

*Doing Life  
Together*



Updated August 22, 2019

Greetings,

Thank you for taking the time to explore in *Doing Life Together*. We hope you will find it to be informative and encouraging. *Doing Life Together* is meant to provide you with an overview of the vision and mission of Life Church. You will also learn more about the various ministries within Life Church, as well as our outreach to our community and the world.

We hope that in time you will be interested in becoming a partner with Life Church. The next step would be to participate in a *Partnership Covenant* session, which explains the benefits and responsibilities of being a partner.

Now, let's grow together!

Pastors Steve and Dave

## ~ About Life Church ~

In 2010, two pastors serving in separate ministries within Calvert County, Maryland began meeting together to pray and encourage one another. In the months that followed, it seemed clear that God had brought them together and was orchestrating a change in the direction of their ministries. Incredibly, they believed God was calling them to plant a new church in Calvert County, MD.

Responding to what they believed to clearly be God's prompting, in September 2010, the two men, joined by their wives, heeded God's call and gave notice to the churches where they had been serving. This would be a leap of faith. With no promise of help or support from any other church or organization and no source of income, they knew it would be up to God to build His church. Those two men were Steve Forrester and Dave Mohler. The name of the church: Life Church Calvert.

Life Church began holding worship services on January 9, 2011, at Plum Point Elementary School. During its first year, God did some amazing things, including sending others to serve and lead ministries essential for building His church. Life Church has grown from a handful of dedicated believers into a worshipping, serving, compassionate group of followers of Jesus Christ.

Life Church Calvert is an evangelical, non-denominational, independent Christian ministry. Financially, Life Church is recognized as a 501(c)3 tax exempt nonprofit organization. Although not directly affiliated with any other church, denomination, or organization, we may at times partner with other churches or organizations to share ministries and promote godly causes.

## OUR MISSION

To love God, love others, and make disciples of Jesus Christ

## OUR VISION

To be a place for loving, mending, preparing, and sending people in Calvert County and beyond

## OUR CORE BELIEFS

- A. There is only One True God—the Creator and Sustainer of all life Who is revealed in the three persons of the Trinity as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- B. The Bible is God’s authoritative and trustworthy Word to all people; it teaches us what to believe, how to live, and declares God’s plan and purpose for all mankind.
- C. Jesus Christ is fully God and man’s only Savior. He became flesh, was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, and died on a cross to pay the penalty for our sin. He was resurrected from the dead, returned to heaven, and now reigns as the King of Kings, Lord of Lords, and the head of His Church on earth.
- D. We were each created in the image of God. However, our sin has marred that image and separated us from Him. The remedy is reconciliation through God’s grace that is made available to each of us through repentance and by embracing the sacrificial death and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- E. God’s grace through Jesus Christ is available to anyone who by faith will call upon Him. All who are in Christ become children of God and brand-new creations in Him.
- F. The evidence of being a child of God is abiding in Christ, following in His footsteps, and loving Him with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength. The outcome of being a child of God is loving others as Christ has loved us and showing them the same compassion that He has shown us.
- G. The Holy Spirit indwells every believer. It is He who illuminates our minds, directs our steps, provides us divine ability to serve God and accomplish His purposes, and enables us to walk in the fruit of the Spirit in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
- H. The Church is Christ’s body on earth; every follower of Christ is a member and He is its head. The

purpose of the Church is to make known the goodness of God, to go and make disciples of all people, and to help meet the needs of others in the most tangible, meaningful ways available. Every believer is called to actively worship with, serve with, fellowship with, financially support, and be accountable to the local church.

- I. By following Jesus' example and being baptized by immersion in water, we announce that we have become followers of Jesus Christ. Sharing the Lord's Supper together with our fellow believers is a reminder that Christ laid down His life for us, and we are called to lay down our lives for one another.
- J. Praying for God's kingdom to come and His will to be done is the responsibility of every follower of Christ. Praying that God will provide healing, deliverance, strength, wisdom, and blessings is the God given privilege of every believer.
- K. Marriage, as defined by Scripture, is the blessed union of one man and one woman who have entered into a lifelong covenant.
- L. Human life is sacred, including the unborn.
- M. The family is the bedrock of a healthy society. Parents, not the government, are responsible for nurturing our children.
- N. The earth is not our permanent home. There will come a day, at God's appointed time, when He will call for His Church, and all believers on earth, including those who died in the faith, will rise to meet the Lord in the air and remain with Him forever.
- O. There will be a final judgment. Those who have abided in Jesus Christ will be rewarded for their life of faith and good deeds and will enjoy God's presence forever. Those found to be without faith in Christ will be sentenced to eternal punishment, separated from God forever.

## OUR CORE VALUES

- A. *The Church is Not a Building:* The church is not a building; it's a community of individuals in the process of becoming more like Jesus. At Life Church, you will find no perfect people. Instead, you'll encounter a vibrant, welcoming community of believers from all walks of life who have been captured by Christ's love, are being transformed by His power, and are experiencing the irrepressible joy of life in Jesus.
- B. *It's About Relationships, Not Religion:* Organized religion is not the church. Jesus laid down His life

so that each of us may find forgiveness of sins, be transformed by His power, and experience abundant life in Him. He is the God of the second chance Who desires a relationship with every person on earth. The life that Jesus gives is also meant to be experienced in community with others. Life Church is committed to helping you discover a personal relationship with Christ and build rewarding, Christ-like relationships with others.

- C. *Worship is Everything:* God created us to worship Him with everything we have and everything we are, and wherever His church gathers should be the most exciting place on earth! At Life Church, be prepared to experience a warm, family friendly, and joy filled celebration that glorifies the Father, exalts the Son, and makes room for the Spirit.
- D. *Everyone Has Value in God's Eyes:* We believe the followers of Jesus Christ should be the most compassionate people on earth. Life Church is committed to being Jesus to others, loving them where they are, as they are, and when they least expect it.
- E. *Every Believer is Gifted By God and Called to Serve:* Every believer has been gifted by God and called to faithfully serve Him. A priority of Life Church is to help you discover your calling and giftedness, and then encourage, prepare, and equip you to fulfill God's calling.
- F. *Prayer is Not an Option, it's a Lifeline:* Prayer is a spiritual connection with God and is necessary for anyone desiring to truly know Him. Prayer is also the fuel upon which we depend in order to fulfill our calling. You can expect Life Church to model a great reliance on prayer and emphasize its importance within the life of every believer.
- G. *The Bible is the Word of God:* The Bible is the Word of God; it is God's reliable message to us, His divine and infallible blueprint for our lives. At Life Church we live, worship, teach and serve together under the Bible's authority.
- H. *We Cannot Out Give God:* God has held nothing back from us; we should hold nothing back from Him. The ministries of Life Church are provided for by the tithes and offerings of its participants. Life Church also tithes from its income to support other ministries in our area and around the world.
- I. *Playing it Safe is Risky:* There is nothing passive about following Christ; we are not called to be comfortable, play it safe, or do church as usual. In fact, we believe irrelevance is irreverence and "good enough" is not good enough. Instead, we are committed to serving God by all available means and in the most meaningful, relevant, and innovative ways. As a church we will make the most of every opportunity to glorify God, recognizing that great opportunities to serve Him may often come disguised as insurmountable obstacles or insignificant moments.

## OUR CORE PURPOSE

The core purpose of Life Church Calvert is to be great at the Greatest Commandments. Jesus said: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ - Matthew 22:37-39

## OUR CORE OBJECTIVES

### A. To become a place for loving people:

*A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. - John 13:34-35*

God, who has loved us with an unfailing love, has called us to demonstrate this love to those around us. In fact, Jesus said it will be convincing evidence that we truly belong to Him. Life Church is committed to obeying Christ’s command to love one another and follow His example to make His love known beyond our walls. - 1 John 4:7-12, 20, 1 Peter 1:22

### B. To become a place for mending people:

*The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor. - Luke 4:18-19*

The Church of Jesus Christ is called to be a caring, healing community. Of course, what each of us needs most is inner, spiritual healing. We need our hearts to be healed and our souls set free so that we may know God and have a relationship with the One who created us. This spiritual healing is made available to us when we call upon Jesus, repent of our sins, and entrust our lives to Christ as our Savior and Lord.

There are also many other kinds of healing needed today. Some need physical healing. Others are carrying deep hurts, are burdened down emotionally, or are struggling with life controlling issues. Brokenness within marriages and families is epidemic.

Life Church is committed to be a healing community, coming along side those who are in need, offering prayer for the sick, providing biblical counsel and encouragement for those who are discouraged, and instilling hope in the hearts of those bruised and broken. *Isaiah 42:3,1 Corinthians 12:12-21, 26-27, James 5:13-16, Philippians 2:3-4, Galatians 6:2*

### C. To become a place for preparing people:

*It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 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. - Ephesians 4:11-13*

At Life Church, we believe that every believer has been gifted by God and called to serve. Believers being discipled and prepared to fulfill their calling is vital if the kingdom of God is going to effectively advance within the church and into all the world. We believe it is the responsibility of the church to help believers discover the joy of getting “plugged in” to ministry within the body, as well as experiencing the joy of serving Christ beyond our walls.

**D.** To become a place for sending people:

*Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. - Matthew 28:18-20*

Discipleship is not an option for the Church. Fulfillment of the Great Commission is the responsibility of each believer individually and the whole Church collectively. Jesus said that those who follow Him will take the gospel with them into the world. At Life Church, our goal is to make disciples and equip and encourage each to live his or her faith out loud.

We will also reach beyond our walls by investing our time and resources in the community ministry opportunities the Lord gives us, by providing outreach events to share the Good News, and by partnering with others churches, individuals, and ministry organizations that are serving others within our community and beyond our borders. *Matthew 25:35-40*

## Our Core Ministries

A brief description of the current ministry teams within Life Church

### *Transformation Team*

It requires a lot of effort to transform a school gymnasium into a gathering place for worship. Yet this is what is required each Sunday morning. Whether you would like to help one Sunday each month or more, there are plenty of great opportunities to lend a hand and make friends while serving with this important ministry team.

#### *Prerequisites to serve with the Transformation Team:*

Faithfully worshiping with and supporting Life Church for at least one-month  
Successful completion of an informal interview with the Creative Arts Director.

#### *Commitment:*

You may serve one or more times per month.

#### *Contact:*

For additional information, please contact with our Creative Arts Director, Tim Mohler  
([tmohler@lifechurchcalvert.com](mailto:tmohler@lifechurchcalvert.com))

### *Production Team*

Lights, camera, action! Well, *almost*. Having experienced worship at Life Church, you are aware that we make great use of lighting, sound, and media. Production Team Members hang and adjust lighting, set up the screen, projector, and sound equipment, and then monitor these systems throughout the service.

#### *Prerequisites to serve with the Production Team:*

Faithfully worshiping with and supporting Life Church for at least six months  
Completion of *Doing Life Together*  
Successful completion of an interview with the Creative Arts Director  
Successfully completing all required training  
Approval by the church elders

#### *Commitment:*

Depending upon the needs of the Production Team, you may serve one or more times per month.

#### *Contact:*

For additional information, please contact with our Creative Arts Director, Tim Mohler  
([tmohler@lifechurchcalvert.com](mailto:tmohler@lifechurchcalvert.com))

## ***Greeting Team***

Our greeters are responsible for meeting people at the door with a warm welcome and a smile. Since we only have one opportunity to make a first impression, it is essential that those serving as greeters are comfortable meeting new people and are able to answer basic questions about Life Church.

### ***Prerequisites to serve with the Greeting Team:***

Faithfully worshiping with and supporting Life Church for at least three months  
Completion of *Doing Life Together*  
Successful completion of an interview and brief training

### ***Commitment:***

Typically, once every 4-6 weeks.

### ***Contact:***

For additional information, please contact Lynne Sneade ([lsneade@lifechurchcalvert.com](mailto:lsneade@lifechurchcalvert.com))

## ***Guest Services***

A warm smile and refreshments go a long way towards helping others feel welcome. Our Guest Services Team serve by showing hospitality and helping provide information to guests about the ministry of Life Church and answer any questions they may have.

### ***Prerequisites to serve with the Hospitality-Life Line Team:***

Faithfully worshiping with and supporting Life Church for at least three months  
Successful completion of *Doing Life Together*  
Successfully completing an informal interview with our *Guest Services* Team Leaders

### ***Commitment:***

Depending upon the needs of the Guest Services Team, you may serve one or more times per month.

### ***Contact:***

For additional information, please contact Monica Forrester ( [mforrester@lifechurchcalvert.com](mailto:mforrester@lifechurchcalvert.com) ) or Karen Mohler ([kmohler@lifechurchcalvert.com](mailto:kmohler@lifechurchcalvert.com))

## ***Worship Team***

Worship is an important part of each of our services at Life Church, and we have been blessed with several gifted musicians and vocalists. If you are a vocalist or musician and interested in serving as part of our Worship Team, contact our worship leaders today.

### ***Prerequisites to serving as a member of the Worship Team:***

Being gifted to sing well and/or play an instrument well  
Faithfully worshiping with and supporting Life Church for at least three months

Completion of *Doing Life Together*

Successfully completing a required audition

Successful completion of an interview with the Worship Team Leaders

Approval by the church elders

***Commitment:***

Depending upon the needs of the Worship Team, you may serve one or more times per month.

***Contact:***

For additional information, please contact our Worship Leaders, Rebecca Forrester ([rforrester@lifechurchcalvert.com](mailto:rforrester@lifechurchcalvert.com)) or Mark Lehew ([mlehew@lifechurchcalvert.com](mailto:mlehew@lifechurchcalvert.com))

***The Plot Thickens (Life Church Drama Team)***

Drama is a powerful means of communication. The Plot Thickens provides the opportunity for its members to communicate biblical truths in contemporary dramatic style. Presentations are offered at various times throughout the year.

***Prerequisites to serve with the Drama Team:***

Faithfully worshiping with and supporting Life Church for at least three months

Successful completion of *Doing Life Together*

Successfully completing an informal interview

Approval by the church elders

***Commitment:***

Rehearsals and productions take place throughout the year.

***Contact:***

For additional information, please contact our Drama Director, Casey Garner ([cgarner@lifechurchcalvert.com](mailto:cgarner@lifechurchcalvert.com))

***Life Kids***

At Life Church, we love families and think it's important to worship together. Life Kids exists to help little ones connect with God. Before the morning message, children through 5<sup>th</sup> grade will be invited to participate in Life Kids. If a parent of an infant or toddler, wants a little break, they are invited to drop off their child at Life Kids upon arrival on Sundays.

***Prerequisites to assist with Life Kids:***

Faithfully worshiping with and supporting Life Church for at least three months

Successful completion of *Doing Life Together*

Successful completion of a Life Kids questionnaire and a background check

Successful interview with our Life Kids Director

Approval by the church elders

***Commitment:***

You will typically serve once every 4-6 weeks.

***Contact:***

For additional information, please contact our Life Kids Director, Stacy Davidson ([sdavidson@lfechurchcalvert.com](mailto:sdavidson@lfechurchcalvert.com))

***Life Teens***

The goal of *Life Teens*, our ministry to youth, is to provide a place for acceptance and unconditional love, a place where teens may increase their circle of friends by meeting other teens from within Life Church and surrounding churches. Goals of the youth group ministry also include relating biblical alternatives for dealing with the many issues facing teens today, and providing opportunities to serve within the church and our community.

***Prerequisites to assist with Life Teens:***

Faithfully worshiping with and supporting Life Church for at least three months.

Successful completion of *Doing Life Together*

Successful completion of a Youth Ministry questionnaire and a background check

Successful interview with the Life Teens Ministry leaders

Approval by the church elders

***Commitment:***

Depending upon the needs of the Youth Ministry Team, you may serve one or more times per month.

***Contact:***

For additional information, contact *Life Teens* Team Leaders Ben and Dana Banyasz ([bbanyasz@lfechurchcalvert.com](mailto:bbanyasz@lfechurchcalvert.com)) ([dbanyasz@lfechurchcalvert.com](mailto:dbanyasz@lfechurchcalvert.com))

***Men of Life***

Men of Life was established to help men build great friendships and learn how to apply scriptural truths to everyday living. Our men are also involved in ministry opportunities within the church and the community as well as enjoying opportunities to share fun and fellowship together. *Men of Life* meets every 1st and 3rd Saturday morning from 7:30 - 9:30 AM.

***Prerequisites to participate in Men's Group:***

*Men of Life* is led by our Men's Group Ministry Team Leader and is open to all men.

***Contact:***

For additional information, please contact *Men of Life* Team Leader, Kevin Weimert ([kweimert@lfechurchcalvert.com](mailto:kweimert@lfechurchcalvert.com))

## ***Ladies of Life***

*Ladies of Life* is an opportunity for women to grow in their walk with Jesus and build supportive relationships with other women. *Ladies of Life* meets twice monthly.

### ***Prerequisites to participate in Ladies of Life:***

*Ladies of Life* is open to all women.

### ***Contact:***

For additional information, please speak with our *Ladies of Life* team leader, Karen Mohler, or email Karen at [kmohler@lifechurchcalvert.com](mailto:kmohler@lifechurchcalvert.com)

## ***Life Group***

If you asked about the significance of *Life Group*, we believe those who regularly participate would tell you it's one of the highlights of their week. *Life Group*, our weekly home group ministry, is a great time to get to know others and make new friends. Life Groups typically meet on Tuesday and/or Wednesday evenings, beginning with dinner provided by the host family at 6:30 PM, followed by study of the current series, which often includes video presentations, and concluding with prayer. Our goal is for sessions to conclude by 8:30 PM.

### ***Prerequisites to participate in a Life Group:***

*Life Group* sessions are typically led by our pastors and are open to all who would like to fellowship and grow with us. Registration times will be announced and may be completed at *Lifeline*.

### ***Contact:***

For additional information, please speak with Pastors Steve or Dave, or drop them an email at [sforrester@lifechurchcalvert.com](mailto:sforrester@lifechurchcalvert.com) or [dmohler@lifechurchcalvert.com](mailto:dmohler@lifechurchcalvert.com)

## ***Heart F.E.L.T. (Filling Empty Little Tummys)***

Heart F.E.L.T. is a local ministry to elementary school aged children in need that provides backpacks filled with nourishing food items. Life Church became a part of the Heart F.E.L.T. ministry in April 2014. Each Sunday morning throughout the school year, volunteers serving with *Heart FELT* assemble in the school cafeteria to pack backpacks with purchased and donated food for needy children at Plum Point Elementary. Our volunteers typically serve 30 or more children each week.

### ***Prerequisites to serve with the Heart FELT team:***

Faithfully worshiping with and supporting Life Church for at least three months

Completion of *Doing Life Together*

Completing an informal interview with the *Heart FELT* Ministry Team Leader

### ***Commitment:***

Depending upon the needs of the *Heart FELT* Team and your availability, you may serve one or more times per month

### **Contact:**

For additional information, contact our *Heart FELT* Ministry Team Leader, Suzanne Walker ([swalker@lifechurchcalvert.com](mailto:swalker@lifechurchcalvert.com))

## **Ministry Beyond Our Walls**

At Life Church, we support outreach and ministry beyond our walls. Our investment includes providing monthly financial support to missionaries, special needs support, community outreach and hands on ministry when the opportunity arises. We love to partner with other ministries!

### ***Shield Bearers***

Being encouragers is part of our DNA at Life Church. One of the ways we provide encouragement beyond our walls is by recognizing each of the more than 360 members of Calvert County's Law Enforcement Community on his or her birthday with a birthday card that includes a gift card dinner for dinner out at a local restaurant. We also bless our officers and their families at Christmas, with get well cards, sympathy cards, and gifts cards when a new baby arrives, as well as offering personal, marital, and family counseling.

### ***Farming 4 Hunger***

Under the leadership of Bernie Fowler, Jr., and his wife Rose, *Farming 4 Hunger*, based at Serenity Farm, in Benedict, Maryland, raises fresh produce to feed the hungry. Since 2013, *Farming 4 Hunger* has experienced significant growth, and provides millions of pounds of fresh produce for families throughout Southern Maryland and around the state.

During the growing and harvesting season, groups of volunteers from Life Church serve at the farm by helping harvest and pack produce for those in need. Volunteers from Life Church have also provided meals and mentoring during the summer months for the pre-release workers serving at the farm.

### ***End Hunger in Calvert County & The Chesapeake Cares Food Pantry***

When beginning Life Church, two of the first ministries we partnered with were End Hunger and the *Chesapeake Cares Food Pantry*. End Hunger and the food pantry provide food for hundreds of families each week. On occasions, individuals from Life Church help unload tractor trailers of food from the Maryland Food Bank to help feed the needy.

### ***Birthright (Crisis Pregnancy Center)***

Located in Prince Frederick, *Birthright* provides free, non-judgmental support and love to pregnant women and their unborn children. Among the many services offered at *Birthright* are: free pregnancy testing, physician referrals, information on medical insurance, legal and educational referrals, prenatal and paternity information. Also available are and baby clothes and necessities, housing referrals, social agency referrals, and information on other community services. *Birthright* also provides adoption information, non-judgmental counsel, friendship, and emotional support.

### ***Samaritan's Purse***

Through our partnership with *Samaritan's Purse* we have supported ministry that assisted relief efforts in New Jersey and New York after Hurricane Sandy, and in 2017 sent a team of volunteers to Texas after Hurricane Harvey devastated the area. We have also helped with provisions for those in other parts of the world suffering from the effects of violent storms and earthquakes. Through Operation Christmas Child, we have blessed hundreds of children around the world.

### ***World Vision***

Through *World Vision* we have helped supply school supplies to inner city kids in the U.S., supported a ministry dedicated to helping girls escape the sex trade in India, were able to provide food and clothing to the needy in Africa, and purchased a share of a well digging project that will bring water to a village for generations.

## **Missionaries at home and abroad with whom we have partnered**

*Alex and Kathryn Humphreys*, Missionaries to Japan

*Jeffrey and Melissa Castro* who serve as teaching missionaries to Dominican Republic

*Matt and Elizabeth VanWart* who serve as medical missionaries in Uganda

*Jeff and Emily Weimert* who are serving as missionaries in the Philippines

*Matthew Carns* who serves with *Young Life*, in the United Kingdom

## **Other Life Church Ministries and Outreach Events**

### ***Down by the Riverside and Church at the Ball Park***

In our past we gathered for worship followed by a picnic, games and hay rides along the Patuxent River. We have also held worship services at the Southern Maryland Blue Crab's Stadium and invited all of our community law enforcement officers and their families to be our guest for the day. This invitation included joining us for morning worship at the stadium, a catered buffet lunch, tickets to the children's park, and a ticket to the afternoon baseball game. We are always on the look out for opportunities to show our appreciation and support for our local law enforcement officers and their families.

### ***Harvest Fest***

On several occasions we have held a Harvest Festival on the grounds of PPES. Following morning worship we enjoyed a cook out and afternoon filled with fun and games for children and adults alike.

### ***Operation Christmas Child***

Each November, a highlight here at Life Church is when, during morning worship, we share the love of Jesus with boys and girls in over 130 countries by filling shoeboxes with gifts in support of Samaritan's Purse in Operation Christmas Child.

### ***One Warm Coat***

Life Church has participated in the *One Warm Coat* initiative for several years, which helps provide winter coats for those in need.

### ***Baskets for Boo-Boos***

Life Church has partnered with the Huntingtown High School Key Club to provide baskets of toys and games for children visiting the Calvert Heath Systems emergency room or being admitted to the hospital.

### ***Christmas in April***

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."* - Margaret Mead

Christmas in April in Calvert County, Inc. is an affiliate of Rebuilding Together that, in partnership with the community, repairs and improves houses assuring that low-income homeowners live in warmth, safety and independence. Recently more than 500 volunteers donated over 5000 hours to bring real change to thirty-eight low income community homeowners and their families. During the 2017 Christmas in April events, a large group of volunteers from Life Church stepped up and took the lead in making major renovations to a home in northern Calvert County. We again responded to the call in April of 2018 and 2019.

### ***Building Life Together***

On January 15, 2013, we announced that we were looking at a parcel of property available for sale, located on the corner of Route 4 and Cox Rd in Huntingtown. On February 4, we felt led by the Lord to make an offer on the property, which required us to make a deposit of \$2,000 in earnest money, a sum that all but exhausted our checking account.

Our offer on the property was contingent on the property passing a feasibility study, our securing financing, and our raising the approximately \$28,000.00 needed to cover the feasibility study and closing costs. At that time, we had \$205.00 in our church account. The next day, February 5, we were notified that our offer had been accepted. During the following 90 days, God did what in the natural would have been impossible. Through the sacrificial giving of those of Life Church and generosity of supportive friends, we received and exceeded the amount needed to meet the settlement requirements. On June 26, 2013 we closed on the property.

Life Church plans to construct a 16,000 square foot multi-purpose building designed to allow us to serve the church and our community. This campus will be built in Huntingtown, Maryland, at the corner of Routes 2&4 and Cox Road on our 7.24-acre property. Construction will be in two phases: The first phase will be approximately 10,000 square feet and include a multi-purpose auditorium with seating for approximately 375 people, a children's ministry wing, kitchen, and a large foyer to serve as an area for fellowship. The cost of this phase is \$2.2 million dollars.

We are believing that God will provide the necessary funds. Our capital campaign began in September 2018. As of August of 2019, we are heading towards settlement in September. Our hope is for construction to begin in November 2019 of being in our new building by September 2020.

## Becoming a Partner of Life Church

Many congregations have chosen the term *member* to define who belongs to the local church. However, at *Life Church*, we have chosen the term *partner* to describe this relationship; why do we make this distinction?

Although the Apostle Paul speaks of the church as a body of many *members*, (*1 Corinthians 12:12-27*), our understanding of membership has become skewed over the years. For instance in today's culture, a member of an organization may be someone who has paid to belong and may be more or less a consumer of a product or a benefit as a result of his membership, rather than a contributor. This seems to be evident within some of today's churches where, although a person does not pay to gain entrance, a distorted view of membership may nevertheless contribute to a consumer mind set.

A *partner* is an active participant in the life of the church, believes in the vision and gives of himself to see it fulfilled. A *member* wants to know what he gets. A *partner* wants to know how he can give. When the Apostle Paul described the followers of Christ within the local church as *members*, he was not describing those who infrequently participate in worship, or are seldom involved in serving, or who rarely give in support the local church and its ministries. Instead, in the New Testament *members* of the body are individuals who are bound together in Christ and who are functioning together, serving together, and supporting one another for the common good.

As with each part of the human body, we really do need each other; and as we are taught in the New Testament, there are no unimportant members. Within the local church everyone is important, we are to make every effort to love, encourage, and care for one another. Each part of the body functioning properly as God has designed it contributes to the health of the whole body and allows the church to reach its goals and fulfill God's redemptive mission.

Thus, at *Life Church*, those who are followers of Christ, who consistently participate in worship with the church, who are actively involved in serving within the church, who regularly give in support of the church and its ministries, and who are willing to abide by the *Life Church Partnership Covenant* shall be considered partners of *Life Church Calvert*.

## ***Benefits of Partnership***

Scripture identifies many blessings associated with our commitment to the local church. A partner of Life Church may expect the following:

- A) Opportunities to serve as leaders within the church and beyond
- B) Documentation of the church's ministry outreaches, achievements, and future goals, including personal giving statements and the church's yearly financial accountability statement.
- C) Opportunities to affirm major decisions of the Leadership Council to include the acquisition or disposal of real estate, the selection of pastors, or the selection of Leadership Council members.

### **I. Qualifications for partnership**

Partnership at Life Church Calvert is offered to men and women who are at least (18) eighteen years old. All those who abide by and fulfill the following qualifications will share the rights, privileges and responsibilities of being a partner of Life Church Calvert.

To be a partner of Life Church Calvert means that:

1. I am a follower of Jesus Christ.
2. I am committed to grow as a disciple of Jesus Christ.
3. I will do my best to be an example of Christlikeness by walking in humility, practicing love towards all others, and pursuing a life of biblical, ethical, moral, and sexual integrity.
4. I will consistently pray for the church, its ministries, and its leaders.
5. I have been consistently worshipping with, serving with, and financially supporting Life Church Calvert for at least six months and will continue to faithfully worship with the church, serve within at least one recognized ministry within the church, and will continue to faithfully provide financial support for the church and its ministries.
6. I will make the most of every opportunity to invite the unchurched to share in the activities of the church and to warmly welcome and build relationships with those new to the church.
7. I will refuse to gossip, murmur, or grumble in order that I may honor God and not cause others to stumble
8. If I become involved in a conflict of any kind, I agree to make every effort to see that it is resolved biblically and will seek counsel from my pastors if it is not resolved.
9. I have completed a required *Doing Life Together* session. I fully embrace the Core Beliefs, Core

Values, Core Purpose, Vision, Mission, and Core Objective of Life Church Calvert and will abide by the church's constitution and bylaws. If, for any reason, I am unable to continue to fully embrace the tenets of this covenant, I will not hesitate speaking with the Lead Pastors.

## Our Leadership

The leadership of Life Church is provided by our elders (pastors), the Leadership Council, and those who serve as ministry team leaders.

The goal of our pastors is to “shepherd the flock”, help believers become mature followers, and prepare every follower of Jesus Christ to effectively serve Him:

*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. 7 But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.... It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 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 men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into 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. - Ephesians 4: 1-16*

The Life Church Leadership Council provides encouragement, counsel, and accountability to our pastors as they lead, care for, and watch over the church. Members of the council assist the Lead Pastors in ministering to the body, help establish ministry goals, assist in overseeing the finances of the church, assist with the formation and presentation of the Annual Ministry Report to the partners of Life Church, and are involved with the development of our church property and erection of our new facilities.

For all who serve as leaders within Life Church, our example and model of leadership is provided in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ:

*Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross!*  
(Philippians 2:3-8)

## Wrap Up

At Life Church, we are all about loving people, mending people, preparing and sending people. Although not everyone may be called to *lead* a ministry, we believe each and every believer is called to serve and should be involved in at least one ministry within the church.

17

When Jesus saves us, He also calls us to follow in His footsteps, to follow His example:

*“On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” - John 20:19-21*

*“Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, “If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all.” - Mark 9:35*

*“I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them. - John 13:16-17*

*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. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. - 1 Corinthians 12: 12-20*

At Life Church, there is a place of ministry for every believer. Therefore, as we conclude our *Doing Life Together* session, a few good questions to ask yourself are:

*Where do I fit in? Where could I begin serving? Am I feeling led to become a part of a team? How do I get started?*

It would be our privilege to help you discover the answers to these questions and help you get plugged in at Life Church!

Thanks for exploring *Doing Life Together*. We hope you found it informative and encouraging. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, or to discuss how you may become more involved in the life and ministry of Life Church.

Be blessed,

Pastors Steve and Dave