

# Koinonia Homeschool Co-op

*What does our co-op name mean?*

*It's Greek*

Wikipedia says, “no single English word is adequate to express its depth and richness. It is a derivative of “*koinos*,” the word for *common*. Koinonia is a complex, rich and thoroughly fascinating Greek approach to building community or teamwork.

Koinonia embraced a strong commitment to “*Kalos k’agathos*” meaning “*good and good*,” – an inner goodness toward virtue, and an outer goodness toward social relationships. In the context of outer goodness, translated into English, the meaning of Koinonia holds the idea of *joint participation* in something with someone, such as in a *community*, or *team* or an *alliance* or *joint venture*.

Koinonia also means “*a sharer*” as in to share with one another in a possession held in common. It implies the *spirit of generous sharing* or the act of giving as contrasted with selfish getting. When Koinonia is present, the spirit of sharing and giving becomes tangible. In most contexts, generosity is not an abstract ideal, but a demonstrable action resulting in a tangible and realistic expression of giving.

In classical Greek, *koinonein* means “*to have a share in a thing*,” as when two or more people hold all things in common. It can mean “*going shares*” with others, thereby having “*business dealings*,”

such as *joint ownership* of a ship. It can also imply “*sharing an opinion*” with someone, and therefore agreeing with him, or disagreeing in a congenial way. Participation is vital as the members are sharing in what others have. What is shared, received or given becomes the common ground through which Koinonia becomes real.

Phillipians 2:1-2 declares, “If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.”

Koinonia is being in agreement with one another, being united in purpose, and serving alongside each other. Our Koinonia with each other is based on our common Koinonia with Jesus Christ.

First John 1:6-7, “If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”

Researched, compiled, and suggested by Janet and Mike Kelly, charter members of Koinonia Co-op.

Voted and approved by all charter members July 2008.

# Statement of Faith

We believe the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, to be the verbally inspired Word of God, the final authority for faith and life, inerrant in the original writings, infallible, and God-breathed. Nothing has been added to it, and it is the only source of divine truth. In its original autograph, the Bible is without error in whole or in part, including theological concepts as well as geographical and historical detail. (2 Timothy 3:16; Revelation 22:18-19)

We believe there is one living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, perfect in all His attributes, one in essence but eternally subsistent in three persons as revealed in the New Testament: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)

We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His miracles, His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, His bodily resurrection, His ascension, and His personal return in power and glory. He was God come in human flesh, being fully God and fully man. (John 1:1-18)

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person proceeding from the Father and Son and is therefore eternal, and of the same essence, majesty, and glory with the Father and Son. We believe, therefore, that the Holy Spirit is truly God. (Acts 5:3-4)

We believe in the fall of man through the disobedience of Adam, and that now no man is able to justify himself before God. All men are in violation of God's righteous requirements and His holy character, both by nature and act, and are therefore under His wrath and just condemnation. The central purpose of the coming of Jesus Christ was to pay the penalty for man's sin through His substitutionary death on the cross – the successful accomplishment of which was attested to by his subsequent visible bodily resurrection. (Romans 3:10, 23; Romans 6:23)

We believe salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and responded to by personal faith, not trusting in any personal works, but in the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ alone. (Ephesians 2:8-9) This salvation is eternal in its duration and results in good works. (John 3:15-16, Ephesians 1:13; Titus 2:14)

We believe in the existence of a personal devil who is working in this world to destroy the souls of men. We believe that all believers should live in such a manner as to not bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord, and that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasure, practices, and association is commanded of God. (2 Timothy 2:19) Therefore, and because we believe that the Bible is the only source of divining truth, we believe God forbids pagan practices such as witchcraft, fortune telling, casting spells, consulting familiar spirits, interpreting omens, and contacting the dead. (Deuteronomy 18:10-12) We also believe that sexual relations in marriage between a man and a woman are a blessing from the Lord, and all other sexual relations are forbidden. (Leviticus 18:6-30)

We believe it is our obligation as believers to witness by life and word to the truths of the Gospel and proclaim these to all mankind. (Matthew 28:19-20)

We believe in the "Blessed Hope", the personal return of our Lord Jesus Christ, for His redeemed ones; and in His return to earth with His saints to establish His kingdom. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. (2 Thessalonians 1:8, 10; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 22:12, Revelation 20:1-5)

We believe God, in His Word, has given parents the responsibility and authority to educate their children in a godly manner. (Deuteronomy 6:5-9)

# Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this co-op is to provide supportive educational opportunities to parents in their efforts to raise Christian children by educating them from a Biblical worldview. We will accomplish this purpose by primarily providing our families an opportunity to fulfill the requirements for core curriculum classes for all grades. Core curriculum classes include reading, writing, mathematics, science, history geography and for 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades, composition and literature.

We may also choose to provide electives which include art, music, foreign language, critical thinking/logic, character training, etc.... But these offerings will be limited, giving preference to core curriculum classes.

# Statement of Conduct

In obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ, parents are to train their children in proper behavior towards adults and other children. Parents are to review these rules with their children so they will be aware of what is expected of them during our co-op and related field trips. If a parent is unable to be at a co-op or field trip, the responsibility of the child must be delegated to another adult and the child made aware of their authority. Children are expected to:

- Obey our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Consider each other's interests ahead of their own
- Speak with adults and one another in a respectful manner
- Wait to speak with anyone engaged in a conversation with another person
- Take good care of the facilities that the church has allowed us to use
- Speak in normal voice inside the building so as not to disrupt anyone.
- Refrain from bringing toys or other distracting objects to the class or on field trips

Children will not be permitted to:

- Disrupt learning time with inappropriate comments, questions, gestures, or whispering
- Use unkind words or actions toward another individual
- Show disrespect or disregard to adults.
- Abuse, deface or destroy property belonging to someone else or to the church
- Run or roughhouse inside the buildings
- Use electronic devices (phones, tablets, laptops, mp3 players, etc.) during class time

We should remember Jesus' teaching in Matthew 18:15-16 when dealing with the discipline of a child. Teachers are to address the student first with love. If the problem persists, the teacher will address the student and his or her parent. If further action is needed, the co-op leadership will address the issue with all parties. We will refrain from complaining or gossiping with others not involved in the situation. In harmony with Scriptures, any corrective discipline will be handled in love with concern for the student's welfare as a child of God. If needed, all parties will agree to mediation as stated in our Conflict Resolution Contract.

# Dress Code

Knowing that each co-op member is an image-bearer of the Lord, Koinonia Co-op would like to stress modesty and neatness in appearance and dress. Our students and parents are asked to avoid extremes in clothing and hairstyles. Parents are very instrumental in helping students look their best and in being considerate of how their appearance affects others and honors Jesus Christ.

# *Koinonia Co-op Policies and Guidelines*

*The following guidelines have been established to maintain a positive experience for all families involved.*

- All members must read, understand, agree to, abide by, and sign the Statement of Faith, the Statement of Purpose, the Statement of Conduct, the Dress Code and the Conflict Resolution Agreement. All members must sign the Release of Liability and General Agreement and provide medical insurance proof.
- All church, co-op and class fees should be paid in full by the first day of classes. If this is a financial hardship, payment arrangements must be made with the individual teacher or co-op leadership. Installment payments are only offered to existing members. New members must pay in full by the first day of classes. If all fees are not paid in full by April 30 of the current year, the family will not be allowed to enroll for the following school year.
- Children must be supervised at all times. Do not dismiss your classes before the scheduled time. Do not allow your children to play inside the church buildings before or after co-op. Make sure your children have all of their book bags, lunch boxes, clothes and shoes before leaving each week.
- The success of this co-op depends on the full participation of each parent by teaching, assisting and maintaining the cleanliness of church property. Our standard is to leave the church cleaner than we found it. Remember that others are depending on you. Please fulfill your commitment for the full year and arrive early before your first class to set up your room.
- In the event that you will have a planned or emergent absence from co-op, it is your responsibility to notify your co-teachers and find a substitute for all of your responsibilities – teaching and cleaning. Phone calls must be used to notify everyone your absence will affect. No emails or other electronic messages are acceptable. Do not ask another co-op member or leader to notify others of your absence. This is your responsibility.
- Member families that have numerous absences, or habitual tardiness, during the first semester will be put on membership probation for the second semester. Continuation of these problems will prohibit the family from enrolling in the co-op for the following year.
- Field trips are encouraged, but should be scheduled outside of our co-op time. Appropriate conduct and dress as outlined in the codes are encouraged.
- Class fees may be collected by each teacher to cover the costs of class materials. Art supplies, science lab materials, and student workbooks are to be purchased by the parent. Students should bring their own basic school supplies to each class.
- We will collect a love offering for the church to cover the costs of using the facilities.
- The elementary classes should be hands-on as much as possible. Homework for grade 3 and below should be limited to completing a project or reading a book. No written homework should be assigned to these lower grades.
- Upper elementary grades through twelfth grade will be assigned homework in order to complete the curriculum within the school year. Middle school and high school students will be responsible for completing their assignments from their co-op classes as scheduled by the teacher and for submitting their work by the given deadline. Each teacher will determine the penalty for late assignments in her class.

- If middle or high school students arrive unprepared for class (assignments not done and unable to answer questions or participate), **then the teacher is to first speak with the student and address the need for work to be completed. On the second and third offense, the teacher is to communicate to the parent that their child is not completing assignments as soon as possible.** If the student continues to be unprepared for class, they will be assigned to the study hall class for the rest of the year with academic assignments from the parent.
- Students will not be allowed to audit any class. All students are expected to be full participants in the class.
- Study hall teachers are to be present in the study hall classroom with the students while they are completing academic work or pursuing quiet, non-disturbing activities. No music or non-academic videos are to be played during the study hall hour from any electronic devices including lap tops, tablets, phones or mp3 players.
- Courses will be for a semester or full year, no less. Please keep grades for the middle school and high school classes and be prepared to forward them to any parent that requests them.
- Institute for Excellence in Writing will be the writing curriculum for all grades.
- Apologia Ministries Exploring Creation series curriculum will be used in all science classes for grades 7-12. Science classes are to be lab-oriented for the purpose of completing labs and lab reports for a lab grade, not teaching all of the material the students are to have read at home. If the schedule and time permits after completing labs, a teacher may choose to review the module material with the students.
- All class discussions must be relevant to the subject being taught.
- Teachers will provide a syllabus so that parents know what to expect and can file the syllabus with school records. Middle school and high school students are expected to keep track of their assignments from the syllabus.
- Teachers are to use co-op time to enrich and supplement the curriculum with hands-on experiences, and using any extra time for reviewing the material and for answering student questions.
- Chapter and final testing and grading of work will be the responsibility of the parent, not the co-op teacher. The parent is the final authority on a student's grade as the children's education is their ultimate responsibility as a home educator.
- Each class will be assigned at least two parents for safety reasons and for teacher absences. All teachers are to be fully engaged with the class they are assigned to. No teacher should be on their electronic device unless necessary for teaching or researching for the subject of the class they are co-teaching.
- Parents and teachers have the responsibility to address any issues they have privately with the appropriate party as soon as possible in the school year as per our Statement of Conduct and our Conflict Resolution. Please refrain from gossiping. Take your issue to the person first and privately. Please do not allow a problem to continue until it is too late to address it.
- Parents are responsible for notifying each of their children's teachers about any allergies or medical conditions they believe are necessary for the safety of those children. Teachers should notify parents before serving any foods in their classroom or using any chemicals in science experiences.
- The co-op leadership reserves the right to refuse membership in the co-op to any prospective family.
- The co-op leadership reserves the right to terminate membership in the co-op after completing the Conflict Resolution proceedings if an agreeable solution is not reached between the parties. Refusal to participate in the Conflict Resolution will automatically terminate the family's membership in the co-op.
- The co-op leadership reserves the right to be flexible with all policies (except our Statement of Faith), exercising discernment with grace and mercy.

# Koinonia Co-op Safety

## Nursery Safety

For the comfort and safety of our pre-school children, a minimum of two adults must be in the nursery rooms at all times. On co-op days where we are short of teachers due to planned or emergent absences, staffing of the pre-school rooms will take priority over all other ages and grades. Please be flexible enough to cover these needs.

In the interest of not spreading germs and to keep the children hydrated, each child should have a name-labeled, refillable sippy cup or bottle. Pre-packaged drinks such as juice boxes and Capri Suns are not refillable, but are allowed if labeled with the child's name. If you send a pre-packaged drink, please also provide a refillable, labeled sippy cup.

Please do not send any beverage that is colored with dark or red food coloring or dark fruit juice. When these spill or leak, they leave stains which are difficult to remove.

Older Students will only be allowed in the pre-school rooms with permission of the co-op leadership or if their mothers are present in the room.

## Illness Policy

In the interest of keeping us all as healthy as possible and protecting those around us who have medical conditions in which a common illness could potentially be life-threatening, the following illness policy has been established.

Please do not attend or bring your child to co-op unless:

1. Fever-free without medication at least 24 hours before co-op, meaning as of Tuesday morning there was no more fever.
2. No diarrhea or vomiting at least 24 hours before co-op, meaning the last incident of diarrhea or vomiting was before Tuesday morning.
3. Antibiotics for a contagious infection were started by Monday evening, or first dose before 9 am on Tuesday.
4. In the case of lice, must be nit and lice free for 7 days. Teach your children not to share personal hygiene objects and not to bring toys with fur or hair to co-op.

## Weather Emergencies

In case of severe weather, such as a tornado warning, please cautiously and calmly escort your class to the center hallway of the building, being sure to stay away from windows and exterior doors.

## Evacuation Plan

If there is any reason we need to evacuate the buildings, please count your number of students, escort your class calmly to the nearest exit and take them to the open field behind the Children's Building. You will be able to find your own children there.

## Visitors/Unfamiliar Persons

We welcome adult family members to come to observe or to assist classes in which their family members are enrolled as long as they are not a distraction or disruption to the students or teachers. However, we don't always recognize each other's family, so please be sure to introduce your visitors to as many members as possible and have them wear a visitor badge.

Also, if you see someone you do not know in the church building, go introduce yourself as a member of the co-op and find out who they are. We may have church members passing through for volunteer work at the church and most would welcome the opportunity to meet you. If at any time, after introducing yourself, you do not feel comfortable with that person's presence, immediately report them to a co-op Service Team member.

If at any time it is necessary for a non-enrolled student to be on the campus of the church during co-op hours, they must remain under the supervision of their host or gain permission to be in the study hall under teacher supervision. The co-op and/or the church could be held liable for any harm that comes to our children or the building.

# *Conflict Resolution Agreement*

This document is an attempt to provide us guidance as believers in resolving conflict in a Biblical manner. Ever since the introduction of a sin nature into the heart of man, there has been the potential for conflict between believers. The Bible and human experience are replete with examples of interpersonal conflict between believers which have caused hurt, offense, misunderstanding and further sin, within and without the body of Christ.

Our Creator's desire is to enjoy a perfectly harmonious relation with all of His children and for his children to have a similar relationship with each other. The essential theme of all of Scripture is reconciliation: unholy men being reconciled to a holy God through the death of His Son. Because of the power of his blood, we believe it is possible to resolve any conflict between believers who come into an effort at conflict resolution with a humble and submissive spirit.

To that end, the starting point in the resolution of any conflict is to come before the Lord in a spirit of humility, requesting clarity of thought, wisdom, self-control, and most importantly, asking for a heart's desire to honor and submit to God and each other as we seek to restore the damaged relationship.

The failure to confront rarely results in a harm or offense resolving itself by other means; rather the matter tends to "fester", giving the Evil One a foothold by which to cause "simmering animosity" and ultimately, destroy a relationship. Spirit-led confrontation is an integral part of God's plan for the restoration of the relationship between the offender and the offended, and even more importantly, between the individual and Him.

The first step in the process is to contact the offender and request an opportunity to meet in person so that you might express the concern that you have. Be prepared for the possibility that the offender has no idea that he/she has harmed or offended you. Give the offenders the opportunity to ask questions which may help them to understand what they have said or done to harm you.

It is never easy to be "called out." However, how we respond to being confronted not only says a great deal about our individual character; it may set the stage for a successful or unsuccessful effort at conflict resolution. Be quick to listen and slow to speak. Prayerfully and humbly consider what your fellow believer is saying to you. If needed, ask for time to consider and to pray over what has been said to you. When you are ready to respond, request a private meeting with the person you have offended with the goal of confession, forgiveness, understanding and reconciliation.

If, after a reasonable time, the offender has not acknowledged the harmful nature of the events, ask two or three wise individuals to be witnesses as you meet with the offender to provide an account of the events and why you feel a sin or offense has occurred. If the offender is willing to meet with you and the witnesses, request the witnesses to contribute their thoughts in an attempt to achieve confession, repentance and restoration.

If confession and restoration are not achieved as a result of these meetings, or the offending party is unwilling to meet with you and the witnesses, schedule a meeting with the Koinonia Co-op Service Team. After careful evaluation of the situation by the Service Team, the co-op leadership will assume responsibility for the matter and will decide the best course of action, which may include extending an opportunity to meet with both the offended and the offender; bringing the matter before the Pastor of Christian Heritage Church; and/or termination of membership in Koinonia Homeschool Co-op if the offending party refuses to meet with the co-op leadership and/or the church leadership.

The perfect will of the Father is for His people to live in a mutually respectful, harmonious and God-honoring relationship with each other and Him. He has provided us with a clear guidance in His Word.

If you have need of using this Conflict Resolution, Kelly Massey will gladly forward to you the full pdf file with Scripture references included, or you may find additional information at [www.Peacemaker.net](http://www.Peacemaker.net). Content of this document was taken from the Elder document of Trinity Church in Lansing, MI. [www.trinitywired.com](http://www.trinitywired.com)