



GCI *Buzz*

Healthy Church: The Purpose & Our Calling as the Church



The Church

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Noun

Definition: The community of believers; not a building, but people whom Jesus calls, forms, and sends.

What Is the Church?

The Church is not just a Sunday gathering or a building. It's the people of God, united by faith in Christ and connected by the Spirit. Jesus said, "I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18 NIV), and he loves the Church so much that he gave himself for it just as he gave himself for all people everywhere. We don't belong to a denomination; we belong to Christ. Our belonging shapes our identity and purpose together as one family.

Six Functions of the Church

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Why do we meet together?

GCI describes six key purposes for gathering as the Body of Christ:

- **Worship:** We lift our voices, hearts, and minds to God.
- **Instruction:** We learn from God's word, together and from pastors.
- **Prayer:** We pray corporately, expressing our faith and support.
- **Encouragement:** We strengthen one another in love and truth.
- **Service and Mission:** We reach inward and outward through love and action.
- **Community:** We build deep, Spirit-connected relationships.

We weren't made to go it alone. Church is where these purposes come to life.

Your Role in the Church's Mission

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Every person matters, whether you're greeting newcomers, teaching a class, sharing your gift on stage, hosting people in your home, or silently praying for others. Discipleship is:

- **Worship:** Participate in songs, prayers, and Scripture to open pathways to God's presence.
- **Learning:** Ask questions, discuss messages, and grow alongside others.
- **Praying:** Join prayer groups, write and honor prayer requests, and believe God together.
- **Encouraging:** Send a note, check on someone, or share a word of hope.
- **Serving:** Volunteer in ministries, engagement events, or care for needs.
- **Building Community:** Invite people over, open space for deep conversations, and show Christ's love through relationships.

Paul wrote that the Church is the *"body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, [which] grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work"* (Ephesians 4:16 NIV).

You are a vital part.



The Church Exists for the Sake of the World

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The Church doesn't exist to serve itself. We are called together not to protect what we've built, but to participate in what God is doing.

Jesus didn't form the Church to be an exclusive club or a spiritual retreat center. He formed a people, his Body, to be a light in the world, a sign of God's love, and a vessel for his grace and reconciliation.

We gather so that we can be sent. Everything we do is meant to shape us to live as disciples in the world: serving, inviting, listening, and loving.

As members of Christ's church, we're not called to comfort or self-preservation.

We're called to mission:

- *To love our neighbors*
- *To share good news*
- *To embody justice and mercy*
- *To reflect God's heart in our communities*

The Church exists for the sake of the world, because Jesus came for the world.

Next Steps for Members

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- **Reflect:** Which of the six functions of Church is most meaningful to you?
- **Participate:** Think about how your participation creates space for others. Can you invite someone into a ministry you are part of? Can you mentor, equip, or simply step aside to make room for new voices and gifts?

Conclusion

The Church is not a building, it's us. As we gather in worship, learn God's word, pray, serve, and build genuine relationships, we join Jesus in his mission: bringing God's grace, hope, and transformation to the world.

Reference:

What Is the Church? - Grace Communion International