

# VINEYARD

---

# MembersHIPCLASS

---



## Welcome!

We're glad you've chosen to find out more about the Vineyard. This class is the basic introduction to our church family. Since we have members from many different church backgrounds, this class was designed to clearly explain who and what our church is.

### The basis for this class:

...You are a **member** of God's very own **family**...and you **belong** in **God's household** with every other **Christian**.

—Ephesians 2:19 (LB)

---

aVINEYARDresource

## Key Truths

The church is **a family**.

God expects you to be **a member** of a church family.

A Christian without a church family is **a contradiction**.

*The goal of this class:*

That I will commit myself to **Jesus** and to the **Vineyard Family**.

## What makes Vineyard a family?

*These things unite us:*

### **Our Christian commitment**

What God has done for us

### **Our mission and vision**

Why we exist as a church

### **Our relationships**

How we are connected

### **Our Service**

What we do

# Our Christian commitment

Our community is founded first of all upon a commitment to Jesus. Each member is committed to Jesus and the community as a whole is committed to Jesus. He is our source, our foundation and our leader.

Before you commit to the church as a member, you should first commit to Jesus and express it through baptism.

## What is the nature of our commitment to Jesus?

*We are committed to an active relationship with God through Jesus.*

- Christianity is more about relationships than it is about religion, rules and regulations.
- There are two primary relationships in Christianity: relationship with God (*John 1:12*) and relationship with people—his church (*1 Corinthians 12:27*).
- We were made to live in relationship with God.
- God has designed us with an emptiness that can only be filled by him (*John 10:10*).

*We are committed to be disciples (students) of Jesus.*

- A disciple might be thought of as a trainee, student or follower of a mentor.
- A disciple is more than just a believer. In the Bible, belief is not just intellectual, it is acted out. Belief might be thought of as trust in an individual.
- A disciple has faith in Jesus' life, death and resurrection, and chooses to follow Him.
- What does a disciple look like?
  - A disciple believes in Jesus (*John 3:16*)
  - A disciple follows Jesus (*John 1:43*)
  - A disciple trusts Jesus with his/her life (*John 14:1*)
  - A disciple learns from Jesus (*John 14:23*)
  - A disciple loves Jesus (*John 14:15*)
  - A disciple loves other disciples (*John 13:35*)

## How do we make this commitment?

- We decide to stop running our own life and to turn our life completely and totally over to Jesus.
- We express this commitment to Jesus in prayer.
- We begin making decisions in the light of Jesus' teachings and His current leading.
- We make our commitment public in baptism.

## Baptism

Jesus never asked His disciples to remember His birth. But He did instruct them to remember His death and resurrection. He gave the church two visible symbols and actions (called *ordinances*) as reminders of His death. These two ordinances are *Baptism* and *The Lord's Supper* (discussed on page 7).

### Why should I be baptized?

#### To follow the example set by Jesus.

"At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river." —*Mark 1:9*

#### Because Christ commands it.

"Jesus said, 'Go then, to all people everywhere and make them my disciples, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and then teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.'" —*Matthew 28:19-20*

#### It demonstrates that I really am a believer.

"...many of the people who heard Him believed and were baptized." —*Acts 18:8*

"We know that we have come to know Him, if we obey His commands." —*1 John 2:3*

### What is the meaning of baptism?

#### It illustrates Christ's burial and resurrection.

"Christ died for our sins... He was buried... and he rose again."  
—*1 Corinthians 15:3-4*

"For when you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ."  
—*Colossians 2:12*

#### It illustrates my new life as a Christian.

"When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun!" —*2 Corinthians 5:17*

"By our baptism then, we were buried with Him and shared in His death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead... so also we may live a new life!" —*Romans 6:4*

Baptism doesn't make you a believer—it shows that you already believe. Baptism does not *save* you, only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring—it's the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart.

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith... it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."  
—*Ephesians 2:8-9*

### When should I be baptized?

As soon as you have believed!

"Those who believed... were baptized... that day!" —*Acts 2:41*

"Then Philip began with the scripture and told him the Good News about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water, and the man said, 'Look, here is water! Why shouldn't I be baptized right now?' Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' The man answered, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' So they went down into the water and Philip baptized him." —*Acts 8:35-38*

There is no reason to delay. As soon as you have decided to receive Christ into your life, you can and should be baptized. If you wait until you are *perfect*, you'll never feel *good enough*!

# Mission and values

## Our mission statement

Introducing people to the life-changing power of God's mercy and truth

At the Vineyard, we believe that we can have a relationship with God where we can meet Him and know Him; that our spiritual lives are not just ritual. Our lives are to be lived through the power of God as we grow in our knowledge of Him and our relationship with Him. We believe that God has called us to bring others into such a life and relationship by expressing His mercy and speaking His truth through all our ministries, and with our friends, families, neighbors and co-workers in our daily lives.

People...

Life-changing...

Power...

Mercy and Truth...

## What are our key values?

### *Worship*

We want to experience God, exalting Him with praise and adoration.

Worship accomplishes something no other feature of human existence can. It renews us, orients us to God, increases our receptivity to God's work in us, strengthens us, unites us and helps us forget about ourselves, and focus on God as the essential reality of the universe.

### *Compassion and mercy*

We value compassion, mercy and generosity that accepts people for who and where they are, without condemnation or legalism, trusting God to bring change and growth, expressing our commitment to one another through our time, energy and resources.

### *The Word of God and the Spirit of God*

We are a church that is both evangelical and charismatic, taking the truth of the Gospel to the world with the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit, with the church, is able, willing and free to break in and do His work in non-spectacular, non-manipulative and surprising ways.

### *Simple integrity*

We value committing to honesty, integrity and simplicity without religious veneer. Committing to a lifestyle marked by balance, tolerance and moderation according to biblical guidelines, characterized by openness, loving confrontation and practical expression in our relationships with each other and the world.

Suffering (trials, not necessarily illness) is a norm of life. Regular hardship produces perseverance which enhances Christian character.

### **Relationship**

Relationships are what hold people together in fellowship in the local church.

Building relationships is a priority for our church. Everyone needs honest and stable relationships to be emotionally healthy. In particular, Christians need relationships with other Christians in order to mature in their faith and to fully participate in the body of Christ. Our small groups and ministries are all geared toward helping people grow closer to one another.

### **Handling Conflict**

In honest relationships, conflict is inevitable. Therefore, we do not encourage avoiding conflict at all costs. Rather, we hope that when conflicts arise between members of the Vineyard, they will handle them according to Biblical principles.

"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector. —Matthew 18:15-17

"In your anger, do not sin. Don't let the sun go down while you are angry." —Ephesians 4:26

"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."  
—Ephesians 5:21

### **Gossip and Slander**

Gossip is defined as *idle talk or rumors about others*. Slander is defined as *the utterance of false statements harmful to another's character*. Gossip and slander hurt the body by breeding division, and have no place in our church. Even spreading information that isn't blatantly damaging can sow seeds of mistrust. We suggest that church members develop a habit of simply not repeating personal information about others. Learning how to deal with conflicts directly will often quell the temptation to gossip or slander.

### **Disagreements**

The pastors and ministry leaders in the Vineyard try to make the best decisions for the church, through careful prayer and deliberation. Occasionally, you may disagree with a decision. In such a case, we ask you deal with your disagreement in one of the following ways:

1. Decide to support the leader anyway, pray for their discernment and wait to see what happens.
2. Talk to them. This course of action is not disloyal, providing it is done in a way supportive of the leader. Discussing your difficulty communicates that you are on their side and want the best for the ministry.
3. If the decision is a pastoral decision that affects you personally, appeal to the leader to reconsider. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, talk to their pastoral leader.

The following are not appropriate ways of handling disagreement:

1. Tell everyone else but the leader.
2. Reject the person as leader in your heart.
3. Say nothing, but subtly undermine everything the leader does.

If you have chosen to put yourself under the authority of the Vineyard's leadership, it is assumed that you will support them with your words, attitudes and actions.

### **Diversity**

To be multicultural as a congregation—a living example of racial and ethnic reconciliation and how the gospel can break down ethnic, racial and cultural barriers.

### **Service**

Church life should equip people to live in and help build the kingdom as Jesus described it. It is normal for everyone in the church to be giving of themselves in some service on a consistent basis in order for healing and growth to come to them.

### **Multiplication**

It's natural for people who have experienced Jesus to share about Him over the course of everyday life. The prime locations for this sharing are our homes, businesses, schools and neighborhoods rather than the church celebrations on Sundays.

To be active in missions and church planting. We have a call beyond ourselves, to extend ministry all over the world. Specific goal: keep sending out churches and cross-cultural missionaries and to provide ongoing support to our church plants and missionaries.

# Membership

## What does it mean to be a member of the Vineyard?

The difference between *attenders* and *members* can be summed up in one word: **commitment**.

*At Vineyard we recognize the need for a formal membership, and we ask you to commit for four reasons:*

1. *A Biblical Reason*—Christ is committed to the church.  
“...Christ loved the church, and He gave His life for it.”  
—*Ephesians 5:25*
2. *A Cultural Reason*—It is an antidote to our society.  
We live in an age where very few want to be committed to anything... a job... a marriage... our country. This attitude has even produced a generation of *church shoppers and hoppers*. Membership swims against the current of *America's consumer religion*. It is an unselfish decision. Commitment always builds character.
3. *A Practical Reason*—It defines who can be counted on.  
Every team must have a roster. Every school must have an enrollment. Every business has a payroll. Every army has an enlistment. Even our country takes a census and requires voter registration. Membership identifies our family.
4. *A Personal Reason*—It produces spiritual growth.  
The New Testament places a major emphasis on the need for Christians to be accountable to each other for spiritual growth. You cannot be accountable when you are not committed to any specific church family.

## What commitment do members of the Vineyard make?

*Members commit to:*

1. *Agree with, and live by, our statements of faith and practice.*  
*The Church Constitution states that members should not have unrepentant sin and should be cooperative with pastors' guidance.*
2. *Maintain a lifestyle in keeping with Biblical teachings.*
3. *Consistently attend weekend worship services.*  
“Let us not give up the habit of meeting together... but let us encourage one another.” —*Hebrews 10:25*
4. *Find a way in addition to weekend services to grow spiritually and relationally (small group).*  
“So let us concentrate on things which make for harmony, and on the growth of our fellowship together.”  
—*Romans 15:19 (Ph)*

5. *Participate in serving either inside or outside of the church. (Including serving as a helper in Children's Ministry at least twice a year.)*  
“Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you ...” —*1 Peter 4:10 (Ph)*  
“Each of you should look not only to your interests, but also the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ... who took on the very nature of a servant...” —*Philippians 2:3-4, 7*
6. *Give financially in proportion to your income with the understanding that God-directed and sacrificial generosity is the ideal.*  
“Each one of you, on the first day of each week, should set aside a specific sum of money in proportion to what you have earned and use it for the offering.”  
—*1 Corinthians 16:2*
7. *Work out relationships in the church with love, honor and devotion, both in person and online.*  
“Live in complete harmony with each other—each with the attitude of Christ toward each other.” —*Romans 15:5 (LB)*  
“Have a sincere love for your fellow believers, love one another earnestly with all your hearts.” —*1 Peter 1:22 (GN)*

## How can I become a member of the Vineyard?

1. Be a baptized believer in Jesus Christ.
2. Attend the Membership Class.
3. Be in agreement with our Statement of Faith and Statement of Practice.
4. Be willing to be governed as regards your church participation by the provisions of the constitution and by-laws ([vcce.org/constitution](http://vcce.org/constitution)).
5. Fill-out the Membership Application ([vcce.org/memberapp](http://vcce.org/memberapp)).
6. Have a short conversation with one of the pastors.
7. Be received into the church at a public meeting.

## How could membership end?

1. You resign for any reason.
2. If you aren't giving or attending regularly, you'll be removed from the membership list..

# Statement of Faith and Practice

## Vineyard Christian Church of Evanston

### Statement of Faith

We confess our affirming of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, which we believe to reflect Christian orthodoxy and the clear teaching of the Holy Scripture. In addition, as members of Vineyard Christian Church of Evanston, we make the following confession of faith our own:

#### God

We believe in one true God, eternally existing in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Who are co-eternal in being, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfection. (*Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10-11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22; 2 Corinthians 13:14*)

#### The Father

We believe in God the Father, the Almighty, creator of the heavens and the earth, perfect in holiness, perfect in love, perfect in judgment, from Whom the Son and the Spirit proceed. (*Genesis 1:1, 17:1; Isaiah 5:16, 6:3, 43:15; Matthew 11:25; John 6:57, 8:42, 14:16-17; Romans 11:17; 1 John 4:16*)

#### The Son

We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary and is true God and true man. (*John 1:2 14; Luke 1:35*)

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that our justification is made sure by His literal, bodily resurrection from the dead, and that His name and work are our sole means of salvation. (*1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 1 Peter 2:24; Ephesians 1:7; Romans 4:25; Acts 4:12*)

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, where He is exalted at the right hand of God above all power and dominion, and ministers as our High Priest and Intercessor. (*Acts 1:9-10; Ephesians 1:20-21; Hebrews 4:14, 7:25; 1 John 2:1*)

#### The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person Who is with the Church forever and Who teaches the Church and guides the Church in all truth. The Holy spirit gives varieties of Gifts for the common good of the Church and guides the Church and the individual believer in service for the Church and in service towards the world. The Holy Spirit continues to manifest Himself through the gifts as described in Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 and Ephesians 4:11-12. The individual believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, has his life in Christ and final redemption guaranteed in the Spirit, and is supernaturally empowered by the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit Who convicts

the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. (*John 1:16, 14:26, 16:7-11; Acts 1:8, 10:19-20, 16:6-7; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30*)

#### Scripture

We believe in the sixty-six canonized and commonly recognized books of the Old and New Testaments as inspired by God and inerrant in the original writings, and they are the supreme and final authority in faith and life. (*2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:19-21; 1 Thessalonians 2:13*)

#### Depravity

We believe that man was created in the image of God, that he sinned and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which is separation from God, and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature, and become sinners in thought, word and deed. (*Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:23, 5:14; Ephesians 2:1-3*)

#### Judgment and Eternity

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved, and the everlasting punishment of the lost. (*John 5:28; Matthew 25:45; Revelation 20:11-15*)

#### The Church

We believe in the one, universal Church as the Body of Christ, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, the purchased people of God, the bride of Christ. The Church is built and established upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone. The church is united in having one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father and one Head, Jesus Christ. The Church is all those who in faith look upon Jesus as the author and giver of salvation. God has called the believers in various places to join together into local churches as visible expressions of the Church in order to bring the power, the life, the character, and the authority of God into the lives of people. (*1 Corinthians 1:2; Ephesians 1:22-23, 2:19-22, 4:4-6, 5:22-32; 1 Peter 2:5-10*)

#### Salvation

We believe that eternal salvation is solely the gift of God, and that all who in sincere contrition repent of their sins, believe the Gospel and receive the Lord Jesus Christ by faith alone are born again of the Holy Spirit and become adopted sons of God. (*John 3:3-5; Titus 3:5; Acts 2:38; Ephesians 2:8-10; Romans 8:16*)

#### Second Coming

We believe in the personal, bodily and imminent return of Christ in the air for His saints. (*Matthew 24:30-31; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*)

# Getting Involved

The three essential disciplines necessary for anyone to grow in this church are:

- Attending Sunday services consistently.
- Serving on a regular, ongoing basis.
- Commitment to a small group.

## Sundays

“Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” —*Hebrews 10:25 (NIV)*

Consistent attendance at Sunday services is an important ingredient in the spiritual health of a follower of Jesus. We are urged to participate in corporate worship, scripture reading, the Lord’s Supper and Bible teaching regardless of our whims and moods and temporary spiritual temperatures.

Sunday services are meant to inspire faith, boldness, hope and to help us overcome discouragement, isolation and fear. We need regular reminders of our confidence in God’s provision and grace.

We are inspired by the example of others, including both those physically present and those in the Biblical witness who make us believe that more is possible than our own narrow blinders can lead us to believe.

One of the most important things we do on Sunday is participate in the Lord’s Supper.

**What is the Lord’s Supper?** (*1 Corinthians 10:16-20, 11:23-26*)

**It is a meal.**

“The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, took bread...” (*11:23*)

**It is a memorial.**

“...and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; eat it in remembrance of me.’” (*11:24*)

**It is a sign or seal of our covenant relationship with God.**

“In the same way, He took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood; drink it to remember me.’” (*11:25*)

**It is a witness.**

“For whenever you eat the bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes back.” (*11:26*)

**It is an act of worship & thanksgiving.**

“Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks...” (*10:16*)

**It is a time of intimacy & fellowship with Christ.**

“Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation (fellowship) in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?” (*10:16*)

**Who Should Take the Lord’s Supper?**

**Only those who are already followers of Jesus.**

(*Mark 14:22-26*)

“For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment upon himself.” —*1 Corinthians 11:29*

**How do I Prepare Myself for the Lord’s Supper?**

“Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A person ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.”

—*1 Corinthians 11:27-28*

**Prepare by ...**

- Self-examination (*1 Corinthians 11:27*)
- Confessing my sins (*1 John 1:9*)
- Recommitment (*Romans 12:1*)
- Restoring relationships (*Matthew 5:23-24*)

## Serving

This is a fundamental viewpoint and value of our church:  
*The people are the ministers of the church!*

Our vision and the dynamic engine of this church: *mobilizing the people of God to serve in life-changing ways in every way and in every place will have an impact.*

Who do we serve? *The Lord, each other and the world.*

**How can I serve?**

- Try out some easy beginning places such as Sunday mornings or the Harvest Food Pantry on Wednesdays.
- Find out what your ministry gifts and passions are.
- Check out the list of ongoing ministries.
- Consider yourself a minister where you live and work.

**How can I get equipped to serve?**

- Small groups
- Study groups and conferences
- Assist existing leaders—ask lots of questions
- Check out resource libraries

**The Benefits of Service**

*Benefits to you:*

- Keeps your faith alive
- You get to use and discover your spiritual gifts
- You need to be needed
- You need to have your life make a difference
- You need an opportunity to participate
- Develop relationships
- Affirmation and self-esteem
- Paradox of the Christian life: the more you give away life, the more you find life. The more you hold on, the less you have.

#### *Benefits to God:*

- Christ's example is honored
- God gets the glory
- A chance for God to display His wisdom, power and love
- Restored relationship with His children

#### **The Costs of Service**

##### *Costs to you:*

- Time
- Money
- Change in lifestyle, self-denial
- Risk (face inadequacy, rejection, relationship)
- Prayer

*Bottom line: It's worth it!*

#### **Leadership**

##### *Leadership Values:*

- We place a high value on leadership as a functional reality—that is, we are looking for leaders who are there because of the function they fill and work they do.
- Leadership is dispersed throughout the church and decisions are generally made by the ones doing the particular ministry. The church staff pastors and the church council primarily make those decisions which are necessary for overall work or coordination, but not pertaining to particular ministry needs.
- Leaders must be trustworthy
  - they must be committed to the church (i.e. attending regularly, joining as members, giving generously)
  - they must be accountable team players (i.e. working with other leaders and accepting supervision from the appropriate staff pastors)
  - they must be living a life that is a reflection of Christian maturity and discipleship. (i.e. no serious moral problems, and having an ability to handle conflicts or mistakes with humility and grace).
- Leaders must be gifted
  - the trust of followers is earned, not assigned
  - ability to communicate, plan and execute is important
  - there are different kinds of leadership giftings, which must work together.

#### *How to Become a Leader:*

- Go through the **Get Involved Steps**
- Serve faithfully in whatever ways you can—your gifts will become evident
- If you fit the values you will probably be asked to lead in some function in an existing service team
- Remember both the first and the second rules of leadership: *Show up!* and *Be there at the end!*

#### **Small Groups**

##### ***Why it's important to be a part of a small group:***

- To build relationships
- To grow in your spiritual life
- To be a part of a community of care and support
- To learn how to help and minister to others
- To receive the direct and meaningful care of a pastor
- To have fun!

##### ***What kind of groups are options?***

*Traditional Groups*—usually a mixed group, from 8-25 people, meeting weekly. These groups might include Bible study, worship, prayer and time to get to know other people.

*Men's or women's groups*—usually a smaller group, 3-6 people. Customized meeting schedule. Usually a group open by invitation only, with a higher level of intensity, openness and commitment. These are usually formed spontaneously among friends or with help from the men's or women's ministry leaders.

*Specialized support groups*—these groups have a special emphasis on providing support for particular kinds of needs or situations. Examples would include Ruth & Naomi (for single moms) or Living Waters (for those struggling with sexual issues).

*Activity Groups*—These groups meet to build community around a shared experience. This could include anything from leisure activities such as sports, board games or knitting, or specialized service projects such as serving at a shelter together.

# Giving

Listen to a message about spirituality and giving from Steve Nicholson: [vcce.org/money](http://vcce.org/money)

## **Look around you at the Vineyard... What do you see?**

**HERE**—People talking and enjoying a cup of coffee; the Vineyard worship band leading energetic worship music; a first-time guest receiving a welcome bag; someone diligently listening to the message and taking notes; children learning about Jesus in Kids Church.

**NEAR**—Men and women in our city receiving free groceries and clothes at The Harvest; hundreds of backpacks, toys and Thanksgiving baskets given away year after year.

**FAR AWAY**—Churches and church leaders being supported by the Evanston Vineyard in almost a dozen countries.

Each of these ministries is possible because the Vineyard is a member supported church. Without the tithes and offerings of our members and attenders it would be impossible to offer ministries that help people to become fully developing followers of Jesus.

## **Imagine...**

what would happen if 100% of the Vineyard's regular attenders took the step to become a regular giver at the Vineyard. These are just a few things that would be possible:

- Expansion of current ministries
- Creation of new ministries
- More lives introduced to the life-changing power of God's mercy and truth
- Deeper personal relationships with God
- Greater impact on our city

## **Why should I give?**

- Giving helps me to grow in my faith.
- Giving supports the ministries of the Vineyard.
- Giving allows me to be a part of God's impact here in Chicagoland.

## **What does the Bible say about giving?**

*Faithful giving draws me closer to God*

"Wherever your treasure is, there your heart and thoughts will be also." —*Matthew 6:21*

*Faithful giving is the key to a full life.*

"Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and should give generously... By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may take hold of real life."

—*1 Timothy 6:18-19*

*Faithful giving blesses me in return.*

"Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do," says the Lord Almighty, "I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Let me prove it to you!" —*Malachi 3:10*

*Faithful giving makes me happy.*

"There is more happiness in giving than in receiving." —*Acts 20:35*

*Faithful giving reminds me that everything belongs to God.*

"But remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth." —*Deuteronomy 8:18*

## **Four easy ways to give...**

1. *Give on Sunday at the services*—You can give each Sunday by using the envelope found in the seatback pockets or at the Welcome Center. Just drop it in the offering basket as it is passed.
2. *Give your gift by mailing*—You can mail your Sunday giving envelope to the Vineyard's office. The postage is prepaid. You can also utilize your bank's billpay service to have checks automatically cut and mailed to the Vineyard.
3. *Give through automatic debit*—Set up monthly or semimonthly gifts to the Vineyard through your bank. Download a form at [vcce.org/debit](http://vcce.org/debit).
4. *Give online*—Giving online is a safe and easy way to give. Simply visit [vcce.org/donate](http://vcce.org/donate).

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

*How much should I give?*

The Bible calls every follower of Jesus to give generously of their first and best. In the Bible, a tithe, or 10%, is a first step to generosity. Anything over 10% is called an offering and is a way to honor God through sacrificial giving.

*Is my gift tax-deductible?*

All contributions are 100% tax-deductible. A giving envelope must be completed in order for a cash gift to be tax-deductible. We mail giving statements at the end of each quarter and year to help you keep track of your giving.

# Additional Resources

*Available at [vcce.org/resources](http://vcce.org/resources):*

- Annual Report
- Baptisms
- Benevolence Fund and resources for those in need
- Constitution of the Evanston Vineyard
- Funerals
- History of the Evanston Vineyard
- Membership Application ([vcce.org/memberapp](http://vcce.org/memberapp))
- Promoting an event
- Reserving a room or resources
- Values and goals of the Evanston Vineyard
- Weddings