



We are glad you are interested in membership! It is impossible to cover the total doctrine of the church here, but we can explain the why and the how-to of membership at Cornerstone Neighbourhood Church. If anything is unclear or you have questions not covered here, please contact our pastor or one of our Leadership Team members for more information. Some say, "I am part of God's Church...why do I need to join a local church." Is it sufficient to be a member of God's family by faith in Jesus? Though we do not find a "membership command" in Scripture, the pattern throughout the New Testament is one of covenant relationship and responsible belonging. When Paul wrote to churches, he wrote to the church in Corinth or Galatia or Ephesus. These were specific, localized congregations where believers banded together to grow in Christ and spread the Gospel. To be a part of the **Church universal** leads us to be part of the **church local**.

Paul invested his life's work in these congregations building them up, strengthening them, protecting them and in turn Paul received great help and support from them. It is important to distinguish between the Kingdom of God and the local church because there are some things that can only be accomplished in and through the local church. The church has a vital role to play in the life of every believer.

## WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

God has designed the Church to be the "called out ones" who are believers in Jesus. Christians are the redeemed - those "called out" of the kingdom of darkness and brought into the kingdom of light. (Colossians 1:13-14) We must remember, however, that Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church. (Colossians 1:18) The Church continues the work of Christ on earth until He returns. (Ephesians 5:23)

In each local setting, the Church is expressed by a community of believers gathered together to worship God, disciple and care for one another. Believers use their spiritual gifts to equip and build up the Body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-16) The local church is a spiritual family with accountability, responsibility, and unity. (I Thessalonians 5:12-13)

Because of the presence of the Holy Spirit, the Church is a dynamic organism through which the power of God is displayed. The Body of Christ only thrives when it is God glorifying, Christ centered, and Holy Spirit empowered. As Martin Luther wrote in his famous hymn, the Church of Jesus Christ is a fortress, a tower of strength, and a stronghold designed to fight against the powers of darkness. (Matthew 16:18)

## CALLED TO BE FAMILY

The early Church was a close-knit community that cared for one another's needs, fellowshiped and worshipped together, ate together and supported one another. There was a deep commitment to help one another to grow in Christ and to experience the benefits of being in the family of God. At Cornerstone we believe that God designed the church as a *family* so that there were no 'spiritual orphans' who did not belong to a particular fellowship of believers. To not belong to a church body prevents a person from living inter-dependently and serving fellow believers.

In I Thessalonians 5:12-13 we also learn that Christians need to submit to spiritual leaders and place themselves under their care. This is an important care and accountability relationship. As Paul urged the elders from the church in Ephesus, "**Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God.**" (Acts 20:28) This would be impossible if those Christians living in Ephesus refused to come under their leadership or decided to roam about from church to church.

## MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

At Cornerstone, members are invited to link their lives with the ministry direction of our church. Together, by God's grace, we agree to pursue the following responsibilities.

- To continually be taking next steps on their spiritual journey (Galatians 5:22-26).
- To express Jesus' love in deeds and words, in the world in which they live (Matthew 28:19-20).
- To meet regularly with the church family (Psalm 150:1; Ephesians 5:19-20; Acts 2:42-47).
- To support the Church financially (II Corinthians 9:6-15).
- To be responsive and supportive to the leadership of the Church (Hebrews 13:17).
- To love, encourage, support and pray for one another (Romans 12:10).
- To serve faithfully and grow as a servant (Mark 10:45; I Peter 4:10).
- Connect with others through active participation in the community life of the Church Hebrews 10:24-25; Acts 2:42-47).



## ESSENTIAL CHURCH LIFE

The Church was birthed on the day of Pentecost. God's Spirit moved and the results were amazing! We read about it in Acts 2:37-47. All of a sudden the followers of Christ had a baby on their hands -- the newborn Church!

In this text we also discover the most basic visible representation of the Church. If we were to boil down and distill all of the trappings of church life what would we be left with? Five essentials emerge.

- ◆ Worship
- ◆ Instruction
- ◆ Fellowship
- ◆ Evangelism
- ◆ Prayer

At Cornerstone, we express this by the acrostic "W.H.O.L.E"

- ◆ Worship
- ◆ Home
- ◆ Outreach
- ◆ Learn
- ◆ Equip

## WHAT DOES MEMBERSHIP MEAN?

At Cornerstone, we believe that membership is a relational covenant or agreement between an individual, a couple or a family and the church congregation. We invite you to...

1. Live a life that demonstrates Christ as your Lord and Savior.
2. Serve God and this congregation with your active engagement in worship, fellowship, giving, and use of your spiritual gifts.
3. Represent the testimony of Jesus well in our local community.

## WHO CAN BE A MEMBER?

Those who accept Christ as Lord and Savior, follow Him in believer's baptism, and desire to grow as His disciple are welcomed as members. Members are required to...

1. Trust Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
2. Publicly express faith in Christ through believer's baptism by immersion.
3. Agree with Cornerstone's Statement of Faith.
4. Complete a membership class, interview and submit a membership application.

## WHAT DO I DO?

If you are interested in becoming a member of Cornerstone, please speak with Pastor Brent or a member of the Leadership Team. When there is enough interest, a membership class will be scheduled. This will help you become better acquainted with the doctrines, policies, and vision of Cornerstone.

Once you have completed the membership class you will be contacted by a member of the Leadership Team to set up an appointment. This will be an opportunity to get to know you better and answer any questions you may have about our church. Following this interview, your name will be presented to the Leadership Team. Following the affirmation of the Leadership Team, new members will be welcomed publically at a worship service.

*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.*

Ephesians 4:2-6

# Membership

