



Life Church Calvert  
Partnership  
Covenant

April 4, 2019

## ***Why Partnership?***

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.

## **II. 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.

## **III. Dissolution of a Life Church partnership**

A partnership at Life Church may be considered dissolved or revoked for any of the following reasons:

- A) By ceasing to consistently exemplify an example of Christlikeness i.e., walking in humility, practicing love towards all others, and pursuing a life of biblical, ethical, moral, and sexual integrity.

- B) Having submitted a request to the Leadership Council and receiving confirmation of acceptance.
- C) By ceasing to faithfully worship with the church, serve within the church, or provide consistent financial support for the church and its ministries.
- D) By not seeking to biblically resolve any conflict, or otherwise ceasing to uphold or live in compliance with the core beliefs, core values, partnership covenant and teachings of Life Church.

Because God has called us to love one another and to live in peace with one another, before a partnership will be considered dissolved, the church partner will be invited to meet with the Lead Pastors to seek resolution where a conflict is involved. If deemed necessary the Lead Pastors may request the entire Leadership Council to participate in this or a subsequent meeting with the hope that the issues may be satisfactorily resolved. However, regardless of whether an individual agrees to participate in a meeting(s) with the Pastors and/or Leadership Council, if it is believed in the best interest of the individual and/or the church for a partnership to be revoked, this authority rests with the Leadership Council.

#### **IV. Restoration of a Life Church partnership**

Upon request, a former partner of Life Church may be restored to full partnership by the Leadership Council when he or she provides satisfactory evidence that he or she has, for the last six months or longer been living in compliance with the core beliefs, core values, partnership covenant, Constitution and Bylaws of Life Church Calvert, and has biblically resolved any preexisting conflicts.



## 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 of 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.