3:16-17, Matt. 25:34-40, Heb. 13:16, Rom. 12:13
(1 Corinthians 12:4-5) “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. (5) And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.”
(1 Corinthians 12:12) “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.”
(1 Corinthians 12:27) “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”

At Val Verde...

Every member is a: MINISTER
Every task is: IMPORTANT
Every member is a “10” in: SOME AREA
Don’t judge a church by its seating capacity, judge it by its sending capacity
Our Statement of Faith

What We Believe

I. In essential beliefs we have unity.

(Ephesians 4:4-6) “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

II. In non-essential beliefs we have liberty.

(Romans 14:1) “Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.”
(Romans 14:4) “Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.”
(Romans 14:12) “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

III. In all our beliefs we show charity.

(1 Corinthians 13:2) “And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.”

STATEMENT OF FAITH:

I. The Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testament, is supernaturally inspired and without error; is the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man; is the true center of Christian union, is the sole authority of all matters of life, faith, and practice. We believe that the King James Bible, AV 1611, is the Word of God given to the English speaking people and is the only Bible we will accept in our language and at Val Verde Baptist Church.

Psalms 119:105  Psalms 119:160  Proverbs 30:5-6  
2 Timothy 3:16-17  1 Peter 1:20-23  2 Peter 1:19-21

II. The True God

We believe there is only one true and living God. He is the creator and the supreme ruler of heaven and earth; worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love. Consisting in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; equal in all things.
III. The True God

We believe that Jesus Christ is the second person of the Triune God; existing eternally with the Father; became man by divine conception by the Holy Spirit and was born of a virgin. Even though He was the perfect man, yet He is still God. He lived a perfect sinless life and voluntarily laid down His life for the atonement of sinners. He rose from the dead three days later and now sits at the right hand of the Father being an intercessor and mediator for the redeemed.

Isaiah 7:14 Isaiah 55:4-5 Matthew 3:16-17
Matthew 18:11 John 1:1, 14 John 3:16
Philippians 2:5-71 Peter 2:21,24

IV. The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person in the Triune God; equal with God the Father and God the Son. He convicts the world of sin and their need of a Saviour, regenerates, and seals all who put their trust in Christ. He indwells, guides, and helps the believer. He is the Comforter that Jesus Christ promised.

John 15:26-27 John 16:7-11

V. The Devil or Satan

We believe Satan was once holy and enjoyed heaven’s bliss, but through pride tried to become as the Almighty. The Lord put him out of heaven. He is now the prince of the power of the air; the unholy god of this world. He is the accuser of the Saints, a liar, and the father of lies. He is the author of sin and the cause of the fall of man, and is declared the enemy of God and man. He will one day receive eternal judgment in the lake of fire.

Isaiah 14:12-14 Ezekiel 28:14-17 John 8:44
John 14:30 Ephesians 2:2 1 Peter 5:8
Jude 1:6 Revelation 20:10
VI. Man

Man was created in the image and likeness of God, innocent, but by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and holy estate. The consequence of which is that all mankind are now sinners. This was done under his own will, and he now stands guilty before God and has within himself no means of recovery or salvation.

*Genesis 3:1-7*  
*Genesis 3:23-24*  
*Romans 3:9-23*  
*Romans 5:12*  
*Romans 6:23*  
*Galatians 3:22*

VII. The Atonement for Sin

We believe that the Salvation of sinners is wholly of Grace; through the ministry of Jesus Christ. Who being the perfect sacrifice, took upon Himself the sins of the world on Calvary, and through the shedding of His blood we are able to obtain the remission of sins. This is made knowledgeable to us only through the Word of God.

*Leviticus 17:10-13*  
*Matthew 18:11*  
*John 3:16*  
*Romans 3:24-25*  
*Romans 10:9-13*  
*Romans 10:17*  
*Ephesians 1:7*  
*Ephesians 2:8-9*  
*Hebrews 7:25*  
*1 Peter 2:24*  
*1 John 4:9-10*

VIII. The Gift of Salvation

We believe that the blessing of Salvation is made free to all by the Gospel. Salvation is a free gift that has been extended from God unto man, all we must do is accept that gift in recognition of our sinful state. All who have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are justified, their sins are pardoned, and Christ’s righteousness is imputed to them. Nothing can prevent the saving of the greatest sinner except his own rejection of Jesus Christ. Christ’s sacrifice was the perfect sacrifice; He paid our sin debt in full and our works cannot add anything to His sacrifice. Therefore, those who come to Christ for salvation must do so by faith; there are no works that a person can do to earn salvation. If a person is depending upon their own works, they are not saved.

*Isaiah 55:7*  
*John 3:15-16*  
*John 3:36*  
*Romans 5:1, 9*  
*Ephesians 2:8-9*  
*Titus 3:5-7*

IX. Eternal Security of the Believer

We believe that once a sinner by faith accepts the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, that he/she is regenerated or born again and given eternal life; of which he/she can never lose.
X. The Virgin Birth

We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner; born of Mary, a virgin, as no other has ever been born or can ever be born. He is the Son of God and God the Son.

*Genesis 3:15*    *Isaiah 7:14*    *Matthew 1:18-25*
*Luke 1:35*    *John 1:14*

XI. Creation

We believe the Genesis account of creation and that it is to be accepted literally and not figuratively; that man was created directly in God’s own image and after His own likeness. We believe that God created the world in seven literal, twenty-four hour days. Man did not evolve from any lower species or develop through periods of time from a lower to higher form. All animal and plant life was a direct act of creation by God. He established that they should bring forth only “after their kind.”

*Genesis 1:2-25*    *John 1:3*    *Colossians 1:16*
*Hebrews 1:2*    *Hebrews 11:3*

XII. The Church

We believe in the local, visible church, made up of a congregation of born again, baptized believers, bound together by the love of Christ and a common faith and fellowship in the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ and governed by His Word; seeking that the Gospel reaches the uttermost part of the earth. It’s only scriptural officers are the pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are found in Acts, Timothy, and Titus. We believe that the church’s true mission is the spreading of the Gospel and is given this authority in the Great Commission. The head of the church is Jesus Christ and is not subject to any organization or individual.

*Matthew 28:19-20*    *Acts 2:41-42*    *Acts 13:1-4*
*Acts 14:27*    *Acts 15:19-31*    *Acts 20:17, 28-32*
*Romans 16:1,4*    *1 Corinthians 3:9, 16*    *1 Corinthians 5:4*
*2 Corinthians 11:2*    *Ephesians 1:22-23*    *Ephesians 5:23-27*
*1 Timothy 3:1-13*    *Titus 1:5-11*    *1 Peter 5:1-4*
*1 Corinthians 12:12-14*
XIII. Baptism and the Lord’s Supper

We believe that baptism and the Lord’s Supper are the only ordinances of the church. They are each a memorial and symbol of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We believe that Christian baptism is by immersion in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. We believe that baptism is a prerequisite to the privileges of a church membership and that it is not a means of salvation, but a step of obedience to reveal our relationship in Christ. The Lord’s Supper is to remember Christ’s love for us in that He shed His blood and gave His life that we might be saved and to remind us to look for His coming. The elements used in the Lord’s Supper are unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine to be taken only after a solemn self-examination.

Acts 2:38, 41 Acts 8:36-38 Romans 6:3-5
1 Corinthians 11:23-29 1 Corinthians 12:13 Ephesians 4:5
1 Peter 3:21

XIV. The Saved and the Unsaved

We believe that there is a complete and total difference between the saved and the unsaved. The saved have been justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and born again in the Spirit of God and therefore will spend eternity in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in Heaven. The unsaved that reject the saving Grace of Christ are doomed forever to spend eternity in the lake of fire.

Matthew 7:13-14 John 3:18
1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 Revelation 20:11-15
Revelation 21:8

XV. Future Events

We believe in the blessed hope of the believer and the personal, pre-tribulation, pre-millennial appearance of Christ to rapture the saved. His judgment will be poured out on an unbelieving world during the tribulation, at the end of which Jesus Christ will physically return to the earth to set up His Kingdom for the thousand year millennial reign. At the end of the millennial reign will be the judgment of the wicked—the Great White Throne judgment, in which sinners will be cast into the lake of fire. Then there will be a new heaven and a new earth where the believers will be with the Lord for eternity.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17
XVI. Missions

We believe that the Lord has commanded us to give the Gospel to the world. The command of the Great Commission has been given to the church and to every Christian. As a local church we achieve this goal of worldwide evangelization through the sending and supporting of missionaries.

John 20:21  Acts 1:8

XVII. Civil Government

We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home; 2) the Church; and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the Church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God.

Romans 13:1-7  Ephesians 5:21-25  Ephesians 6:1-4
Hebrews 13:17  1 Peter 2:13-14

XVIII. Human Sexuality

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity should be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery and pornography are sinful perversions of God’s gift of sex.

Genesis 2:24  Genesis 19:5, 13  Genesis 26:8-9
Leviticus 18:1-30  Romans 1:26  1 Corinthians 5:1
1 Corinthians 6:  1 Thessalonians 4:1-8  Hebrews 13:4
XIX. Abortion

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the mental well-being of the mother are acceptable.

Job 3:16  Psalms 51:5  Psalms 139:14-16
Isaiah 44:24  Isaiah 49:1,5  Luke 1:44

XX. Lawsuits Between Believers

We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the Church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the Church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek fair compensation for injuries from another Christian’s insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander.

1 Corinthians 6:1-8  Ephesians 4:31-32

XXI. Giving

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God’s wealth entrusted to him/her, is obligated to support his/her church financially. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to support the church, and the spreading of the Gospel.

1 Corinthians 16:2  2 Corinthians 9:6-10  1 Timothy 5:17-18
Our Values Statement

What We Practice

Beliefs are not worth much unless they are translated into actions. Based on what the Bible teaches, we feel very strongly about the following practices:

We value LIFE CHANGING SPIRITUAL GROWTH which encompasses: a committed life of Christ-likeness for every believer; local and world evangelism; Biblical family values; a weekly tithe to God; a personal walk with God; individual and corporate worship; separation from the world; and Christian training and service.

I. Bible as our sole authority

(2 Timothy 3:16-17) “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

The values of Val Verde Baptist Church are based upon the belief that the Bible is the final authority in all manners of life. Therefore, Christ-likeness is the goal of each member. We accept the Bible as our manual for living and we practice daily Bible reading, Bible study, and Bible memorization.

II. Witnessing

(Proverbs 11:30) “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.”

(1 Peter 3:15) “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:”

We practice evangelism both at home and abroad as the primary purpose of the church. Therefore, a member in good standing will practice being a witness in the local community as well as support world missions.

III. Family values

The duties of wives and husbands are enforced by the spiritual relation between Christ and the church.

(Ephesians 5:22) “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.”

(Ephesians 5:25) “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;”

(Ephesians 6:1-2) “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;”

We practice Biblical family values, therefore, we support the God-given responsibility of the husband and father as the leader of the home and admonish him to lead, love, protect and provide for his family. We support the wife and mother as she follows the leadership of her husband, and loves, nurtures, and helps in the administration of the home. We admonish parents to raise Godly children and to protect them from the world and the Devil’s subtle devices. It is the children’s responsibility to obey and honor their parents in
all things.

IV. Tithing
(Leviticus 27:30) “And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD’S: it is holy unto the LORD.”
(1 Corinthians 16:2) “Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”

At Val Verde we practice tithing for the support of Christ’s body, the church, as God commands. We recognize that giving 10% of our income is the Biblical standard of giving.

V. Separation from the world
(2 Corinthians 6:17) “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.”

We value the Biblical teaching that every Christian is set apart by God for his use. We encourage every believer to live a life representative of Christ. Because God wants to use each Christian, we must be yielded to God in every area of life. We practice clean, Godly living, separated from the world in areas of: worldly practices, associations, and philosophies.

VI. Worship
(Psalms 34:3) “O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.”

We value the responsibility and privilege of every Christian to worship God individually and corporately. Therefore, we practice a personal walk with God through daily prayer and Bible study. We also practice regular church attendance where we can corporately worship God through music, tithing, and preaching.

VII. Serving God
(Colossians 3:17) “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”

We practice service within the local church as the responsibility of every believer. God has given each person unique gifts and abilities which can be , and should be used for God. The gifts may vary but the responsibility is the same, to serve God and each other in the local church. Therefore we promote the participation of every member in Sunday School, New Life Training, Discipleship, and other programs designed for further spiritual growth. Our goal is to help every member develop spiritual habits, discover his/her gifts, prepare them for service, and assist them in finding the ministry which best suits their gifts. It is the churches responsibility to continue teaching, training, and encouraging believers
Our Vision Statement

Where We Are Going

I. Evangelism
We envision a church where the Gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed to all those who have not heard, not only in the Golden Triangle, but also around the world through personal evangelism and world missions.

II. Meeting Needs
We envision a church that strives to meet the needs of people, whether they are spiritual or physical, regardless of status, culture, or position.

III. Acceptance
We envision a church where people that are hurting, depressed, lonely, and confused, can find peace, joy, love, and acceptance in Christ through this local body of believers.

IV. Maturity
We envision a church where the Word of God is taught and believers become mature, committed followers of Jesus Christ through practical Bible teaching, evangelism, worship, ministry and fellowship.

V. Ministry
We envision a church where believers can find their unique gifts and talents, and utilize those gifts and talents by meeting the needs of others through ministry.

VI. Missions
We envision a church where scores of preachers, teachers, soul-winners, and missionaries are trained and sent out in order to share the Gospel with a lost and dying world, both in full-time ministry and in short term missions projects.

VII. Attendance
We envision a church with a large attendance so that we may effectively reach the area God has given us. We envision building, filling, and then adding to our existing facilities as the church grows and new ministries are birthed.
(1 Corinthians 9:22) To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.
OUR HISTORY

Following a two week revival, held at the corner of Atlantic Road and Val Verde Street, Val Verde Baptist Church was organized on December 16, 1945 with 10 charter members. It was stared as a mission of 18th Street Baptist Church under the leadership of Brother John W. Duggar, assisted by Brother W.P. Murchison, Pastor of Park Place Baptist Church, Brother L.N. Lassiter, Polk County Missionary pastor, and Brother M.D. Cruse.

By February 28, 1946 the church had grown to 23 members when they called their first pastor. Membership grew to around 320 by October of 1964 when there was a merger of Calvary Baptist Church with Val Verde, giving the church a combined membership of 438. During the pastorate of James Stroud, the church grew to an average of 1,000 with high days in excess of 2,000 in attendance.

On February 14, 1946, property was purchased at the corner of 32nd Street and Cleveland in the Groves. Three frame buildings were erected. The original buildings were razed in 1968 and new church buildings were erected. In 1975, a shopping center located at the corner of 39th Street and Cleveland was purchased. It was remodeled for church use and a building was joined to it that could be used both as a gym and an auditorium. On March 8, 1981, a beautiful new 1,000 seat sanctuary was dedicated. The entire structure contains in excess of 70,000 sq. feet and is set on eight acres of land. It has an appraise value of over four million dollars. In the past six years much of the building has undergone restoration and redecoration.


Val Verde has been involved in many effective and fruitful ministries during its history. Only eternity will reveal the positive effects that it has had over these many years. At this time we are involved in a full range of ministries. We have a strong foreign missions program that supports over 35 missionary families in over 30 different countries. Our Child Care ministry currently has over 140 children enrolled. Other ministries include an active soul-winning ministry, a vibrant music and drama ministry, kids clubs for our children, an active student ministry for our area youth, a senior adult ministry, a growing bus ministry, a nursing home ministry, and a food room, a sports ministry and others.
The Four Val Verde Covenants:

I.  **The Membership Covenant Class 101**
Is a commitment to **Christ** and the **Val Verde Baptist Church** family.

(Romans 12:5-6) “So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;”

(Ephesians 2:19) “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;”

II.  **The Maturity Covenant Class 201**
Is a commitment to the **habits** necessary for spiritual growth.

(2 Peter 3:18) “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”

(1 Timothy 4:7) “But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.”

III.  **The Ministry Covenant Class 301**
Is a commitment to discovering and using my God-given gifts and abilities in **serving** God and others.

(1 Corinthians 12:5) “And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.”

(1 Corinthians 12:27) “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”

(1 Peter 4:10) “As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

IV.  **The Missions Covenant Class 401**
Is a commitment to **share** the Good News with others.

(Acts 1:8) “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

(1 Peter 3:15) “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: “

Why do we have these covenants?

We Become What We Are **Committed to**.

If you want to make your life count:

Learn to be **Totally Committed** to a **Few Things** rather than **Half Committed** to a **Dozen Things**.
Session Four

The Val Verde Structure

(1 Corinthians 14:33) “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.”

(1 Corinthians 14:40) “Let all things be done decently and in order.”
How Our Church Is Structured

The structure of the church should not be determined by culture, business practices, or even denominational traditions.

The nature of the church determines its structure.

I. The Church Is a FELLOWSHIP

Definition of Fellowship: TWO FELLOWS ON THE SAME SHIP

(Acts 2:42) “And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”

A. A top priority in a fellowship is Harmony and Unity.

(Romans 14:19) “Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.”

(Ephesians 4:3) “Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

1. We can have unity without forcing uniformity.

2. Any attitude that causes disunity is sin.


3. Implication: A good structure promotes unity and downplays differences.

(1 Corinthians 11:17-18) “Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse. {18} For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it.”

Question: What do these words have in common?

Voting, committees, boards, parliamentary procedure, majority rule, democracy, elections, board meetings

Answer: They are not in the Bible.

“Voting” tends to CREATE DIVISION.

At Val Verde, we only vote on:

- Purchase of LAND AND BUILDINGS
- Calling the SENIOR PASTOR
- Changes in the CHURCH CONSTITUTION.
II. The Church is a Family
(1 Peter 3:8) “Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous.”
Galatians 6:10, Hebrews 2:10-12, 1 Peter 4:17

So we operate on the basis of **Relationships** not **Rules**.

(1 Timothy 5:1-2) “Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.”
1 Timothy 3

III. The church is a Body

(1 Corinthians 12:27) “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”
(Ephesians 1:22-23) “And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”
(Ephesians 5:23) “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.”
(Colossians 1:18) “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”
(Colossians 2:19) “And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.”

A. We are a body — not a business!
B. We are an organism — not an organization!

1. Therefore, we function on the basis of **Abilities** and **Talents** (spiritual gifts) not **Elected Offices**.

(Romans 12:4-6) “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;”

2. In an organization, “maintenance” becomes the focus. But in an organism, “ministry” is the focus.
3. At Val Verde we have a simple structure so we can maximize MINISTRY and minimize MAINTENANCE.

(Ephesians 4:11-12) “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:”

4. Our Structure
   i. The people are the “MINISTERS”.
   ii. The pastor and staff are the “ADMINISTERS”.

Our Ministers are responsible to keep the church committed to the biblical vision of the church in Doctrine, Practice, and Purpose.
IV.  The Church Is A Flock (Jesus’ favorite description of the church)
(Matthew 25:33) “And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.”
(Matthew 26:31) “Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this
night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be
scattered abroad.”
John 10:1-30

A. Therefore, it is cared for and led by a SHEPHERD.
(John 21:16) “He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, loveth thou
me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed
my sheep.”

B. Three different terms are used in the New Testament to refer to the same
church leaders:
1. “POIMEN” PASTOR   Shepherd   FEEDER
2. PRESBUTEROS” ELDER   Spiritually Mature   ADVISOR
3. EPISCOPOS” BISHOP   Oversee    MANAGER

(Acts 20:17-18) “And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the
church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day
that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons,”
(Acts 20:28) “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which
the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath
purchased with his own blood.”
(1 Peter 5:1-2) “The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a
witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:
Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint,
but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;”
Titus 1:5-7, 1 Tim. 5:17

What It Means To Be A Member

The difference between “attenders” and “members” can be summed up in one word:
Commitment.

At Val Verde we recognize the need for a formal membership. We ask you to commit to
membership for four reasons:

I.  A Biblical Reason:
Christ is committed to the church.

(Ephesians 5:25) “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and
gave himself for it;”

At Val Verde we never ask our members to do more than the Bible clearly teaches. We
only expect our members to do what the Bible expects every Christian to do. These
responsibilities are spelled out in the Membership Covenant.
II. **A Cultural Reason:**
It is an antidote to our society

We live in an age where very few want to be committed to anything...a job...a marriage...our country. This attitude has even produced a generation of “church shoppers and hoppers”. Membership swims against the current of America’s “consumer religion.” It is an unselfish decision. Commitment always builds character.

III. **A Practical Reason:**
It defines who can be counted on

Every team must have a roster. Every school must have an enrollment. Every business has a payroll. Every army has an enlistment. Even our country takes a census and requires voter registration. Membership identifies our family.

IV. **A Personal Reason:**
It produces spiritual growth

The New Testament places a major emphasis on the need for Christians to be accountable to each other for spiritual growth. You cannot be accountable when you’re not committed to any specific church family.
The Val Verde Baptist Church Membership Covenant

“Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and been baptized by immersion, and being in agreement with Val Verde’s statements of faith, purpose, and practice, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Val Verde Baptist Church family. In so doing, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

I. I will protect the unity of my church

A. By acting in love toward other members
(Romans 14:19) “Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.”

B. By refusing to gossip
(Ephesians 4:29) Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

C. By following the leaders of the church as they follow Christ
(1 Corinthians 11:1) “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.”
(Hebrews 13:7) “Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.”
(Hebrews 13:17) “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”

II. I will share the responsibility of my church

A. By praying for its growth
(1 Thessalonians 1:1-2) “Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;”

B. By witnessing to the unsaved and inviting the unchurched to attend
(Luke 14:23) “And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.”

C. By warmly welcoming those who visit
(Romans 15:7) “Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.”

III. I will serve the ministry of my church

A. By discovering my gifts and talents
(1 Peter 4:10) “As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

B. By being equipped to serve by my pastor and teachers
(Ephesians 4:11-12) “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the
work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:”

C. By developing a servant’s heart  
(Philippians 2:3-5) “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:”

IV. I will support the testimony of my church

A. By attending faithfully  
(Hebrews 10:25) “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

B. By living a godly life  
(Philippians 1:27) Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

C. By giving regularly  
(Malachi 3:10) “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”  
(1 Corinthians 16:2) “Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”

What Now-

Sunday School, Sunday Morning Worship, Sunday Evening Worship, Wednesday Evening Prayer Meeting and Bible Study, Discipleship, Classes 201, 301, 401.
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Val Verde Baptist Church
Four Requirements

Have you committed your life to Jesus Christ and trust only Him for your salvation? (Please tell us when and what happened-)

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Have you been baptized by immersion (under water) after you trusted Christ as your Saviour? (Please tell us when and what church were you baptized at-)

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Do you understand what we believe and what we practice at Val Verde Baptist Church?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Are you in agreement with what we believe and practice and do you wish to join with us here?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

____________________________ __________________
Your name Today’s date

Welcome to our Family and may God bless you as you serve Him here!