



Discover Life

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Our Mission

We exist to lead people to life in Jesus Christ.

Our Vision

- To be a recognizable, life-giving presence in our community existing for the good of the world.
- To be a collaborative, life-giving partner with other like-minded churches and organizations in our community and around the world to advance the Gospel.
- To be an active, life-giving participant in the work of the Gospel both locally and internationally with an emphasis on equipping and sending disciples into the world.

Our Strategy

We accomplish our mission and vision by making disciples who are engaging in gospel-centered worship, gospel-centered community, and gospel-centered service.

Our Story

Life Church was established in 2014, joining other local churches in Rowan county and Salisbury, North Carolina to bring glory to the name of Jesus Christ and to advance His gospel both locally and internationally. Life Church is an autonomous, self-governing church, formally affiliated denominationally with the Southern Baptist Convention. However, we could be best described as an interdenominational church made up of people from all walks of life with different church backgrounds and people with no church background. We are a unique blend of ethnicities and cultures that serves to reflect the community of which we are a part and the diversity of the Kingdom of God.

Life Church is committed to being a gospel-centered, generous, life-giving, collaborative church that exists for the good of the community and the world. We are far more interested in being the church rather than doing church. Our vision is to be a sending and equipping church in obedience to the commission given by Jesus to His disciples:

“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 NIV.

Our Core Values

Our core values bring clarity to the things that matter most to Life Church. They guide our mission, influence major decisions and direct everyday ministry plans. They also help bring direction and clarity to our needs and finances.

Jesus is at the center of all we are and all we do. We believe in a church made-up of unapologetically passionate, fully-devoted followers of Jesus who relentlessly pursue Him, as he relentlessly pursues us.

Everyone Belongs. We believe that everyone belongs – regardless of backgrounds, differences or how close/far we may be from God. We are a ‘safe’ place and a ‘come as you are’ church. We are a church that makes a kaleidoscope of beauty from brokenness.

Love reigns supreme. We believe in practicing the unconditional, transforming love of Jesus.

Community is essential. We believe in community, made-up of intentional relationships where we open ourselves to discipleship, vulnerability and genuine accountability. We believe community is the essence of who we are as a church.

The Gospel is a verb. We believe in missional, incarnational living. We do not exist for ourselves, but for the good of the world around us. As followers of Jesus, we have been commissioned to share the Gospel of Jesus in word and action.

We are generous. We believe in being an extravagantly generous church through acts of service and sacrificial financial giving. We believe that a life of fullness is a life of generosity, and that as we are faithful to empty ourselves for His glory and the sake of others, God is faithful to fill us with life.

We are next-generation focused. We believe in investing of our time, energy and resources into our children and students. In partnership with families, we strive to lay strong foundations for the children/students in our community so they can grow into their full God-given potential.

We take the Bible seriously. We believe the Bible (the 66 books of the Old and New Testament) to be God’s holy and inspired Word, and the sole basis of our belief.

We are grounded in unity. We believe in the power of unity in the church and will relentlessly protect it for the sake of the Gospel.

We are globally-minded. We believe in a globally-minded church with a mission to take the Gospel to our community, our region, our nation and to the ends of the earth. This means we are called to assist, participate and go on mission to advance the Gospel of Jesus.

We are collaborative. We believe in working closely with other like-minded churches, ministries and organizations to bring hope and relief to our community and the world in the name of Jesus.

We are transforming, not conforming. We believe in a transforming (not conforming) church, with the responsibility to help people recognize their immeasurable value to God and to develop their full, God-given potential. We believe every individual is creative – created in the image and likeness of a creative God, uniquely designed and gifted with talents, gifts, strengths and abilities that are for God’s glory.

Our Structure

Our structure is designed to be simple, allowing the church to operate as an 'organism' rather than an 'organization.' Therefore, we stress relationships, unity and ministry over meetings, maintenance and voting. As an organism, our structure is also designed to grow as we grow. Our church governing style is described as elder-led, where the church-body, in submission to Christ, gives authority to the elders to care for and lead the church. This keeps our decision-making process efficient and focused on accomplishing the vision and mission of our church. Elders are nominated by the church body and examined by the Elder Selection Team (made up of Members, Elders and Staff) for recommendation and final appointment (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Timothy 3:1-13, 5:17-18; Titus 1:5-9).

Elders (Servant-Leaders)

- Lead under the authority of Christ
- Shepherd the body of Christ
- Teach God's Word
- Model the character of Christ
- Actively serve 2-to-4 year terms
- In addition, Elders oversee budgetary and legal issues, handle church discipline, and provide accountability of pastoral and non-pastoral staff and personnel, including the annual evaluation of the Pastor(s)

Staff (Lead-Servants), positions filled or planned for as of January 2019

- Lead Pastor (Full-time)
- Associate Pastor (Full-time)
- Worship Arts & Student Ministries Director (Full-time)
- Administrative Director (Part-time)
- Director of Children's Ministry (Part-time)
- Assistant Director of Children's Ministry (Part-time)
- Connections Director (Part-time)
- Administrative Assistant (Part-time)
- Ministry Assistant (Part-time)

Ministry Team Leaders (Deacons: Lead-Servants)

Teams value relationships and working together to accomplish a task. Each of the following teams has a leader (Deacon) who assumes responsibility for accomplishing the teams' goals. Some of our teams include:

- Prayer Team
- Resource Center & Library Team
- Greeting Team (First Impressions)
- Life Kids (Ages 0-Grade 5)

- EKO Student Ministry (Grades 6-12)
- Collide (College Age Ministry)
- Worship Arts Team
- Website & Creative Team
- Production & Tech Team
- Hospitality Team
- Facilities & Maintenance Team
- Life Groups (Hosts & Leaders)
- Discipleship Team (First Responders)
- Local Ministries & Outreach
- Safety & Security Team

Covenant Members

Those who complete a Covenant Membership Application, feel called to Life Church, and align with its mission, vision and strategies to reach a fallen world through Gospel-centered worship, community and service.

Why Membership?

What's the big deal about becoming a member of the church? If you have never asked yourself this question, perhaps you should. There are lots of differing opinions and perceptions concerning what church membership actually is, what it should look like and how it should work – much of which is shaped by culture and previous church experiences. However, what does the bible actually say about membership? This question is worth asking and answering before introducing you to what church-membership looks like with Life Church.

Is church membership biblical?

You may be surprised to know that there are no references in the Bible that specifically command us to join a church, however, it is certainly clearly implied. In other words, although you will not find any verses that give such a command, a careful survey of the Bible (and the New Testament in particular) certainly points toward believers having a community, or membership, that exists within the local church.

Evidence of church membership in the Bible

Below are a few examples of scripture that indicates the existence of church membership in the Bible. It is because of the following verses that we believe church membership is biblical and necessary for spiritual growth:

- Numerical records – Acts 2:41; 4:4
- Activities of the local church – Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-36
- Leadership in the local church (structure) – Acts 6:1-7; 1 Timothy 3:1-13
- Conduct among the fellowship – Romans 12
- Names of members – Romans 16:1-15
- Its function as a body – 1 Corinthians 12
- A household made up of God's family – Ephesians 2:19-22
- Unified in purpose and belief – Ephesians 4:1-16
- Grounds for removal – 1 Corinthians 5
- Restoring a member caught up in sinful behavior – Matthew 18:17-18
- Letters addressed specifically to local churches – Pauline Epistles and Revelation
- The 59 'one another's' found in the New Testament

What is Membership at Life Church?

Church membership is a formal, exclusive relationship between a local church and a follower of Jesus (Christian) characterized by the church's oversight and care of the Christian's spiritual growth and discipleship (Adapted from *Church Membership*, Jonathan Leeman). This definition can be further defined as follows:

1. Church membership is a **DECLARATION** of citizenship in God's Kingdom. Citizenship into God's Kingdom is granted through a person's response to the Gospel and their confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord, along with their belief in the purpose of His crucifixion and death, and His victorious resurrection (Romans 10:9-10). This is the primary condition of membership

and the first step when it comes to identifying those who are part of God's Kingdom here on earth. It is also important to understand that a person's citizenship is not and cannot be granted by a local church – only God can do that. It is the responsibility of the local church to affirm a person's citizenship before they should be declared a member of the local church body.

2. Church membership is a **COVENANT COMMUNITY**.

The predominant language used in the Bible to describe God's relationship with His people is what we would refer to as Covenantal language. A covenant, by definition, is an agreement between two parties to bind or to give themselves to something or someone. A covenant is quite different from a contract, where two parties agree on the exchange of goods along with a list of rules that must be followed; otherwise, the contract is void. However, a covenant is relational in nature and is far more binding. Perhaps the most familiar example we have is marriage, which is covenantal and not contractual.

It is this covenantal language that is used to describe both God's relationship with His people and the relationship among God's people. As members of a family, we are bound to one another in love, and it is our relationships with one another that ultimately proves to the world who we are (followers of Jesus) and what God is like (John 13:34-35; Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27). This covenant community is made up of Christians:

- who love one another in all circumstances because of the love that the Father has lavished on us as His children;
- who are not quick to push away at the first sign of disagreement or disappointment, but rather a people who are willing to stay, compelled by love, and are willing to fight for unity;
- who want to participate in a community of members, regular-attenders and guests, where everyone belongs; and
- who are interested in becoming mature followers of Jesus and not just 'good members.'

This is what should differentiate the church from everything else that exists in all of creation. As a covenant community, not only do we get to experience something beautiful, but we also demonstrate to the world the attractiveness of the Gospel.

Disciple Making

Who is a disciple?

A disciple is a person who has been reconciled into relationship with God by putting their faith in Jesus Christ, and who is subsequently empowered by the Holy Spirit to grow in love for God and love for others.

Why are we disciple makers?

In one of the most well-known passages in the New Testament (The Great Commission, Matthew 28:18-20), Jesus commands His disciples to go and make more disciples. When we add the words of Jesus found in another well-known passage in the New Testament, known as the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37-40), we can conclude that a disciple of Jesus is devoted to loving God and loving others by equipping and empowering others to do the same. We are called to multiply as we extend life to a dead world.

How do we make disciples?

1. Making disciples through Gospel-Centered Worship

We are created to worship, and each of us worships something, whether it be our Creator or His creation. God created us to worship Him, who alone is worthy of our worship. As we worship Him in spirit and in truth, we discover our true purpose as human beings – to be worshippers of God (John 4:21-24).

Worship is so much more than a service we attend once or twice a week or singing along with the band to our favorite songs; it is a sacrificial life (Romans 12:1-2) lived every moment of every day to the glory of God in all we do – whether we eat, drink, speak, think, work or breathe, we should do it all for His glory (1 Corinthians 10:31). While worship is more than a church service, it is nurtured through the weekly gathering of the church where we proclaim and celebrate the Gospel of Jesus. Within these environments, we worship God together through musical and visual arts, preaching and teaching, prayer and giving, and through the celebrating of the ordinances of baptism and communion. This environment creates an intentional place where everyone belongs, where there is always room for more, where there is room to remain anonymous, but where there is also the intent to move people to experience life in Christ alongside others. God loves us where we are, but He loves us too much to leave us there!

2. Making disciples through Gospel-Centered Community

We worship a relational God, who has eternally existed in a triune relationship with Himself – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Therefore, as people created in the image of God, we are created for relationship with God *and* relationship with others. This means our individual relationship with God, though personal, is never intended to be private, and that the Christian faith is not intended to be lived in isolation, but is meant to be lovingly and gracefully shared with others.

This is the essence of what it means to *be* the church – which is more than a place to attend, but rather a people to whom we belong and a community of people growing in relationship with God and each another. This involves a loving commitment to others, an openness to accountability and vulnerability, and a willingness to remain consistent and goes beyond mere attendance and casual involvement (Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:23-25). We call this loving commitment to one another Gospel-Centered Community.

As a church, our heart is set on building community and seeing each person intimately connected to God and others. It is in the context of gospel-centered community where growth and transformation happens best, where we invest relationally in one another to grow into our full, God-given potential. Community is essential to our growth and development as followers of Jesus.

3. Making disciples through Gospel-Centered Service

A life of fullness is found in a life of generosity and cheerful giving. As we are created by a giving God, we are called to express His love to others through our giving. While it is true that we can give without loving, it is virtually impossible to love without giving, and we believe the result is expressing that love through acts of giving and generosity. We call these expressions of love Gospel-Centered Service.

We are each created in the image of God, given a unique set of gifts, talents, strengths and abilities, and when we offer these in service to others, it pours life into others and life back into us (Proverbs 11:25). We are called to move from being consumers to contributors; from takers to givers. Serving requires sacrifice and humility, and should always be motivated by love. There are two primary ways we encourage people to get involved in a life of service:

Serving within the church. The first followers of Jesus shared their possessions and talents with one another as a way of living in community and building up the church (Acts 2:44-46; Eph. 4:11-16). As a growing church, there are numerous ways to contribute to the building-up of the Body of Christ by sharing our gifts, talents, abilities and passions to serve one another. See Ministry Team Leaders (Pages 5-6) for a list of service opportunities within the church.

Serving outside the church. We believe our hearts should be broken by the things that break God's heart. At the same time we can be encouraged by His ability to redeem that brokenness as we serve the vulnerable, those who are hurting, the oppressed, the poor, the orphans, the widows, the refugees, and the marginalized. We believe the church is called to be an agent of grace to our neighbors, both near and far.

MEMBERSHIP COVENANT



A covenant is a voluntary agreement based on a meaningful relationship between two parties. The purpose of this covenant is a declaration that you have joined with others in membership with Life Church in order to fulfill God's purpose your life and to accomplish God's mission in the world...together.

In becoming a member of Life Church, I affirm the following:

- I have put my faith in Jesus Christ, have surrendered my life to Him as Lord and trust in Him alone for my salvation.
- I have been baptized. (Please share date/location: _____)
- I have not been baptized, but am willing and ready to be baptized.
- I am in agreement with the vision, mission, beliefs, strategy and structure of Life Church.

As a member of Life Church, I commit myself to the following:

I commit to pursue growth in my relationship with Jesus by:

- ✦ **Walking with Jesus Daily**, striving and learning how to spend time with Him regularly through prayer, Bible reading, worship, and other spiritual disciplines.
- ✦ **Seeking to grow into my full potential** by discovering my gifts and embracing my uniqueness.
- ✦ **Being an active part of His Church by regularly attending and actively participating** in the life of the church, as this is critically important to my spiritual growth.

I commit to grow in relationships with others by:

- ✦ **Making myself available to others**, which includes proactively seeking others out and building relationships.
- ✦ **Involving myself in a Life Group and/or similar gatherings** where I can connect relationally, grow spiritually, find accountability, and experience Gospel Community alongside others.

I commit to invest in the life of the church by:

- ✦ **Serving others at Life Church**, offering my time, talents, strengths, abilities, passions to serve and contribute to the overall growth, health and mission of the church. (i.e.: Ministry Teams)
- ✦ **Giving a portion/percentage of my income** (tithes, offerings, gifts) regularly, sacrificially and joyfully, as an act of worship to God and an eternal investment in His Kingdom.

I commit to be a messenger of God's love by:

- ✦ **Reflecting Jesus** in my relationships, at work/school, in the community, etc.
- ✦ **Sharing my faith with others who may not know Him** by building relationships outside the church and inviting them to attend church with me.
- ✦ **Serving in the community and abroad**, regularly pursuing opportunities to be a light in the world both individually and alongside others at Life Church.

I commit to protect the unity of the church by:

- ✦ **Supporting, praying for and following our leaders** (elders, pastors) **as they follow Jesus**.
- ✦ **Demonstrating and relentlessly upholding an atmosphere of love, acceptance and grace**, being a source of encouragement to others, avoiding gossip and inappropriate talk, quickly resolving conflicts and misunderstandings in a Biblical manner.

Name (Printed): _____ Signed: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Email: _____ Phone: _____

Last church you were a member of: _____