



***So, you're thinking about membership at Community Church....?
(Look inside for details!)***

(Revised September 4, 2015)

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Welcome to Community Church

We would like to thank you for your interest in becoming a member of Community Church. This booklet has been printed as a means to acquaint you with how we view church membership, what we believe, and how we function.

As you review this booklet, we encourage you to ask questions. If you come across areas for which you would like to have more clarification, our pastor and staff will be more than happy to assist you. As you read through the various sections, we would also encourage you to read the scripture references to help you understand why our beliefs are important to us.

So, let's get started!

A Brief History of the Wesleyan Church

The Wesleyan Church can trace its early beginnings to the formation of the Methodist Episcopal Church in December of 1784, based upon the writings and preaching of John Wesley. As the Methodist Episcopal Church began to grow, so did the church's political views, particularly on the subject of slavery. Wesley and the early Methodist leaders had been uncompromising in their denunciation of human slavery. When a group of ministers in the New England Conference, led by Rev. Orange Scott, began to rally again for the abolition of slavery, the bishops and others in the church sought to silence them. This led to the formation of the Wesleyan Methodist Church on May 13, 1841. In 1947, the name was changed to *The Wesleyan Methodist Church of America*.

Meanwhile a "holiness" movement began sweeping the nation around that same time. That movement, or revival, was moving through several denominations. The roots of what became known as the Pilgrim Holiness Church began with the formation of the *International Holiness Union and Prayer League*. The church then underwent several name changes, but the *Pilgrim Holiness Church*, was the official name adopted in 1922. In the late 1950s, merger talks between the Wesleyan Church of America and the Pilgrim Holiness Church began and on June 26, 1968, the 2 churches officially merged into what we know today as *The Wesleyan Church*. - Source: *The Discipline of The Wesleyan Church*

Today, you will find the Wesleyan Church all around the world! In 2014 there were 5,800 churches with over 516,000 worshippers. During that year, over 90,000 people gave their lives to Jesus!

Section 1: Is Membership Important?

Absolutely! **Becoming** a member of a church is a big step for anyone. Why? Church membership is really a special covenant between two parties—you and the church. So, before **becoming** a member of a church there should be a deep sense of **belonging** in your heart. You should know as much about the church as possible and you should feel comfortable with what you know. You should feel good about the people, the pastor(s), the beliefs, the structure, the purpose and the vision of the church. At the same time, you are making a commitment to love and serve the church body. **Belonging** is not just about you. It's about the body of people you **belong** to and how you will support them and work with them. Ultimately, your experience of **belonging** to a church body should help you **become** the person God created you to be! When this happens, you will **begin** the special journey of serving Him and impacting the world around you for His Kingdom.

The materials in this booklet were prepared to help people like you understand Community Church so you can make an informed decision about church membership. Community Church is a ministry of the Wesleyan Church of North America. The information contained in this booklet reflects the views of The Wesleyan Church and the essential commitments for membership in the local church as well as in our world-wide body.

We have divided this booklet into eight parts. It will not take long to read each section. If you are interested in membership, read the booklet thoroughly and ask any questions you need to ask! We'll be glad to answer your questions. The final part is a Membership Questionnaire. After reading the information in this book, if you still desire to pursue membership at Community, just fill out the questionnaire and return it to one of our pastors.

Section 2: Let's talk about Community Church



Our church logo embodies our mission statement. It is our mission to be a Christ-centered community where people can belong, become, and begin! The logo design represents people, (triangles), coming together. For instance, if you look closely, you will see the outline of a cross. The smaller points of the triangle are situated to make them look like they are coming together, as in a community.

Belong... *to a passionately Christ centered community no matter where you are in life*

Become... *the person you were created to be by allowing God to redefine your life*

Begin... *to live a revolutionary life that transforms the world*

The Vision Statement:

Our vision is to build a Christ centered community through service oriented lives, authentic relationships, and genuine worship.

We will accomplish this through...

- Prayer for God's guidance and empowerment
- Loving God and loving others
- Striving for cultural relevancy
- Cultivating missional DNA
- Building meaningful relationships through Community Groups and other small group ministries, whether fellowship, growth, or task oriented groups.
- Providing discipleship and growth opportunities for all ages
- Creating a culture of authentic, Spirit empowered worship
- Teaching devotion to God's word

(Biblical support text: Acts 2: 42-47)

The Church as a Community:

Many times we talk about the church as the "family of God", however, the church is also a community of people who are on a journey to know, love and serve God.

Every community is diverse. A community consists of many ages, personalities, cultures and ethnicities. In a community there are varying levels of education and understanding, as well as a wide range of socio-economic differences. People are different. We all come from different places and we all share in different experiences, but a true community is a group of people who live life together. Despite their differences they embrace common concerns, interests and goals. Your community becomes an important part of your life. Communities help shape us into the people we will become and they impact the way we understand life.

Community Church is founded on the realization that the world is filled with people who need the companionship of God and the companionship of other human beings who are learning to know God. To find the fullness of life on earth and to live eternally in Heaven, we all need God's guidance, strength and forgiveness as well as

the support of people who follow Him. Our journey through life is incomplete and empty without Christ and a community of His followers.

Community Church is a Christ-centered community in which you will find love, acceptance, support and relevant truths from the Bible. Community Church is real people connecting with one another, walking through real life together and discovering God in real ways. *No matter where you've been or where you're going, what you have or what you're missing, this Community has a place for you.*

Our Core Values:

Community Church is dedicated to the following Core Values for the life and ministry of the church body. We do not change our core values just because someone doesn't like them. They do not represent preferred ideals - they represent our unchanging convictions.

We are a Community of:

- 1. Biblical Authority** - The Bible is God's life giving, life changing truth. The words of the Bible are not just words written by men. These words are completely inspired by God to show us that we can live life to the full in Jesus Christ. Through the authority of the Bible we are challenged to live out its truth and are motivated to share that truth with others.
(2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- 2. Cultural Relevance** - God's truth is relevant and applicable to our changing world. To reach our present culture we will practice a willingness to change our methods, yet, never compromise God's truth.
(Psalm 51: 6)
- 3. Authentic Relationships** - Community Church is filled with imperfect people connecting with one another as a means to grow in our relationship with Christ and His church and to fulfill His perfect mission. (Acts 2: 42-47)
- 4. Missional Service** - Missional service is following Christ's example of service by putting other's needs above our own in order to share God's love and transform the world.
(Matthew 28: 16-20; John 13: 12-17)
- 5. Genuine Worship** - Worship is not a magical word. Worship is a lifestyle that reflects what you truly love. Genuine worship is God-ward. It is both personal and collective. Although worship is not about us, we connect with God by responding to Him through worship and by this we experience His power and presence. *We say it this way: "Worship is all we are responding to all HE is."*
(Psalm 95: 6-7; John 4:24)

6. Transformational Faith - The Church is a body of transformed people who are continually being transformed into the image of Christ by pursuing the life of holiness. At the same time, the church is called to transform the world around us by loving and accepting people, caring for them, and helping them grow in faith. (Acts 9: 1-22; Galatians 1: 11-2:10)

(For more information about Community Church, please visit www.cwcnewark.org . You can also visit www.wesleyan.org for further information about the Wesleyan Church of North America)

Section 3: Our Basic Beliefs

A Statement of Faith:

Wesleyans believe in one God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the Savior of all who put their faith in Him alone for eternal life. We believe that those who are made new in Christ are called to be holy in character and conduct, and can only live this way by being filled with the Lord's Spirit. We believe in the Bible and its sufficiency to establish our faith and conduct. We believe God wills for people everywhere to know Him and be made new in Christ. We believe that the purpose of the Church is to worship God in spirit and in truth, and to reach a lost and fallen world with the gospel of Jesus Christ through its worship, witness, and loving deeds. <https://www.wesleyan.org/beliefs>

Here's what we believe.....

About God...We believe in one eternal God consisting of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He is the Creator and Maker of all things. (Genesis 1: 1; Matthew 28:19; John 14:26; 1 Corinthians. 8:6; Revelation 10:6)

About the Father... As the first person of the Trinity, the Father is the source and ruler of all things and is paternal in His relationship with creation in general and believers in particular. And although there is one eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing, holy, just, loving, true, and unchangeable God, in the unity of the one God there are three divine persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—equal in power but distinct in roles. (Psalm 68:5; Psalm 103:19; Malachi 2:10; Matthew 28:19; Ephesians 4:6; 1 Peter 1:2;)

About Jesus...We believe Jesus is God who came in the flesh. He was born through a virgin and lived a life full of love and without sin. He died as a sacrifice for the sins of every person. He was raised from the dead on the third day, ascended into Heaven and now sits at the right hand of God the Father helping His followers live and grow in their faith. We also believe that Jesus will return again. When He does, He will take

all of His true followers to be with Him forever. (Matthew 1:18-25; Matthew 3:16,17; Mark 10:32-34; John 1:1; John 1:14; John 3:16,17; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Hebrews 1:3; 1 John 4:14;

About the Holy Spirit...We believe in the personal work of the Holy Spirit. He helps us understand sin and guides us to the truth and life found in Jesus Christ. He lives within every person who has embraced Jesus as Savior. His purpose is to lead us into God's righteousness and holiness. He fills us with His presence, empowers us for living and gives us spiritual gifts for service in God's great Kingdom. (John 14; John 15: 26; John 16; Acts 1:5, 8; Acts 2:1-47; Galatians 5:22, 23)

About the Bible...The Bible is the word of God. God's Holy Spirit used human authors to write the truths necessary for us to know, love and serve God. There is no other book equal to it and no other religious guide needed to help us discover God's truth. (Psalm 119: 9-16; Proverbs 30: 5; Matthew 4:4; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:21;)

About Salvation...We believe that everyone born into this world needs a Savior. The Bible teaches that sin separates us from God our Creator and causes spiritual death. If we want to restore our relationship with God and find life, both in this world and in eternity, we must turn away from our sins, seek God's forgiveness and trust in Jesus Christ as our personal Savior. Through Christ we can find true life on this earth and be assured of a home in Heaven. We cannot save ourselves by going to church, doing good things, or by simple religious duty. We can only be saved by God's grace through Jesus Christ.

(Psalm 27:1; John 3: 1-21; Acts 4:12; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Ephesians 2:8; Philippians 2:12)

Section 4: Distinctive Beliefs and Stuff You May Want to Know

Every church has what would be considered "distinctive doctrines". These are beliefs that may make them a little different than other churches and/or denominations; doctrines that represent denominational (or church) heritage and historic theological positions. Most Bible believing evangelical churches differ very little in their beliefs, however, there can be some differences in doctrines and theological language that should be made clear to everyone interested in membership.

Salvation:

We believe that salvation is through faith in Jesus and His completed work. We cannot be saved through good works, baptism, communion, church law or ritual. "Salvation" means to be saved from sin's dominion and its eternal consequences. To be saved does not make an individual perfect. It's the start of a life-long process of spiritual growth, understanding and faith. We teach four simple steps to salvation. To be saved you must:

- ✓ **Confess . . .** If we confess our sins He is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1: 9

- ✓ **Repent** . . . Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord. Acts 3: 19
- ✓ **Believe** . . . Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life. John 3: 36
- ✓ **Receive** . . . Yet all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become the children of God. John 1: 12

When these steps are taken in sincerity of heart, Christ will forgive our sins, make us into a new creation, and give us eternal life.

(Scriptures listed in the text above. Also see: John 3:3-17; John 14:6; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2: 1; 1 Peter 1:18-13)

Baptism:

Every person who decides to receive Jesus as Savior and become His disciple should be baptized at the first opportunity. Before entering public ministry, Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:13). Baptism is important because it was commanded by Jesus Himself and re-emphasized by the Apostles and leaders of the early church (Matthew 28:19). Baptism is more than a simple ordinance of the church; it is a means of grace. It is an act of obedience and a visible testimony that Christ has washed away our sins. Christians proclaim their faith in Christ through baptism. It is the declaration of new life in Christ. When we are baptized we proclaim that we were dead in sin, buried with Jesus in baptism, and resurrected to new life through faith in Him (Romans 6:3-7; Colossians 2:12). It is our public profession that we have become His disciple and it is our intention to follow Him. Since we are saved by grace through our faith in Christ, we do not believe that baptism is our source of salvation (Ephesians 2:4-9). If a person who comes to faith in Christ dies before he/she has an opportunity to be baptized - that believer will go to heaven. If a person is critically ill and cannot be baptized, he/she is saved by grace - not by water. Baptism is a command and a very important element in our faith journey, but we are saved through the person and provisions of Jesus Christ. It is the merits of His life, death, burial and resurrection which provide the power for salvation from the dominion and consequences of sin.

Although water baptism has been administered through various methods since the early history of the church, the truly biblical method is immersion. The very word “baptize” in the Greek language (baptizo) means to “be covered”. It is only when a person is immersed that the symbolism of death, burial and resurrection is replicated. If a person needs to be baptized, and due to some reason cannot be immersed, some other form of baptism can be used.

(See scripture references in the text above. Also see many references in the Book of Acts as believers were baptized as members of the new Christian Church)

Infant baptism:

Water baptism is reserved for people who have made a willful decision to follow Christ. We refer to it as “believer’s baptism”. Since infants do not have the sense of

accountability to make this decision, an infant should not be baptized but can be **dedicated**. Parents are encouraged to bring their children before the church community for public dedication to the Lord. This is in line with the Jewish traditions of the Old Testament (See section about baptism, also Luke 2:22, 23)

Communion (The Lord's Supper):

As we receive the Lord's Supper we remember and celebrate the sacrifice of Jesus Christ through which God offers redemption to the world. The bread and wine stand as eternal symbols of the shed blood and broken body of our Savior. Although we cannot (and would not) decide if a person should receive The Lord's Supper, the Bible tells us that a person who is not in a right relationship with God should not receive it. Of course, this is a very personal decision determined by the individual receiving the elements in honesty with God. However, we also believe that the Lord's Supper can provide a perfect opportunity for a person who wants to come to God for forgiveness and restoration! Is there a better place to come to Christ than at His table where we celebrate His sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins?

(Matthew 26:17-30, Mark 14:12-26, Luke 22:7-39, John 13:1-17:26, 1Corinthians 11:23-26)

Membership:

Membership in Community Church is permitted if a person confesses faith in Christ as his/her Savior, has been baptized, and has successfully completed a membership class. Membership in a local church is the act of becoming a **spiritual shareholder**. Although the church belongs to Jesus, He has called us to take a certain degree of responsibility and ownership. A prospective member should be in unity with the church and the church should be confident about the prospective member. A person should not become a member of a church if he/she doesn't agree with the church's doctrines, mission, vision, and values statements. The church should serve the member and the member should serve Christ and His Church. Together, the church has been called to live in love, unity and service.

(This is an extensive subject and there are scriptures throughout the New Testament which tell of the importance of church membership. For more information you should contact a pastor.)

Thoughts on Marriage:

Marriage is a sacred union between one man and one woman. According to the Bible, the marriage of a man and woman is a special union in which two people become one. This union is supposed to last a life-time and we should do all we can to nurture the marriage relationship to keep it healthy and strong. Ephesians, chapter 5, is one of several places that help us understand the love and respect that must exist between a man and woman to sustain a lasting, loving marriage relationship.

Although we love and respect everyone we do not acknowledge same gender relationships as God's design for marriage or alternative sexuality. (Genesis 2:19-24; 1 Corinthians 7: 1-7)

Although the Bible stands strongly opposed to divorce, we are told it will happen because people have "hard hearts". The "certificate of divorce" is mentioned many times in the scriptures. The Bible justifies divorce in a few cases, but God desires for people to work out their differences whenever possible (read Matthew 19:3-8). We recognize that divorce is an extreme action that creates excessive pain and adversity and two people should never go into a marriage relationship with the idea that divorce is an option for resolving differences. It is always the last resort.

Unfortunately, almost half of all marriages end in divorce. People fail, so marriages fail. Some divorces are caused through problems which are beyond our control. We cannot dictate the attitudes and actions of our mate. But often, as human beings we can become self-centered and sinful, and we make mistakes which may not be repairable. The Bible tells us that God hates divorce, but thankfully, He has healing grace for all of our faults, failures, and hurts. (Deuteronomy. 4: 9; 5: 1-21; 6: 7-9; Psalm. 78: 5-7; Proverbs. 1: 22; 15: 17; Matthew. 7: 1, 2; Matthew. 19:3-8; Acts 2: 39; Ephesians. 6: 10-18; 5: 22, 29; 6: 1-4)

The sanctity of human life:

As a church, we seek to recognize and preserve the sanctity of all human life from conception to death. We are opposed to euthanasia, abortion and slavery (human trafficking). We encourage Christians to pray for and support organizations which promote the sanctity of human life and to become involved locally and nationally in efforts to guarantee the protection of life according to God's laws. (Exodus 20: 13; 21: 22; Jeremiah 1: 15; Psalm 130: 13-16)

Sanctification and Entire Sanctification:

When a person first receives Christ as his/her Savior, that person is set apart and made holy. We call this *initial sanctification*. Every true believer is considered sanctified because they have been washed by the blood of Christ and have become a new creation through Him; the old has gone and the new has come. *Entire Sanctification* is another term to describe what we would usually refer to as "the baptism of the Holy Spirit" or "the filling of the Spirit". The word "entire" does not denote any type of sinless perfection or spiritual state that does not require further growth. However, it does imply a new level of spiritual wholeness in our lives. The

filling of the Spirit provides two very important elements for Christian living; it empowers us for service and witnessing, and it brings purification to the heart which enables us to live holy lives. This sanctification is brought about by a gradual process that leads to a critical juncture in life when we fully surrender and consecrate ourselves to God. (Genesis 17:1; Deuteronomy 30:6; Psalm 130:8; Isaiah. 6:1-6; Ezekiel 36:25-29; Matthew 5:8, 48; Luke 1:74-75; 3:16-17; 24:49; John 17:1-26; Acts 1:4-5, 8; 2:1-4; 15:8-9; 26:18; Romans 8:3-4; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 6:11; 2 Corinthians. 7:1; Ephesians 4:13, 24; 5:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 3:10, 12-13; 4:3, 78; 5:23-24; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 10:14; 12:14; 13:12; James 3:17-18; 4:8; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 1:7, 9; 3:8-9; 4:17-18; Jude 24.)

Heaven and Hell - Eternal Destiny:

When we die, we do not simply cease to exist. We are created to be eternal beings and our lives on earth (whether we serve Christ or not) will determine our eternal destination.

“Heaven” is the term used to describe or define the eternal residence of the believer. Heaven is a real literal place of everlasting peace and joy in the presence of God. “Hell” is the term used to describe the eternal residence of the unbeliever. It too, is a real literal place described as a place of torment and separation from God.

(Scriptures for “eternal destiny” Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:34-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 13:3; John 8:21-23; 14:2-3; 2 Corinthians 5:6, 8, 10; Hebrews 2:1-3; 9:27-28; 10:26-31; Revelation. 20:14-15; 21:1-22:5, 14-15.)

Ministry:

All Christians are gifted by God to minister in certain ways and should be involved in service to Jesus and His Church. At Community we will do what we can to help you discover your spiritual gifts and find your place of service in the body of Christ. (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 14:1-33; Ephesians 4:11-16)

Spiritual Gifts:

We accept and give full recognition to all the gifts of the Spirit as found and defined in the scriptures. We believe that 1 Corinthians 12: 12-30 demonstrate the importance of the whole body working together and using the special gifts we have received from God. Some areas of giftedness include: leadership, administration, teaching, knowledge, wisdom, prophecy, discernment, exhortation, shepherding, faith, evangelism, apostleship, service/helps, mercy, giving, hospitality, and tongues. It is important for us to explain that we believe the gift of tongues is a “sign gift” of known languages rather than an ecstatic or angelic tongue. Out of concern for orderly worship and the fragile heart of the unbeliever (1 Corinthians 14:23), the Apostle Paul encourages us to be very careful with the use of this gift during public worship. (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 14:1-33; Ephesians 4:11-16)

Leadership:

Internationally renowned leadership guru, Dr. John C. Maxwell once said, “Everything rises and falls on leadership.” While we never want to diminish the immense importance of good followers, we also know that the church needs good leaders. The Bible teaches us that leaders in the church are to be chosen according to spiritual maturity and their spiritual gifts. Therefore, it is our goal to help people grow and develop their gifts for maximum effectiveness in their specific roles. (Proverbs 11:14; Matthew 20:25-28; Mark 10:44; Acts 6: 1-6; Acts 20:28; ph. 4:11-16; 1 Timothy 3:1-4, 8-10; 2 Timothy 2:15; Titus 1: 5-9)

Social Concerns: substance abuse, gambling and addictive dangers....

Our wholeness is important to God (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 5:17). Jesus came that we might have life to the fullest (John 10:10). Unfortunately, we can become entangled in habits and vices that will diminish our lives rather than enhance them. As a church, we have historically taken a stand against societal evils that destroy lives rather than build them. There are 3 issues at hand when we address the idea of social concerns:

First, there is the personal health and well being of the Christian. The Bible declares that as Christians our bodies are the “temple of the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 2 Cor. 6: 14-20) and we are not to do anything to destroy them - for “God’s temple is sacred”.

Second, our influence upon the lives of others is of utmost importance (Titus 2:7; 1 Cor. 11:1; Col. 4:5-6). People should find Christ in and through us. We should be examples of God’s power to save and deliver. By our actions, we never want to lead anyone in the wrong direction.

Third, God desires for us to be the best possible stewards of our time, talent and possessions, and one day, we will give an account of our stewardship in life (Matthew 24, Matthew 25, Luke 19; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:12-13).

Therefore, seeing such things as social evils and knowing the extreme expense, addictive dangers and potential damage of such, we oppose the use and promotion of alcohol, illegal drugs, pornography, gambling, smoking, and all other substances and vices that are known to be destructive and/or habit forming to the body and dishonoring to God. As Christians we need to take these things seriously, for the good of our bodies and our relationship with God, for the good of those around us, and for the good of God’s Kingdom. (Proverbs 28: 13; Mark. 14: 38; Romans 13: 14; 1Corinthians 3: 16, 17; 5: 11, 13; 6: 10, 19; Ephesians 4: 1; 6: 10, 11, 16; Philippians 3: 3, 4; James 4: 1; Titus 2: 12; 1Peter 2: 11; 1 John 2: 16)

The Rapture and Jesus’ Second Coming

We believe in the imminent return of Jesus Christ at which the time of the “rapture” of the church will take place. The dead in Christ shall rise first, and those who are alive and remain will be caught up to meet Him in the air, “and thus shall we always be with the Lord.” (Job 19:25-27; Isaiah 11:1-12; Zechariah 14:1-11; Matthew 24:1-51; 25; 26:64; Mark 13:1-37; Luke 17:22-37; 21:5-36; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:6-11; 1

Corinthians 1:7-8; 1 Thessalonians. 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:1-11, 23; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10; 2:1-12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 9:27,28; James 5:7-8; 2 Peter 3:1-14; 1 John 3:2-3; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-16; 22:6-7, 12, 20.)

For more detailed information about our doctrines and beliefs, please contact the church office or one of our pastors. You can also go to www.wesleyan.org/beliefs

Section 5: What is Holy Living?

One of the distinctive elements of membership in the Wesleyan Church comes in the form of the constant call to live a holy life. We encourage our members to live as close as possible to God. It's best for the member, for the church, for God's great kingdom, and for the world around us. So, what is holy living?

HOLY LIVING IS NOT....

.....**living a perfect life!** (That's not possible!)

.....**hiding from the rest of the world and becoming a spiritual hermit so you are not contaminated by the evil stuff of life.** (You cannot influence the world if you hide from it!)

.....**living as though you are better than everyone else!** (That is self righteousness!)

.....**spending a certain amount of hours each day reading your Bible and praying.** (Not to say this is bad, but God doesn't judge us by the amount of hours we spend doing "holy stuff".)

HOLY LIVING IS.....

.....**growing and maturing in Christ and His word;** being a doer of the word and not only a hearer or student of it.

.....**trying to live right;** Learning to live the way God wants us to; abstaining from the things that are bad and clinging to the things that are good; standing against the wrong and for the right. We should live to honor God and to be a witness for His kingdom and saving grace.

.....**learning to love;** loving God with all out heart, soul, mind, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves and living in the fullness of God's Spirit. We should fully commit ourselves to God so He can fill us with His Spirit to purify our hearts and use us in the work of His kingdom.

Section 6: Membership Expectations

Do we expect anything from our members? Sure we do! You wouldn't want to be a member of a church that has no expectations! You want to be a member of something alive and important.

- A prospective member must be able to make a confession of faith declaring Jesus Christ as his/her personal Savior.
- A prospective member must be in agreement with the doctrines, structure and beliefs of the church.
- A prospective member must be in agreement with the vision, mission and core values of the church.
- A prospective member will serve others and serve in the church.
- A member is expected to support the church through prayer, attendance, finances, service, and by illustrating a spirit of unity.
- A member is expected to pursue spiritual growth, the fullness of God's Spirit and the life of holiness.
- Members should be Jesus' witnesses to everyone around them! Jesus taught to go out into the world and help others become disciples. This should be a top priority for every Christian.

Section 7: Church Structure

From international to local, the Wesleyan Church is structured the same. This structure provides a thorough system of biblical authority and necessary accountability. It is actually a balanced mixture of the three most common forms of church government: 1. Episcopal (Bishop/Minister) 2. Presbyterian (Elders/Church Board) 3. Congregational (Members/Congregation)

The Pastor.... Jesus is the Head of the Church, but the pastor is the chosen spiritual leader in each local congregation. The pastor is the earthly shepherd, teacher, primary administrator, visionary, and human spiritual leader of the church body. He/she will guide the development and the agenda for ministry under the guidance and leading of the Holy Spirit and God's word. The pastor is not a rogue or renegade leader. He/she is accountable to God, the District overseers, The Local Board of Administration, and the church membership.

The Pastoral Team.... is selected and mentored by the pastor and is responsible for the implementation and development of church ministries. The Pastoral Team can become as large as necessary and will consist of both paid ministerial staff and volunteer ministerial students. There will be many teams formed under the direction of the Pastoral Team as they guide the ministries of the church.

The Local Board of Administration.... is responsible for all issues of church policy and business administration. This Board acts specifically according to Robert's Rules of Order and in conjunction with the guidelines and mandates of The Wesleyan Discipline and the Greater Ohio District Journal. The L.B.A. shall consist of the Pastor as Chairman and ex-officio member, the Local Church Secretary, the church treasurer (chosen by the LBA), the chairman of the Team of Trustees, and minimum of 2 members at large elected by the membership during an annual meeting.

The Team of Trustees.... is responsible for the maintenance, the management and the legal issues concerning all church property and corporate existence. There will be at least 3 Trustees each serving alternating 3 year terms.

The Membership.... Meets whenever necessary, to make major decisions in the church, i.e.: voting for a pastor, approving the annual budget, electing specific officers, approving extensive building projects or the purchase of property, etc. Unless there is a necessity to do otherwise, the members meet for business once per year in a meeting which is called, The Annual Local Church Conference.

The District and General Church function in very similar fashion:

The District.... (In our case the Greater Ohio District)

The District Superintendent

The District Board of Administration Vice Chair:

The District Leadership Teams

The District Conference (Delegates elected from each church in the District)

The General Church.... (Wesleyan World Headquarters)

The General Superintendent

The General Board of Administration

The General Departmental Leaders

The General Conference (The District Superintendents and the elected delegates from each District in the General Church)

With this booklet, we hope and pray that we have been able to answer some of your questions and educate you about what Wesleyans believe. If you are ready to take the next step and become a member of Community Church, please read and complete the next section.

Section 8: The Membership Questionnaire

Please fill out the attached questionnaire and return it to one of our pastors. The Local Board of Administration will review your questionnaire and render a decision on your membership. A member must be 16 years of age and, if possible, should complete the questionnaire his/herself. If you are currently a member of another church, it may be possible for you to transfer your membership to Community. This depends on the doctrines and theological positions of the other church as well as your agreement with our positions and values. To transfer membership, you should still read this booklet and complete the questionnaire. You would then address the issue of transfer with one of our pastors.



Community Church Membership Questionnaire

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____
Phone _____ - _____ - _____

Please give a brief written answer to each question. If you have additional comments you can use the back of this sheet.

1. Have you placed your faith in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior? Have you confessed and repented of your sins? Do you believe He has forgiven you and that He lives in your heart today?

2. Do you believe that the Christian life is one of faith, learning and growth, and is it your intention to pursue spiritual maturity and the Spirit filled life?

3. Have you reviewed the church's doctrines, structure, and positions on social issues and concerns, and are you in agreement with them?

4. Have you read the church's mission statement, core values, and statement of vision? Do you understand and accept them? Is it your intention to support the church in its quest to pursue them?

5. Have you been baptized? If not, will you do so at an appropriate time?

6. Will you support the church through prayer, regular attendance, regular financial contributions (tithes and offerings) and spiritual unity?

7. As a member, will you passionately attempt to bring unbelievers to Jesus?

8. As a member of Community, in what way(s) will you employ your talents, gifts and desires to serve Christ and His church?

9. Do you have any questions or reservations regarding the doctrines, polity, or positions of the church?

If so, please describe here:

10. Please share a brief testimony about your faith in Christ:

Your signature:

Pastor's signature:

Additional comments from pastor:
