

Mission Catalyst Membership Commitment Form for Self-Funded Churches

A self-funded church starts and joins MC by following the affiliation process outlined on our website. A church maintains its affiliation with MC on an annual basis, renewable each calendar year, by annually agreeing to the following:

1. They are non-negotiably outreach focused.
2. They affirm and agree with the Mission Catalyst doctrinal summary.
3. They are involved in a mission project at least 100 miles from their own local community.
4. They manage their finances with integrity and responsibility.
5. They create a Pivotal Design team¹ ASAP.
6. **a.** Churches in the U.S. pay forward 5% of its tithe and local giving to the network support office so that Mission Catalyst can start more churches and resource the congregations. (Funds not subject to this arrangement: money donated to a capital campaign; money earmarked for a parachurch ministry that has no connection with the local church; donations of goods and services.)

b. Churches outside the U.S. are not subject to the 5% but, instead, voluntarily pay for services provided by Mission Catalyst (e.g. coaching, resources, workshops). Because new churches often function on limited financial resources, fees are determined on an individual church basis.

Doctrinal Summary

There are a minimum number of beliefs that help bring a coherent voice to our message. They include the following:

1. **God is love. He is eternal, all-powerful, and all-knowing.** He is the Creator of all things and the source of compassion, goodness, and justice. The primary manifestations of God are the all-present Spirit and the beings of the Father and the Son (Jesus). (Revelation 1:8; Genesis 1:1; John 1:1-4, 14, 18; 1 John 4:8; Luke 18:19; Proverbs 29:26; John 4:24; Acts 2:17)
2. **The Bible is our principal source of knowledge about God and redemption.** It is our ultimate authority for truth, our guidebook for life, and the primary way God speaks to us. (John 17:17, Matthew 4:4, 2 Timothy 3:14-17)

¹ Mission Catalyst considers a Pivotal Design team to be critical to the success of a new church. It is a strategically assembled team of volunteer leaders or staff who collectively share six diverse and essential leadership qualities.

3. **God created human beings in His likeness.** But the first human (Adam) chose to disobey Him and, thus, cut off the connection to Him and His goodness. As a result, all humanity is sinful. However, God has a plan to reconnect us to Himself and restore His goodness in us. God, in the form of Jesus, lived a sinless human life that fully met God's standard of holiness. When He died on the cross, He voluntarily bore all the guilt of humanity, making His death a complete atonement (compensation) for our sin. He earned eternal life because we never could (any goodness in our lives is simply a fruit of the new life we have in Him), and He offers to transfer eternal life to us. Our part is to accept His gift and rely on Him as our Redeemer and Lord. Without Him, we share in the sinfulness of Adam and the consequence of eternal death (being separated from the only source of life). With Him, we share in His goodness and the consequence of eternal life. The Bible calls this grace - favor we have not earned for ourselves. (Genesis 1:27, Genesis 3; John 3:16, Romans 5, Romans 6:23)
4. **Our great hope is the soon return of Jesus to earth, this time in all His glory, to rescue the redeemed and seal the victory over sin forever.** His return will be literal, visible, and experienced worldwide. You can't miss it. (John 14:1-3, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Matthew 16:27, Revelation 1:7)
5. **Obedience to God is an indicator of sincere belief and love for Him.** Christians aspire to reflect His character and follow His will as expressed in the two great commandments - love God and love people. God's ten commandments, found in Exodus 20, expand and clarify these two great commands. Because of our spiritual brokenness, God's Spirit enables our obedience and transformation. (John 14:15, Matthew 22:36-40, Exodus 20, Romans 2:29, Romans 7:6)
6. **As the world around us seems to spin faster and faster, we thoughtfully press pause each week and enjoy the retro-practice of Sabbath time.** Each Saturday (as Moses, David, Jesus, and other Bible characters did before us), we celebrate and savor this day of grace. We rest, recharge, and reflect on the stories of God and how they relate to our own. We listen to and love the people who matter most to us. We explore God's creation with our kids. We count our blessings. We worship. And we remember that we don't have to be God, being everything to everyone, everywhere. We can rest in His grace and care and take a day to sync our hearts and minds with His. (Genesis 2:1-3)
7. **Water baptism by immersion publicly signifies our decision to die to our own ways and allow Jesus to live out His life in us** (being born again). (John 3:5-7, Matthew 3:13-17, Romans 6:3-6)
8. **God's design is for all Christians to be part of His body - the church.** In a world where people are often misunderstood, criticized, and harmed, the church must stand, in contrast, as the place where people are protected, valued, and unconditionally loved.

Only in this environment can the church fulfill its twofold purpose: (1) to encourage each other and worship God together; (2) to serve the disadvantaged and fulfill the Great Commission. (Romans 12:4-5, Ephesians 4:1-16, 2 Corinthians 5:17-19, Acts 2:42-47, Matthew 25, Matthew 28:16-20)

9. When a person dies, Solomon says, "the dust (body) returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it." He also noted that "the dead know nothing." Jesus described death as sleep. **When a person dies, God receives his spirit and preserves it in an unconscious state until one of two resurrections.** The redeemed are brought to life when Jesus returns at the end of the world. The unsaved are resurrected at the end of the 1,000 years, when God puts a final end to sin. They experience the fulfillment of Romans 6:23, "...the wages of sin is death." God then restores the earth to its original perfection, and it becomes the promised land of the redeemed forever. (John 11:11-13; Ecclesiastes 12:7; Ecclesiastes 9:5; John 5:28-29; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20-21)

10. **Sex is good. God invented it as an expression of love, for our enjoyment, and to enable us to participate in the miracle of human life.** To protect this most wonderful gift and the people He created to enjoy it, God insists that sex be shared exclusively in the context of a loving marriage covenant. Sexual activity in any other relationship hurts and demeans people and relationships. Marriage is intended by God to be a permanent, loving covenant between a man and a woman. (Revelation 19:6-8; Genesis 2:18, 21-24; Exodus 20:14; Matthew 5:27-28; Proverbs 6:32; Colossians 3:18-21)

11. **Our bodies and minds are God's creation and the residence of His Spirit.** Thus, we are to care for them so that we can effectively represent Him to others and carry out the important work He has given us. (Genesis 1:27, Ephesians 2:22, 2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

Affirmation

Printed Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____