



Why Membership at CVC?

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

What makes us a church is not that we have a building or that a group of people gather together once a week for a service. What makes us a church is the fact that we are followers of Christ who are in caring community together. People can belong to our fellowship and know that they are connected.

Cuyahoga Valley Church is an exciting place. We always have people coming through our doors to be a part of our services. But the church is more than an event. Although the word “membership” is never used in the Bible, the word “member” is used. Membership is implicit throughout the Scriptures.

The Bible gives several word pictures that help to make the point.

1. The church is a **family**.

Families are an important part of the fabric of our society. A healthy family illustrates the essence of commitment – people generationally linked together – inseparable and loyal. Family commitment assures a safe place for the proper nurturing of its members. It’s the focus of warmth and the catalyst for growth. But there are only two ways to get into a family – to be born into one OR to be brought into one. *“So then, you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.” Ephesians 2:19*

2. The church is a **body**.

The Bible illustrates the connectedness of members of the church by referring to them as members of a body. Jesus is the head, and the church is the body. It’s easy to see that the body only functions properly when each member takes its role seriously. *“For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of another.” Romans 12:4-5*

3. The church is a **bride**.

The Bible teaches us that Jesus is the Bridegroom and the church is His bride. Collectively, we make up the bride of Christ. *“Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that He might present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.” Ephesians 5: 25-27*

4. Therefore, we must **connect** and **commit**.

God has called Pastors to “shepherd the flock.” Therefore, it is important for us to be able to identify who is in the “flock.” This allows us to know whom it is that we can count upon and whom it is that we need to shepherd. In a church that values people inviting and including others, that is important!

Cuyahoga Valley Church, by its very design, attracts the uncommitted – seekers, observers, guests. We hope that this will always be the case. But at some point, it is important to identify those who truly comprise the “flock” at CVC – the core that can be counted on to build and sustain the ministries of the church. These are also the “family members” who should receive priority in the

allocation of finite church resources. *“So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.”* Galatians 6:10

Membership moves us from observer to *participant*, and consumer to *contributor*.

Membership identifies our family.

What are the Responsibilities and Privileges of Membership?

Responsibilities

To put it simply, the main responsibility of every member of Cuyahoga Valley Church is to participate in the life of the church by seeking to follow Christ by growing in the fruit of new life. In short, the responsibility of every participating member of CVC is to seek to be a growing Christian.

We believe it is the responsibility of each member to gather with other believers regularly for corporate worship. We also believe it is important for them to spend their own personal time in study of God’s Word and prayer.

We believe it is the responsibility of each member to participate in a LifeGroup, where they will find care, accountability, and spiritual growth in their walk with Christ.

We believe it is the responsibility of each member to use their gifts to serve within the church for the building up and encouragement of His body.

We believe it is the responsibility of each member to live a sent life that is on-mission, taking the Gospel to those who need to hear it locally, regionally, and globally as God directs.

The church ought to be a safe place for people with messed-up lives to come together to experience God’s forgiveness for our failures, His grace to put the pieces back together, and His love to take the message out to others who need His power in their lives, too.

We are a church that desires to biblically address conflict. Often referred to as “church discipline,” our desire is to walk people through a process of instruction, correction and reconciliation, using Matthew 18 as our guide.

Privileges

Being a member means that you now have the opportunity to influence the key decisions of the church. From time to time, meetings or other functions are held which are designated for “members only”. These events are usually called to either inform the core of the church of a major concern or to gather input from our members.

Voting on Elder candidates, or the selection of a Lead Pastor when recommended.

Members also receive priority for facility usage and staff members’ time (such as weddings, funerals, benevolence needs, care needs, personal support in your area of ministry).

Virtually all key levels of leadership positions in the church require membership as a prerequisite. The primary reason, however, to be a member is not to gain a personal advantage, but to identify ourselves with the characteristics or marks of biblical maturity and unity.

Members gain the opportunity to be representatives of Cuyahoga Valley Church at the annual SBC Convention.

Members have the opportunity to apply as full-time global missionaries through the International Mission Board, with provided full salary and benefits.

Members receive 50% off of tuition at SBC participating schools, colleges, and seminaries.

Members may apply to participate in the Journeyman program, a 2-year mission opportunity with the International Mission Board that includes salary and benefits through the International Mission Board for those ages 21-29.

Members are able to network with like-minded members and churches through church planting efforts and the North American Mission Board's Send Network throughout the United States.

Members may serve with Disaster Relief Opportunities of the SBC, a top 3 worldwide Disaster Relief organization.