New Member’s Study
For

Canaan Community Church

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www.canaan-church.org
Dear believer in Christ:
I would like to express my personal welcome as you take these steps into membership at Canaan Community Church. The New Testament is filled with passages such as this:

So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.  Romans 12:5

It is very important that each of us join a local fellowship of believers for the purpose of our own spiritual growth, and to help in the growth of others.

Subsequent to Christ, we believe the equipping of church members is the highest priority. We believe that God draws every person to life and spiritual fellowship. Furthermore, God draws us to a particular fellowship for a reason. Each person contributes their unique combination of natural talents and spiritual gifts to enrich the entire church body. We believe it is the church’s responsibility to help you discover and develop your strengths to the utmost. And it is the responsibility of each member to actively seek out and exercise those gifts.

In this packet you should find:
✓ A personal information sheet to fill out and pass back
✓ A lesson plan we will cover over the next two sessions
✓ A covenant sheet to sign as a reminder to yourself
✓ A Biblical perspective on water baptism

Over the next two weeks, I look forward to getting to know you better. In our final session, other church leaders will join us to answer any questions and take time to offer their welcome. On the fourth Sunday, we will ask you to come up front so that the church as a whole may welcome you into membership. I, and Canaan Church look forward to joining you in the most exciting and vital journey in life—a walk with the Lord, Jesus Christ.

In Christ,

Kevin Thompson, Pastor
CANAAN COMMUNITY CHURCH
MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

FIRST NAME ________________________

LAST NAME ____________________________

ADDRESS________________________________________

CITY _____________________________ ZIP ___________

PHONE NUMBER _________________________________

EMAIL _______________________________________


SO WE MIGHT GET TO KNOW YOU BETTER

CHILDREN AT HOME ______________________________

CHILDREN ‘OUT OF THE NEST’ ____________________

CHURCH YOU LAST ATTENDED:

CHURCH NAME ____________________________

□ I HAVEN’T ATTENDED ANOTHER CHURCH RECENTLY

CITY & STATE OF THE CHURCH________________________ DATE__________

WHEN DID YOU RECEIVE CHRIST AS LORD? _________.

□ THERE IS NO PARTICULAR TIME I REMEMBER

WHEN WERE YOU BAPTIZED? _______________________

□ I WISH TO MAKE PLANS FOR BAPTISM

I WISH TO JOIN THIS CHURCH BY:

☐ BAPTISM

☐ STATEMENT OF FAITH

☐ LETTER OF TRANSFER FROM MY PREVIOUS CHURCH

NATURAL TALENTS AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH THIS FELLOWSHIP ARE:
_____________________________________________________________________________________

AREAS OF SERVICE IN WHICH I’D BE INTERESTED:

EDUCATION

☐ Sunday School

☐ Vacation Bible School

☐ Nursery

☐ Junior Church (Grades 1-3)

☐ Youth programs: Age_

MUSIC

☐ Choir

☐ Instrument ____________

☐ Soloist

OTHER MINISTRIES

☐ Sound System

☐ Computer

☐ Lighting

☐ Other ____________________
LET’S GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER

A little about Canaan Community Church

Canaan church started as a Methodist church in 1869. With the restructuring of the Methodist church in the mid part of the 1900’s, Canaan decided to become an independent community church. The current pastor, Rev. Kevin Thompson is ordained through the Christian & Missionary Alliance. Even though the church remains independent, it is affiliated with the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR BEING A MEMBER OF CANAAN CHURCH?
1. A personal profession of Christ as Savior & Lord
2. Baptism (baptized or immediate plans for baptism) by immersion as a public symbol of your faith
3. Completion of the membership classes
4. A signed commitment to Canaan’s covenant of membership (A commitment reminder which you keep.)

DISCUSSION

Tell us a little about yourself:
What brought you to Canaan Church?
Tell us about your relationship with Christ. (When you came to Christ, baptism, etc.)
What are your expectations and hopes as a member of this local church?
In what ministries can you envision yourself serving?

OUR STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. We believe the bible to be the inspired, infallible, authoritative Word of God.
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons; Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection and ascension and in His personal return in power and glory.
4. We believe that the salvation of the lost comes only by grace through His shed blood.
5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
6. We believe in the resurrection of the saved to one of life and of the lost unto the resurrection of damnation.
7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

DISCUSSION

DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS DEALING WITH THE STATEMENT OF FAITH?

WHAT FEATURES OR QUALITIES OF A CHURCH ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?
NEW MEMBER STUDY  SESSION #1

A statement of faith tells you what a church believes, but it really doesn’t tell you who we are. Perhaps the best way, is to look into what we value. At Canaan, we have spent a good deal of time soul-searching to come up with an honest appraisal of what we think is important. In summary, it goes like this:

**AT CANAAN COMMUNITY CHURCH, WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO US IS RELATIONSHIP.**

1. OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST
   - We value the literal presence of His Spirit in our worship, fellowship, and individual lives.

2. RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEOPLE
   - We value a spirit of unity within our church fellowship through encouragement, appreciation, and mutual support
   - We value healthy relationships within our families, through God’s values
   - We value our community. That means: Each person, as a special design of God. The local community, as our place to live Christ. And our global community, as God call to ‘all nations’.

3. CHANGED LIVES THROUGH SPIRITUAL GROWTH
   Which creates and deepens our relationships. And for this reason, we value the building blocks of growth-
   - Prayer as a means of connecting with God
   - The Bible as a perfect reference for growth
   - Learning through balanced Biblical teaching and example
   - Practice of what we have learned in order to continue growing
   - God-given gifts, both natural and spiritual for the benefit of all

**PRIORITY OF VALUES AT CANAAN**

1. THE PRESENCE OF GOD (Worship)

John 14:16
16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever--

John 4:23
23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.

(NIV)

From the first pages of Scripture to the last, there is a term God uses hundreds of times, “with you.” God offers us relationship. Above all we cherish the presence of God and endeavor to strengthen our relationship with Him through true worship.

2. PRAYER

Rom 8:26-27
26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.
27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.

(NIV)

We value prayer as that unique tool by which our spirit speaks with God’s and His with ours. It is through prayer that we open our hearts to God and are privileged a glimpse into His.

3. BIBLICAL TEACHING
Acts 17:11
11 Now the Bereans … received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

2 Tim 3:15
15 and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.
(NIV)

Scripture is our reference to truth—about God, our world, and ourselves. Our spiritual experience can be no deeper than our understanding of God’s Word.

4. OBEEDIENCE (Ordinances, Lifestyle, Commitment)

1 Jn 3:24
24 Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.
(NIV)

Biblical obedience is not mindless conformity but rather a thoughtful conviction that Christ’s teaching is true. We obey God by actively committing to those things He has revealed to us.

5. UNITY (One mind, one body, one spirit)

1 Cor 12:13
13 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.
(NIV)

Scripture calls the church, ‘the body of which Christ is the head.’ The church is a living organism. And like all organisms, it is made of members different from each other, but vitality hinges upon their unity.

6. DISCIPLING (Children as our future; adults to maturity)

Eph 4:13
13 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.

Heb 5:13-14
13 Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness.
14 But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.
(NIV)

Our children are the spiritual future of humanity. They cannot be raised to maturity if we are not mature.

7. THE FAMILY (Domestic and spiritual)

Eph 5:33
33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Eph 6:1-3
1 Children…”Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise—
3 “that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”
(NIV)

We value the traditional family as a basic unit of society as well as a building block of the church. God treasures the family and He gives clear instruction for its health and happiness. God refers to the church as His family. Every individual that is born spiritually is born into this family with all its responsibilities and rewards.

8. OUR GIFTS (Spiritual and natural)

Rom 12:6-10
6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. …
10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.
(NIV)
God gives us gifts in the form of natural talents, and to those alive in Him, spiritual gifts. The real value of these gifts is not for our personal pleasure, but for the benefit of those in our spiritual family, and in our world.

9. OUR COMMUNITY (Ministry, Missions, and Evangelism)

Matt 28:19-20
19 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,
20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
(NIV)

God so loved the world… the world is people, all people. God values people, and so do we. People who come through our doors, people across the globe, and people who need our help are equally valuable, and equally in need of the Gospel.

10. RELATIONSHIPS (Fellowship)

Acts 2:44-46
44 All the believers were together and had everything in common….
46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.
(NIV)

God’s desire is not only for us to love each other, but to enjoy each other, to encourage and inspire each other. We value time spent together in formal faith building, and in times of casual fun.

DISCUSSION

AS WE CONSIDER THIS LIST OF VALUES, DO ANY PARTICULAR STATEMENTS STAND OUT TO YOU?

ARE THERE ANY VALUES YOU WOULD ADD TO THIS LIST?

WHAT THINGS WOULD YOU CONSIDER AS PRACTICAL INDICATORS, THAT GOD IS PRESENT IN A CHURCH?

WHAT PART DO YOU FEEL UNITY PLAYS IN A CHURCH?

WHAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIPS IN A CHURCH WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO YOU?
DISCUSSION

DO YOU THINK GOD HAS A UNIQUE PURPOSE FOR EACH LIFE?

IF SOMEONE WHERE TO ASK YOU WHAT YOUR PURPOSE IS IN LIFE, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

IN THE SAME WAY; DO YOU THINK GOD MAY HAVE UNIQUE PURPOSES FOR DIFFERENT CHURCH FELLOWSHIPS?

TRANSLATING OUR VALUES INTO PURPOSE

WHAT IS OUR ‘PURPOSE’?

The Apostle Paul described his purpose in these ways:

Romans 8:28  … I should *preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ*,
--NKJ

Eph 3: 9.  … *to make all people see what is the fellowship* of the mystery, ...
*through Jesus* Christ;

*Jesus tells us directly:*

Mark 16:15-16
… "*Go into all the world* and *preach the good news* to all creation.
(NIV)

Matt 28:18-20
… *go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing* them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
20      and *teaching them to obey* everything I have *commanded* you. ...
(NIV)
So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?" (Heb 13:6)

As the church studied and reflected on Biblical purpose, we summarized our purpose in the following statement:

1. As Christ’s servants:
   To afford every man, woman, and child in our sphere of influence the **opportunity to hear, understand and respond** to the Gospel  *(Romans 10:14)*

2. As Christ’s people:
   To **practice our priesthood**, continually striving to mature in the fruit of the Spirit  *(1 Peter2:9, Gal 5:22)*

3. As Christ’s body:
   To **cultivate our spiritual gifts** by fostering personal awareness of gifts, equipping through teaching, empowering in opportunity, and engaging where God leads  *(1Cor 12:4-12)*
THE STORY BEHIND OUR LOGO

As a fellowship and as individual members in Christ, our purpose is to:

*Become people who glorify God.* (The cross)
Striving to reflect the face of God through the warmth of relationship, the healing of compassion and the actions of faith as Christ lives within us.

*In order to-
Receive others as God draws them to Himself.* (Arrow into the world)
Earnestly encouraging spiritual life in Christ and entrance into His family, the Church

*In order to-
Grow as members of God’s family.* (Upward arrow to the cross)
In balance and maturity through Biblical worship, prayer, teaching, preaching, example, and lifestyle

*In order to-
Go as servants.* (Downward arrow to the world)
Into our fellowship, our local community, and the world, equipped to be the face of Christ

DISCUSSION

WHAT DOES “GLORIFYING” GOD MEAN TO YOU?

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE A “HEALTHY” CHURCH FAMILY?

WHAT IS OUR PART AS GOD’S CHILDREN, IN THE ETERNAL WELFARE OF OTHERS IN THIS WORLD?

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS PRACTICAL INDICATORS, A PERSON OR CHURCH IS MATURING SPIRITUALLY?
A SUMMARY OF OUR VIEW

God views the church as the physical body of Christ on this earth.
This fellowship of believers is the hands and feet of our compassionate God.
The church is unlike any other community or organization in that it is a living entity-
alive through the Holy Spirit and the person of Christ.
Extraordinary unity of the church becomes real as each member becomes active in
their spiritual gifts they are given at salvation.
The unity of the church becomes stronger as each Christian matures in their gifts
and understanding of God.
Each person matures as they develop what God has already given.
It is the Biblical obligation of each member to be active in using their time, talents, and
resources to:
- First, benefit others in the church body in their spiritual growth and physical needs.
- And secondly, to spread the good news of Christ into an unsaved world.

ASPECTS OF SERVING

There are a number of ministries at Canaan that could use help. Our goal in on-going ministries
is to have a number of people active in order to rotate the workload.

However, we believe a church is not a dictator of ministries, but rather a facilitator of them. That
is to say, if God is moving a member to a new kind of ministry, it is the church’s place to help in
the call as much as possible.

We are convinced a ministry is God-ordained for the church when:
1. The person is currently growing and active in God’s business.
2. The ministry idea is the product of time spent with God, and has been a conviction that
   persists over time.
3. That it is Biblically sound
4. That it enhances work God is already doing here
5. That the person believes in it enough to take responsibility for it and coordinate with the
   church’s governing body
We ask that you sign the covenant found on the last page as a pledge to God, this fellowship of believers, and to yourself. It is not intended to be a church document, but rather a reminder. You're encouraged to take it home and put it in a safe place. In a year or so, pull it out and see how well you are doing.

WHAT TO EXPECT NEXT:
Expect the elders to speak with you regarding membership
Expect to come up during a morning service for:
  • An introduction to your fellow members
  • Your pledge to the covenant of membership
  • Congregational acceptance into membership
  • The hand of fellowship as new members.
A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON BAPTISM

Water Baptism

In the Bible there are two sacraments (holy rituals), which Christians are enjoined to practice and observe: The Lord’s Supper and Water Baptism.

The purpose of both is to signify by outward symbolism, what Christ has accomplished in a believer’s life through faith in Christ. As true believers, we are both instructed and commanded to submit to both as expressions of our faith in Christ.

In what has become known as the “Great Commission,” Jesus gave the following command:

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. Matthew 28:19,20

The word “baptize” is taken from the Greek word baptizo meaning:

1) to immerse or submerge, 2) to overflow or cover with water, 3) to wet thoroughly or moisten and 4) to pour upon or drench.

Because of the wide scope of this definition, and differing views on the words usage in the New Testament, three different methods of baptism have developed over the centuries:

1) Immersion, wherein a person is completely lowered under the water;
2) Pouring, where water is ladled or poured over the person’s head and body; and
3) Sprinkling, in which the person is lightly sprinkled.

Unfortunately, these differences have often led to a great deal of conflict among God’s people over the years. Each have value in that they testify to differing benefits derived from a relationship with Christ.

1. Immersion portrays the atoning death of Christ and gives witness to the reality of His bodily resurrection. (Romans 6:3-5)
2. Pouring signifies the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the believer’s life when he/she commits their life to Christ. (Acts 2:17,18)
3. Sprinkling tells us that we are washed from our sins only by the shed blood of Christ. (Hebrews 10:22)

Why You Need To Be Baptized

1. Act of Obedience

Throughout the New Testament water baptism was practiced following conversion. This was done in direct response to Jesus’ command that Christians everywhere are to “preach” and then “baptize” those who believe. Therefore, everyone who becomes a Christian needs to be baptized out of obedience to God.

2. Statement of Faith

As mentioned earlier, water baptism is an outward statement of one’s belief in Christ’s atonement for our sins, the indwelling presence of His Holy Spirit to guide and influence our lives, and the only means for gaining a clear, guilt-free conscience towards God. Baptism is a means to make a public statement of your faith.

3. Public Testimony

Specifics:

Baptisms are celebrated at Heritage Lake during the summer and in our baptismal (located behind the stage curtain) in other season. Baptism requires the Canaan Baptism study be explored first. There are studies tailored to adults and children.

Men wear white ‘T’ shirt and light colored slacks. Women wear underclothing and light top with slacks. Bring a change of clothes with you. You do not need wear shoes into the baptismal. Towels are furnished by the church. Men will change in the room on the right of the platform and women in the room at the left of the platform.
ARTICLE H - STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

As a body of Spirit-filled believers, our purpose is to glorify and honor Jesus Christ through worship, prayer, evangelism, discipleship, Christian education and world missions.

ARTICLE III - STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.

We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father and in His personal return in power and glory.

We believe that the salvation of lost and sinful man comes only by grace through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father and in His personal return in power and glory.

We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a Godly life.

We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.

We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Persons professing faith in Jesus Christ; having been baptized; giving evidence of the Christian experience, such as fruits of the Spirit; and believing in the statement of faith and the covenant (attached) of this church may be received into membership.

Section 2. All applicants for membership (18 years and older) after attending the Pastor's new membership class and meeting with an Elder or Elders shall be considered as candidates for membership.

Section 3. All candidates for membership shall be formally received into membership at a subsequent Sunday service.

Section 4. The membership of Canaan Church shall be classified as follows:

A. Active member is a member who regularly attends the services of the Church and who gives financial support to the Church. For the purpose of voting on Church matters, all active members in good standing who are … 18 years of age or older.

B. Inactive member is one who fails to show interest in the Church through attendance at meetings and services of the Church, or in giving of financial support for its work for one year, shall be classified as inactive. Inactive members shall forfeit all voting privileges.
C. Associate member is a person who desires membership in Canaan Church without severing membership in another Church that they have been involved in that is a distance from where they now reside. Such members, 18 years of age or older, if active., have the right of voting on Church matters.

D. Seasonal resident: Seasonal resident members are urged to carry out the spirit of the Church covenant by attending Church services while away from Canaan, but still communicate with Canaan and contribute to its financial program. Seasonal residents have the same voting status as active members.

E. Family associate member. Children under 18 years of age, whose parents are members of the Church shall be considered as Family Associate Members.

Section 5. Membership in Canaan Community Church may be severed by letter.

2

ARTICLE V - ORDINANCES

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two recognized ordinances of the Church. Baptism is taught and practiced as a scriptural principle. The Lord's supper (Communion) is administered regularly.

10

CHURCH COVENANT

As members of the Canaan Community Church, we under God, prayerfully and joyfully enter into this covenant with one another, to keep and preserve the commitments which we made when we accepted Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Savior.

We seek, as one body in Christ, to be led by the holy and supreme authority of God the Father, the Lordship of His Son, Jesus Christ; and the divine guidance of the Holy Spirit.

We join together in thankfulness for the two ordinances of the church which we perpetrate through our practice, Christian Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We agree that our lives should be guided by the two great Commandments, that we love God with all our heart, soul and mind; and that we love our neighbors as ourselves.

God being our witness, we pledge, one to another that: 1: We will strive together to promote a spirit of love, hospitality, humility and forgiveness in our associations together. 2. We will hold to the faith and promote the evangelizing of the lost. 3. We will be faithful in our assembling together on the Lord's Day for worship. 4. We will practice good stewardship by cheerfully giving of our time, abilities, and material possessions, as God has prospered us, for the furtherance of His Kingdom. 5. We will encourage and be supportive of those who lead us. 6. In our daily lives, we will strive for the more perfect way in our dealing with other. 7. We will strive to develop our spiritual life through private and family devotions and through study of the Holy Scriptures.

We further covenant that in the event we move from this community and this church, we will unite with another body of Christians of like faith so that we can continue to promote the building of the Kingdom of God.
Personal Pledge of Membership

I pledge between God, this church and myself that:

1. I will strive to promote a spirit of love, hospitality, humility and forgiveness in our associations together.
2. I will hold to the faith and promote the evangelizing of the lost.
3. I will be faithful in my participation as we assemble on the Lord’s Day, and meet in fellowship and study.
4. I will practice good stewardship by cheerfully giving of my time, abilities, and material possessions, as God has prospered me, for the furtherance of His Kingdom.
5. I will encourage and support those God has placed here to lead us.
6. In my daily life, I will strive to reflect Christ in my dealings with others.
7. I will strive to develop my spiritual life through private and family devotions and through study of the Holy Scriptures.

NAME__________________________________________

DATE__________________________________________