

Beth Sar Shalom Florida Messianic Congregation

Who Are We? ©

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Shalom and Welcome!

One of the first questions we are asked at Beth Sar Shalom is “What is Messianic?” To answer this and many other common questions, we have put together this pamphlet of information about what we believe, how we worship, and how we live out our faith in the G-d of Israel. We trust that this booklet will be a good introduction to our community, and will answer any questions that you may have.

Please keep in mind that our heart and doors are always open. If you feel the need to discuss these things further, you can easily contact our Rabbi, or one of our Elders, by using the phone number or email address located in this booklet.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and our prayer is that the L-rd may bless you and keep you as you continue your spiritual journey.

So...Who Are We?

Beth Sar Shalom (House of the Prince of Peace) is a congregation of Messianic believers, regardless of ethnic background, who choose to maintain the Hebraic culture from which the Bible came.

Messianic worship is the completion, or “full flowering,” of the only “worship” that G-d created for His children. He chose the Hebrew people to bring the knowledge of His standards, His grace, and His saving power through the Messiah to the world. Messianic worship is the completion, and the fulfillment, of the development of that faith.

A Messianic believer is one who believes that Yeshua of Nazareth (known in English as “Jesus”) is the long awaited Messiah; the permanent, eternal and divine Passover Lamb sacrifice of G-d who gave His life to remove the sins of those who believe in Him and make Him the L-rd of their lives. Messianic believers base their faith and practice on the lifestyle of Yeshua. Although other *halachah* (traditions) may develop, the Scriptures are the basis for our beliefs. We believe that the entire Bible, including the *Tanach* (Old Testament) and the Apostolic Scriptures (New Testament) is the complete, infallible Word of G-d in its original languages and manuscripts.

The Bible clearly tells us that in a vertical relationship with G-d, “*there is neither Jew nor Gentile, male nor female...*” (Gal. 3:28). However, there are differences between people, and even different parts of the Body of Messiah:

“For just as the body is one but has many parts; and all the parts of the body, though many, constitute one body; so it is with the Messiah. For it was by one

Spirit that we were all immersed into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, slaves or free; and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. For indeed the body is not one part but many. If the foot says, 'I'm not a hand, so I'm not part of the body,' that doesn't make it stop being part of the body. And if the ear says, 'I'm not an eye, so I'm not part of the body,' that doesn't make it stop being part of the body. If the whole body were any eye, how could it hear? If it were all hearing, how could it smell? But as it is, G-d arranged each of the parts in the body exactly as he wanted them. Now if they were all just one part, where would the body be? But as it is, there are indeed many parts, yet just one body." (1 Corinthians 12:12-20)

Although all believers and groups of believers in Yeshua are unique parts of the same Body of Messiah, there are differences in practice and calling which are not requirements for one's salvation. Believers may be found on an infinite number of points along that continuum. The Bible tells us that anyone who believes in their heart, and confesses with their mouth that Yeshua is L-rd and that G-d raised Him from the dead will be saved. (*Romans 10:9*)

Why Do We Use Different Terminology?

In Messianic fellowships, ministries, congregations, literature, and internet forums, you will notice the use of terminology that is different than what is used by the rest of the Body of Messiah. In most cases this terminology is historically and linguistically more accurate. Throughout this pamphlet, we will use many of these terms in place of their English counterparts. Please take a moment to look these over so that you are familiar with them as you read the rest of the booklet.

Yeshua: This is the Messiah's original, Hebrew name, meaning "L-rd's Salvation." It was the name his mother, Miriam (Mary in English), would have used when addressing Him. His name was transliterated into Greek as "*Iesous*" and later into English as "Jesus."

G-d: Many times the "o" is left out of this word as a way of recognizing the traditional respect and reverence that the Scribes had for the name of G-d. Although this is not His name but rather His title, this usage reminds us of the tradition of neither pronouncing nor spelling in Hebrew the "Tetragrammaton" (YHVH) except on holy scrolls. Many Messianic writers also use "L-RD."

Messiah: Although "Christ," the Anglicized version of the Greek term "*Christos*," is commonly used to describe Yeshua, the Hebrew "*Mashiach*" captures the original concept of "Anointed One" more accurately. The word "*Mashiach*" is then transliterated into English as "Messiah." We are also very aware that the term "Christ" has been used for millennia in the persecution of the Jewish people; therefore, to avoid any conflict or misunderstanding, we use the term "Messiah." Because of the fact that Yeshua fulfills all of the requirements and prophecies of Messiah found throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, it is more appropriate to use this term.

Synagogue or Congregation: A “church” is normally understood to be a gathering (Greek *ekklesia*) of predominantly non-Jewish believers in Yeshua. A “synagogue” is normally understood to be a gathering (Greek *synagoge*) of predominantly (non-Messianic) Jews for study or worship. “Congregation” is a neutral, generic term, which is more appropriate in regards to ‘who we are’.

Tanach: This is the correct, original name of the compiled books of the Bible commonly referred to as the “Old Testament.” *Tanach* is a Hebrew acronym made up from the first letters of the three parts: *Torah* (Teachings), *Nevi'im* (Prophets) and *Khetuvim* (Writings).

Apostolic Scriptures: This phrase refers to the compiled books of the Bible commonly referred to as the “New Testament” or “New Covenant.” The “New Covenant” of Jer. 31 is a spiritual covenant that we enter into when we accept the Messiah, not words on paper. The correct term for the Bible written after the *Tanach* is “Scriptures written during the times of the Apostles” or “Apostolic Scriptures.”

Ruach HaKodesh: This is the Hebrew phrase used for the Spirit of G-d. Literally, this means “the Holy Spirit.”

Messianic Community: This is a designation of all believers in Yeshua worldwide and throughout time. It is the collective whole, or the “Body of Messiah.”

What is a Torah-Pursuant Messianic Congregation?

One of the most straightforward statements made by Yeshua concerning the basis for the faith and practice of His followers is quoted in the Good News as reported by His disciple Matthew:

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Torah or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill [to fill full your understanding]. Yes indeed! I tell you that until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke will pass from the Torah, not until everything that must happen has happened. So whoever annuls the least of these mitzvot [commandments] and teaches others to do so will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But whoever obeys them and so teaches will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.” (Matthew 5:17-19, parenthetical explanations added)

In this teaching, Yeshua is establishing a basis for the lifestyle of His followers. Not only are those to whom the commandments were given (believers) warned not to disobey the commandments, and not teach others to disobey them, but also in the last verse Yeshua said very plainly that “whoever obeys them and so teaches will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.” Is this a statement about how to achieve salvation? No, not at all! In no way do these verses suggest that one will be prevented entry into the Kingdom of Heaven, only that those who disobey the commandments given to them will be “the least”, and those who obey the Torah and the Prophets will be “called great.”

Messianic Believers and the Torah-Pursuant Life-Style

Many Messianic believers may be defined as “Torah-pursuant”. In this, they are following the example of the first-century Messianic believers who were also “zealous for Torah.” (*Acts 15:19-21; 21:17-27*)

Most Messianic believers will refrain from calling themselves “Christians,” which is Greco-Roman terminology; they prefer the more Hebraic term, “Messianic.” The sect of early first century believers in Yeshua was called “the Way,” not to be confused with the modern cult of the same name (*Acts 24:14, 22*). The early believers were also called Nazarenes, not to be confused with the modern Christian denomination of the same name.

In addition, Messianic believers follow, and have found great value in the traditions passed down by the Jewish people. Theirs is a heritage rich and full, and this history is indeed the history of G-d’s people. Yeshua did not condemn these traditions, but rather commanded that they not be exalted above the commandments of G-d (*Mark 7:6-8*). We are to be careful in following what our Master commanded.

Lastly, it must be understood that we are saved by grace through faith and in the blood atonement provided by Yeshua; not on the basis of our own righteousness or good deeds, which as a means of atonement falls far short. (*Isa. 64:5-6; Eccl. 7:20*)

Properly observed, Messianic worship has no middle wall of partition (*Ephesians 2:14*) separating Jewish believers from non-Jewish believers. Most Messianic congregations have a significant percentage of non-Jewish believers. They love the L-rd, Israel, and the Jewish people, and have been called of the L-rd to a Messianic expression of their faith in Yeshua.

It is in Messianic worship that we find a most wonderful fulfillment of Scripture, in that all—Jew and Gentile, male and female, bond and free—are seen worshipping the Holy One of Israel in Spirit and in Truth. We welcome you to join us in this worshipful experience.

Do Some Messianic Believers Keep Kosher, and if so, Why?

Yes, they do indeed. Many Messianic families keep ‘biblical kosher’ which may differ from rabbinic or orthodox kosher guidelines. The basic reason is that we believe that the commands of G-d have never been withdrawn, in other words, our L-rd never changed His mind (c.f. *Malachi 3:6*).

Yeshua clearly states in *Matthew 5:17-19* that all the commands of G-d are eternal. Yeshua adhered to the Torah perfectly and fulfilled predictions of the Prophets, but never came to abolish either. *Matthew* states that He came “to make full” (*plerosai*) the meaning of what the Torah and Prophets require. He came to “complete our understanding” of the Torah and the Prophets so that we can be more effective in our pursuit of obedience of G-d.

Yeshua taught that the Torah has not been abolished. All commands of G-d, including the dietary statutes given to all believers in Leviticus 11, still stand.

How do Messianic Believers Keep the Sabbath, and How is it Different Than Orthodox Judaism?

Messianic Believers keep the Sabbath as a celebration of creation (Genesis 2) and the new creation (John 3). The Bible says to make it holy, to not do ordinary work, and to hold a sacred assembly. Making the Sabbath day holy means setting it apart (apart from the workweek) and apart from “the world.” We welcome the Sabbath on *Erev Shabbat* (Evening of the Sabbath) which takes place on Friday at sundown (a Biblical day going from sunset to sunset). We celebrate with many traditions passed down over the years, many dating back to Biblical times. Many begin with the lighting of Sabbath candles, and the special Sabbath dinner. This is a very unique family time that incorporates different elements such as prayers, special Sabbath songs, and blessings for every person present. The purpose of the *Erev Shabbat* ceremony is to use these elements to help make the transition from the secular week into the holy Sabbath.

The Sabbath ends on Saturday evening with the lighting of the *Havdalah* candle and reading of Scripture concerning G-d’s provision. This is the start of the workweek, so after it is over, it is traditional to greet each other with the phrase “*Shavuah Tov*” which means, “Good Week.” Many meet with other believers after *Havdalah* to discuss Scripture and break bread together, as the early believers did. (*Acts 20*)

Messianic believers recognize the seventh day as being the Sabbath (Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11; 32:12-17). The Sabbath is even mentioned more in the Apostolic Scriptures than all the other days of the week combined. There is no mention in the Scriptures of the Sabbath being changed to any other day of the week.

Although there are various levels of observance of *Shabbat* (Sabbath) among Messianic believers, the *Shabbat* is still the day of choice for celebrating our relationship with the L-rd. It is also seen as the perpetual sign spoken of in Exodus 31:13-16, pointing back to the original state of the creation and forward to the time spoken of by the author of the book of Hebrews (4:3) when, “...we who have believed do enter into a Sabbath rest (*shabbaton*).”

Our Mission

- To proclaim the Good News of Salvation through Yeshua the Messiah (Matthew 28:18-20), to the Jew first and also to the Gentile (Romans 1:16), and to develop fully mature believers in order to accomplish this task.

- To place the believer's well-being, physical and spiritual walk, and professional development, as our highest responsibilities.
- To be concerned with and promote the welfare of the Body of Messiah, the Jewish community, and the Nation of Israel.

Our Government

Beth Sar Shalom Messianic Congregation is an Elder-led organization whose administration exists to support the work we are called to do. We are recognized as a Congregation and Ministry both by the United States government and the State of Florida. We operate based on a set of corporate bylaws and a constitution (both are available for you to read by seeing one of the Elders), which call for Elder leadership based on the following Scriptures:

So YHVH said to Moses: "Gather to Me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them; bring them to the tabernacle of meeting, that they may stand there with you. (Numbers 11:16)

The reason I left you in Crete was so that you might attend to the matters still not in order and appoint congregation leaders in each city—those were my instructions. (Titus 1:5)

The Office of Elder (Overseer) and the Position of Rabbi

According to the Apostolic Scriptures' concept of eldership, elders lead the congregation, teach and preach the Word of G-d, protect the assembly from false teachers, exhort and admonish fellow believers in sound doctrine, visit the sick and pray, and judge doctrinal issues. In biblical terminology, elders shepherd, oversee, lead, and care for the local congregation. *"Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Messiah, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of G-d among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of G-d; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock."* (1 Peter 5: 1-3)

In Beth Sar Shalom, one of our elders also serves as the 'Head Overseer' of our congregation. This position is known as 'Rabbi'. A Rabbi is not a priest, neither in the Jewish sense nor in the Christian sense of the term. In the Christian sense of the term, a priest is a person with special authority to perform certain rituals. In the Jewish sense of the term, a priest (*kohen*) is a descendant of Aaron, charged with performing various rites in the Temple (when there was a Temple) in connection with religious rituals and sacrifices. Although a *kohen* could be a Rabbi, a Rabbi is not required to be a *kohen*.

Our Rabbi, on the other hand is a teacher, leader, and shepherd who is sufficiently educated in Scripture and in *halachah* (traditions), in order to instruct the community, answer questions, and resolve disputes regarding such.

When a person has completed the necessary course of study, he is given a written document known as a *semikhah* (ordination), which confirms his authority to make such decisions. This is essentially “a setting apart by others,” authorizing a person to answer questions and resolve disputes, and do the work of the ministry that they have been called to. It includes a ceremony of the laying on of hands for the passing of blessing and the ministry based on Genesis 48:15-16 and 2 Timothy 4.

The Elders’ (Overseers’) Responsibilities to the Congregation:

- To proclaim the Gospel with the goal of reaching people for Yeshua the Messiah and fostering academic, emotional, social, and spiritual growth.
- To love, affirm, and show respect to individuals and their families within the fellowship without bias or prejudice.
- To serve as the administrator of congregational programs and ministries, and recommending appropriate ministries and programs to the appropriate persons.
- To give primary oversight and direct the congregational office, overseeing the congregational calendar, representing the congregation to visitors and other persons who might come in contact with the congregation, advising other congregation members of information they will need to carry out their duties as congregation officers, and serving in other reasonable activities relative to the congregational office.
- To give general supervision and leadership to all paid and volunteer staff.
- To conduct or be responsible for all worship services, Bible studies, and congregational gatherings.
- To be accountable to each other on the Elder Board in the performance of ministry.

The Congregation's Responsibility to the Elders:

- To show sensitivity to the physical, spiritual, and the emotional needs of the elders and their families.
- To pray for the elders' ministry, affirm their efforts, and work with the elders toward the end goal of accomplishing the will of G-d in the congregation and in the community.
- To allow the elders full responsibility for the preaching and teaching of the congregation, and the calling on others for participation.
- To allow the elders responsibility for administering the bylaws and doctrinal statements of the congregation without opposition.
- To acknowledge that we are all imperfect human beings seeking to serve a perfect G-d.
- To be willing to inform the elders of misunderstandings or offenses as soon as possible, so that wrongs may be righted, and reconciliation accomplished.

The Shammashim (Deacons)

Our English word "deacon" comes from the Greek "*diakonos*" (Hebrew: "*shammash*") meaning "servant", and specifically, "a table servant". In the Apostolic Scriptures it has a general use in which it refers to all manner of ministries (the vast majority of occurrences), and a technical or official use. When used in the official sense of someone appointed as a "deacon", the concept of a servant is united with that of an office. The term "*shammash*" or "deacon" thus refers to an office which involves the basic duty of rendering service to others. A deacon is one who is placed in an official position for a ministry of service to benefit others in the Body of Messiah. (*Acts 6: 1-6*)

Shammashim serve as assistants to the elders under their leadership and direction while having the right and responsibility to evaluate the suggestions of the elders and give input. The office of "*shammash*" or "deacon" is not gender exclusive as evidenced where "...*our sister Phoebe, who is a servant* [Greek: *diakonos*] *of the assembly...*" (Rom. 16:1) served in the same capacity as her fellow male *shammashim*, Tychicus and Epaphras (Eph. 6:21; Col. 1:7, 4:7). It is absolutely essential that deacons be holy in the areas of managing their households and children, as well as in their marriages (1 Timothy 3: 8-12).

The Shammashim (Deacons') Responsibilities to the Congregation –

- Supporting as well as relieving officers to the community.
- May be given some administrative responsibilities and oversight.
- Aid in visitation, evangelism, or other spiritual duties according to their gifts and burden.

Our Beliefs

1. SINCE G-d has made the Gospel message in its very nature a pre-eminently Jewish message, and entrusted that message to the Jewish people (Romans 1:16); and,

2. SINCE G-d has called us to communicate the Good News to both the Jewish and non-Jewish people in a bold, yet sensitive way; and,

3. SINCE G-d has called us to plant this congregation in order to evangelize, disciple, and unite Jewish and non-Jewish people; and,

4. SINCE G-d has called us to instruct our non-Jewish brethren in regard to the 'Jewishness' of the Gospel and the responsibility to love and share the Gospel with all people,

Therefore: we covenant together to fulfill our calling, while remaining true to the sound teaching of our faith as embodied in the following statement of faith.

Section 1 - The Scriptures

We believe that the Scriptures, both the *Tanach* and the Apostolic Scriptures, are fully inspired and G-d's complete and final revelation to mankind until the Messiah returns. The 66 books of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation are inerrant in the original autographs. They are authoritative in every category of knowledge to which they speak including faith, practice, science and history. (*Proverbs 30:5-6; Isaiah 40:7-8; Jeremiah 31:31; Matthew 5:18; John 10:35; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20, 21*)

Section 2 - The Creator

We believe in the unity of G-d as reflected in the *Shema* (Deut. 6). G-d is the Creator of all things. He is infinite and perfect, eternally existing as Creator, Redeemer and Comforter. (*Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 48:16; Psalm 45:6, 7; Matthew 28:19; John 6:27; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1:8*)

We believe He is Father over all creation, thus its sovereign ruler; Father of Israel whom He has chosen as His unique people; Father of Messiah Yeshua, whom He sent into the world to redeem mankind and creation; and Father of all who

trust in His gracious provision. (*Exodus 4:22; Matthew 3:17; John 1:12; 3:16; Acts 17:2, 3; Galatians 3:26*)

Section 3 - The Redeemer

We believe that G-d the Son became flesh in the person of Yeshua of Nazareth, the promised Messiah of Israel, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit of G-d and born of the Jewish virgin, Miriam (Mary). He is both fully G-d and fully man, united forever without division or confusion. (*Isaiah 7:14; 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Micah 5:2*)

We believe that Messiah Yeshua died as a substitutionary sacrifice for mankind's sin, and that all who personally accept by faith His sacrifice are declared righteous on the basis of His shed blood. The Messiah's substitutionary death was the purchase price for our redemption and was foreshadowed in the *Tanach* in the slaying of the Passover Lamb, the sin and trespass offerings and the sin offerings on Yom Kippur. (*Leviticus 16:15-16, 17:11; Psalm 22:16; Isaiah 53:4-6, 10-12; Daniel 9:26; Zechariah 12:10; Mark 10:45; Romans 3:24-26, 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:14, 21; 1 Peter 3:18*)

We believe that Messiah Yeshua arose from the dead bodily, ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. Presently He serves as our *Kohen Gadol* (High Priest) according to the priesthood of Melchizedek. As such, He is intercessor and advocate before the Father on behalf of all believers. (*Genesis 14:17-20; Psalm 16:10-11, 110:4; Zechariah 6:12-13; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:4-8; Hebrews 7:1-25, 8:1; 1 John 2:1*)

Section 4 - The Comforter

We believe the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) possesses all the distinct attributes of deity and hence He is G-d. He does not call attention to Himself and is ever-present to glorify and testify of Messiah Yeshua. (*Genesis 1:2; Nehemiah 9:20; Psalm 139:7; John 15:26-27; John 16:12, 13; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11, 12:11; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 4:30*)

We believe that during the period of the *Tanach* the Holy Spirit was active in creating the world, granting gifts, and empowering and filling individuals for specific services to G-d. (*Genesis 1:2; Exodus 31:3; Numbers 27:18; Judges 6:34*)

We believe the Comforter is active today convicting the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. He regenerates, seals, and sets the believer apart to a holy life. At the moment of salvation, each believer is immersed with the Holy Spirit into the Messianic Community and is permanently indwelt by the Spirit. Therefore, all believers are complete in Messiah and possess every spiritual blessing. It is the privilege and responsibility of all believers to be constantly filled (controlled) by the Spirit, thereby manifesting the fruit of the Spirit in their lives.

(John 14:16, 16:7-15; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:13, 28-30; Ephesians 1:13; 5:18; Colossians 2:10; 2 Thessalonians 2:13)

We believe that at salvation the Holy Spirit sovereignly imparts at least one spiritual gift to every believer for the purpose of edifying and equipping the Body of Messiah. *(1 Corinthians 12:11; Ephesians 1:13; 1 Thessalonians 1:4,5; 2 Timothy 3:1-12; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 4:10)*

We believe that promoting the gift of tongues gives undue prominence to a gift that had limited use even in the times of the Apostolic Scriptures. It tends to place more emphasis on tongue-speaking as an external manifestation of the Holy Spirit rather than on the work of the Spirit within the believer, which produces godly character and behavior (the fruit of the Spirit). Therefore, believers in their local congregations should seek the more excellent way of life and be zealous about perfecting and utilizing the more useful and edifying gifts. *(Romans 8:13; 1 Corinthians 12:28-31, 13:1-3, 13; 1 Corinthians 14:12, 19, 23, 27, 28; Galatians 5:22-23)*

We believe that tongue speaking in the Apostolic Scriptures was the gift of speaking in human languages previously unlearned by the speaker and that what is commonly practiced today is not the Biblical gift. Although we believe that the Holy Spirit is active today in illuminating, leading, and guiding the individual believer, He will not grant any kind of new revelation until the eschatological “day of the L-rd.” *(Psalm 119:105; Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:6-11, 10:45-46; Hebrews 1:1-2, 2:4)*

We believe that G-d has promised to heal according to His will. This may occur miraculously, medically, or naturally. Supernatural healing may occur in response to prayer and in accordance with G-d's sovereign will. However, healing cannot be claimed unconditionally based upon one's salvation. *(Exodus 4:11:2, Corinthians 12:7; Galatians 4:13; 1 Timothy 5:23; 2 Timothy 4:20; James 5:14-15; 1 John 5:14-15)*

Section 5 - Angels, Satan, and Demons

We believe there is a great company of angels who are holy and are before the throne of G-d praising, worshipping, adoring, and glorifying Him. They are sent forth as special agents to bring about G-d's intended plans and purposes and to minister to all believers. *(Daniel 9:10-23; Daniel 10:10-21; Luke 15:10; Hebrews 1:14; Revelation 7:11-12)*

We believe in the reality and personality of Satan, who had the highest rank of the created spiritual beings. He sinned through pride and carried a great company of angels (who are now known as demons) with him in his moral fall. *(Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; 1 Timothy 3:6; 2 Peter 2:4)*

We believe that Satan is the originator of moral evil. He and his agents are active in blinding mankind to spiritual truth, inciting anti-Semitism and hostility toward Israel, and attempting to defeat believers. Believers can and should resist him by

applying Scriptural truth. (*Genesis 3:1-19; Luke 10:18; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 6:10-19; James 4:7-8; 1 Peter 5:8-9; 1 John 4:1-3; Revelation 12:13*)

We believe Satan, as god of this world (c.f. 2 Corinthians 4:4), now rules the world system (c.f. John 12:31). He was defeated by the Messiah Yeshua's death, burial, and resurrection, though not executed. Satan will suffer eternal punishment by being cast into the lake of fire after the Messiah's one thousand-year reign. (*2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:1-3; Colossians 2:15; Revelation 20:10*)

Section 6 – Mankind

We believe that mankind was created in the image of G-d. Adam sinned and consequently experienced not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from G-d. The consequences of this sin affected the entire human race. All human beings are born with a sinful nature, and sin in thought, word and deed. (*Genesis 1:26-27; 2:17; 3:6; Isaiah 53:6; Jeremiah 17:9; Mark 7:20-23; John 2:24-25; Romans 5:12-19; Ephesians 2:1-3*)

Section 7 - Salvation

We believe that anyone who by faith trusts Messiah Yeshua as Savior and Redeemer is immediately forgiven of sin and becomes a child of G-d. This salvation from spiritual death and eternal separation from G-d is not the result of any human effort or merit. Salvation is entirely dependent on the undeserved favor of G-d. Further, there is no other way of salvation apart from faith in the Messiah Yeshua for any person, whether Jewish or Gentile. (*Genesis 15:6; Habakkuk 2:4; John 1:12, 14:6; Acts 4:11-12; Romans 3:28; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Timothy 2:5; Titus 3:5*)

We believe that all believers are kept eternally secure by the power of G-d through the new birth, the indwelling and sealing of the Holy Spirit, and the intercession of Yeshua our High Priest. (*Zechariah 6:12-13; John 10:28-30, 14:16-17; Romans 8:38-39; Ephesians 4:30; 1 John 2:1; 1 Peter 1:23*)

We believe that all believers, though forgiven, still have a sinful capacity in this life. In spite of this, G-d has made full provision for believers to live in obedience to Him through identification with Messiah Yeshua, reliance upon the Spirit's power, and the knowledge of the inerrant Scriptures. (*John 17:17; Romans 6:1-11, 7:15-21, 8:11-13; 1 John 1:8-2:2*)

Section 8 - The Messianic Community (The Body of Messiah)

We believe that all believers in Messiah Yeshua, since the beginning of time, are members of the universal Body and Bride of the Messiah. The membership of the Body of the Messiah is not based on any earthly organizational affiliation or works but is based on faith in Messiah Yeshua. This Body is distinct from National Israel and composed of both Hebrews and non-Hebrews made one by

faith in the Messiah. These members are under the solemn duty to keep the unity of the Holy Spirit and the bond of love with a pure heart. (*Romans 10:12-13; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 2:11-15; Ephesians 5:23-27; Colossians 1:18, 3:14-15*)

We believe that water immersion is a testimony of our faith in Messiah Yeshua as it has been for all believers since the beginning of time. Therefore, all believers should express their testimony by immersion. We believe in the annual celebration of the Passover as the memorial of the Messiah's death, burial, and resurrection until he returns. (*Exodus 12:12-13; Matthew 28:19; Romans 6:1-4; 1 Corinthians 11:24-26*)

The local Messianic Assembly is organized to glorify G-d through worship, instruction, accountability, discipline, fellowship, and outreach. Its Eldership is open to men who fulfill the qualifications for Elder. (*Colossians 2:16-17; Titus 2:3; 1 Timothy 3:1-7*)

Section 9 - Israel

We believe that Physical Israel is distinct from the Messianic Community. We believe Israel is G-d's special people, chosen by Him to be a holy nation and kingdom of priests. G-d's choice of Israel is irrevocable, despite her national rejection of Yeshua the Messiah. G-d will purge Israel of unbelief during the Great Tribulation, "the time of Jacob's trouble", ultimately resulting in her national acceptance of Yeshua as her Messiah. (*Deut. 7:6-8; Daniel 9:24-25; Romans 11:26*)

Jewish believers in Yeshua have a unique twofold identity: first, as a spiritual remnant within physical Israel and second, as part of the Messianic Community. (*Exodus 19:6, Amos 3:2, 9:8; Romans 10:1, 11:2,5,28-29; Ephesians 2:14-16*)

We believe the Abrahamic Covenant is an unconditional, irrevocable covenant given to Israel. This covenant provides the title of the land of Israel to the people of Israel, promises a descendant (the Messiah) who would come to redeem Israel, and provides blessing for the entire world through the Messiah. G-d will ultimately fulfill every aspect of the covenant in the Messianic kingdom, both physical and spiritual. At that time Israel will know G-d personally through Messiah Yeshua and will possess the entire land of Israel according to its Biblical boundaries. (*Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 15:17-18; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Romans 11:25-28*)

We believe that since the Gospel has been pre-eminently entrusted to the Jewish people ("to the Jew first"), it is the believer's duty and privilege to communicate the Good News to them in a bold, yet sensitive way. It is also the believer's duty to support and love Israel while opposing anti-Semitism according to the provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant. (*Genesis 12:3; Numbers 24:9; Jeremiah 31:35-37; Matthew 28:18-20; John 4:22; Acts 13:46; Romans 1:16*)

Section 10 - Torah, Grace, and Faith

We believe that the Torah is relevant in the life of the believer, whether ethnically Hebrew or not. Commonly referred to as "the Law," the Hebrew word *Torah* is more accurately translated as "Teaching" or "Instruction." These teachings and instructions are G-d's revealed will for mankind, from Genesis to Revelation. They are how He desires us, both Hebrew and non-Hebrew, to walk with Him. The complete teachings of G-d include, but are not excluded to, the honoring of the Sabbath, the Feasts and eating only biblically kosher food in accordance to Leviticus 11. We believe that at the heart of every commandment is the love of G-d and the love of our neighbor.

This Torah-pursuant lifestyle of abiding in Messiah while on this earth builds the sanctified relationship with Him that we are to enjoy for all eternity. The observance of these commandments is not now, nor ever was, a means of salvation. The Torah was originally given to a redeemed people, and was meant for the benefit, growth, and maturity of the follower of G-d. Salvation has always been by grace, through faith. From that point on, our faith grows and matures as we strive to walk obediently to our G-d and His Torah (Teachings). (*Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Acts 21:24-26; Romans 6:14, 8:2, 10:4; 1 Corinthians 9:20; 2 Corinthians 3:1-11; Galatians 6:2, 3:3, 11; Ephesians 2:14*)

Section 11- Last Things

We believe that upon physical death, believers enter into the joyous presence of G-d, whereas non-believers enter into conscious suffering apart from G-d. (*Luke 16:19-31; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8*)

We believe in the personal return of the L-rd Yeshua, our Messiah. All members of the Messianic Community, whether living or dead, will at that time be gathered to the L-rd forever. Subsequent to this, the tribulation will begin. The tribulation, also known as Daniel's 70th week, is a seven-year period of G-d's wrath upon the earth. G-d will purge Israel during this time so that the entire nation surviving the tribulation will become believers in Messiah Yeshua. (*Ezekiel 20:33-40; Daniel 9:24-27; Romans 11:25-27; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 4:13-18, 5:1-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3; Titus 2:13; Revelation 3:10*)

We believe in the personal, bodily, visible, and pre-millennial return of the L-rd Yeshua. At that time, He will lift the corruption which now rests upon the whole creation, totally restore Israel to her own land, give her the realization of G-d's covenanted promises, and bring the whole world to the knowledge of G-d. (*Deuteronomy 30:1-10; Isaiah 9:6-7, 11:2-5; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Matthew 24:30; Acts 1:11; Romans 8:19-23, 11:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11*)

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all mankind. We believe everyone found in the Lamb's Book of Life shall be resurrected to enjoy eternal life with G-d following his or her appearance at the Judgment Seat of Messiah. Those not found in the Lamb's Book of Life shall be resurrected to experience judgment and then eternal suffering apart from G-d. (*Job 19:25; Psalm 49:13-20; Daniel 12:2;*

John 5:28-29; 1 Corinthians 15:35-54; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17; Revelation 20:4-6, 12-15, 21:1-8)

Section 12 - The Grace of Giving

We believe that the Holy Spirit impresses on the heart of each believer to prayerfully and financially support the local Messianic Community.

We believe we have a spiritual obligation to support ministries around the world. (*Matthew 28:2; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 16:1*)

BETH SAR SHALOM MEMBERSHIP –

Should You Want to Become an Active Part of our Community:

At Beth Sar Shalom, we are not so much interested in having your name on the roll as we are in your becoming actively involved in the life of our community. We want to be your “spiritual home,” a place where you feel loved and accepted, where you can find and develop a vital and vibrant relationship with Yeshua the Messiah, and where you can put your gifts to work in the ministry. Therefore, we welcome you to participate in our programs, benefit from our ministries, receive spiritual care, and be an active part of our family.

At Beth Sar Shalom, becoming a member of our community means that you become a “contributor” in addition to being a “consumer.” It is like buying stock in a company—you receive certain dividends, but you also bear responsibility for the company’s success.

Please know that belonging and committing is important to your spiritual growth. Becoming a member of Beth Sar Shalom, in addition to being a part of the family, you will commit to:

- Pray for the congregation (its leaders, ministries, and fellow congregants) on a regular basis.
- Attend our services on a regular basis.
- Support the congregation financially through proportional giving.
- Find a place to serve in the congregation’s various ministries.
- Do whatever else it takes, within your abilities, to further the ministry of the congregation.

How to Become a Member:

1. Attend Beth Sar Shalom regularly for at least six months. As you worship and learn our core doctrines, beliefs, and *halachah*, search the L-rd's face in prayer concerning membership with us. Allow the L-rd to give you assurance that this is the congregation for you.

2. Following your six months of fellowshiping with us, and your assurance that G-d has placed you in Beth Sar Shalom for His purpose, you may take part in our membership class which is a brief overview of our core beliefs and values.

3. Take part in all of our services and teachings which are designed to help you grow as a Torah-pursuant Messianic believer with an understanding of the Bible and to help you find your place of service within our community.

Why Choose to Become a Member of Beth Sar Shalom Messianic Congregation?

A Biblical Reason: Messiah is committed to the congregation. "Messiah loved the congregation, and he gave his life for it." *Ephesians 5: 25*

A Cultural Reason: It is an antidote to our society. We live in an age when very few want to be committed to anything...a job...a marriage...our country. Belonging swims against the current of America's "consumer religion." It is an unselfish decision. Commitment always builds character.

A Practical Reason: It defines who can be counted on. Every team has a roster. Every school must have an enrollment. Every army has an enlistment. Belonging identifies the players on our team.

A Personal Reason: It produces spiritual growth. The Scriptures place a major emphasis on the need for believers to be accountable to each other for spiritual growth. You cannot be held accountable when you are not committed to any specific congregation.

We Hope This Has Helped

In closing, we would like to thank you for taking the time to read through this booklet. We hope that this has answered some of the questions that you may have had about our congregation. Please remember, our doors are always open and we invite you to join us in this lifestyle of worship to the G-d of Israel.

“May YHVH bless you and keep you; May YHVH make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; May YHVH lift up His countenance upon you and give you His peace!” (Numbers 6:24-26)

Beth Sar Shalom Florida Messianic Congregation

5780 W. Atlantic Ave. (Atlantic Ave. & Via Flora)

Delray Beach, FL 33484

Phone: (561) 315-4725

Email: contact@bethsarshalomflorida.com

Website: www.bethsarshalomflorida.com