

Membership at The Fountains

As United Methodists, the traditional expectations are that you support the church with your prayers, your presence, your gifts, and your service. These are promises that are backed by your own personal Christian integrity. The church will help members keep these promises in a variety of ways:

1. Regular opportunities for training in the areas of Spiritual growth, Bible Study, and Religious Education.

The Fountains' commitment to Religious Education will make opportunities for study and personal growth available throughout the year. These opportunities will be for all ages, with a special emphasis on programs for our children and young people.

Another help on the road of discipleship is through personal devotions. With devotionals like "A Guide to Prayer for All God's People" and other tools to assist you in your journey, we will offer trainings and encourage "daily devotionals", a practice that has historically been at the heart of the Wesleyan movement.

2. Spiritual Gifts-based ministry

The Fountains is developing a comprehensive Spiritual Gifts inventory to help determine how all of us might best serve Christ and our neighbor through The Fountains. A Spirit Gifts Team will help determine areas where you may be gifted to serve. You may even see an area of service which we have yet to develop – hooray! Our ministry will be based on what God is calling us to do as individuals and a community.

3. Opportunities for mission and outreach

All Christians are called to be in ministry and at The Fountains the expectation will be for all to participate regularly in ministry and service on some level. Along with everyday ministry and witness in the community, The Fountains will serve as a clearinghouse of ministry opportunities for people to express their gifts in the service of others. This will include short-term and long-term commitments, ministries in our own community, in the center-city, and abroad. We seek to practice ministry with both a local and a global vision.

4. Encouragement to experience the joy of generosity

One of the most rewarding elements of being a disciple is that of Jesus' call to extravagant generosity: Jesus wants your whole life! At the heart of our Christian faith is the belief that the sole reason we were given life and all its blessings is to share our lives and resources with others. To that end, members at The Fountains are reminded of the goal of tithing (the offering of 10% of one's resources) to the work of the church or

other organizations doing God's work in the world. It is expected that members make an annual pledge toward supporting the ministries of The Fountains.

Some financial facts:

- Each United Methodist Church contributes an apportionment – an amount determined by the larger church each year -- towards ministry and mission around the world. The current apportionment for The Fountains is over \$450 per year per member.
- The nationwide average for giving in the United Methodist Church is approximately \$1,500 to \$1,800 per giving unit (family) per year.

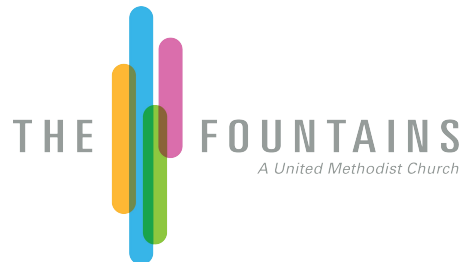
5. Annual renewal of memberships:

We live in a fast-paced and transient culture. It is hoped that many can and will join us for the “long haul” of discipleship, but are also aware that many will move on for a variety of reasons. After joining, each member will be expected to re-evaluate his or her place on the journey on an annual basis and prayerfully consider renewing their vows each year. The church will take special care in arranging for membership renewal for those who are homebound, serving in the military, away at school, or other situations

Membership Vows

If a person wishes to answer Jesus' call to community by continuing their spiritual journey with the other disciples of The Fountains, there are several steps:

- 1) Baptism (Baptism in a previous faith community is perfectly acceptable or, if not baptized, arrangements can be made for one's Baptism as an adult or as a child)
- 2) the ability to answer the following questions in the affirmative promising to support the community with their Prayers, Presence, Gifts and Service:



- Will you seek to love God with your whole heart, soul, mind, and spirit?***
- Will you seek to love your neighbor as generously as you love yourself?***
- Will you acknowledge Jesus as One who has changed your life and seek to live as a disciple of Christ?***
- Will you strive to live your life with extravagant generosity, courage, and hope?***
- Will you commit to using your gifts and graces to further the mission of this fellowship called The Fountains?***