

GROWTH TRACKS

Church 101

New Members
Students Book

**South
Decatur
Church**



WELCOME TO SDC

It is my honor to be apart of the spiritual journey with you. Our vision is simple in that it is all about making a connection with God and with people.

Growth Track was developed to help people move to the next step in their personal walk with God and with the church. We have continued to develop what is best to help your grow, experience, and discover what we are about as a church. Also, how you can be connected to others on this incredible journey called life.

We have decided to break this up into 4 separate weeks because we believe you are worth the investment and time. Everything we do we desire transparency and clear understanding for what we as a church stand for and believe is true according to the scriptures.

I am so excited to walk with you through this step of your journey. It is my hope that we are a catalyst to helping you be equipped for what God has created you to do and to be. Make yourself at home, relax and lets

GET STARTED!



jay rhodes

LEAD PASTOR

OUR STORY

OUR STORY

In the summer of 1968, the Church of God in Alabama was going through a growth campaign under the late Earl F. Hall (State Evangelism Director). The Overseer decided that Decatur had become large enough to support an additional church. The Sherman Street Church of God, which was located in the downtown area of Decatur, was approached about the endeavor. The State Office purchased the land here at 3103 Spring Ave. SW and sent Rev. J. Harold Williams to start a new work. Since the land the church had purchased was still wooded and needed clearing before a church sanctuary could be built the small congregation had to meet in a temporary site. In September 1969 the congregation moved to the current site after building the sanctuary (which is now the Kid's Church Building). In July 1976 Leroy Smith became fifth pastor of South Decatur. It was under his pastorate that the Common's house was extended with two new bedrooms and remodeled. Then in 1982 a new Education wing and Fellowship Hall was built, which is not the classroom hallway, under the leadership of Pastor Randy Eubanks.

In 1993 the current Sanctuary was constructed under Rev. Samuel Parker and is the current worshipping center. This was the largest building project that the church had been a part of at the time. With a great deal of planning and faith the church stepped out and constructed a beautiful Sanctuary and converted the old sanctuary into a fellowship hall.

In 2009 the church took on the largest building program in the churches history under the leadership of Rev. Jay Rhodes. The church built a 9500 sq. ft. Life Center that housed a dinning hall, four classrooms, food pantry, and a youth sanctuary. In doing this the church was also able to convert the old Fellowship Hall into a large Kid's church area. With three classrooms and a Kid's Church Sanctuary. In the recent years there has been a great deal of remodeling that has taken place on the church property that has allowed for growth.

The Congregation has growth from 10 people in 1969 to over 160 in 2009. There has been change and growth all through the years. We owe a great deal of gratitude to those that paved the way. God has blessed us and the people of South Decatur have been faithful to the call of God.

We believe that our best days are not in the past but they are in the future. Our desire is to build on the foundation that was left for us by those that came before and we pray that God will give us the ability to see South Decatur to continue to grow through the year

CHURCH 101

**Getting
to know
Your
Church**



Introduction

What sort of impact can one expect Growth Tracks to have on a local church? *First* and foremost, Growth Tracks set forth a single unifying idea upon which all of church work can be built. Namely, “Every believer is a potential minister and is gifted by God and call to a specific ministry.” It is the function of the local church to equip the believer for the work of the ministry.

Sometimes people feel overwhelmed by the call and have no direction. Growth Tracks provides focus for everyone to concentrate on the most important priorities.

Secondly, one will realize a steady stream of qualified volunteers who are excited to minister and resistant to burnout. In the process, the church will note a greater degree of connectedness, increase in giving, and the growth of membership. The Pastor will be able to concentrate on the most challenging area of his work, which is bringing believers into maturity.

Finally, one ought to notice more people eager to assume spiritual leadership, thereby freeing the pastor to function more in line with his/her calling, which is to “equip the saints to do the work of the ministry.” Ephesians 4:12

Growth Tracks accomplishes these things and more with a two-pronged approach.

1. A paradigm shift is initiated through sermons showing the church the true calling that has been given to every Christian. It has been said that baseball is a simple game, you hit the ball, you catch the ball, and you throw the ball. Well Christianity is simple as well, you win the Lost, you disciple believers, and you equip the saints to do the work of the ministry. Church work seems so complicated, but Basis allows us to get back to the basics of ministry and center in on what is truly important.

1. Lasting change is achieved through a series of classes designed to bring individuals from church visitors to ministers in a minimum of 30 weeks. These classes are Newcomers, Spiritual Maturity, Gifts, and Calling. Upon completion of these classes the individual should have

- Become acquainted with the ministry philosophy of the local church.
- Become acquainted with the pastor and with one another. United with the church and become a supporter of the church.
- Developed a framework to move toward spiritual maturity.
- Learned about one’s unique spiritual gifts and the diversity of ministry.
- Discovered one’s ministry calling and received appointment or began an apprenticeship assignment.

In short Growth Tracks intends to revitalize the existing church and retain a greater portion of visitors through a systematic approach to ministry that releases lay people to function in their God giving gifts.

SECTION 1 NEWCOMERS CLASS-CHURCH101

1. WELCOME EVERYONE! This is our Newcomers class or what we call Church 101.

Our Central theme is this: *“We believe, every believer is a potential minister and gifted by God and called to a specific ministry.”*

It is therefore the function of the church to equip believers for the work of the ministry and then set them forth in the ministry that God has called them into.

And our mission statement falls in line with that in that we want *“To lead people to become fully devoted followers of Christ”*.

This is the reason that we exist as a church. Jesus said, *“He said unto them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe...’ Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.”* Mark 16:15-20

Once people come to know Jesus it is the job of the church to equip them and help them to mature in their faith.

THE BASIS OF MINISTRY DIAGRAM ILLUSTRATES. HOW THIS MISSION STATEMENT IS APPLIED TO OUR CHURCH.

1. EXCITABILITY-or to “Worship with Passion and Serve with Excellence”. We are to lead the sinners to Jesus, disciple believers, and equip the saints to do the work of the ministry. “The Basis of Ministry diagram illustrates how this mission statement is applied to our church. “Worship with Passion” represents the entry point into ministry for most people. Worship remains one of the main reasons that a person choice a church and it is this passion to connect with God that attracts and holds people until they can be disciplined into maturity and equip for ministry.

2. ACCOUNTABILITY-or “Disciple Believers”. Discipleship classes following this section of teaching are designed to bring personal issues into balance thereby allowing one to focus on the needs of others. Paul said, “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.” Philippians 2:3-4.

3. TEACHABILITY-or “And equip Saints to do the work of the ministry”. From 2nd to 3rd there is the path of teachability. In this process specific gifts are discovered and developed to enable one to effectively minister. The single greatest reason for burnout in church work is due to incorrect placement in ministry opportunities. When one is ministering within a specific calling an anointing from God is available to do His work.

God-called ministry is an energizing experience! Conversely, when one ministers out of duty or need, it tends to be a depleting experience. It is the responsibility of local church leadership to come alongside and assist in the work of the ministry.

4. AVAILABILITY or “Serving with Excellence” speak to the final product of the entire ministry developmental process represented by the baseball diamond. We are saved and whatever we do for God should call forth our best effort. Here at SDC we have a question we ask, “Is that Five Star”? We strive to be a 5 Star church where everything is done with excellence and to accomplish that we have to have the commitment of every minister. In reference to our baseball model, many people are asked by the local church to serve in some ministry capacity after they have reached the first base of community. Until they reach the 2nd base of Maturity their own personal issues remain the ministry focus instead of other’s needs.

5. MINISTRY or to “Save the Least, the last, and the lost” is the desired result of the entire ministry process and it is precisely in this way that God’s kingdom is built on the earth.

THE BASIS OF MINISTRY DIAMOND

When we look at Growth Tracks we look at it like a Baseball Diamond.

First Base -Commitment

Second Base-Maturity

Third Base-Calling

Home Plate-Ministry

- One must know how to make and keep commitments before they are qualified to minister to others.
- Otherwise, he/she may quit amidst a ministry assignment, creating problem for everyone. The 6-week Newcomers Class focuses on commitment and lays groundwork for the entire series.

Approximately 75% of people in any given church have never reached the 2nd Base of Maturity! Because the first base pathway is excitability, people find it difficult to turn their backs on the crowd and head for the loneliest base on the field. Ministry is not about YOU but meeting the needs of others. A 9-week class on discipleship puts things into perspective and clears the way to hear from God regarding a specific calling.

What is Commitment?

By definition it means to place one’s trust in, or to pledge to a specific course of action. Therefore, being committed to something means that you give it everything you have.

David said it this way, *“Into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.” Psalms 31:5*

What should we as Christians be committed to?

1st Commitment to God

Our commitment in this life has to begin with God. Without a right relationship with God nothing else works in our life. That means that we have to be saved.

But what does it mean to be saved? Salvation comes when we confess our sins to Jesus Christ, and we ask Him to forgive us with the mindset that we are going to follow Him. Salvation is when we surrender ourselves to God, our will, our life, our plans, and we become obedient to Him. Salvation comes in a moment, but it continues through process as we grow in Christ and as our life changes. There must be change if we are truly committed to God.

So, what do I do once I have been saved? Here are some things that can help you build your commitment.

1. You are Saved, Don't Doubt it

John said, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

If you have asked Jesus to forgive you and you mean it in your heart, then that is all that you have to do. The Holy Spirit is the one that brings you salvation in Christ. We cannot bring ourselves, so Jesus made a way that is simple and yet so powerful. All you have to do is ask and accept Him and you will be saved. There can be times when you will doubt your salvation because the enemy does not want you to change, but if you have asked, believe and confessed then you have no need to doubt.

2. Realize that you are not Perfect

Proverbs says a righteous man falls seven times, but he keeps getting up. You will make mistakes and you may even sin, but if that happens do not quit, just ask Jesus to forgive you and help you. Learn from it and become stronger. Does this mean you can continue to sin? NO! The grace of Jesus did not just have the power to save you from sin, but it gives you the power to overcome sin in your life. When you mess up just ask Jesus to get you back on track and do all that you can to continue to grow in Christ and become more like Him.

3. Pray Every Day

Prayer is our lifeline to God. You cannot grow without prayer, and it has to be more than, "when I am in trouble" prayer. You have to create a PRAYER LIFE, which means that you pray every day. Now some people when they think of prayer, they think of being on their

knees at the altar and using theological words. The truth is that prayer can occur anywhere, and it is just expressing ourselves to God in our way. God is not concerned with how you sound or the fact that you have a large vocabulary or a small one. God cares about having a conversation with you every day. So here are a couple things you can do. First, spend some time talking to God every day. Starting your day in prayer helps make the rest of your day better. Second, send God “twit prayers” throughout the day. Just like a twit you can give God prayer throughout the day even when you are busy and in a hurry. Ask for His help or give Him praise when something goes right. He is all ways listening.

4. Go to Church and Get Connect with a Small Group

“Forsake not the assembling of thy selves together, but so much more as you see the day approaching.” Hebrews 10:25

Christianity is communal which means that it only works within the support of the community. Without the community it is impossible to grow in Christ. Therefore, you have to be faithful to attendance in church. Church is important and help you develop relationships with others that are going through the same life challenges that you are. Not only is it important to go to church but you have to get involved in building relationships and that does not happen in a worship service but rather in small groups. Make connections, go to small groups, bible studies, and fellowship events. Who you hang out with will have a great impact on the type person that you become, and so you have to build Christian relationships. You will find that life is better when we do it together.

5. Pay your Tithes

Now this is not so the church can have money. No, it is about you trusting in God for provision. The tithe is 10% of our income and God requires that from us. But here is the great thing about God. He says if you will give me the 10%, I will bless the 90%. You will find that when you give to God, He pours out His blessing on you and not only do you not miss what you gave but what you have left work better. This is one of the only things in the Bible that God says, “try me” and see if I will not pour out blessings in your life. Giving is a mark of your maturity and your trust in God for everything else in your life.

6. Get Rid of the Past

Once you have been saved, make sure that you rid your house of anything that would pull you back into sin. Whatever it is that is sinful or pulls you into sin must go. You need a clean slate and that mean ridding yourself of anything that would pull you down. So throw it out, clean it up, and disconnect it.

7. Read your Bible Every day

The Bible is the Word of God. The Bible is Jesus in writing and the only way that you can truly know Him better is through the Bible. It is great that you attend church, and bible study and hear others talk about the Bible but you need to read it for yourself. Reading the

Bible help you to understand more about God, who He is, and who He is calling you to be. Reading the Bible will deepen your relationship and commitment to Him.

2nd Commitment to Family

Before there was a church there was the family. This is the first institution that God created, and it must be vitally important. Other than our personal relationship with God there is nothing more important than the family and we must be committed. The family starts with marriage. Before there were children there was a husband and a wife.

As Christians we have to be committed to our family and committed making our home a Christian home that allows the Spirit of God to show forth peace to those that enter in.

The Christian marriage is an example of Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5) and so it must be something that we are committed to caring for and sacrificing. As we grow in Christ our marriage grows because the married couple is partners in life.

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR WE HAVE CLASSES ON MARRIAGE AND RAISING KIDS.

3rd Commitment to the Church

We ask that you commit to SDC. So what does that mean? Well first let's take a look at who we are and what we believe.

PART ONE:

OUR PURPOSE

“Let there be real harmony among you so there won’t be any split in the church. I plead with you to be of one mind, united in thought and purpose.”

1 Corinthians 1:10 (LB)

OUR PURPOSE STATEMENT: WHY WE EXIST AS A CHURCH

The purpose statement of South Decatur is derived from the final words of Jesus to His followers. These words are known as the Great Commission.

Vision Statement: The Vision statement of South Decatur Church is simply”

1. _____ We want to connect with God and with other believers.
2. _____ We want to grow in our faith and become disciples of Christ.
3. _____ We want our church to grow and to expand the kingdom of God through all that we do.

Mission Statement: Our Mission statement of how we accomplish this is as follows.

“South Decatur Church exist to Lead people to becoming fully devoted followers of Christ”

The Great Commission:

“He said unto them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe...’ Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.”

Mark 16:15-20

“He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.”

Colossians 1:28-29

1. “He is the one we proclaim” is _____.
2. “Admonishing” is _____.
3. “Teaching everyone” is _____.
4. “Present everyone fully mature” is _____.

I. WE PROCLAIM – _____.

"His intent was that through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known..."

Ephesians 3:10

Weekend Services

A. _____

"I was glad when they said to me, let us go to the house of the Lord."

Psalm 122:1

"...the Father seeks worshippers... and His worshippers must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

John 4:23-24

B. _____

"But if an unbeliever or someone who does not understand comes in...he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all, and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, 'God is really among you!'"

1 Corinthians 14:24-25

C. _____

"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up."

Ephesians 4:11-12

D. _____

"Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. But who can ask them to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells him?"

Romans 10:13-14 (LB)

How to Win People to Christ:

1. Accept the personal _____.

2. Build a personal _____.

3. Share your personal _____.

4. Give a personal _____.

POINTS OF PASSION

"You will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Acts 1:8

1. Jerusalem – My City.

“Real religion, the kind that passes muster before God the Father, is this: Reach out to the homeless and loveless in their plight...”

James 1:27 Message

2. Judea and Samaria – My Nation.

“Whatever a person is like, I try to find common ground with him so that he will let me tell him about Christ and let Christ save him.”

1 Corinthians 9:22 LB

3. The ends of the earth – My World.

Jesus said to His followers, “Go everywhere in the world, and tell the Good News to everyone.”

Mark 16:15 NCV

WHAT CAN I DO?

1. _____.

“Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.’”

Matthew 9:37-38

2. _____.

“Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?’ Then I said, ‘Here am I. Send me!’ He said, ‘Go, and tell this people...’”

Isaiah 6:8-9

3. _____.

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Matthew 6:19-21

II. ADMONISHING – _____.

Getting connected at South Decatur means participating in a tribal group. Some people enjoy a large church because of its focus on others while others want a small, intimate church.

We believe that our church must become larger and smaller at the same time.

“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.”

Acts 20:20

TRIBAL GROUPS PROVIDE THREE THINGS:

1. A place to _____.

"...yes, whatever a person is like, I try to find common ground with him so he will let me tell him about Christ and let Christ save him."

1 Corinthians 9:22 LB

2. A place to _____.

"We know what real love is because Christ gave up His life for us. And so we also ought to give up our lives for our Christian brothers and sisters."

1 John 3:16 NLT

3. A place to _____.

"As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another."

Proverbs 27:17

HOW SMALL GROUPS WORK

1. Tribal groups or Care Groups

These groups meet once a month for either Bible study or a time of fun, and fellowship. Most of these groups meet on a Sunday night and have something in common. It would be a group of a certain age, or stage of life or a group that loves to sing hymns together, etc.

2. Six to Four Weeks

Throughout the year we have special groups that meet to study a particular item. These include parenting classes, marriage class, financial peace, etc. The class can be either Sunday morning or on Wednesday night and they usually last four to six weeks.

3. Becoming a leader

We believe that everyone has areas of strength and gifting that could benefit others. The first step in becoming a small group leader is to attend the Small Group Leader Orientation. These classes are offered throughout the year to give you an overview of what it takes to start a group. You'll discover that it's easier than you think.

4. Two Weekly LIFE Opportunities

We have LIFE groups on Sunday morning at 8:45am which are more disciple focused and then on Wednesday night which are more evangelistic focused.

III. TEACHING EVERYONE – _____.

The SDC Growth Track offers the information and experiences necessary to develop you into a fully devoted follower of Christ. From the initial decision to accept Jesus as your Lord to your final destination in ministry, the Growth Track will lead you through a step-by-step process of healing, growth, and leadership.

“Let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity...”
Hebrews 6:1

THE SDC GROWTH TRACK

1. _____.

This class is a basic introduction to the ministry of South Decatur and will help you understand church membership. Church 101 is held every six months on Sunday morning.

2. _____.

This class develops the essential habits that every believer needs to become a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ. Essentials 201 is held every six months on the second Sunday morning.

3. _____.

This class will help you discover your personality, gifts, and purpose in life, and see how God combines them for the best fit in ministry. Discovery is held every six months on the third Sunday.

4. _____.

Attend an orientation or training session in the ministry area of your choice to learn more or to join the Ministry Team. Ministry Team 401 is held every six months on the fourth Sunday morning.

God’s ultimate goal for our life is to make an eternal difference in the life of another person. The Growth Track is complete when you join or start a ministry team.

IV. PRESENT EVERYONE FULLY MATURE – _____

“Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly father is perfect.”
Matthew 5:48

All of us were created by God to make a difference in the life of another person. God has a place for you where your unique abilities and passions can touch the lives of others. We believe that your life will never make sense until you find, develop, and fulfill that purpose.

“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”
Ephesians 2:10

“However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me.”
Acts 20:24

“Now God gives us many kinds of special abilities...and there are different kinds of service to God (ministry)...All of you together form the one Body of Christ and each of you is a separate and necessary part of it.”

1 Corinthians 12:4-5, 27 (LB)

AT SOUTH DECATUR CHURCH...

...every member is a _____.

...every task is _____.

...every person is to be _____

PART TWO:

OUR BELIEFS

“Watch your life and your doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.”

1 Timothy 4:16

OUR STATEMENT OF FAITH: WHAT WE BELIEVE

1. In essential beliefs, we have unity.

"There is one Body and one Spirit...there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of us all..."

Ephesians 4:4-6

2. In non-essential beliefs, we have liberty.

"Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters...Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls...So then each of us will give an account of himself to God...So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God."

Romans 14:1, 4, 12, 22

3. In all our beliefs, we show charity.

"...If I hold in my mind not only all human knowledge but also the very secrets of God, and if I have the faith that can move mountains - but have no love, I amount to nothing at all."

1 Corinthians 13:2 (Ph)

I. FOUR ESSENTIAL TRUTHS

1. The _____ is the Word of God.

"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right."

2 Timothy 3:16 NLT

"We also thank God continually because, when you received the Word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it, not as the word of men, but actually as it is, the Word of God, which is at work in you who believe."

1 Thessalonians 2:13

God's Word is the only completely reliable and truthful authority and we accept the Bible as our manual for living. Our first question when faced with a decision is, "What does the Bible say?" We practice daily Bible reading and Bible study. The Bible is the basis for all we believe.

2. _____ is the Son of God.

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

John 14:6

"For Jesus is the one referred to in the Scriptures, where it says, 'The stone that you builders rejected has now become the cornerstone.' There is salvation in no one else! There is no other name in all of heaven for people to call on to save them."

Acts 4:11-12 NLT

Jesus Christ, second Person of the Trinity, lived a sinless life on earth and voluntarily paid for our sin by dying on the cross as our substitute. This accomplished salvation for all who receive grace by trusting in Him alone. He rose from the dead and is the only mediator between God and us. He baptizes believers in the Holy Spirit and will return to earth to consummate history.

3. You must be _____.

“When anyone becomes a Christian he becomes a new person inside. The old passes away, a new life has begun.”

2 Corinthians 5:17 LB

Jesus: “If you try to keep your life for yourself, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for me, you will find true life.”

Matthew 16:25 NLT

God created humans to have fellowship with Him, but they defied God by sinfully going their own way. As a result, we need God’s saving grace to end our alienation from Him. Salvation comes only through God’s grace - not human effort - and must be received personally by repentance and faith. At the end, everyone will experience bodily resurrection and the judgment. Only believers will enjoy eternal fellowship with God.

4. Believers can be _____ with _____.

“...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you...”

Acts 1:8

“...be filled with the Holy Spirit”

Ephesians 5:18

“If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

Luke 11:13

We believe the only way possible to live the Christian life is by God’s power within us. Every believer can be filled with the Holy Spirit by simply asking. We seek to practice a daily dependence on God’s Spirit to enable us to do what is right.

Our full Statement Of Faith is located in appendix one of this book.

PART THREE:

OUR STRUCTURE

*“For God is not a God of disorder; but of peace...
Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.”*

1 Corinthians 14:33 & 40

SOUTH DECATUR CHURCH GOVERNMENT

Believers who invest their hearts, time, families and finances in the building of a local church deserve to have confidence in church leadership. People are looking for leaders who conduct themselves with integrity and respect when making decisions that affect their lives.

1. Guided by _____

The Staff Leaders refer to the pastoral staff team led by the Lead Pastor. This team oversees the day to day ministry and operations of the church. These staff pastors serve the congregation and are responsible for the development of the spiritual life of the church.

South Decatur also has non-staff Staff Leaders known as Team Leaders. These leaders are over different ministries of the church and answer to the Lead Pastor. These men and women support the church staff as the primary protectors and encouragers of a positive spiritual climate within the church body. They serve in neither a governing nor a corporate capacity, but a spiritual capacity to create and maintain stability in potentially negative situations.

All Leaders are responsible to model a Godly lifestyle, provide a prayer shield for the members, defend and protect the integrity of the church, pray for the sick, mediate disputes, counsel, and represent the church to the community.

2. Protected by _____ and _____

The Deacon board are five members of the congregation, elected by the church body to oversee the finances and direct the provision of the physical facilities needed by the church. They provide counsel to the Lead Pastor regarding the major financial commitments of the church.

The Elders Board is made up of appointed members that take on the Spiritual Care ministry of the church. These are usually couples that have been through Elders School and are called to minister to the needs of church. As new members you will be assigned an Elder which will pray for you and help you if you need it.

South Decatur Council:

3. Strengthened by _____.

The Overseers are Church of God Overseers, District, State, and International. They may be called in to help in accountability matters relating to the Senior Pastor if requested to do so by the Elders or Trustees.

Church of GOD Overseers:

_____ General Overseer, Cleveland TN.
_____, State Overseer, Birmingham, AL.
_____ District Overseer, Decatur, AL.

4. Church Finances

"A tithe of everything you produce belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord."

Leviticus 27:30

At South Decatur we practice tithing for the support of Christ's Body, the church, as God commands. We recognize that giving 5% of our income is the Biblical standard of giving. We also give an additional 5% to World Missions.

Many people love to give to God, but need to have confidence in the methods and purposes used by organizations to which they give. Therefore there are a great number of people willing to give if they are able to see honesty, integrity, and genuine spiritual values reflected in the lifestyles of their church leaders.

The giving of tithes and offerings is worship to Jesus Christ and is an expression of the relationship between the individual giver and the Lord. That is why we don't have people fill out pledge cards or make faith promises. Funds are not "income only," they are worship, and must not be considered as a business transaction, but as an expression of gratitude toward God.

PART FOUR:

OUR HOPE FOR YOU

“...We hope that your faith will grow and that our work among you will be greatly enlarged.”

2 Corinthians 10:15 NLT

OUR HOPE FOR YOU

I. THE NEXT STEPS

1. Profess being saved and water baptized.
2. Join a Tribal Group.
3. Begin the Growth Track or Training.
4. Become a member of South Decatur Church.
5. Serve on the Ministry Team.

II. WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MEMBER

The difference between “attenders” and “members” can be summed up in one word:

_____.

An Attender is a _____.

A Member is a _____.

**At South Decatur we recognize the need for a formal membership.
We ask you to commit to membership for 4 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.

Membership Application

Applicant Information		
Name:		
Date of birth:	Cell Phone:	Phone:
Current address:		
City:	State:	ZIP Code:
Email:		
Spouse's Information (if Married)		
Name:		
Phone:	E-mail:	Cell Phone:
Date of birth:	Are you Saved?	Have you been Baptized?
Membership Information		
Will you becoming a new partner of South Decatur or will you be transferring you membership? NEW TRANSFER		
If transfer than from where?		
City:	State:	ZIP Code:
How long did you attend the previous church? Were you in good standing?		
New Members growth track (See media booth for dvd or go to the church website)		
Have you watch Growth Track 1 (Church 101)? (see the back of application for explanation on Growth Track)	Yes	No
Ministry information		
This information will help us to help you become involved in ministry?		
What areas of ministry have you worked in?	How long?	
What area of ministry are you interested in? or Which one would you like more information on?		
Nursery	Rangers (Boys) or Impact (Girls)	Sports & Recreation
Kids Church	Praise Team, or Band	Men's Ministry
Students	Musician	Ladies Ministry
Media Team	Ushers, Greeters, Check in	Others
Children information		
Name	Name	
Name	Name	
Signatures		
It is my desire to become a partner of the South Decatur Church of God. I commit that all information above is true .		
Signature of applicant:	Date:	
Signature of spouse (only if for a joint membership):	Date:	

Notes: