

# Commitments



WORSHIP

PRAYER

SHARED LIFE

HOSPITALITY

SERVICE

GENEROSITY



# Living Our Commitments

## WHAT IS BLOOM CHURCH?

Bloom Church is a community of people committed to the good news of Jesus Christ. We believe what the global and historical Church has always held to be true: that in Jesus, God was and is healing his broken world. Together we hold out the good news of Jesus to all people until he returns, and God's healing work is complete.

The local church is the practical result of this good news. Together we live in, celebrate, and extend to the world God's healing love as we await God's promise that all things lost and ruined by sin will be made new.

We see ourselves as a community standing in and extending God's healing work in Jesus to the world. That is the "center of the bullseye" for us.

*Wonderful, you might say. But how do you DO that?*

Glad you asked.

On some level, all churches everywhere are seeking faithful patterns of devotion that help them live fully into the mission of God, as they understand it. Reading the same Bible and following the same Jesus accounts for the similarities you see in church practice across historical eras and cultures.

One of the finest statements of those patterns of devotion comes from The Book of Common Prayer in its catechism (a formal teaching on the basics of the faith). The BCP asks:

**Q:** What is the mission of the Church?

**A:** The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and with each other in Christ.

**2 Corinthians 5:19** says that “God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ.” The Church is an indispensable and central part of God’s effort to do just that, which the BCP states. This is what we are ABOUT as the Church, when all is said and done. Next question from the catechism:

**Q:** How does the Church pursue its mission?

**A:** The Church pursues its mission as it prays and worships, proclaims the gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love.

We see in this statement three elements of practice that are traceable across historical eras, denominational lines, and cultures. They are:

1. The Church’s life of devotion (worship and prayer)
2. The Church’s life of proclamation (how the “good news” of the gospel is made visible and accessible to a world that desperately needs it)
3. The Church’s life of service (how justice, peace, and love are built up in the world)

The BCP concludes by asking:

**Q:** Through whom does the Church carry out its mission?

**A:** The Church carries out its mission through the ministry of all its members.

The way that the mission of God to restore all people to himself is actualized in the Church is when each and all of the members of local communities of faith live deeply into the commitments of the Church: devotion, proclamation, and service.

“As we’ve sat with these patterns, they have translated for us into three values and six commitments. Our values both flow from and guide our dreams. They begin with a vision of God, and culminate with a vision of the kind of world God desires to see. Our values are:

**BEAUTY | SACRAMENT | RESTORATION**

The commitments are our attempt to live faithfully into the patterns so that we together can be all God has called us to be, taking our place in God’s grand effort to restore all people to himself. They are:

**WORSHIP**

**HOSPITALITY**

**PRAYER**

**SERVICE**

**SHARED LIFE**

**GENEROSITY**

# Values

## BEAUTY

God, the source and ground of all goodness, is beautiful. We believe that our desire for and orientation towards beauty is in fact a desire for and orientation towards God and the world He is bringing about.

## SACRAMENT

Rooted in the historic Christian Church, we believe that partaking in the life of the sacraments draws us ever into Christ-likeness and are signs of receiving God's sure and certain grace. The lives we live, with the sacraments as anchors to our story, are then a window into all beauty of the Triune God and a shoot unto the world that all are beckoned to come and partake as well.

## RESTORATION

The arc of Scripture bends toward a vision of comprehensive, cosmic renewal of all creation, made manifest in all of life— our persons, communities, work, and resources. And thus we stand with the prophets of ancient Israel in believing that God's dream is a world in which each human being is treated with proper dignity, being made in the image and likeness of God. Therefore, our desire is to seek creative ways to partner with God in seeing that dream come to fruition, that God's beautiful vision for a new heavens and a new earth would be made manifest in the here and now.

# Commitment #1: Worship

We are committed to regular patterns of worship that gather us up as God’s people, put us into positions to experience God’s loving presence, remind us of our identity, and send us back out into the world full of the Spirit, eager to serve.

There is a sense in which all of life is worship, a life lived in response to God’s loving action.

**Romans 12:1 (NLT):** *“And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.*

There is also a sense in which worship is an activity that we gather together to engage in. From the BCP:

**Q:** What is corporate worship?

**A:** In corporate worship, we unite ourselves with others to acknowledge the holiness of God, to hear God’s Word, to offer prayer, and to celebrate the sacraments.

This is part of the reason why we adhere to consistent, historic liturgical rhythms at Bloom. “Liturgy” is essentially an order of service. Yet, these orders of service place us in positions where we can acknowledge the holiness of God, hear God’s Word, offer prayer, and celebrate the sacraments in corporate worship.

## Commitment #2: Prayer

The people of God are a praying people. Followers of Jesus enter into deep and satisfying communion with him and partner with his work in the world by continually bringing ourselves before God. Therefore, we are committed to regular patterns of prayer, both corporately and individually, that place us before the face of God and the world in light of his presence.

In one of Jesus's teachings on prayer, Jesus encouraged the disciples to pray in a similar way to the prayer that has come to be called The Lord's Prayer. It can be a summative prayer (**Mt. 6:9-13 NLT**):

*“Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today the food we need and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. And don't let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.”*

Paul encourages the Ephesians to continue in prayer (**Eph. 6:18 NLT**):

*“Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.”*

All believers everywhere are called to a life of prayer. Prayer is an enormous part of how the kingdom comes into the world. As we call on the Lord, he responds by transforming it for his glory.

## Commitment #3: Shared Life

The good news of Jesus creates a people who share life together as a foretaste of what God intends for the whole world. We are committed to the joy and discipline of a shared life together, refusing our culture's obsession with individuality, ever opening our lives and hearts to each other in fresh ways. This means we are committed to serving each other, forgiving one another, and living life in community.

Luke, the author of the Acts of the Apostles, witnessed to how the early church experienced shared life in Christ (**Ac. 2:42-47 NLT**):

*“All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer. A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They worshipped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.*”

The commitment to a shared life is central to being the Church. At Bloom, this is tangibly lived out in House Churches. These are places where life is shared in several ways: in sharing meals, sharing thanksgivings, reading the Scriptures together, and in prayer.

## Commitment #4: Hospitality

The community of faith's shared life is intended to open up, to fan out, and to draw in others to become aware of the presence of God. Hospitality is essentially creating intentional space within our tangible world for the eternal to break, for the sake of others. We are committed to a life of hospitable friendship with all people, because every human heart is in need of the love, kindness, and power of God.

Peter to the early church admonishes them to a posture of loving hospitality (1 Pet. 4:8-9 NRSV):

*Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins.  
Be hospitable to one another without complaining.*

God intends that the shared life of the local church would be accessible to all those who are seeking God, and to some who may not yet know they are seeking God at all. Hospitality is that posture of the local church that makes it accessible to all.

So... we see no other way for the Church to be than...Wildly hospitable—immersed in true friendship...that all may know and love the Lord, our God.

## Commitment #5: Service

Each person called to friendship with Christ is also commissioned to a life of service. Our gifts, talents, and energies are to be used for the good of others both in the Church and in the world. Within this life of service, Christianity calls us to a particular focus on the poor, the overlooked, the marginalized, and the oppressed. We are committed to a life of creative and courageous service wherever God places us, that the light of God's kingdom would shine in the darkness.

Peter, in his epistle to the early church, encourages them to serve one another with their gifts all to the glory of God **(1 Pet. 4:10-11 NLT)**:

*God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.*

## Commitment #6: Generosity

To follow Christ is to place the totality of our lives, including our possessions, at his disposal. Together with Christ, we seek to use our resources joyfully and generously for the good of others. We are committed to a life of generosity, contributing each as we are able to both to the ministry of the local church and to those people and causes to which God may lead us.

John the elder, writing to the early church speaks of generosity as following Jesus's example, saying, **(1 Jn. 3:16-18 NLT)**:

*“We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God’s love be in that person? Dear children, let’s not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions.”*

See also these passages on generosity:

Generosity to one another commanded in the Mosaic Law **(Dt. 17:7-8)**

A widow giving all she had as an example of generosity: **(Lk. 21:1-4)**

Generosity is how the character of the self-giving and utterly generous God is put on display in us. It is a concrete and tangible way that his life comes into the world. Generosity is also a core way that justice, peace, and love are built up in the world.

**BLOOM**  
CHURCH