

IDENTIFYING PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

At Evangel, we want to recognize and affirm all those who are committed to Christ and to this local body in the ways just described. The process of identifying our participating members consists of four steps.

EXPLORATION

The prospective member attends a 2 hour membership class that explores membership further, our Statement of Faith, and the distinctives of Evangel. Take-home material will be provided.

AFFIRMATION

The prospective member now privately responds to questions based on the studies in the membership class. This is a time of self-evaluation where each individual affirms whether the marks of a participating membership are true in his or her life.

CONFIRMATION

The prospective member meets with a Pastor and/or Deacon to discuss the affirmation made and to confirm participating membership. Any difficult issues are referred to one of the pastoral staff.

CELEBRATION

New participating members are presented to the congregation on a Sunday morning Celebration Service, with their small groups present, so that our whole community can rejoice together.

WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?

If you would like to explore becoming a participating member at Evangel, pick up the brochure entitled “Membership Application”. They are located in the information displays in the foyer, or at the church office throughout the week. After you have completed the application, you may drop it off with our host at the Information Desk, hand it to one of the pastors, or drop it off at the Church Office.

Church Membership



Church Membership

Everyone who accepts Christ and becomes a Christian, automatically becomes a part of the Church, which is often referred to in the Bible as the “Body of Christ”. Local church membership does not bring salvation to anyone! This worldwide fellowship of believers is represented locally by individual congregations. The Bible repeatedly impels believers to become fully devoted to a specific congregation (Acts 2:42; Romans 12:4-8).

Why is Local Church Membership Important?

Becoming a member of a local church is an intentional step that helps to move an individual into a place of committed participation.

Church members publicly voice their support and take on the privilege and responsibility of:

- Praying for the ministry, outreach and growth of the church
- Protecting the unity of the church (Ephesians 4:1-3)
- Of sharing in the ministry of the church through the use of talents and spiritual gifts in the life of the congregation (I Peter 4:10)
- Being accountable to other believers (Ephesians 5:21), which is an important part of spiritual growth (Galatians 6:1-2, Hebrews 10:24-25)
- Being under the spiritual protection of godly leaders (Hebrews 13:17, Acts 20:28-29)

- Supporting the ministry of the church financially (I Corinthians 16:2)
- Having a voice at church business meetings where decisions are made that affect the future of the local congregation and its ministry.

Membership brings with it a sense of ownership and accountability. Ownership in that it presents the challenge to not merely be a spectator but to publicly affirm that this local body can count on us to help fulfill the ministry that God has called this church to. Accountability in that the church offers spiritual safety and discipline to its members that develops Christian character, principles and maturity!

“POSITIONAL AND PARTICIPATING”

The Bible actually describes two kinds of membership in a church. Scripture is full of references to the union with Christ which happens at the instant of conversion. (I Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 2:13-22; 4:3-6; Colossians 1:13-22). At that moment, you become a “positional member” in the universal church of Jesus Christ, based solely on His merit and grace. Positional membership is eternal and unchanging.

But then the Bible also urges positional members to continue growing by becoming “participating members” in a specific local assembly (Romans 12:4-8; I Corinthians 12:25-31; 14:12,26; Hebrews 10:24-25; I Timothy 3:14-15). We cannot see the invisible bond of positional membership, but we can identify those who are participating members here at Evangel.

THE FIVE G’S

How can participating membership be described biblically? People who fulfill the following five areas are living out the lifestyle of a true participating member.

GRACE

The individual appropriation of the saving work of Christ followed by water baptism. Ephesians 2:8-9

GROWTH

The ongoing evidence of a changing life and pursuit of Christ-likeness. 2 Peter 3:18

GROUP

Participation in the body of Christ and connection with others in significant relationships. Acts 2:46

GIFTS

Serving Christ’s body according to spiritual giftedness and passion. Romans 12:6-8

GOOD STEWARDSHIP

Honoring God with one’s material resources and supporting the church using the biblical precedent of the tithe as a goal to reach or exceed as God prospers. Philippians 4:11-19

We believe these statements capture the essential “marks” of someone devoted to Christ and His Church. These characteristics are biblical—they have not been artificially manufactured. As such, we believe they provide criteria for determining participating membership at Evangel.