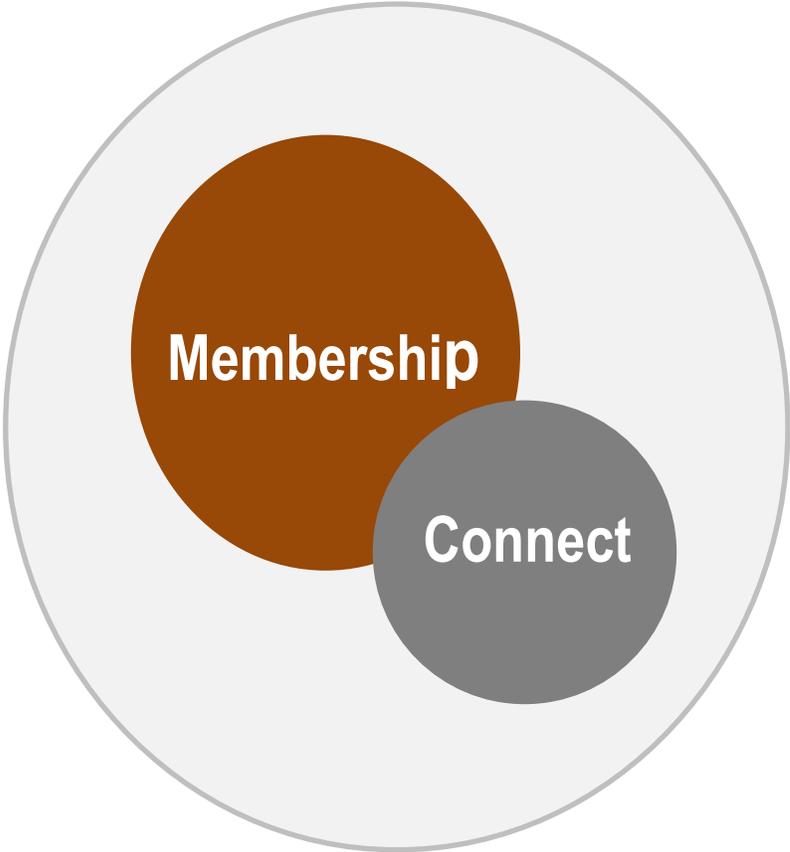


CALVARY FELLOWSHIP



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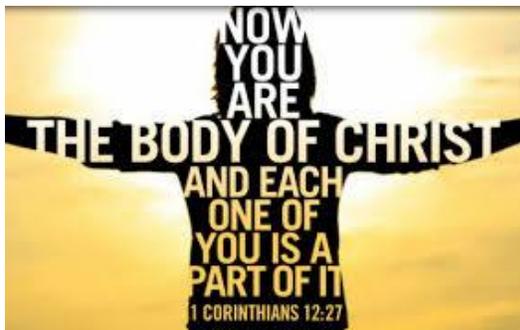
I. CONNECTED IN CHRIST

MEMBERSHIP CONNECT PROCESS

Membership Connect begins today with this overview of our membership process and teaching on what it means to be *Connected in Christ*. You will then work through the rest of this workbook at your own pace. At any point along the way feel free to contact Pastor Mike Edelman via email (medelman@cfdowntown.com), phone (610.363.7171 x2140) or personal meeting to discuss questions you may have.



The Membership Connect process concludes with a lunch on the 3rd Sunday of the month (10/16, 11/20, 12/18, 1/15, 2/19, 3/19, 5/21). Once you have read *I Am A Church Member* and this workbook, complete your Membership Application and contact pastor Mike to reserve a spot at an upcoming Membership Connect Lunch. You'll be able to meet others who are completing the membership process and ask whatever questions you may have from anything that has been discussed throughout the program. Once we receive your application, one of our elders/pastors will contact you to schedule a follow-up meeting to hear your testimony of faith in Jesus and spend time in prayer together to conclude the Membership Connect process.



If you are saved by grace through faith in Jesus, you **ALREADY ARE** a member of God's family. This is the primary membership that is referenced in the Bible. This membership is a gift, something to be treasured. It's not a legalistic obligation. When we trust Jesus as Savior we identify with Him through baptism and with the other members of His body through a local church.

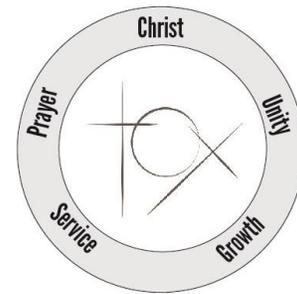
"The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. ... Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is part of it."

1 Corinthians 12:12, 27

Membership at Calvary Fellowship represents our commitment to live out together Jesus' mission to go and make disciples, living and loving more like Jesus and helping others to do the same. Connected, as a family of believers, we commit to love one another, build each other up into Christ and lead others to do the same. While all Christians are a part of the universal Church, God's word gives clear instruction to belong to a specific local church.

In a recent Sermon Series called *I Love My Church*, we reminded our church family of the joy and privilege of being a member of the body of Christ and we incorporated the theme of being CONNECTED in various ways as members of a local church. Membership Connect will remind you that as a follower of Jesus you are not only *Connected in Christ*, but as members of God's household you are also ...

- Connected in Unity
- Connected in Growth
- Connected in Service
- Connected through Prayer



How is being a member of a church like being part of a family?

What kinds of things get in the way of us viewing church membership as a privilege?

OUR PURPOSE, MISSION AND VISION

We are thrilled that you have shown interest in becoming a member of Calvary Fellowship. Our mission is quite simple. We want to follow Jesus and proclaim the simple but life-changing message of the gospel across Chester County and around the world.

This requires the presence of Christ in his people, living as disciples who make disciples of Jesus. We believe the church is God's household (Eph. 2:19). We are God's family called to devote ourselves to one another in loving relationship (Acts 2:42) both showing what God is like and calling others to join his family through faith in Jesus Christ. Though the Church is one household with one God and Father over us all, we believe it's important to devote ourselves to a local expression of the family, submitting ourselves to one another under biblically qualified elders for the purpose of ongoing care, equipping and development for ministry, and faithfulness to our doctrine and mission. Our membership commitment is an expression of our desire to learn and live as a family together on mission to fulfill Jesus purpose, mission, and vision for us.

At Calvary Fellowship we are unified around our purpose to glorify God in all that we do (Psalm 115:1). We are unified around our mission to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). And we are unified around our 2 cross vision based on Luke 9:23.

We decided that rather than writing out a lengthy vision statement, we'd just draw a picture. You'll see this picture at the top of every web page and on almost every document that's associated with Calvary: Two crosses. If you can remember two crosses, you've got the vision.

It's not just our vision, it's Jesus' vision for your life. Take a look at the pictures below, and we'll briefly describe what you're seeing.

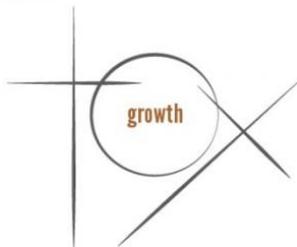
JESUS' CROSS



The first cross is Jesus' cross. I Corinthians 1:18 says (the bold is ours), "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing..." We recognize that it's hard to get through that cross. Believing that Jesus and His death are the **ONLY** way to a relationship with God and the **ONLY** way to obtain eternal life... well, it's a potential stumbling block! That's why we love the second part of that same verse which says, "...but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."

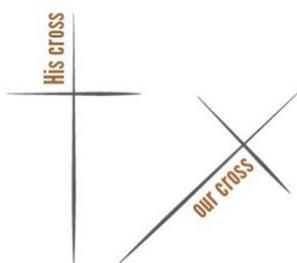
After we put our faith and whole trust in what Jesus did on that cross in redeeming us, we are His children! Now it's time to grow, grow, grow.

THE GROWTH CIRCLE



After you come to know Jesus, you should become a sponge. Learning, praying, and meeting with other Christians at church and in smaller group settings is both natural and important. The Bible becomes your guide for every aspect of life. But it's not enough to stay in that circle.

OUR CROSS



Now for that second cross.

Luke 9:23 says, "And he said to all, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.'"

After we get "through the cross," so to speak, and begin to grow in Christ, it's time for us to get *under* our cross. Jesus Himself gives that very instruction to anyone who wants to be His disciple.

If it's hard to grasp how to do this, try starting every single day with this prayer:

"Jesus, I am all yours today. Whatever you want me to do, I will do it. Fill me with your Holy Spirit and help me to, with your help and by your power, do everything you ask of me."

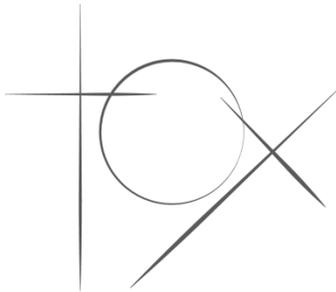
Then live your day with the expectation that Jesus will take you up on it. Knowing the Bible well is an absolute must, since God mostly speaks to us through His word!

Denying yourself can involve forgiving an enemy and praying for him/her instead of allowing yourself to wallow in self-pity or hatred (Matthew 5:43-48). Getting under your cross can mean giving up something of value in order to meet the need of someone else (1 John 3:17). There are a million ways to live out "denying yourself" and "taking up your cross." You just have to decide what God is telling you to do right now—and then live it out by His grace.

A WAY OF LIFE

So there you have it in pictures. Whenever you see the two crosses at Calvary, you can remember that the first cross represents Jesus' cross that purchased your salvation. The second cross is your cross to take up daily and carry. We look forward to living this out together!

As members of Calvary Fellowship we are ...



- Committed to *pointing people to the cross of Christ* – trusting the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.
- Committed to *guiding people through the cross* – establishing them in the faith and equipping them to serve the Lord.
- Committed to *inspiring people to take up their cross* – living and loving more like Jesus and helping others to do the same as we deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Him.

What encourages you most about our 2 cross vision?

In which of the three elements of the vision would you like to grow/develop most in the next year?

These commitments are intended to be lived out in relationship with one another and within the context of the local church. Jesus established the church to be a public, earthly institution that would identify, affirm, and oversee those who profess to believe in Him (Matthew 16:18-19, 18:15-20).

Jesus established the church to publicly declare those who belong to Him in order to give the world a display of the good news about Himself (John 17:21-23). Jesus wants the world to know who belongs to Him and who doesn't. And how will the world know this? They are to see which people publicly identify themselves with His people in the visible, public institution He established for this very purpose. They're to look at the members of His church. Jesus intends for His people to be marked out as a visible, public group, which means joining together in local churches.

As part of our Membership Connect process, we've asked you to read Thom Rainer's book, *I Am A Church Member*. This is a wonderful, short book that will help you re-discover, or perhaps discover for the first time, the joy and privilege of being a member of God's church, universal and local.

"The idea of being a member of a church has been around for generations, but few people grasp what that really means. There are reasons why churches are declining in today's culture, but perhaps the greatest is that we've lost a biblical understanding of what it means to be part of the body of Christ."

- Dr. Thom Rainer



God did not give us local churches to become country clubs where membership means we have privileges and perks. He placed us in churches to serve, to care for others, to pray for one another, to grow, to teach, to give, and in some cases, to die for the sake of the gospel.

We've provided a place for you to record your learnings/observations from this book at the end of this workbook (chapter 6). Take a few minutes to summarize your thoughts as you read through this short book. During the Membership Connect lunch that will conclude your membership process, you'll have an opportunity to discuss some of your learnings.

CONNECTED IN CHRIST

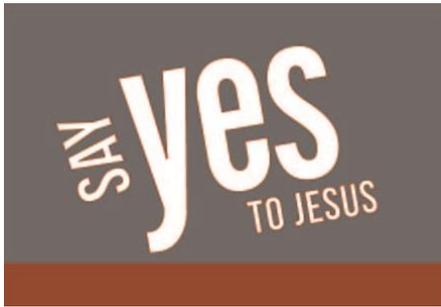
Jesus' command to make disciples begins with loving the lost and faithfully communicating the Gospel message. Our mission is to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing and teaching others to obey all that Jesus commanded. Every member at Calvary Fellowship professes to have received God's free gift of eternal life through faith in Christ's substitutionary death for our sin. We never grow tired of reviewing the truth of the Gospel and reminding ourselves of the amazing grace and love of God demonstrated through His Son, Jesus Christ.



It comes as a surprise to many to learn how different Christianity is from other religions; at its core, it isn't about morality, or philosophy, or self-fulfillment. Rather, it's about news – good news; the greatest news the world has ever heard. In fact, the word "gospel" literally means "good news", and it is this news that stands at the center of the Christian faith, and should be the core of the Christian life. It is what the apostle Paul called a matter "of first importance" [1 Corinthians 15:3]. The Gospel is positioned at the start of our Membership process because it represents the starting point of every journey focused on exploring the claims of Christ. For the brother or sister in Christ who has responded to the Good News, we agree with the words of the apostle Peter in 2 Peter 1:12,

"So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have".

Summarize the Gospel in your own words:



You'll see these cards all over the place. We encourage you to keep a few with you at all times to share with people when God opens the door to talk about His love for them demonstrated through Jesus Christ.

Saying "Yes" to Jesus and trusting Him as Savior is as easy as **A, B, C** ...

Admitt that you are a sinner and need a Savior

People tend to divide themselves into two groups: Good people and bad people. But God says that every person who has ever lived is a sinner and that any sin separates us from God.

The Bible begins with people enjoying the presence of God. We were created to be in relationship with our Creator. But, very soon, sin entered into the world and into the hearts of people and put a barrier between God and humanity. The Bible states that "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). It's a universal, spiritual problem. It contaminates every part of us: our physical bodies, our minds, our relationships, our emotions, our decision-making abilities and our destiny.

The Bible states that "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Death is the just penalty and punishment for sin. In the Bible, the word "death" means "separation". There are three degrees of separation people experience because of the problem of sin:

Physical Separation: Every obituary is a reminder that all of us are mortal. Our physical death, separation from this life, is the result of sin in the world (Genesis 2:17).

Spiritual Separation: Sin puts a barrier between us and God and prevents us from enjoying a relationship with Him. The holiness of God prevents Him from compromising Himself and turning a blind eye to sin. He must, instead turn His back on us.

Eternal Separation: Some have thought hell to be an imaginary place. However, the Bible teaches that sin leads to a very real separation from God forever (1 Thessalonians 1:8-9).

This inward sin problem cannot be cured by outward actions. No matter how good, helpful, truthful or kind we might try to be, none of us will ever be able to change the condition of our sinful heart. Only God can do that. And He did!

Believe that Jesus Christ died for your sin and rose again

There is no way to God except through Jesus (John 14:6). It's God's grace that allows you to come to Him – not your own efforts to "clean up your life" or work your way to Heaven. You can't earn it. It's a free gift.

Jesus came to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. He visited our world, took on human flesh and lived a perfect life deserving no punishment. Yet Jesus willingly took on Himself the just penalty for our sin by dying on the cross. By taking our place, He exchanged our imperfection for His perfection. Think about this truth: "God made him who knew no sin to become sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Commit your life to follow Him

Forgiveness is a gift from God, but a gift has to be accepted. To receive eternal life, you must accept that Jesus Christ saved you from your sin and then commit yourself to follow Him.

A transformed life is a free gift of God. It is not earned. It isn't purchased. It is personal and non-refundable. It is the ultimate gift that will last forever. And, it's available to you. You may respond to God's gracious provision simply through faith. You can trust Jesus for who He is and what He has done for us. The Bible speaks about this step into new life:

"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." [Romans 10:8-9]

Having received the free gift of salvation, believers are also to respond to God's grace by observing the two ordinances of the church, baptism and the Lord's Supper. Participation in these ordinances contributes in no way to one's salvation. These are outward signs of the inward grace that has already taken place in the life of the believer.

Jesus told His followers: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit". Jesus' followers were to take the message of salvation around the world and as others became followers of Jesus, these new believers would publicly identify themselves with Him.



Baptism is a public testimony of what Christ has done in your life as a Christ-follower. It is a symbolic picture of death, burial and resurrection—and new life! When you are baptized, you are obeying Christ's command in the Bible for all believers, and you are telling the world that Jesus Christ is the Lord of your life. No matter what your age or background, baptism is a natural and important step in your journey as a Christ-follower.

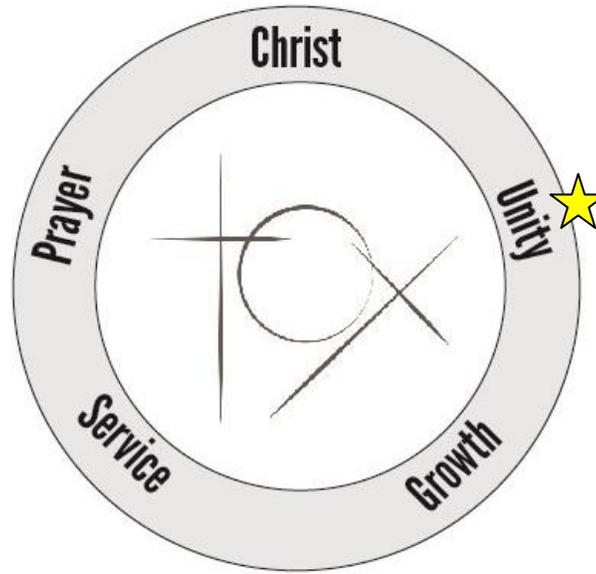
So by participating in baptism, a new follower of Jesus symbolically aligns themselves with new beliefs and a new community. Simply put, baptism is an external sign of an internal change that has taken place in someone's heart. It is not a means of salvation but a response to salvation.

At Calvary Fellowship we regularly schedule *I Am New* Baptism Celebrations during our Sunday Worship Services or our special Gathering Services. If you have not been baptized as a believer in Jesus Christ, we encourage you to take this step of obedience as soon as possible. It is not a pre-requisite for membership at Calvary Fellowship but it was the first act of obedience in the early church for those who said "Yes" to Jesus.

There is a place in your Membership application to write out your testimony of how/when you placed your faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior. As you begin this Membership Connect process, let that be your first step as you testify that you have been saved by grace through faith in Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. If you have never written your personal testimony, the next two pages provide a framework for this and a place to write a rough draft.

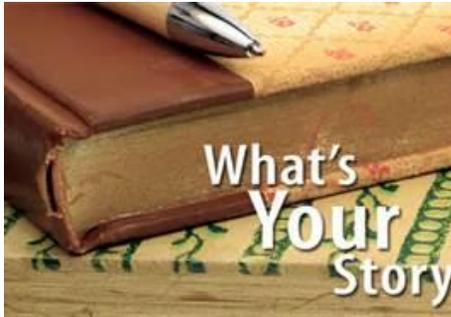
In doing so you affirm that you are *Connected in Christ* and a member of God's family with a desire to be living like a member of His family in relationship with others in this local church.

The rest of the workbook will provide a summary of what it looks like to be living as members of God's family, not only *Connected in Christ* but also ...*Connected in Unity*, *Connected in Growth*, *Connected in Service*, and *Connected through Prayer*. In the next chapter you'll discover more about the encouragement and power of being *Connected in Unity*.



As you conclude this chapter, complete pages 1-3 in your Membership Application.

WRITING AND SHARING YOUR PERSONAL FAITH STORY



We all love to listen to a good story. Every time we tell our story of God's grace in our lives, we give honor and glory to Him. The Scriptures tell us to always be prepared to give an answer for the reason for the hope that we have. We are witnesses for Christ and witnesses are called to testify to what they have seen, heard and experienced. Here are some thoughts about what surrounds your personal testimony.

- It is your personal story! [Acts 26:4-29]
- It should glorify Christ, not you or your sinfulness.
- It should explain the gospel clearly [Romans 1:16-17, Colossians 4:4, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4]
- It should be given with a dependence on the Holy Spirit. [1 Thessalonians 1:4-5]

THE STRUCTURE

There are at least three key parts to your testimony:

- What your life was like before Christ. [A brief summary with an acknowledgement of your sin and your need for a Savior.]
- How you came to faith in Christ. Testify to what you believe Jesus' death on the cross accomplished for you and what you believe about Jesus Christ.
- What has transpired since you came to faith in Christ.

SOME ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS

- It should communicate the gospel with key verses. The emphasis should be on Jesus Christ and not just ourselves. Remember the attitude of John the Baptist, Jesus must become greater, and you must become less.
- It should fit on a single page, be readable in two or three minutes. It should also be flexible enough to expand or adapt when necessary.
- Keep it simple and avoid using words that only other Christians may understand.

Next Step: If you have not done so yet, use the next page to write out a draft of your personal faith story. You can include your final version with your membership application at the end Membership Connect. Remember that above all, the focus of your testimony is to testify to what you believe about the Lord Jesus and what His death and resurrection accomplished for you.

Use the space below to write a few paragraphs that summarize your life before Christ, how you came to trust in Jesus, and how He is active in your life today. Remember to include a few key verses that clearly articulate the gospel.

My Life prior to trusting Jesus Christ as my Savior

When and how I came to faith in Christ

My life now as I walk with Christ

II. CONNECTED IN UNITY

UNIFIED AS FAMILY MEMBERS

In our first lesson, we affirmed that the primary “membership” referred to in the New Testament is our membership in God’s family, the body of Christ.

We were enemies of God because of our sinful rebellion against him. There was a time when we couldn’t come to God with personal knowledge of his love and acceptance of us. But God is full of mercy, and he changed everything for us through Jesus. God showed his love for us in that while we were enemies, he gave his Son to die for us, to make us his dearly loved children. We have been adopted into God’s family so that we are now co-heirs with Jesus Christ. We have been born again by his Spirit, making us the true children of God.



Ephesians 2:19 also affirms that when we trust Jesus as Savior, we are *Connected in Christ*, and become *members* of God’s household.

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household ... (Ephesians 2:19)

As members of God’s family, the question to begin asking is what does it look like to be living as members of His family?

The remainder of this workbook provides a biblical context for what it looks like to be living as a member of the body of Christ.

The main point in this chapter is that as members of God’s family, we are *Connected in Unity*.

Jesus prayed for His church to be unified in John 17:20-23 ...

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”

Ephesians 4:1-6 tells us ...

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

As family members, God clearly wants His children to get along. Unity does not just happen because people decide to connect with other believers in a local church. This passage reminds us that we can never create unity, but we are called to “keep the unity of the Spirit”.

The life of a Jesus follower should be balanced or unified between what we say we believe and how we actually live. In Ephesians 4:1, the Apostle Paul commands us to live *worthy* of the calling we have received. The word “*worthy*” refers to being in balance, like the two sides to an old fashioned scale. In essence Paul is saying, that our behavior should match our beliefs, our conduct should match our creed, our walk should match our talk.



Our unity should also be an expression of the love we have for Jesus and His Church. In Ephesians 4:2, we are reminded that if we say we love one another, this should be accompanied with specific behaviors. The apostle Paul provides four examples of love in action ... humility, gentleness, patience and bearing with each other in love.

As family members, we are to put the needs of others ahead of our own, to submit one to another, to serve one another, to put up with the faults and failures of each other and not seek revenge when we are wronged. There should be a willingness to forgive and not hold grudges.

Read Ephesians chapters 4-6 and then write down some practical ways based on God's Word that you can help to contribute to unity within our church family?

This is not an easy thing to do, thus Paul wrote, *make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit*. Through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, we may begin to live and love in this way.



Why is unity so important? Because we have a mission to complete and we can't complete it as individuals. We need one another. We have been designed to live the Christian life in connection with the body of Christ. In the Ephesians 4:4-6 passage, Paul used the word "one" seven times to emphasize the importance of unity.

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

- Though made up of individuals, the church exists as **ONE** body.
- Within the church you will find great diversity but **ONE** Spirit indwells each of us.
- The Spirit living within us is our guarantee of the **ONE** hope we share. Our common hope is that we who trust in Jesus Christ will spend eternity with Him.
- Christians are bound together by **ONE** Lord, **ONE** faith, and **ONE** baptism. We're united by our common belief that Jesus alone is Lord and Savior and we proclaim this belief publicly through the symbol of baptism.
- All Christians worship the **ONE** God and Father, who is Creator and Sustainer of the universe. The "oneness" or tri-unity of God (Father, Son and Spirit) is the foundation of our unity as the church.

These statements of unity almost sound like a creed that the early church may have repeated to remind each other of what they believed. This and other creeds, like the Nicene Creed (see below), were helpful for the church in those early years to help define the essentials of the faith.

We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten from the Father before all ages, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made; of the same essence as the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; he became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and was made human. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried. The third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead. His kingdom will never end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life. He proceeds from the Father and the Son, and with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified. He spoke through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

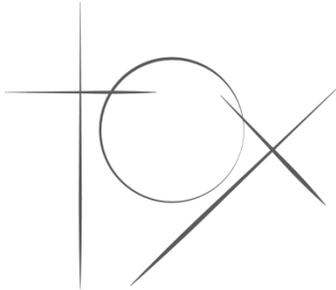
We affirm one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look forward to the resurrection of the dead, and to life in the world to come. Amen.

What a blessing that we possess the clear teaching of both the Old and New Testaments to help unify us around what we believe. Through the study of God's Word, we are unified around a biblical understanding of who God is, what He values, and what He teaches us about the essentials of our faith.

At Calvary Fellowship we are unified around our purpose to glorify God in all that we do (Psalm 115:1). We are unified around our mission to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:20-18). And we are unified around our 2 cross vision that was shared in our first session.

As members of Calvary Fellowship we are ...



- Committed to *pointing people to the cross of Christ* – trusting the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.
- Committed to *guiding people through the cross* – establishing them in the faith and equipping them to serve the Lord.
- Committed to *inspiring people to take up their cross* – living and loving more like Jesus and helping others to do the same as we deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Him.

With deep longing our Lord prayed for our unity, knowing that on it rests our own blessing and the credibility of the church's witness for Christ (John 17:20–23). In our age of pluralism and the post-modern, relativistic approach to truth, we need clarity and boldness more than ever regarding the essentials of our faith. We agree with the quote often attributed to Augustine, "*In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things Christ.*"

When looking for a church, the most important element for consideration is what the church believes and teaches. This is why "statements of faith" are helpful. At Calvary Fellowship we are also unified around what God teaches through His Word. All of God's Word is inspired and useful for teaching, correcting, rebuking and training in righteousness.

Our Essential Doctrine listed below summarize what we believe about the Bible, God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, Man, Salvation, the Church, End Times, and Eternity. This statement of faith is not exhaustive. It simply states what beliefs are absolutely essential for life in Christ (salvation) and in the body of Christ (the church).

STATEMENT OF CALVARY FELLOWSHIP ESSENTIAL DOCTRINE

We believe the Holy Scriptures, all 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, to be verbally inspired by God and inerrant in the original writings, that they are of supreme and final authority in faith and life, and that they will be used to settle all matters not specifically addressed in this statement of faith. [2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21]

We believe in only one living and true God, eternally existing in three distinct, equal, and fully divine persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each member of the Godhead works together and is holy, sovereign, all-knowing, all-powerful, and present everywhere. [Deuteronomy 6:4; John 14:16]

We believe that Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, lived without sin, and is fully God and fully man. [Galatians 4:4; Philippians 2:5-11]

We believe that man was created in the image of God; that he sinned, and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death which is separation from God; that all human beings are born with a sinful nature, and are therefore sinners in thought, word, and deed, subject to God's righteous wrath, and in desperate need of a Savior. [Romans 5:12; Romans 6:23]

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died and fully paid the penalty for our sins as our substitute to make atonement before God. He was raised from the dead on the third day and justifies all who believe on Him by faith alone. Salvation is found in none other than Jesus Christ. [1 Corinthians 15:3-5; 1 John 2:2]

We believe in two ordinances of the church as given in scripture: water baptism and the Lord's supper. Water baptism is the public testimony of a believer's salvation identifying with Jesus. It is found in scripture to be an initial act of obedience of a Christ-follower. It declares faith in Jesus to all who are watching and is not a means of salvation. The Lord's Supper is a remembrance of the Lord's death "til He comes." [Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26]

We believe God has given every believer the Holy Spirit as a guarantee of our salvation. The Holy Spirit enables us to live a holy life and uses us to accomplish His purposes in the world by gifting us to serve His church. [Ephesians 4:30; Galatians 5:22-25]

We believe in the imminent, visible, and personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ and in His literal reign of 1,000 years on earth. [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 22:20]

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and unjust, the eternal blessedness of the saved in a literal heaven, and the eternal punishment of the lost in a literal hell. [Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:46]

You are encouraged to look up the Scriptures that support each statement. We should each be able to explain what we believe and why we believe it based upon the truth of God's Word.

What questions if any do you have regarding our Essential Doctrine?

If you have any questions, send Pastor Mike an email and he will respond and/or set up a meeting to discuss in more detail.

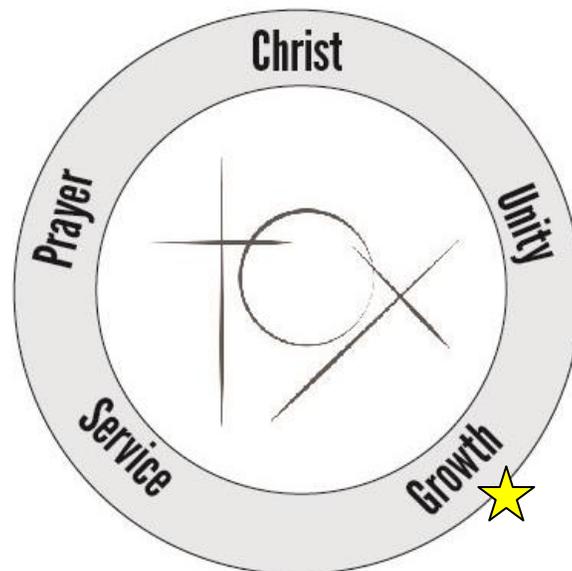
DOCTRINE CLASS

You may watch Pastor Lee's teaching on our Essential Doctrine in 16, one-hour sessions that were offered January 21- May 13, 2015. You may access this teaching on the Sermon page of our website: Doctrine Class. If you have this document open while connected to the internet, you may click on any of the links below and you will be directed to that session on our website.

- Session 1: <http://cfdowningtown.com/resources/sermons/the-bible/>
- Session 2: <http://cfdowningtown.com/resources/sermons/the-bible-ii/>
- Session 3: <http://cfdowningtown.com/resources/sermons/god-the-father/>
- Session 4: <http://cfdowningtown.com/resources/sermons/jesus-christ-and-the-trinity/>
- Session 5: <http://cfdowningtown.com/resources/sermons/the-trinity/>
- Session 6: <http://cfdowningtown.com/resources/sermons/doctrine-of-jesus/>
- Session 7: <http://cfdowningtown.com/resources/sermons/doctrine-holy-spirit/>
- Session 8: <http://cfdowningtown.com/resources/sermons/doctrine-alan-schafer--questions/>
- Session 9: <http://cfdowningtown.com/resources/sermons/doctrine-spiritual-gifts/>
- Session 10: <http://cfdowningtown.com/resources/sermons/doctrine-class-angels/>
- Session 11: <http://cfdowningtown.com/resources/sermons/doctrine-class-satan--demons/>
- Session 12: <http://cfdowningtown.com/resources/sermons/doctrine-class-hamartiology-study-of-sin/>
- Session 13: <http://cfdowningtown.com/resources/sermons/doctrine-class-soteriology-study-of-salvation/>
- Session 14: <http://cfdowningtown.com/resources/sermons/doctrine-class-ecclesiology-study-of-the-church/>
- Session 15: <http://cfdowningtown.com/resources/sermons/doctrine-class-end-times/>
- Session 16: <http://cfdowningtown.com/resources/sermons/doctrine-class-final-session/>

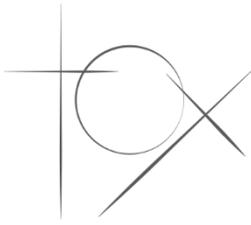
As members of God's family, we are *Connected In Christ* and thus *Connected in Unity*. As we gather together in this local church we have the privilege of glorifying God and submitting to one another as we live a life worthy of our calling by the power of the Holy Spirit. In doing so, the world will see Jesus in us and know that the Father sent Him to be the Savior of the world.

In the next chapter, you'll learn more about how as members of God's family, we are *Connected in Growth*.



Complete pages 4-5 in your Membership Application at this time.

III. CONNECTED IN GROWTH



Our two cross vision unifies us around a passion for leading people to trust Jesus as Savior (His Cross) as well as inspires us to live surrendered lives to the Lord as we deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Him in every area of our lives. We also believe that the place where spiritual growth and transformation takes place best is in the circle of growth and intentional relationships. This is where we are learning to live and love like Jesus as we connect in relationship with others and help each other grow in our walk with Him. This is the essence of discipleship.

Sometimes we make this more complex than it needs to be. God has connected us within His body and the local church to help each member of His body grow up in the faith and become disciples who reproduce themselves. Let's look at what the Apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:11-16

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Key points ...

- Every believer is to be equipped for the work of the ministry which is making disciples.
- Every believer is to be growing and maturing in our relationship with Jesus while helping the rest of the body grow as well.

As members of God's family, we are to be *Connected in Growth*.

We are called to be making disciples as we go throughout the course of our daily lives. There are plenty of spiritual disciplines by which we can define and guide this process. Jesus, however, made a very revealing comment about what it means to be His disciple.

"A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher."
Luke 6:40

Some translations replace the word disciple with *pupil* or *student*. That's what a disciple really is: a learner. As disciples of Jesus we are to learn, and when we are fully trained, we will be like Him.

That's the true goal of discipleship. It's not to generate Bible scholars or evangelists, or counselors or even leaders. The result of discipleship is someone who looks more like Jesus. Consider the impact the early disciples had. It wasn't their Bible knowledge or their oratory skills that made them stand out.

“When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.” Acts 4:13

No matter where people are engaged in the process of discipleship, no matter what tools or techniques we use to pass on spiritual truth, the ultimate goal is men and women who become more and more like Jesus—and are able to pass this character on to others and help them do the same. As we begin to live and love more like Jesus, here are a few helpful marks of a disciple who is growing in Christ. This is not intended to be a checklist to measure yourself against others but more like a compass to continually guide your journey.

As members of Calvary Fellowship, who are growing and maturing in the Lord by God’s grace, we desire to be ...

WORSHIPPING REGULARLY

Gathering together weekly with our church family, participating in baptism and the Lord’s Table in celebration of the new life we have in Jesus and in remembrance of all that Jesus has done for us by His grace.

WITNESSING BOLDLY

Asking God to open doors for the gospel, always being ready to give an answer for the reason for the hope to we have, sharing this Good News boldly and clearly yet with gentleness and respect.

LOVING UNCONDITIONALLY

Walking in a manner worthy of the gospel and making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

CONNECTING INTENTIONALLY

Learning to live and love like Jesus and helping others to do the same in the context of intentional, discipling relationships.

SERVING FAITHFULLY & GIVING GENEROUSLY

Stewarding God’s resources by giving of our time, talents, spiritual gifts and treasures to the Calvary Fellowship family and beyond.

PRAYING PURPOSEFULLY

Seeking God’s face and continually interceding for others privately and corporately as we pray for God’s kingdom to come and His will to be done.

What's so encouraging is that many at Calvary Fellowship are experiencing the joy of being *Connected in Growth* as we help others grow in their relationship with Jesus. We have many environments where each of us can connect with others as we help each other learn to live and love like Jesus and actively live out the 2 cross vision.

- Families – The first and most important discipling relationships we have are developed between husbands & wives and parents & children.
- Men's and Women's studies, Students and Kidz JAM, Care Groups, Serving Team, Short term mission trips – Calvary Fellowship offers many relational environments for intentional discipleship to take root and grow.
- Small Groups provide a huge opportunity for intentional discipleship – Small groups enable us to connect with 4-12 people as we study and apply God's Word, pray for and encourage each other, and serve one another. Spiritual growth takes place as the members of the group minister to each other as well as sometimes God opens the door for people within the group to connect in one-on-one discipling relationships outside of the group.
- The most basic level is one-on-one mentoring relationships for a season.

As members of Calvary Fellowship, it is expected that we will be connected in relationship with others, helping others to grow in Christ and allowing others to speak into our lives as well. No matter where you are connected relationally, I encourage you to be intentional with using your gifts to help others continually grow in their relationship with Jesus.



Our strategy for disciple making is illustrated best by the two rails of a train track. The first rail represents an outward focus on **evangelism** - leading people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Every believer is called to be a witness for Christ.

The second rail is focused on **maturity** – helping believers get rooted and established in the faith as they press on toward maturity in Christ. In the same way, every believer is called to invest in the spiritual development of others.

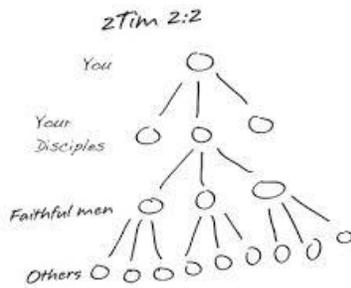
Often churches emphasize one more than the other. If a train leans too much on one rail than the other it will be in danger of running off the tracks. Discipleship begins with evangelism and continues through to making disciples who make disciples.

Jesus ministered to the crowds and to His small group, but much of His ministry was focused on connecting with one person at a time.

Who's your "one" for this next season?

Who's the man or woman who you may have led to the Lord or who is still an infant in their walk with Jesus who you can come alongside and help to learn to live and love more like Jesus? Imagine if each person in our church was connected in growth with just one other person for the next year.

The illustration below helps to cast a vision for what can happen when we step out in faith and allow the Holy Spirit to transform us and grow us up in Christ. It is based on the principle found in 2 Timothy 2:2



“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.”

Here we see the apostle Paul discipling Timothy, who in turn will disciple “faithful men”, who in turn will disciple others. This represents 4 generations of disciples. This is the vision of making disciples who make disciples that Jesus modeled for us.

THE POTENTIAL OF INVESTING IN ONE PERSON FOR ONE YEAR AS YOU MAKE DISCIPLES, WHO MAKE DISCIPLES, ...

Year 1	2 disciples
Year 2	4 disciples
Year 3	8 disciples
Year 4	16 disciples
Year 5	32 disciples
Year 6	64 disciples
Year 7	128 disciples
Year 8	256 disciples
Year 9	512 disciples
Year 10	1024 disciples
Year 20	1,048, 496 disciples
Year 35	8,589,279,232 disciples

Imagine if you were to invest in just one person for the next year. At the end of the year they would have an abiding relationship with Jesus having grasped His vision for making disciples that He cast for us in Matthew 28. You would have also grown because that is God’s plan to grow us up as we serve Him in this way. After one year there would be two disciples. In the second year you each find someone new to connect with for the next year and repeat the process, year after year. Just one person at a time. At the end of 5 years there would be 32 disciples. Now don’t get discouraged. This is huge! Remember that Jesus only had 11 committed disciples at the end of three years. In theory, within 35 years there would be 8.5 billion disciples, more than the current population of the world!

As members of God’s family we are to be *Connected in Growth!*

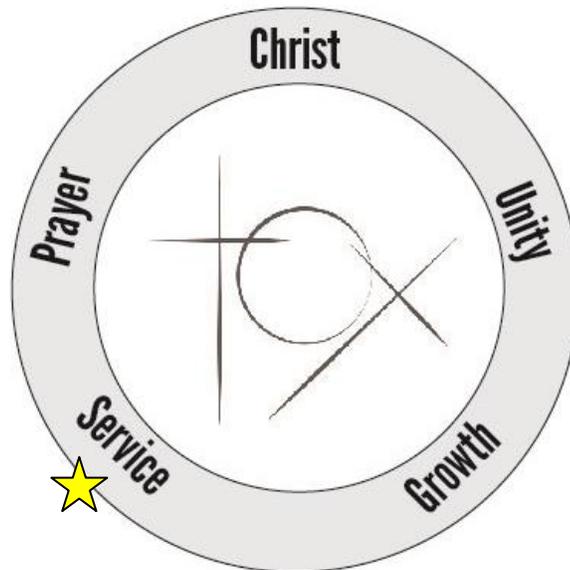
Let’s just start with one!

We can't disciple 2, 3 or 4 people until we have invested in one. Who's your ONE?

And since we are members of one body, this is not something that we have to do alone. When we are connected in growth through authentic, intentional relationships, as members of a small group, or a serving team, or a short term mission team, we are helping one another grow and mature in Christ. As members of Calvary Fellowship, we are committed to cooperating with the Holy Spirit as He transforms and grows us up in Christ and we are committed to being intentional with helping others to repeat this process with others. Remember the task that Jesus gave us ...

Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and in the name of the Son, and in the name of the Holy Spirit. And teaching them to obey all that I have commanded.

So far in Membership Connect we have talked about the joy of being *Connected in Christ*, *Connected in Unity* and *Connected in Growth*. In the next chapter we will discover the joy that comes with being *Connected in Service*.



Complete pages 5-6 of your Membership Application at this time.

IV. CONNECTED IN SERVICE

FOLLOWING JESUS IN SERVANTHOOD

The word “servant” occurs fifty-seven times in the New Testament. Sometime it refers to a person who has the official role in a household. But many times it refers to the role we are to assume as Christians. Also, “serve” occurs fifty-eight times in the New Testament. Get the picture? Serving is important in the Bible. Jesus said we must be last of all and servant of all. That doesn’t sound like all of the church members we may know. Many church members demand their preferences, their desires, and the way they’ve always done it. And Jesus said we are to serve. True joy means giving up our rights and preferences and serving everyone else. – *Thom Rainer, I Am A Church Member*



Fully God—fully human, Jesus took on the posture of a servant. He gave His life, even unto death, so others could experience salvation, peace, and restoration. Jesus said, “I am among you as one who serves. . . .”

All those who follow Jesus are called to serve in the same humility. The apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 2:5-8 ...

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Jesus told His disciples and us that whoever wants to be His disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow Him (Luke 9:23).

At the core of our old, sin nature is pride and selfishness. It’s our nature to want others to serve us rather than to be servants. As a new creation in Christ, humility, self-denial, and submission to the Lord and others begin to take over our heart and mind. For us this means joyfully submitting to Jesus as Lord, to the leaders He has placed over us, and to one another as we also serve whomever God brings into our lives. We do whatever He leads us to do, whenever He tells us, and wherever He wants us to do it.

So how do we make this change? The answer is found in Ephesians 5:18-21 as we look to surrender control of our lives to the Holy Spirit.

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submit one to another as in the Lord.

Daily submission to the Spirit helps us bear the fruit of the Spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

To be “filled” with the Spirit is to be controlled and empowered by Him – continually. This is a daily, if not moment-by-moment process of submission to the Spirit. Just as Jesus said that His followers must deny themselves, take up their cross daily, and follow Him, we must surrender control of our lives to the Spirit.

As we grow to live under the influence of the Holy Spirit, we will serve others, give generously, and share our faith rather than focus on getting what we want out of church.

At the moment of salvation, every believer receives supernatural spiritual gifts from the Holy Spirit for the purpose of glorifying God and building up the body of Christ. In chapter 2 we talked about how we are *Connected in Unity* within the church. In addition to this unity, there is also great diversity within the body of Christ. In 1 Corinthians 12 we are reminded that just as our physical bodies have many parts, each with a special function, so too the church has many members and every part is necessary and needed to work properly for good health.

What are some of your natural talents?

What are your passions?

Do you know your spiritual gift(s)? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, how has God gifted you?

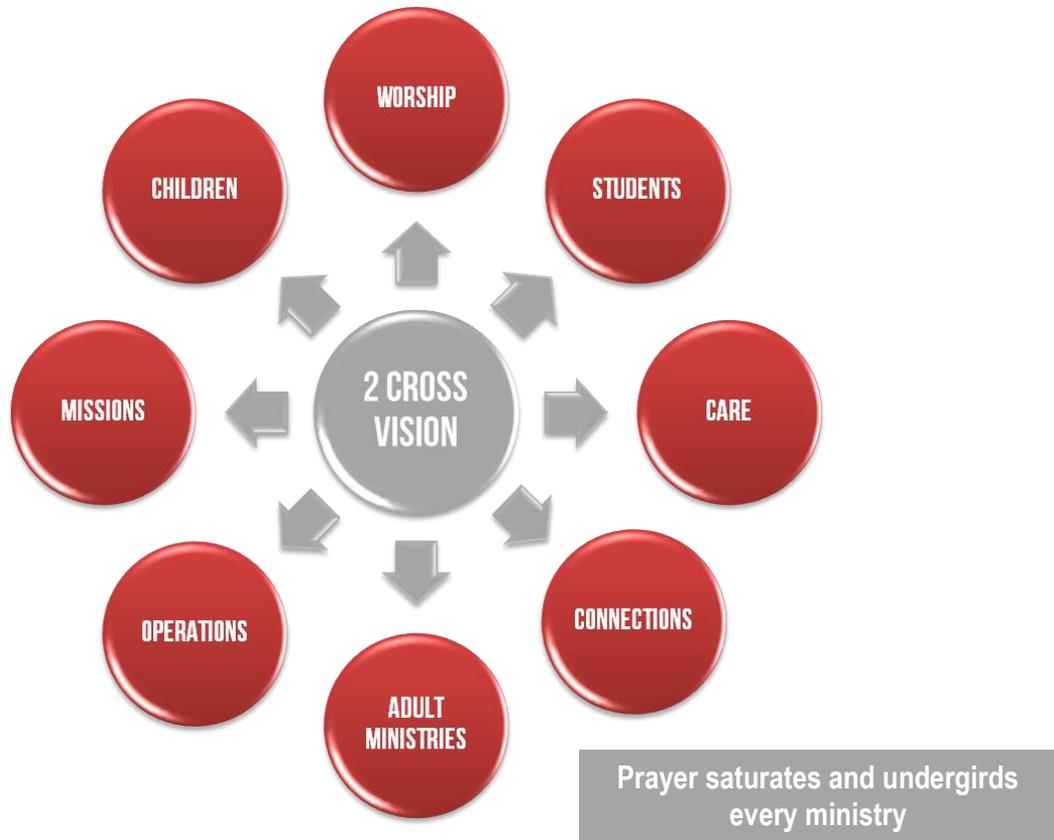
Check your primary gift(s) from the list below.

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administration | <input type="checkbox"/> Giving | <input type="checkbox"/> Service/Helps |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discernment | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality | <input type="checkbox"/> Shepherding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Encouragement | <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evangelism | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Wisdom |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faith | <input type="checkbox"/> Mercy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (share below) |

To learn more about spiritual gifts, check out 2 books by Bruce Bugbee, *Discover Your Spiritual Gifts the Network Way* and *What You Do Best in the Body of Christ*.

As a member of the body of Christ and this local church, we are each called to a life of surrender, submission and service. What a joy when we serve in our area of passion and giftedness. As you complete your membership application, you will have the opportunity to identify the ministries that interest you. Here’s a big-picture view of opportunities for service at Calvary Fellowship. The next few pages provide more detail within each of these ministry areas. We are encouraged to serve within the walls of Calvary, in our local community and even in ways that support ministries reaching “the ends of the earth”.

CALVARY FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY MAP



As members of God's family, *Connected in Service*, we encourage all members to be serving in at least one area of passion and giftedness. We look forward to following up with you to help you get *Connected in Service*.

Calvary Fellowship Leadership

Lee Wiggins – Senior Pastor [lwiggins@cfdowningtown.com]
Pastoral Staff
Calvary Fellowship Elders

Prayer

Mike Edelman – Pastor [medelman@cfdowningtown.com]
Sunday Morning Prayer Team
Encouragement Team
Prayer Chain
Pastor Prayer Shield
Prayer Shawl Ministry
Pastors available for prayer each day [Pastor on Call]
Monday Night Prayer – Fresh Encounter

Children

Britt Price – Children’s Ministry Director [bprice@cfdowningtown.com]
Kidz J.A.M.
Nursery [Newborn – 2 yrs]
Preschool [2-5 yrs]
Elementary [K-5 grade]
Wednesday AM
Upward
Child Dedications

Worship

Brandon Klinger – Director, Worship Ministries [bklinger@cfdowningtown.com]
Worship Team (vocalists, instrumentalist)
Production
Technical
Creative Arts
Weekend Support
Guest Services
Greeters
Ushers
Parking Lot
Kitchen Ministry
Prayer Team
Counting Team
CD Ministry

Students

John Lawley – Pastor [jlawley@cfdowningtown.com]
Sunday AM
Student Center
Wednesday PM
Life Groups
Avalanche – Winter Retreat
Camp at Old Mill – Summer Mission
Twenty-Somethings (Young Adult)

Global Outreach/Missions

Bill Bateman – Pastor [bbateman@cfdowningtown.com]
Local Outreach
BACC
Lord’s Pantry
Chester County Women’s Services
Good Works
City Gate Missions
Local Missionaries
Global Outreach
Short-term Missions Trips
International Missionaries
Mission Inter Senegal – Church Planting
Moldova – Help the Children

Care

Bob VanArsdale – Pastor [bvanarsdale@cfdowningtown.com]
Grief Share
Divorce Care
Job Seekers [Employment Networking and Support Group]
Parents of Prodigals
Monday Night Prayer – Fresh Encounter
Single + Parenting
Blended Families
Financial Peace University
Helps Ministry
Funeral Assistance
Hospital Visitation

Adults

Bill Bateman – Pastor [bbateman@cfdowningtown.com]
Kim Flagg – Director, Connection Ministries [kflagg@cfdowningtown.com]
Stephanie Rousselle – Director, Women’s Ministry
Bob VanArsdale – Pastor [bvanarsdale@cfdowningtown.com]
Mike Edelman – Pastor [medelman@cfdowningtown.com]
Meet + Greet [New to CFC]
Membership Connect
Baptism
Small Groups
Equipping Seminars
Right Start: Pre-Marriage Preparation
Weddings
Newlyweds
Ventures
Women’s Ministries
Men’s Ministries

Operations

Jenna Smyth - Director of Communications [jsmyth@cfdowningtown.com]
Marty Klein - Director of Technology [mklein@cfdowningtown.com]
Administrative Team
Website
Information and Communication systems
Library
Debbie Avila – Controller [davila@cfdowningtown.com]
Dave McIntyre - Facility [dmcintyre@cfdowningtown.com]

Where are you most interested in serving? Where would you like to get more information regarding serving opportunities?

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

In addition to being good stewards of our time and spiritual gifts, God also calls us to be good stewards of our finances. In Christ's kingdom, we understand the purpose for earthly wealth is to invest it in eternal treasures.

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:19-20)

The faithful use of our resources is not only commanded by God; it is an undeniable indicator of our spiritual health. Materialism, selfishness, greed, hoarding, anxiety over finances – all of these reveal that our trust lies not in God but in money. In the same way, generosity and faithfulness reveal that our trust is in God.

There were very specific giving instructions provided for Israel in the Old Testament. The tithe was a requirement of the Law in which the Israelites were to give 10 percent of the crops they grew and the livestock they raised. In fact, the Old Testament Law required multiple tithes—one for the Levites, one for the use of the temple and the feasts, and one for the poor of the land—which would have pushed the total to around 23 percent.

Under the New Covenant of grace, Christians are released from a legalistic tithing system. The New Testament nowhere designates a percentage of income a person should set aside, but says gifts should be “in keeping with income”. We look at the concept of the Old Testament tithe as a tutor to guide us in our giving as Christians under the New Covenant. The New Testament talks much about the importance and benefits of giving. We are to give as we are able. Sometimes that means giving more than 10 percent depending on the ability of the Christian and the needs of the church. It is our expectation that members of Calvary Fellowship will contribute faithfully to support the ministries of this church

In addition to the command to give, Scripture also addresses our motives and attitudes toward giving. Here are a few examples:

- Giving is to be generous, not stingy. (2 Corinthians 9:6)
- Giving is to be enthusiastic, not forced. (2 Corinthians 9:7)
- Giving is to be deliberate, not haphazard. (2 Corinthians 9:7)
- Giving is to be proportionate, not standardized. (1 Corinthians 16:2)
- Giving is to be discreet, not showy. (Matthew 6:1-4)

Above all, tithes and offerings should be given with pure motives and an attitude of worship to God and service to the body of Christ. “Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver”. Without question, giving based on the teaching of the New Testament is expected and should be considered a privilege of participating in the work of the kingdom.

Why is giving back to God financially so important to our spiritual growth?

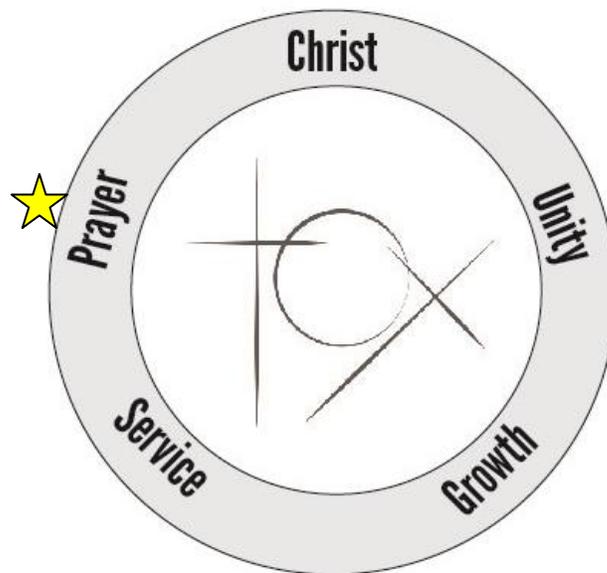
GENERAL FUND GIVING

The Elders of Calvary Fellowship establish a faith-based budget each year that is affirmed by the members. When you give weekly to the General Fund, you are supporting our staff, the operation of the church, ministry expenses, and local and international missions. We are pleased to offer you several convenient methods for giving your tithes and offerings, as well as other contributions.

- On the Weekend: An offering is received at each of our weekend services. Simply make your check payable to Calvary Fellowship.
- Secure Give Mobile App: Through this app you can use your mobile device to give with a credit card or set up an electronic automated transfer. Download the SecureGive app from your app store and search Calvary Fellowship.
- Bill Pay: Set Calvary Fellowship up in your bank's bill pay system. Using the memo line you can designate amounts to any of the 4 approved designations (General Fund, Mortgage, Missions and Helps).
- The Web Site: Simply logon to our website [www.cfdowningtown.com] and easily set up a one-time or recurring gift. By creating an account you will have access to schedule and change your giving. You may use a credit card or set up an automated electronic transfer.
- Electronic Fund Transfer: You can set up recurring weekly, bi-weekly or monthly automatic transfers of funds by requesting a form from Debbie Avila at davila@cfdowningtown.com.
- Mail: We welcome you to mail your contributions directly to our main office: Calvary Fellowship, Attn: Finance Department, 95 West Devon Drive, Downingtown, PA 19335.
- Stock Donations: If you would like to make a stock gift by electronic transfer, please contact Debbie Avila for more details.
- Foundation/Trust Giving: If you have a Charitable Foundation or Giving Trust, please consider making Calvary recipients of your funds.

If you have questions or need a giving number, please contact Debbie Avila in the Finance Department at 610.363.7171 x2138 or davila@cfdowningtown.com.

In the final chapter we will discuss how we are to be living *Connected through Prayer*.



Complete page 7 of your Membership Application at this time.

V. CONNECTED THROUGH PRAYER



There are many *churches that pray* but there are few *praying churches*. We desire to be a *praying church* where prayer saturates every aspect of individual and corporate church life. Being a house of prayer is more than simply believing in prayer. Being a house of prayer means that our primary identifying mark is prayer.

Jesus quoted the prophet Isaiah when he said, “My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations”.

The Bible doesn’t say exactly what it means for a church to be a house of prayer. But we can assume that a house of prayer is a church where prayer is considered the means to access God’s power and the real work of the ministry that is integrated into every facet of the life of the church.

To be a house of prayer, we must proclaim a passionate call to prayer. We must be intentional and relentless in our efforts to teach believers to pray. Prayer must be the expression of our hunger for divine companionship, of our desire for intimacy with our Creator, of our need to build a deeper relationship with our Lord.

The ultimate mark of a praying church is that God’s presence fills His house. Perhaps the single most distinguishing characteristic of a “house of prayer” is that it is filled with the tangible presence of God. A lack of spiritual appetite in the congregation is replaced by spiritual hunger. Unbelievers’ hearts are converted by the life-giving messages preached from the pulpit. The spiritual objectives of the church begin to move forward, not so much by human ingenuity and hard work as by the supernatural assistance of the Holy Spirit.

We refer to these powerful movements of God as *Something Only God Can Do* answers to prayer. We want to be a church that is fully dependent on God for all things. If our purpose as a church were simply to socialize and build friendships, we could thrive on our strength and abilities. But the church is tasked with the greatest mission the world has ever known. In addition, we have a relentless enemy trying to destroy us at every turn. For these reasons and many more, we must be *Connected Through Prayer* as members of God’s family.

In Ephesians 6:10-17, the apostle Paul exhorts believers to put on the full armor of God and to stand strong in His mighty power as we engage in the spiritual battle. Verse 18 may be the key to activating and empowering this metaphor of the armor when he says ...

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

This is a call to a ministry of intercession for not only those in our church but across the larger body of Christ. There are opportunities daily and weekly to pray in this way as members of our Sunday Morning Prayer Team, Encouragement Team, and daily email Prayer Chain.

We have developed a Prayer Ministry Handbook that will strengthen your prayer life as you seek God's face and intercede for the needs of His church. This has been included in your Membership Connect packet.

In addition to praying for the spiritual needs of the church, the apostle Paul often asked for prayer for himself. As members who are *Connected Through Prayer*, we are committed to intercede for our pastor and church leaders.

I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. Pray that I may be kept safe from the unbelievers in Judea and that the contribution I take to Jerusalem may be favorably received by the Lord's people there, so that I may come to you with joy, by God's will, and in your company be refreshed. The God of peace be with you all. Amen. (Romans 15:30-33)

Paul asked the people to strive, struggle, battle together in their prayers for him. "Struggle together" literally means "to contend with adversaries." It means to fight, or to strain. It is the kind of prayer that is described in Ephesians chapter 6 as "warfare". Jesus modeled this intense spiritual prayer life. Like Him, we must agonize or wrestle in pray on behalf of our spiritual leaders. As followers of Jesus Christ, we plead for the supernatural unleashing of the power of God in their lives, and in our churches and homes and throughout our country.

If you are interested in praying for one of our pastors on a daily basis, contact pastor Mike to get more information about our Pastor Prayer Shield. God is calling His people to become that mighty force to bring healing, encouragement and fresh power into the pulpits and leadership boards of our churches.

The New Testament is clear that the local church is to be led by a plurality of godly leaders under the oversight and watched care of Elders. The Elders are given ultimate responsibility and authority to see that the church remains focused on Great Commandment and Great Commission priorities, that its members are shepherded appropriately, that the body is being fed through accurate biblical teaching and that the life of the church is well managed with godly leaders.

Our 2016-2017 Elder Board welcomes your prayers as well as they shepherd the flock that God has placed under their care for this season. (Matt Chiodi, Brad Jackson, Stan Nagahashi, Paul Smith, and Lee Wiggins)

Let's strive, by God's grace, to be so much more than a church that prays but rather a praying church, a church devoted to prayer.

Devoting Ourselves to Prayer

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. (Colossians 4:2)

Father, as I come before You now, I'm so very aware of my own prayerlessness. I think and worry about so much, but pray about so little in comparison. Forgive me, Lord. By the work of the Holy Spirit within me, teach me to pray and to do so continually. *(Be still before the Lord. Pray as the Holy Spirit leads you.)*

I ask also, Lord, for my church family. May my brothers and sisters in Christ be full of joy as they wait on You in the midst of trials that they are experiencing, and may they be faithful in prayer. *(Pray for those in our church who are in difficult circumstances. Ask God to strengthen their faith.)*

Remove from our lives all things that hinder our prayers, unbelief, sin that we have not turned from, unforgiveness and, may we respond to every prompting of the Holy Spirit that we might be unfettered and pray with all of our hearts.

Father, I ask that fervency in prayer and intercession be released on us that we might become a true "house of prayer for all nations." Replace any prayerlessness within our church with a passionate longing to see Your Church revived. May prayer become the fuel of the Holy Spirit among us.

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I ask that we at Calvary Fellowship would become those who always pray and never give up. May we be found faithful when You come, Lord Jesus! May we be those that you call upon by the Spirit to watch on the walls for Your Church, for cities and even nations!

I ask that You stir our hearts with and urgency to pray and give us full-of-faith, God-sized dreams and requests. Teach us to pray Your heart. Teach us to pray Your Word. May the men of our church lead their families on their knees in prayer. May our women humble themselves before You and be self-controlled so that they can pray with greater boldness. Raise up intercessors among the youth of our church. Grab hold of their hearts, I pray, and fill them with great faith. May our hearts and minds be set on the things of Your kingdom. Teach us to pray, Lord! From youngest to oldest, teach us to pray!

Do these things I ask so that we, Your Church, might come alive by the Spirit and be allowed the privilege of participating in the harvest that is coming. Even this day, O God, call Your people to humility to turn from sin, to seek Your face. Wake us up from our slumber, O God, for surely time is short!

In the name of Him who lives and intercedes for me, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Luke 11:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Romans 12:2; James 1:6-8; Matthews 6:14-15, 5:23; Psalm 66:18; 1 Peter 3:7; Isaiah 56:7; Mark 11:17; Luke 18:1-8; Isaiah 62:6-7; 1 Peter 4:7; Hebrews 11:13-16; 2 Chronicles 7:14; Romans 13:11-12; Hebrews 7:25

Pray The Word for Your Church by Teice L. King

Complete page 8 of your Membership Application at this time.

Use chapter VI to summarize your key learnings and any questions you would like to discuss prior to and/or during the Membership Connect Lunch on the “third Sundays” of most months.

Contact Pastor Mike to reserve your place in a future Membership Connect Lunch.

medelman@cfdowningtown.com

610-363-7171 ext.2140

VI. SUMMARY/QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Use the space below to summarize your key learnings/observations from I Am A Church Member and the content presented in this Workbook.

I Am A Church Member

Chapter I – Calvary Fellowship Mission & Vision and Connected in Christ

Chapter II – Connected in Unity

Chapter III – Connected in Growth

Chapter IV – Connected in Service

Chapter V – Connected through Prayer

Next Steps



Once you have *read I Am A Church Member*, completed the self-paced *Membership Connect Workbook* and *Membership Application*, contact pastor Mike to sign-up for one of the upcoming *Membership Connect Lunches* (10/16, 11/20, 12/18, 1/15, 2/19, 3/19, 5/21).

APPENDIX

Calvary Fellowship Constitution

Calvary Fellowship Marriage and Human Sexuality Policy

Prayer Toolkit