

Becoming A Member of Gloria Dei | Session 1A

Getting to Know Each Other

Welcome!

We are very thankful that you sense God is calling you to live and serve as a disciple of Jesus in His community here at Gloria Dei! As you know we highly value our relationship to Jesus and His mission Gloria Dei; this is reflected in our mission statement “Leading ordinary people to an extraordinary life in Christ,” and in everything we do here as we seek to serve the Lord Jesus with our heart, mind, soul and strength. But as we live in relationship with our Lord Jesus, we also live in relationship with one another, and truthfully, that’s a big part of becoming a member of our congregation. So...let’s get to know one another then!

As you introduce yourself, use these questions to assist:

- Where did you grow up?
- What is your favorite childhood memory?
- Who was most influential in your life as a child?
- Where do you live now?
- What is your current vocation?
- How did you first come in contact with Gloria Dei? Who/what brought you here?
- Why do you want to be a member of Gloria Dei?
- What’s one thing you hope to get from this class?

Use the space below if you want to make any reminders as people introduce themselves.

Becoming A Member of Gloria Dei | Session 1B

Getting to Know Gloria Dei

Who Are We as a Congregation?

What does the name “Gloria Dei” mean?

We are Lutherans—We could be called “Reformed Roman Catholics”

- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther 1517; 95 Theses Wittenberg Door
- See: Kittelson, James M. Luther the Reformer
- Sola Fide/Sola Gratia/Sola Scriptura

We are—“The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod”

Our beginnings...

- Saxon Germans—Fleeing Persecution
- St. Louis...MISSOURI
- 1847—11 Pastors
- President C.F.W. Walther

Our Current Status...

- 36 Districts—6125 Congregations
- 2.2 Million Members
- 10 Colleges/Universities and 2 Seminaries

Our Governance...

- Presidents...not Bishop or Pope
- Congregational and yet “Synodical” which means we are “Walking Together”

We are a Member Congregation of the Iowa District West (IDW)

- One of about 173 Congregations
 - In Urbandale since 1965
 - Congregation of about 2,200 members
 - Blended Congregation
 - Preschool—On Site
 - Children’s Ministry and Youth Ministry
 - Small Group Ministry
 - Men’s and Women’s Ministry
 - Care Ministry (Stephen Ministry)
 - Missions Minded and Outreach Oriented
- (Walk through Resource “F”)

Leading ordinary people to an extraordinary life in Christ.

Becoming A Member of Gloria Dei | Session 2A

What Can You Expect Your Congregation to Do for You?

- Support You in the Time of Need - I Corinthians 12:26; Acts 2:42-47
- Equip You for Ministry Every Day - Ephesians 4:11-14
- Provide Opportunities for You to Serve and Follow Jesus - Acts 6:1-7
- Challenging You to Live for Jesus - Ephesians 4:1-6
- Always Scripture-Centered
- Always Christ-Centered
- Always Doctrinally Conservative
- Always Good Stewards of the Lord's Resources
- Always Seeking and Reaching the Lost
- Always Concerned for and Reaching Out to Those Who Are Disenfranchised.

Becoming A Member of Gloria Dei | Session 2B

What Does Your Congregation Expect of You and Your Discipleship

Jesus said in Matthew 16, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.” As a disciple of Jesus in this place, we ask that you faithfully and as much as in you lies to adhere to the following:

- Faithful in Worship—Every Week as You Are Able, Even When Traveling - Hebrews 10:25
(Also See Resource C)
- Faithful in Study and Prayer—Devotions and Bible Study Each Week - 2 Timothy 3:14-17
(Also See Resource A and B)
- Faithful in Witness—Seeking to Grow in Your Ability to Speak the Gospel - 2 Corinthians 5:17-21
(Also See Resource D)
- Faithful in Living—Seeking to Live a Righteous and Upright Life - Ephesians 5:6-13
- Faithful in Giving—Seeking to Give a Consistent Percentage of Your Income - 2 Corinthians 9:6-7
(Also See Resource E)
- Faithful in Serving—Seeking to Use Your God-given Talents to His Glory - 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

Becoming A Member of Gloria Dei | Session 3A

God’s Word Our Source for Faith—The Bible

Information Sources

What are the sources of general information in your every day life?

Of these, which do you rely on the most? Trust the most?

Which of these is 100% accurate, never, ever wrong?

What is the purpose of the Bible?

Bible Basics

The Bible was written over the course of _____ years.

It was penned from about _____ B.C. to about _____ A.D.

The Old Testament contains _____ books/chapters.

The New Testament contains _____ books/chapters.

The Function of the Old Testament is to _____.

The Function of the New Testament is to _____.

The Divisions of the Bible

Besides the Old and New Testaments, how is the Bible divided?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

The Genre of the Books of the Bible

Why is it important to understand the style/genre of the book?

Translation of the Bible

- ESV
- NIV
- NASB
- King James

Becoming A Member of Gloria Dei | Session 3B

The Attributes of the Bible

Its Authority In Our Life

The Bible is God's truth given through men: See 2 Peter 1:16-21 and John 17:17.

The words of Scripture are not just the words of men, but in actuality are the very Words of God. See 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21; 2 Peter 3:15,16.

As God's Word it has supreme authority in our lives and if we do not completely understand or agree with the words of the Bible, we are not to stand as judge over it. The Bible is the scalpel in God's hands to bring surgery/healing; therefore we're not to take a scalpel to the Bible. See John 12:47,48; Isaiah 66:2; Psalm 119:105; Hebrews 4:12.

Its Inerrancy/Infallibility As the Very Word of God

Though the Bible was written by humans and in human language, we've established that in fact, God wrote the Scriptures through these men. We therefore hold that the Bible, which is God's Word, is as perfect as the God who gave them. They are therefore inerrant (without error) and infallible (incapable of error). When someone claims that there are contradictions and errors in the Scriptures, we say "Show me!"

Look at: John 17:17; John 8:31-32; Matthew 7:24-27; Exodus 3—"Holy...Ground" Why was the ground "holy?"

Its Primary Purpose

1. God gave us His perfect and powerful Word for a very specific purpose. The Bible does help us as we live our lives in relationship to Him. Consider the Ten Commandments and the Epistles.
2. The Bible also helps us to get a minute glimpse into who God is. Consider Matthew 28:18-20 and our Creeds.
3. But the Bible's ultimate purpose is to bring us to faith in Jesus. Look at John 5:39 and John 20:31.

How does the Catechism fit with God's Word?

JESUS

Becoming A Member of Gloria Dei | Session 4A

The Way We are Given Salvation in Jesus' Name

The Gift of God's Grace: How are we saved?

We must first remember our need and then God's provision for our need. Our need is well presented in Romans 3:9-20 and His provision for our need is well presented in Romans 5:6-11. Ephesians 2:8,9 also reminds us that it's not about who we are or what we've done, but about who God is and what He's done for us in Jesus.

The Means of Grace: How do we receive the gift?

So...it's by grace and through faith that God saves us. But how does He communicate that grace and faith to us? This is called "The Means of Grace" or the "avenue" or "way" in which God gives His grace to us. And the Means of Grace are:

His Word read, taught, preached: Hebrews 4:12; Romans 10:14-17.

Baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:38-41.

The Eucharist, Holy Communion or the Lord's Supper: Matthew 26:26-30 alongside 1 Corinthians 10:15,16; 11:17-33.

Becoming A Member of Gloria Dei | Session 4B

Our Baptism into Discipleship

Baptism—Historical Background

Historical Background for Baptism: John the Baptizer: It is thought by some that John the Baptizer was likely what was called an Essene, though to my knowledge this has never been confirmed. The Essenes were a strict Jewish sect that held a strong ritualistic faith. They were therefore well connected to and driven by Old Testament Jewish purification rites. Therefore, the Baptism by John was simply the pre-cursor to the Baptism Jesus would later institute and was simply a ritualistic cleansing, preparatory for the advent of Jesus. Check Exodus 30:17-21 as well as in Mark 7:1-5.

John's baptism did confer the forgiveness of sins, but in the same sense that our confession and absolution do. See what John himself said about it in Luke 3:1-18 and Matthew 3:1-12. However, John's baptism did not confer the Holy Spirit; see Acts 19:1-7.

Baptism—Christian

While John's baptism should be seen as ritualistic in nature and preparatory for Jesus' baptism, the baptism of Jesus is active, conferring the Holy Spirit and forgiveness of sins.

Jesus' Baptism was done in a different way: Matthew 28:18-20.

Jesus' Baptism was instituted after the Cross and the Grave!

Jesus' Baptism cleanses from sin and confers the gift of the Holy Spirit: Acts 2:38-39; Acts 19:1-7; Acts 22:1-16; Romans 6:1-5; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 3:26-29; Titus 3:5-7; 1 Peter 3:18-22.

What About Infant Baptism?

Does an infant have sin and therefore need forgiveness? Psalm 51:5 and Genesis 8:20,21.

Does baptism bring forgiveness? Acts 2:38; Acts 22:1-16.

Can God transcend a child's cognition? Luke 1:39-45.

Is it possible for infants to have faith? (Luke 1:37) 1 Timothy 3:10-17.

What about the circumcision connection? When did they circumcise? Read Colossians 2:9-15 and then Genesis 17:1-14. So if circumcision was for infants...why would God change His mind in the New Testament about our children? In fact, read again Acts 2:38,39.

Becoming A Member of Gloria Dei | Session 5A

The Lord's Supper—Holy Communion— The Eucharist

Confession and Absolution

Why? 1 John 1:5-10; John 20:19-23

The Lord's Supper - Historical Background

The Lord Jesus and His 12 Disciples went to the upper room to celebrate what meal? Read Exodus 12:1-30 and Luke 22:7-23.

Why is it important to consider the two events together? John 1:29-34 and re-read Exodus 12:21,22 (also consider Hebrews 9:11-14 and Leviticus 16:1-24).

The Passover Meal celebrated God's mercy in rescuing God's people from bondage and slavery.

The Lord's "Supper" - Future

What is the name of the event that the "Blessed" are invited to? Read Revelation 19:6-9.

Becoming A Member of Gloria Dei | Session 5B

The Eucharist—Holy Communion—The Lord’s Supper

Three Main Positions on Communion:

Evangelicals—“Representational”

These Christians believe that the bread and wine were given by Jesus to remind us of His Body and Blood given at the Cross. They place a greater importance on Jesus’ words “Do this in remembrance of me.” You’ll likely see those words etched into the front of their altars. Communion is done repeatedly because of Christ’s command, and to remember His death for us, but no forgiveness is offered or obtained.

Roman Catholic—“Transubstantiation”

The Roman Catholic Church believes that the whole substance of the bread and the wine are completely changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus and therefore are no longer bread and wine... and they are so in perpetuity. Their Catechism reads: The Council of Trent summarizes the Catholic faith by declaring: “Because Christ our Redeemer said that it was truly His Body that He was offering under the species of the bread, it has always been the conviction of the Church of God, and this holy Council now declares again, that by the consecration of the bread and the wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the Body of Christ our Lord and the whole substance of the wine into the substance of His blood. This change the Holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called Transubstantiation.” Catechism of the Catholic Church, page 347.

Lutherans—“Real Presence”

The Lutheran Church—stemming from Martin Luther’s desire to reform the Roman Catholic Church—falls in between these two. In truth, we are much closer to Roman Catholics than the Evangelicals. We believe that Christ’s Body and Blood are literally, physically present, but common sense and the Scriptures tell us that the bread and wine are also present.

What the Bible says:

Matthew 26:17-30; Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22:7-20; 1 Corinthians 10:14-17; 1 Corinthians 11:17-30.

In summary, the Lord’s Supper is a commemoration of the past (1 Corinthians 11:24), a participation in the present (1 Corinthians 10:16-17) and an anticipation (1 Corinthians 11:26) of the future.