

Partnership is a covenant with our church community towards seeing the kingdom of God expand in the city of Edmonton and beyond. Grace Edmonton exists to bring glory to God through lives transformed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our partners have committed to living out this vision of loving Jesus, loving people, and helping people love Jesus. We do this by worshipping God in all of life, living in community, getting trained for ministry, and making disciples together over time. We ask our partners to uphold some key commitments with this mission in mind and to actively be the church for their community.

Some churches do membership, but we long to find partners. The reason why we use the term partner is that we believe the church is a partnership of Spirit-led disciples who follow Jesus. The church is not a social club bound by exclusive membership; it's a community on mission bound together by the gospel. We believe that the Scripture teaches that everyone who is part of the body of Christ is a minister of the gospel. The role of elders/pastors/teachers, and other leaders is to help partners become prepared to be all God intends them to be. Because of this, we call our members "partners" to emphasize the fact that we hope and expect they'll be more than spectators. The modern idea of being a "church attender" is completely foreign to the New Testament. The church is the body of Christ sent to be Jesus' people in the world. Our partners use their unique gifts and talents to help fulfill our vision for Grace Edmonton. Together, we are becoming a New Testament Church existing for the supremacy of the name and purpose of Jesus Christ.

We ask people to be a partner on mission with the church. As partners, we want to take responsibility in serving the church in accordance with our vision and values as given in this document, submitting to authority, and fighting to protect the unity of the church.

OUR VISION:

**Grace Fellowship exists to bring glory to God
through lives transformed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.**

WHO WE ARE:

**We are a Gospel-Centered family of churches who desire to know the Gospel,
live the Gospel, and advance the Gospel.**

OUR MISSION:

**To live out our Gospel identity as disciple-making disciples who exist as a
family of missionary servants called to love Jesus; love people; and help
people love Jesus.**

Our Vision

Grace Edmonton exists to bring glory to God through lives transformed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We are God-centered; we exist to bring glory to God. This is the chief aim and purpose of humanity and of all creation. The glory of God is ultimate. The scriptures share the wonderful news that God is glorified through the Gospel of Jesus and the resulting changed lives. Life change is both an event (salvation) and a process (sanctification). Both salvation and sanctification are evidences of God's grace in our lives and are appropriated by faith.

When we use the word Gospel, we mean the historic Gospel of Jesus Christ crucified and resurrected. This Gospel is more than a collection of facts to be believed. It is also the good and true story that Jesus died and rose to defeat sin, death and evil in order to make all things new. As the only person capable of such an act, Jesus is the rightful Lord over every square inch of the universe. This "Jesus is Lord" Gospel compels us to be a community that lives redemptively in all aspects of life.

As followers of Jesus, we have come to realize that we are far more broken than we really comprehend, but in Christ we are more accepted than we could ever imagine. Although we fail in following Jesus, we are confident that his redeeming grace is sufficient for our failures and strong for our successes. Grace Edmonton is part of this grand, historic Christianity which seeks the good of the whole person, the city, and the glory of God.

Who We Are

Our vision is driven by the central value of being Gospel-centered

Gospel Centered: The Gospel changes everything. The Gospel is "the power of God" (Rom.1:16) that changes not only unbelievers but believers as well. The Gospel is the solution not only for our "spiritual" problems but all personal problems (Col.1:16) and all societal problems (Gal.2:14).

KNOW THE GOSPEL

"I am a sinner" and "Jesus is the Savior for sinners." These are the twin truths of the Gospel, which the apostle Paul says "is the power (dunamis or dynamite) of God" (Romans 1:16). The Gospel is God's explosive power that changes everything.

First, the Gospel makes us Christians. You cannot be a Christian unless both sides of the Gospel come together. "I am a sinner" without "Jesus is the Savior" leads to guilt and ultimately despair. "Jesus is the Savior" without "I am a sinner" has no meaning. As a result, we see Jesus merely as a great teacher or a good role model, but not as the answer to our greatest need. But when both of these truths collide you have the Gospel and everything changes. God forgives your sin, declares you righteous in Christ, gives you eternal life, adopts you as His child, and ushers you into an intimate relationship with Himself.

Application: We will minister with great hope and confidence. Since we are saved by the Gospel, which is the power of God, there are no hopeless cases. No one and no situation is beyond the Gospel's transforming power. The Gospel can change anyone.

Second, the Gospel grows us. Most people think we become Christians by believing the Gospel, and then we grow by mastering biblical principles for living. They believe that the Gospel is the starting point, but then we must move on to more advanced teaching to grow. But the Gospel is not merely the

way we enter the kingdom, it is also the way we make all progress in kingdom living. The Gospel is not the ABC's but the A to Z of the Christian life. It is the way of righteousness "from first to last" (Romans 1:17). Therefore, the Gospel is the solution to all of our problems. At the root of all of our problems is sin, specifically the sin of looking to someone or something other than Jesus for our significance, strength and satisfaction. This root sin manifests itself in all of our various problems. God intends that my problems drive me to see in a fresh and deeper way that "I am a sinner" and "Jesus is my Savior". And so change continues, just as it began, through the power of the Gospel (Romans 6:1-4).

Application: We will preach the Gospel to believers, not just unbelievers. Since, the Gospel not only makes us Christians (justification), but also grows us as Christians (sanctification), the most desperate need of both unbelievers and believers is to hear and appropriate the Gospel to their lives.

Third, the Gospel empowers us to serve. Some would warn that if we focus on the Gospel of grace that we will produce lazy Christians. Their logic is: If we tell people "Jesus has done it all!" then they will have no motivation to serve others. Nothing could be further from the truth. Only the Gospel can produce unselfish love and service. Apart from the Gospel we will either avoid serving out of fear of failure, rejection, or inconvenience, or we will be driven to serve in order to ease our guilty conscience and gain approval from God and people. But when "I am a sinner" and "Jesus is my Savior" come together, our old motivational structure is demolished. We are no longer driven by fear, guilt or the need for affirmation. The Gospel gives us a whole new motivational structure. Paul says: "Christ's love compels us" to live for others (2 Corinthians 5:14-15; cf. Romans 12:1). It is Jesus' generosity towards us that moves us to be generous with our time, talent, and resources. To claim we believe and yet not be engaged in the needs of our world reveals that our faith is not in the living, powerful Gospel of Christ (James 2:17). For the Gospel changes everything!

Application: We will motivate with grace not guilt. We will refuse to use guilt trips to drive people to serve. Rather, we will motivate with the Gospel, which sets us free to love and serve unconditionally in response to God's grace in Christ.

LIVE THE GOSPEL

In order to live the Gospel, we are completely dependent upon the Spirit of God – apart from whom we can do nothing. The model for our reliance upon the Spirit and our experience of his indwelling and empowering presence is the Lord Jesus Christ himself who was filled with the Spirit and entirely dependent upon his power for the performance of miracles, the preaching of the kingdom of God, and all other dimensions of his earthly ministry.

A Spirit-filled People of Prayer

Thus our main Gospel mission strategy is prayer. The Gospel causes us to pray with an unique combination of humility and confidence. We approach God humbly because the Gospel teaches us that we are far more sinful than we ever dared imagine. And we approach God confidently because the Gospel teaches us that in and through Jesus Christ we are far more loved than we ever dared dream. We want prayer to be both a regular community discipline, and an impromptu response to needs and opportunities. We will not assume we are in control of mission, nor rob God of his glory by boasting of our achievements.

A Spirit-filled People of the Word

We want our lives and our life together to be formed and shaped by the Bible's story of redemption. We are committed to reading and teaching the entire Bible in light of the gospel. The Spirit has come to glorify Jesus (John 15:26; 16:13-14). We believe the Bible to be the reliable, authoritative and sufficient word of God, and are therefore committed to good Bible learning. We will not act on the basis of tradition, habit or pragmatism without reflection on the Bible. We will not see Bible teaching as an end in itself, but as that which reveals Jesus who must shape our thinking and action. We do not want the gospel and truth we learn to be believed as "concepts" in the mind, but rather truths to be treasured in the heart that transforms our behavior.

A Spirit-filled People Unified in Community

The "body of Christ", "a temple of living stones", "a holy nation", "the family of God". The authors of the New Testament thought of themselves primarily as a community, rather than as individuals. They knew the reality of what we often fail to see and experience: that Jesus came not merely to save individuals but to create a new community. The individualism of our day and age has blinded us to the radical corporate nature of salvation.

The Gospel breaks down all barriers (race, class, gender, age) and makes all who claim Jesus as Lord and Savior; one in Him (Galatians 3:28). Unity cannot be overemphasized. The Father decided in eternity not merely to save a collection of individuals, but to redeem a people (Ephesians 1:4). Jesus died to shatter everything that separated us from one another and to make us one in Him (Ephesians 2:13-15). The Holy Spirit takes very different persons, makes us one (1 Corinthians 12:13), and miraculously enables us to love one another.

Christian community is cultivated as people believe the Gospel and in response devote themselves to the Lord and one another. When Luke describes the early Christian Community he says immediately after believing the Gospel "they devoted themselves...to the fellowship" (Acts 2:42). The word "devoted" means they "set as a priority", "committed to", spending significant time with one another. They ate together in their homes, discussed God's Word, worshipped, prayed, and shared their resources with one another. That's why the basic building block of Grace Edmonton will be our Gospel Community Groups—small groups that meet to experience Christ's presence through the Holy Spirit in community. Being a part of this new community partnering together on Jesus' mission is not an optional thing – an "extra" for the Christian. Rather it is a part of the overall purpose of God's kingdom. We want people to experience church as a network of relationships, not simply a meeting you attend or a place you enter.

A Spirit-filled People who are Outward Focused

Through the Gospel, Jesus makes us a people for others. His Gospel gives us deep respect and great hope for every non-Christian, and frees and empowers us not to live for ourselves but for our friends, neighbors and associates who don't believe. The Gospel makes us a people and a place where non-Christians are expected, welcomed, and respected. Their questions and objections are invited. Their struggles and doubts are taken seriously. They are loved not that we might evangelize them, but we evangelize them because we love them.

In our daily life, we will love our neighbors. Through the testimony of a transformed life, deeds of love and kindness, and hospitality, we will actively cultivate authentic relationships with non-Christians and invite them to our home and to our church gatherings that they might meet Jesus (Luke 5:29).

In our gatherings, we will be determinedly conscious of and welcoming to non-Christians in our midst. We will worship in such a way that unbelievers can understand and be included (1 Corinthians 14:24-25). We are committed to welcoming broken people and making church accessible to those who do not yet believe. We want to offer a sense of belonging, and be communities of grace in which people can be open and vulnerable.

A Spirit-filled People living out of a New Gospel-identity

The Holy Spirit gives us a new identity because of what Jesus has accomplished. We live differently because of what he has done and who we are in Christ. Our doing comes out of our being.

We are His:

Family – Because God has restored us to Himself, forgiven our sin, and removed His wrath from us by placing it on his own Son, we have become children of God, holy, and dearly loved by our Father! Therefore, we are God's children and His people in the world, a community that does for each other what God has done for us in Jesus, that the world might taste and see the goodness of our Father. (John 1:11-13; Eph. 3:15)

Missionaries – Because God has come to restore and redeem all of creation through Jesus, His healing work extends to people, systems, cultures, and all of creation! Therefore, we are God's ambassadors or representatives, sent into our culture by the Holy Spirit, commissioned to proclaim and demonstrate that God is restoring the world to Himself through Jesus. (2 Corinthians 5:17-21; John 17:18; 20:21)

Servants – Because God has sent his Son as a sacrificial servant, taking our place on the cross and thereby healing and forgiving us in his substitutionary death, we then are freed from our self-love and self-reliance and empowered by him to serve those around us. Therefore, we model our lives after the Servant-King, increasingly being freed by Him from slavery to self and so empowered to serve others. (Matthew 20:25-28; 25:31-46; John 13:1-17; 1 Peter 2:16)

Disciple-making Disciples – Because God has begun this work in us and by His Spirit promises to bring it to completion one day, we recognize the need to continuously be learning together from him and being changed by him. Therefore, we are students and followers of Jesus, learning from him how to live life the way God intended, and taking responsibility for helping one another to do the same. (Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Tim. 2:1-2; Eph. 4:11-16; 2 Tim. 3:14 – 4:5; 2 Peter 3:18)

We are **disciple-making disciples** who exist as a **family** of God sent on **mission** through **serving** our world in the way of Jesus so that the joy of the gospel fills our city and beyond.

ADVANCE THE GOSPEL

Grace Edmonton embraces a missionary understanding of the local church and its role as the primary means by which God chooses to establish his kingdom on earth. The church has a clear biblical mandate to look beyond its own community to the neighborhood, the nation, and the world as a whole; thus mission is not an optional program in the church but an essential element in the identity of the church.

On Pentecost, the exalted Lord Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit on his church to empower bold preaching of the gospel and, through that, to energize a multiplying church planting movement. Throughout the Book of Acts, Luke calls our attention to how the gospel spread, lives were changed and people were incorporated into vibrant new churches. To this very day, the same gospel continues to spread, changing lives and gathering people into new churches - churches that not only grow but churches that plant new churches for new people because the gospel cannot be stopped.

We want to be part of Jesus' church planting movement. By God's grace and the energizing power of the gospel we hope to not only plant churches but to plant churches that plant churches. We believe we are responsible neither to retreat from our culture nor to conform to it, but with humility, through the Spirit and the truth of the gospel, to engage it boldly as we seek its transformation and submission to the lordship of Christ.

Our Mission

Love Jesus, Love People, Help People Love Jesus

It is the Gospel that moves us to love and worship Jesus who is God (1 John 4:19), to extend grace and love to others, and it is the Gospel that moves us to make disciples in obedience to the mission Jesus has given us. We are formed as a new community by the gospel and this community has as its purpose taking this gospel message forward.

Love Jesus – Worship

“And [Jesus] said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment.” (Matt. 22:37-38 ESV; see also Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27)

Worshiping God is first about valuing, loving, and treasuring God above all others. It is saying with the Psalmist, “Whom have I in heaven but you, and there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever (Psalm 73:25-26).” It’s through our deep desire for God that worship spills over into our lives and becomes living in joyful, sacrificial obedience to God (Romans 12:1).

God can only be known and loved and worshipped in and through Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit (John 4:24; 14:6; 2 Cor. 4:6). It is Jesus alone who can save us from worshipping ourselves to the worship of God.

Love People - Community

“And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39 ESV)

The Church is primarily a people not a place or an event. In Christ we are reconciled to God and to one another as a “new humanity.” We are formed and guided by the Spirit and the Scriptures to be a counter-cultural community that participates fully in one another’s lives through giving and receiving, serving and being served, loving and being loved. As God’s people, we show the world what life under Jesus’ gracious reign looks like and serve as a foretaste of the coming Kingdom.

Help People Love Jesus – Mission

We love God and others by making disciples (worshippers) who find joy and rest and satisfaction in Jesus.

“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’” (Matthew 28:18-20 ESV)

We are the missional community of God, called to reflect the missional heart of God. As His people, we are gifted and empowered by His Spirit and sent together into the world to join with God in His mission to renew this world with the Gospel. Because Jesus is worthy, we work to reorient our lives around Him. Although God is sovereign and does not need our help, it is our blessing and a lifeline of spiritual health to be on mission with Him and to love others as He does.

By being on mission with Christ, we work to redeem people from worshiping themselves to worshiping Jesus. We share the Gospel in both word and deed seeking to touch the spiritual and physical needs of others in our city and world with the message and mercy of Jesus Christ by demonstrating compassion, working for justice, and participating in a church planting movement that will establish Gospel-centered churches.

At Grace, we only expect our community to do what the Bible expects every passionately committed follower of Jesus Christ to do. This covenant reflects the things that we believe are normal expectations for Jesus-followers and the things that we ask those who identify themselves with us to agree to be and do.

As a partner of Grace Edmonton, I am committed to love Jesus, love others by living and growing in community, and helping people love Jesus by making disciples with this body under its leadership, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and through the grace found in Christ Jesus our Lord.

It is my desire to partner with Grace Edmonton that I might live out my Gospel identity in community committed to pursue the following:

LOVE JESUS

- Habitually spend time with God through the reading of scripture and ongoing dependent prayer.
- Follow the example of Jesus in my personal holiness.
- Supporting the mission of this church with my finances, my time, and my resources.
- Be or have been baptized as a believer.
- Participate in communion with Grace Edmonton.

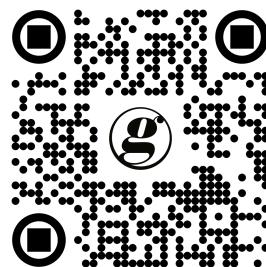
LOVE PEOPLE

- Actively pursue biblical community within Grace Edmonton by regularly gathering, including being a committed member of a Gospel Community. *
- Serve the body of Grace Edmonton.
- Pray for the people and mission of Grace Edmonton.
- Be diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit.
- Not gossip, but instead use my words to give grace to those who hear them.

HELP PEOPLE LOVE JESUS

- Build discipleship relationships with other Christians.
- Pursue intentional, transparent relationships with non-Christians in my sphere of influence.
- Be involved with the living out and sharing of the gospel both locally and globally with Grace Edmonton.

Please sign the document online at
<https://graceyeg.com/partner>



* As a church we seek to serve you in your God-given ministry, not constrain you. Our desire is that everyone is connected to a Gospel Community for the sake of prayer support, encouragement, communication etc. This level of connection may greatly vary depending on God's calling in a person's life.