



MEMBERSHIP- COURSE

Course Material

Additional course material such as the statutes of the church, regulations, the sermon and brochure on Tithing can be accessed via the following link:

www.meine.church/makdocs



If you so wish, we can also provide you with a hard copy of the documents.

Membershipcourse

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and Freie Christengemeinde Chur

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The use of the masculine form, includes the feminine.

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HISTORY AND VISION OF THE PENTECOSTAL MISSION ZÜRICH

Ultimately, the model for our church comes from the Bible, in particular from the Book of Acts. There we read about the first church:

Acts 2:42-47:

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Historically, our roots are in various awakenings such as the Reformation, the Anabaptist movement, Pietism, and the re-discovering of the Holy Spirit Baptism (Pentecostal Experience). The Swiss Pentecostal Mission (SPM) was established in 1935, based in Zürich. Since then, we are an independent church belonging to the SPM.

In 2004 Matthias Theis became the leader of the church. Soon after, the church opened its first additional location (Silbern, 2007). In 2018 we welcomed our third location, the Bernina Church (Pontresina) and in 2019 the fourth, the Freie Christengemeinde Chur. The aim to win people from all generations for Christ, to strengthen them in their faith, and to equip them for active participation is a deep concern of the church. Despite the size of the church, the small groups make it possible at the same time to remain small and personal and to build up relationships.

As a church it is our concern to keep pace with the times and to remain relevant for each new generation with the message of Jesus. In this way we wish to invite and inspire many more people to become part of God's great mission together with us!



OUR PRAYER FOR YOU

Ephesians 1:17-18:

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people...

Our spiritual journey consists of four steps

1. Know God

Ephesians 1:17:

I keep asking that the God ... may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.

John 10:10b:

I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

With a personal decision for Jesus and by dedicating our life to him, our journey with God begins. This is the beginning of a lifelong yearning to get to know God more deeply.

2. Find Freedom

Ephesians 1:18:

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened (*set free from darkness and spiritually impaired vision).*

Ephesians 1:7:

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace...

All of us have a “yesterday” that we have brought along so far, and from which we have to become free. Living in true, God given freedom is fulfilling, and gives us

the basis to live freely for Jesus.

3. Discover Purpose

Ephesians 1:18:

I pray ... that you may know the hope to which he has called you...

Psalms 139:14:

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

God has given each of us gifts and a profile that we wish to discover, so that we can serve God better.

4. Make a Difference

Ephesians 1:18:

I pray ... that you may know ... the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people...

Matthew 5:14:

You are the light of the world...

It is a matter of finding our place in the church, for which God has created and enabled us.

God's intention for our life is to be part of a local church. There we keep receiving encouragement to take concrete steps with God, so that we grow, both in our relationship with God and as a follower.



KNOW GOD



FIND FREEDOM



DISCOVER PURPOSE



MAKE A DIFFERENCE



KNOW GOD

How do we put this first step into practice? Our worship services are designed for all visitors, no matter what their relationship with God is. One of our most important tasks is to reach people who do not know God yet. That is why our main emphasis in the services is to give people, who do not yet have a personal relationship with God, a place where they can get to know and experience Jesus. In the parable about the 100 sheep where one gets lost, Jesus so touchingly describes how the shepherd leaves the ninety nine to seek for the lost sheep until it is found (Luke 15).

Our worship services pursue four goals

1. Celebrate God

We believe that the church should be a place of joy, because God is a God of joy! We want to glorify God and create an atmosphere in which people can experience the presence of God. The worship service on Sunday should be the highlight of the week. It is our desire that the members are able to express this joy in God in the Sunday worship service.

Psalm 122:1:

I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord."

2. Preaching the Gospel

That is why our worship services are designed so that we can gladly and resolutely invite our friends who do not yet know Jesus, to our services. We pray that the Holy Spirit himself can transform their hearts. And so we regularly provide the opportunity for people to give their lives to Christ

1 Corinthians 1:21b:

...God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

3. Equipping the Believers

We are convinced that the church community is a place where people live and learn that the truths of the Bible are relevant in their personal everyday life. We want to preach biblically well-founded and valid sermons, so that the faith of the listeners develops, leading to “action on Monday”.

Ephesians 4:11-12:

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up...

4. Inviting Atmosphere

We create an inviting atmosphere through presentations with high quality elements. This is our intention before, during and after the worship service. We would like people to be greeted with welcoming words and that members keep an open eye and approach new comers welcoming them into God’s family.

1 Corinthians 9:19-20:

Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews.

Being part of the vision

How does one become a part of the vision? Invite your friends to the worship services and accompany them. In order to succeed and to know how to share your faith with others, there are four steps.

How we share our faith with others

Luke 14:23:

Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full.

Each of us can play a part in reaching people who do not know God yet, by living according to the following principles:



1. Take over responsibility for people in your surroundings

God deliberately connects you with people in your surroundings. Pray regularly for those people.

2. Build up a personal relationship by spending time with them

The love of Jesus in our hearts gives us a real concern for others. Spend time with them.

3. Tell them your own story with Jesus

The gospel doesn't mean primarily showing people their mistakes, but to tell them what a difference Jesus has made in our lives.

4. Invite them

You yourself can invite them to give their life to Jesus. Or you can invite them to the worship services. Our promise to you is that we will organize and improve our worship services, so that people can understand and react to the Sermons.

In our city, in our country and in the whole world

Acts 1:8b:

...and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

It is our concern to reach people in the three key areas which Jesus mentioned:

1. «In Jerusalem» – in our surroundings

James 1:27:

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

We reach our town mainly through our worship services, LiFe seminars, evangelistic small groups and social services.

2. «In Judea and Samaria» – in our country

Acts 16:4-5:

As they travelled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey. So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.

We help other churches in our region and our country, and we also have the goal of establishing new locations.

3. «To the ends of the earth» – worldwide

Mark 16:15:

He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.

We do mission work ourselves, mainly to start new churches abroad and to give social aid in emergencies.

You can find further information on our website.



FIND FREEDOM

It is our wish that people can be set free from their “contaminations” and develop, so that they can achieve the full potential that God has placed in them. Because changes in life happen more easily in the context of relationships, small groups are fundamental. In small groups we have the possibility to follow what is happening in our lives. Also, we can share our burdens and learn from others. Jesus exemplified the model of small groups together with his disciples.

A small group offers you two important things

1. A place for relationships

1 Peter 4:8:

Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

1 John 3:16:

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.

We have not been created to live alone. God created us for life in community. A small group offers you a place where you can connect and share your life with other people.

2. A place for growing in faith together

Proverbs 27:17:

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

The Bible teaches us that God created every person with the potential to make a difference in this world. The small group is a place where you can grow with others to become more like Jesus and to reach the potential which God has placed in you.

The model of our small groups

The small group model goes back to the first church, as described in the Bible. In Acts we read how people met in small groups in their homes, and how in this way unbelievable growth was made possible in the first church in Jerusalem.

Acts 5:42:

Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.

Acts 20:20:

You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house.

We are a church *of* small groups, not a church *with* small groups

There are four things you should know about our small groups

1. We have diverse small groups

Our small groups are as varied as the people. The leader has the freedom to create a small group in line with his or her talents and interests. It is our wish that people are able to meet, based on their interests or concerns. Essentially, the things which you already do can be the basis for a new small group. It can be a group for sport or cooking, for education or students, for Bible studies or a ministry group for the creative visual design of our worship services.

Small groups focus on various aspects - for example:

- community
- growth
- service
- teaching
- counselling
- development path
- evangelism

Each small group pursues the principle of “next steps” – to reach a semester goal together.



2. We meet in semester segments

In life we go through several phases. That is why we want to enable you to choose the small group that is ideal for your situation and fits your interests. In addition, we want to make it easy for you to be in the right small group in each phase of life. For this reason our small groups start twice a year. These periods are so called “semesters”. If desired, you can also remain and continue in the same small group.

January	21 Days of Prayer
February	Sport holidays
March	1. Semester
April	
May	
June	
July	Summer holidays
August	Prayer week
September	2. Semester
October	
November	
December	

3. Everyone can become part of a small group

It is our dream that every person becomes part of a small group. Due to the wide selection, we are confident that you can find a small group that suits you. At the small group website, you can filter the small groups by choosing topic, location, time and target group. As soon as you have found a small group that interests you, you can register directly or contact the leader in order to receive more information.

4. Everyone can support a small group

We believe that every person has strengths and talents that are good for others. It could be your living room where a small group can meet, a hobby of yours that brings people together, an experience you made that helps others, or a deep interest to grow in a certain area. Supporting or leading a small group is a good opportunity to bring people into deeper fellowship.

Visit our development path and talk with your leader in order to find out how you can support your small group, or even become a small group leader yourself.



DISCOVER PURPOSE

This third step is about discovering more deeply our personal steps forward. This happens on various levels:

You are experiencing an important part right now, namely our **membership-course**. This is a really important step in our development. It means making a personal decision to belong to a local church. Through the Holy Spirit we were already baptized into the worldwide church of Jesus by being born again (1 Corinthians 12:13). But we live it out practically in the local church. Here, you will get to know God's vision for the church, see how the church lives with this vision, and yourself become a part of this vision.

In the course «**Discover Purpose**» you will be taken along, step by step, on an exciting journey. There you will discover more deeply God's comprehensive purpose for your life. Additionally, you can find out your personal profile and the talents that God has given you with the help of a test. We also show you how to live in your specific calling in the context of the church. The Bible describes this as being "living stones" in God's house.

God desires that we develop. That is why you will hear again and again about taking a next step – our "**next step philosophy**". God may speak to you personally, God can use our leaders to give you an idea for a next step, or He may use your team, or your small group for this purpose. We want to encourage you to be open, reacting positively because God has many wonderful things prepared for your life.

The goal is always to continually grow into what God has planned, by taking small steps. With a **long-range perspective** and perseverance we will reach the goal that God has so lovingly planned for us!

Psalm 139:14:

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

1 Peter 2:5a:

...you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house.



MAKE A DIFFERENCE

We were all created by God to make a difference in the world around us. God has a place for you, where you can use your unique abilities and passions to be a blessing to others. We believe that your life will never really have meaning, until you discover your purpose and live in it.

Ephesians 2:10:

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Acts 20:24:

However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace.

1 Corinthians 12:4-5.27:

There are different kinds of gifts ... There are different kinds of service... Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

1 Peter 4:10:

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

In our church we live the general priesthood, namely that pastors and members stand together in God's great plan. The task of the pastors is to equip the saints for their ministry. The task of the individual is **to occupy and fill his or her place in the body – the church**. We see each member as a servant of God, gifted in at least one area. Also, we consider every task to be meaningful. Discover what you can do well, and take steps to use your gifts in order to make a difference!



LEADERSHIP OF THE PENTECOSTAL MISSION ZÜRICH

Becoming part of a church also means that one is able to trust the leadership of the church. We want you to feel secure in this step. Here you can read how our church is led, supervised and strengthened. Even though we are an Association, we lead the church within the Law and Statutes of an Association according to biblical principles.

Our church leadership is made up of several components:

Visionary Leadership by the Church Board

The Board consists of 7-9 persons whereby the greater part of them are honorary members of the church. The members of the Board are elected at the Annual General Assembly of Members. The Board concerns itself with the long term development of the church, supervises the development of the employees, the infrastructure and the finances, as well as the mission and social work. Based on the Law and Statutes of our Association, the Church Board, together with the General Assembly are the highest authority for these decisions. The Annual General Assembly of Members that all members are expected to attend takes place annually.

Spiritual Leadership by the Pastors

Matthias Theis heads the Pastoral Team as the church leader. Beside a core team, the Advisory Counsel Committee representing our locations, there is an independent Pastoral Team for each location. These are supervised by the respective Location Heads. The Location Heads with their teams are responsible for the strategic pastoral decisions, such as planning the sermons for the overall well being of the whole church. The specific Location Teams carry out the strategy accordingly, and are responsible for the operational matters of the respective locations.

Financial Supervision by the auditors

The General Assembly elects the Auditors. The Auditors are responsible for the complete supervision of the annual financial statement and the accuracy of the accounting of the Association.

Advice by the site Advisory Counsel Committee

At the Annual General Meeting of 2016 a Site Advisory Counsel Committee was introduced for a period of at least 3 years. Each location has its own Advisory Counsel Committee which meets each year. The Committees are balanced regarding generations and cultures. They promote the implementation of the principles of the church according to the guiding principles, and they work together with the church leadership (Board and Pastoral Team) for the development of the respective location.

Networking with the Swiss Pentecostal Mission and other free churches

We believe that each church and its leadership should be under authority. That is why we are part of the SPM. The president of the SPM and the responsible regional leaders give support in emergency situations and also intervene helpfully if needed. The SPM has an active voice in questions on education, appointment and ordination of pastors, and in the election of church leaders.

As a church we belong to VFG – free churches of Switzerland and to SEA (Schweizerische Evangelische Allianz).



CHURCH FINANCES

As a church we teach the principle of the tithe for the support of the local church. Thereby, we refer to the statements of the Old and New Testament, which teach the principle of the tithe as a standard for our donations.

Malachi 3:10:

Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.

«Giving» is a core topic of the Bible. Jesus taught more about this than about topics such as heaven, hell or even prayer. In Matthew 23:23 Jesus confirms the tithe. We do not consider giving to be a law, but a consequence of all our devotion to God. We are convinced that God wants to bless the givers spiritually and practically.

The Tithe

The tithe, the first spending from all of our intakes, belongs to God. The tithe belongs to the local church to which we belong. When we give the first ten percent, then we express that God’s concerns come first in our lives, and that we really trust him to provide for our lives (see Matthew 6:33). We recommend that all members do this electronically, for example with a standing order via the bank or post office.

Gifts and Offerings

Gifts and offerings comprise what is given over and above the tithe. We teach and believe that God creates us as generous people who give from their wealth for his work and for others (1 Timothy 6:18-19). Possibilities, apart from the offerings in the worship services, are specially announced collections, such as our annual Thanksgiving offering or other special campaigns.

The Gift of Giving

God gives some people the special spiritual gift of giving (Romans 12:8). These people have the desire in their hearts to support God's kingdom in a special way with financial resources that go beyond the tithe, the donations and the offerings. People with this gift can, for example, support concrete projects. Information on current possibilities can be found on our homepage.

Above all, our giving is part of our worshipping Jesus and an expression of our relationship of faith, with love and devotion to the Lord. That is why we do not monitor our members concerning their offerings or tithes. Neither does the pastoral team have insight into the donations. We want to ensure that people are not favoured or neglected because of finances (James 2:9). At the Annual General Assembly, everyone is openly informed about the financial budget of the church.

Membership fee:

In the churches of the Swiss Pentecostal (Swiss Pentecostal Mission) an annual Membership fee is charged in favour of the Central Fund. This fee is Chf 100/- per person. The relevant letter containing the payment slip will be mailed to your address annually.



BECOMING A MEMBER

We are very happy that you wish to become a member of the church! As a member, you say “YES” with God’s help to the following things:

Supporting the vision

Know God: through life-changing worship services

- I want to take part in the worship services.
Hebrews 10:25:
...not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.
- I want to invite people to the worship services.
Luke 14:23:
Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full.

Find freedom: through need-oriented small groups

- I will invest in relationships within the church. That is why I want to take part in a small group.
1 John 3:16:
This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.
- I want to be transformed through my relationships in the small group.
Proverbs 27:17:
As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

Discover Purpose: through personal development steps

- I discover my gifts and talents.
Ephesians 4:11-12:
So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors

and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up...

- I want to lead a life which represents God's essence and holiness.
Ephesians 4:1:
As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.
- I want to behave in such a way that other people do not find it difficult to believe in Jesus.
1 Peter 2:12:
Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.
- Through my faith, I want to develop to full maturity.
Ephesians 4:13:
...until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Make a difference: through participation based on talents

- I get equipped and use the talents God has given me to make a difference in the lives of others.
1 Peter 4:10:
Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.
- I allow God to give me the heart of a servant.
Philippians 2:4-5.7:
...not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus ... he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant...



Preserving the unity of my church

- I pray for the growth and health of the church.
Ephesians 4:29:
Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.
- I behave lovingly when interacting with other members.
Philippians 2:2:
...then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.
- In conflicts I want to actively help clarify and reconcile.
Romans 14:19:
Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.
- I want to be an integral part of the church.
1 Corinthians 12:18:
But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

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