



MEMBERSHIP PROCESS & QUESTIONNAIRE

Updated 8/2011

I. Why membership?

- A. Life is a community project:** We live in a day and age and a culture that is becoming increasingly individualistic, autonomous and isolated. It is easy to be around people all day long, but being journeying through life utterly alone. When God created Adam in the garden he quickly stated, "It is not good for the man to be alone" (Gen. 2v18). God then created Eve and the human community was born. We believe that life is intended to be a community project. We all experience difficulties in different areas of life (marriage, parenting, unemployment, sickness, death, etc...). It is in these times that the support of community is vital.
- B. Accountability:** In an ever increasing autonomous society accountability is quickly decreasing. When accountability is lacking inconsistencies in one's public and private life can develop. The motive behind accountability is not to be the police of morality and make sure that ever one is in line. Rather, we believe that accountability creates the context for authenticity and transparency. We believe that we can be open and honest with one another in our failures and faults because in Christ there is no condemnation (Rom. 8v1).

Therefore, the motive behind accountability is spiritual growth and leading people to maturity in Christ (Eph. 4v11-13). However, this does mean that at times when others begin to see destructive sin patterns in our lives members of the community have the responsibility to have direct discussion about those patterns with the hopes of continuing to shape the character of Christ in one another (Matthew 18v15-20).

- C. We believe in the church:** A common phrase heard today is "I like Jesus, but I don't like his church." Many people are desiring to follow Christ but leave his church (his body) behind. We believe that the church is the hope of the world, but we also believe that the church is intended to be a place of healing and growth, in a sense the church is like a hospital. Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick" (Luke 5v31). D.T. Niles once said, "What is the church but one beggar telling another beggar where they found bread."

With this in view, it is easy to see that when you gather a bunch of sick people together a certain level of dysfunction can grow. However, we believe that God is in the business of redemption and he is working in and through the church to bring a new humanity out of the brokenness in our world. God is in the business of redeeming a group of people who desire to make much of Jesus and live with in his story for the world.

II. What is membership?

- A. Commitment:** We believe that all followers of Jesus Christ are part of the Church with a capital "C", the Spiritual Body of Christ. But not all believers are plugged into a local church due to their own choosing. (Above: reasons why getting plugged into a local body is important.) Membership is public statement/promise of entering into a relationship with a local group of believers. This promise is known as a covenant.

According to the Bible, a covenant is the basis of accountability for certain relationships (marriage, citizenship, employment, etc...). By becoming a member of Dunwoody Community Church, a family or individual is making a public statement and commitment to the beliefs, philosophy and vision of this local congregation.

- B. Partnership:** Membership in a church is different than membership in other social organizations. In a consumer society membership can be seen as, "This organization exists to serve me." Membership in a church is a shift in mindset, a shift from "This organization exists to serve me" to "I am here to be a conduit of God's love to others." It's shift from entitlement and consumerism to ministry and service. In his letter to the Philippians, Paul tells the Philippian church that their *partnership* with him in the gospel is his joy and delight (Phil. 1v5). It is our joy

and delight to see people to partner with us in gospel ministry.

Therefore, membership at Dunwoody Community Church is entering into a partnership with us to help fulfill the purpose of the church, to glorify God as we proclaim the gospel and bring people to maturity in Christ. This partnership includes, but is not limited to, your time, resources, giftedness, expertise, etc...

- C. Family:** Another metaphor used to describe the church is that of a family, the family of God's people. We have been adopted into this family by God himself through the work of Jesus in his crucifixion and resurrection. All families have family gatherings where family traditions are practiced, family meals are had and family stories are told. Dunwoody Community Church operates in the same way. We gather weekly and sometimes twice a week in different contexts (large groups and small groups) to participate in the traditions of God's family (worship and mission). At times when we gather we share a family meal (the Lord's Supper and/or an actual meal). And we tell the story of God's family (the gospel - teaching from scripture).

Guests are always welcomed in our family gatherings. For those who are interested in moving from a guest to a family member, the membership process is an opportunity to get to know us better. The intention of this process is not to make people jump through hoops to join the church, rather it is to create space for people to explore our church, ask questions and cultivate relationships with others who are at the same stage in the membership journey.

III. The Process:

- A. Step 1: Express interest in membership
1. Stop by a Visitor's Reception in the Fire Side room (to your left as you leave the worship center).
 2. There you can receive a New Comers Packet. In that packet you will find our Philosophy of Ministry, Church Vision, Doctrine, and a letter from our pastors and staff.
- B. Step 2: Attend our membership Class
1. Our membership class is offered 2-3x's a year (Sept, Jan, Apr) & lasts 4 weeks. We ask people to attend all classes.
 2. It meets during our first hour Bible Class.
 3. Covers our church vision, philosophy, doctrine, church governance and church life.
- C. Step 3: Start acting like a member
1. Attend worship services regularly.
 2. Get plugged into a small group.
 3. Serve and give of your time, resources and energy.
- D. Step 4: Application and Interview
1. As part of the class we ask people fill out an application that gives us your contact information, states that you affirm that our beliefs and let's us know about your spiritual journey thus far.
 2. Upon receiving this application an elder or pastor will contact you to set up an interview. The purpose of the interview is to create space to connect and build relationships. In this interview we seek to understand where you've been on your spiritual journey, what you believe the Lord is doing in your life now and how DCC might help to further your spiritual growth.
- E. Step 5: Approval by elders

The leadership of DCC desires and strives to care for our family members well. Upon entering in the family you will be contacted by a deacon. Each family is assigned a deacon who is intended to be the first line of pastoral care for families when they go into crisis or are in need.

As a family we rely on all members to accomplish the work of the church. We operate with minimal staff, budget and programming because we trust that the Spirit is at work through the transformed hearts of our members to reach our community, our city and our world for Christ. The call is demanding (Mark 8v34-35). The opposition is great (1 Peter 5v8). But Christ goes with us to be our strength, our comfort and our guide (Matthew 28v20).