

CALVARY CHURCH LIFE



LOCAL CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Belonging,
Growing,
and Serving
Together



MEMBERSHIP

For more than one hundred years, Calvary Community Church has been reaching out with the gospel, **because the world needs Jesus**. Membership at Calvary is an intentional commitment to follow Jesus together with this local church family. It is more than attending services or adding a name to a list.

Membership at Calvary means voluntarily placing yourself within this particular body, submitting to its biblical teaching, shepherding, accountability, and discipline, and committing yourself to its shared mission.

Membership is both a privilege and a responsibility.

Why Local Church Membership?

While Scripture does not prescribe a formal membership process by that name, the New Testament clearly presents believers as belonging to identifiable local churches, being known by their leaders, participating in the life of the church, exercising mutual responsibilities, and submitting to biblical shepherding and accountability (1 Corinthians 5:1–13; 1 Peter 5:2; Hebrews 13:17). The Bible describes believers as members of the body of Christ, with each person having an important role (1 Corinthians 12:12–27). Christians are called to love, encourage, serve, forgive, pray for, and build one another up.

The Christian life was never intended to be lived alone.

Membership Does Not Create Two Classes of Christians

Membership does not make someone more saved, more loved by God, or more valuable than someone who attends but has not yet joined. Every believer is equally justified by grace through faith in Christ. Membership represents a particular commitment to a local church family and a willingness to participate more intentionally in its life, ministry, accountability, and mission.

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve;

1 Peter 5:2

Membership, Care, and Accountability

God has given pastors and elders responsibility to shepherd his church (1 Peter 5:2; Hebrews 13:17). Membership helps establish an intentional relationship between the church and those who have committed themselves to this local body. This does not mean we only care for members. Calvary welcomes and loves everyone. At the same time, Scripture calls us to give particular care to our brothers and sisters in Christ (Galatians 6:10).

As members, we commit to:

- Encourage and pray for one another.
- Receive biblical instruction and spiritual care.
- Speak truth with grace and love.
- Practice biblical accountability.
- Pursue reconciliation when conflict occurs.
- Help one another remain faithful to Christ.

Accountability is not about perfection. It is an expression of love and a recognition of our need for God's grace and one another as we grow.

What Does Membership Commit Me To?

Membership is a response to God's grace, not a way to earn God's favor. As God enables me, I will seek to:

- Pursue a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Participate regularly in worship and the life of the church.
- Love and care for fellow believers.
- Pursue biblical and spiritual maturity.
- Pray for the church and its leaders.
- Support Calvary's biblical teaching, values, and mission.
- Discover and use my gifts to serve others.
- Practice biblical accountability and pursue reconciliation.
- Give generously and faithfully as God provides.
- Share the gospel and look for opportunities to make Jesus known.
- Live in a way which increasingly reflects the character of Christ.

Membership is not a promise we will never fail. It is a commitment to keep pursuing Christ together when we do.

At Calvary, our values describe how we desire to live together:



BELONG: We belong because God didn't design us to be alone.

Membership provides an intentional commitment to know and be known, love and be loved, encourage and be encouraged.



GROW: We grow because Christlikeness is our goal.

We pursue spiritual maturity through God's Word, prayer, worship, obedience, the Holy Spirit, and relationships with other believers.



SERVE: We serve because love is shown through action.

God has given every believer gifts and abilities to strengthen the church and serve others. You are needed.



TESTIFY: We testify because God's story needs to be shared.

Because the world needs Jesus, we seek opportunities to share the gospel with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15).



CELEBRATE: We celebrate because joy is found in God's goodness.

We rejoice together in God's faithfulness, answered prayer, changed lives, spiritual growth, and his work among us.

Who May Become a Member?

Membership at Calvary is for those who have personally trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and desire to follow him.

Those seeking membership should demonstrate:

- **Personal Faith:** A clear profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
- **Understanding of the Faith:** An understanding of foundational Christian beliefs and a willingness to continue growing.
- **Agreement with Calvary's Beliefs:** A willingness to affirm Calvary's Statement of Faith and support its biblical teaching, values, mission, and ministry.
- **Desire for Biblical Community:** A willingness to participate in the life of the church, pursue spiritual growth, serve others, and receive encouragement and accountability.

Membership is not reserved for those who have reached spiritual maturity. It is for believers who desire to grow toward maturity together.

Baptism and Membership

Believer's baptism is a joyful public expression of faith in Jesus Christ and identifies believers with his death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6:1–4).

Baptism does not save us or contribute to salvation. Salvation is entirely by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8–9).

While we strongly encourage every believer to follow Christ in baptism, Calvary does not make baptism a prerequisite for membership. We desire to welcome believers into meaningful participation in the local church while continuing to teach and encourage obedience to Christ's command.

For a further explanation, see *Believer's Baptism: Following Christ in Obedience* for a fuller explanation.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9

Communion and Membership

Communion is an ordinance Jesus gave his followers to remember and proclaim his sacrifice until he returns (Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26).

Communion does not save us or add to Christ's finished work. It celebrates God's grace, reminds us of our dependence upon Christ, and celebrates our unity as his body.

For a further explanation, see *Communion: Remembering Christ Together* for a fuller explanation.

And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."

Luke 22:19-20

The Membership Process

We want membership to be an intentional and meaningful step.

1. **Membership Class:** Learn about Calvary's history, beliefs, values, mission, ministries, leadership, and expectations.
2. **Membership Application:** Share your faith journey and desire to become a member.
3. **Meet with an Elder:** Share your testimony, ask questions, discuss your understanding of membership, and begin building a relationship with one of the church's leaders.
4. **Membership Covenant:** Affirm your commitment to Calvary's Statement of Faith, mission, values, and membership responsibilities.
5. **Congregational Review:** New member names are made available to the congregation for two consecutive weeks. This provides an opportunity for members to bring legitimate concerns regarding a candidate's testimony, conduct, or qualifications to the church leadership. Concerns will be handled pastorally, confidentially, and according to biblical principles.
6. **Right Hand of Fellowship:** Following acceptance, new members are publicly welcomed during a worship service as part of the Calvary family.

COMMON QUESTIONS

Is membership required for salvation?

No. Salvation is entirely by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9). Membership is a response to salvation, not a means of earning it.

Can I attend Calvary without becoming a member?

Absolutely. Everyone is welcome to worship, learn, serve, and explore faith with us. Membership represents a deeper commitment to the life, health, unity, and mission of the church.

What if I disagree with something Calvary teaches?

The membership process gives you an opportunity to understand Calvary's beliefs before making a commitment. As you seek membership, if you cannot affirm our statement of faith and foundational beliefs, we encourage you to prayerfully consider whether another local church would be a better fit.

Members are still encouraged to ask questions and seek understanding. We pursue disagreement with humility, grace, truth, and a desire for unity (Ephesians 4:3, 15).

What if I am still growing in my faith?

That is expected. Spiritual growth is lifelong. Membership is not for people who have arrived; it is for believers who desire to grow together.

What happens if I stop participating?

Membership represents an active commitment to Calvary. If you move to another church or no longer participate, we ask you to contact the church so your membership can be updated. When someone becomes disconnected, church leaders may reach out.



MEMBERSHIP & DISCIPLESHIP

Membership is part of Calvary's larger discipleship pathway:

ENCOUNTER GOD

We worship,
learn, and deepen
our relationship
with God.

CONNECT IN COMMUNITY

We belong to
one another
through biblical
relationships.

REINFORCE YOUR CALLING

We continue
growing and
helping others
follow Jesus.

EQUIPPED TO SERVE

We discover and
use our gifts to
serve others.

LIVING ON MISSION

We participate
in making Christ
known.

Our Commitment

Church membership is a commitment to belong, grow, serve, testify, and celebrate together. We do not become members because we are perfect. We become members because we need Christ and we need one another.

Because the world needs Jesus, we come together to know Christ so we can go and make him known until the day he returns and makes all things new.

