

NEW LIFE CHURCH

Canterbury



**MEMBERSHIP
DOCUMENT**



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a house of prayer for
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Registered Charity Name: The Pentecostal Church
Charity Number: 1054365



Brief History

New Life Church is part of the world-wide fellowship of Assemblies of God, which is the world's largest Pentecostal Christian denomination with over 300,000 churches in over 110 countries. It has approximately 57 to 60 million members and it is the fourth largest Christian body in the world. It has over 600 churches in the UK, its own bank and a Bible School based in Mattersey.

HISTORY

New Life Church began shortly after the 1928 Stephen Jeffrey's crusade, which was followed by the Eddie Durham crusade in 1946. The Church has met in various locations including a shop, a mission hut, and an old Methodist building, and is now based on the University of Kent campus in Canterbury.

In 1997, the church adopted the cell group model and has since grown from a congregation of about 20 to 300 people.

Some prophetic words spoken over the Church:

- Intercontinental oasis – a place of refreshing between places.
- A house of prayer for all nations – a place of welcome for all nations (**Mark 11:17**).
- A greenhouse – where people grow very quickly, and are then planted out.
- A call to Receive, Equip and Release God's people for ministry.
- A lighthouse on the hill.

Our Purpose/Vision

This church exists to **glorify God** and to bring the love and power of Jesus to our community and to the people of every nation.

With the Word of God as our foundation and with the enabling of the Holy Spirit, we seek to do this by nurturing, equipping and empowering God's people to serve others and to develop a passionate love for Jesus in each other.



Simply put, this church exists to:

- **Glorify Jesus**
- **Love our community**
- **Equip and empower God's people**

We have seven main values which are unpacked through what we desire to be as a Church.

We seek to:

- Be Jesus centred and Bible based
- Love one another and be welcoming to all people
- Pursue growth and battle mediocrity
- United in purpose with everyone taking part
- Be Generous
- Reach out as a blessing to our community
- Respect and honour one another and our leaders.

We aim to achieve the above objectives by;

• **Being Jesus Centred and Bible based (Colossians 1:17-18)**

We want to keep Jesus at the centre of whatever we do. We also regard the Bible as God's word, true and the standard that we measure everything pertaining to life. We take responsibility for our hearing, too: we compare what we hear with what the Bible says, like the Bereans. What we teach and do is informed by the Bible.

• **Love one another and be welcoming to all people (John 13:34)**

Creating a welcoming church in the way we receive visitors and new members? Colossians 3:11
God is Love. Jesus has commanded us to love one another as he loves us. By doing this, we show the world that we are his disciples.

• **Pursue growth and battle mediocrity...** to be more like Jesus. (Galatians 5:22-23) This entails honouring God in our actions and the way we represent him to others. Whatever we do, we do 'as unto the Lord'. Malachi 1:6-8 reflects that honouring God means not bringing blind and lame sacrifices, i.e. not the things we ourselves don't really want, but the best (see point 7 below).

• **United in purpose with everyone taking part... (1 Corinthians 12:27)**

We are each part of the body of Christ, empowered by one Spirit as co-workers with Christ to bless, edify and serve one another. We expect every member to serve by volunteering at least once a month in ministry. Being united with the leadership in realizing the church's vision. With everyone doing their share to see God's church built (Mark 3:25; Psalm 133).

• **Reaching out... as a blessing to others. (Matthew 28:19-20)**

Our aim is to have an outward focus, each person reaching out to others by developing friendships and serving those around them, sharing their life and the gospel. All this occurs in the context of growth and multiplication of connect groups: disciples making disciples. We also seek to serve our community through social action, prayer and regular outreach events.

These form the Core Values of our life as a 'Connect Church' and are paramount in every activity we host as a church.[For more information about Connect Groups contact the office at

[\[office@newlifecanterbury.org\]](mailto:office@newlifecanterbury.org)]

Respect and honour one another and our leaders:

Respect for each other and honouring /acknowledging our leaders as God's elect over His church (Hebrews 13:17; Ephesians 4:11; Ephesians 5:21).



Support for Local Ministries

As a church, we seek to extend a hand of fellowship to other local ministries around us. Some of the local ministries we support both financially and also with our time include:

- Kidz Club
- Canterbury Schools Trust
- Friends International
- Healing On The Streets
- Higher education chaplaincy work as well as organising Canterbury Global Day of Prayer

Kidz Club: This is an action packed Christian klub for children of primary school age.

Canterbury Schools Trust: The primary objective of the Canterbury School trust is to promote a positive image of Christianity and to provide pastoral support for primary and secondary school pupils.

Friends International: Friends International supports international students in the UK. We equip and envision churches & volunteers to befriend and assist international students.

Healing on The Streets: Offer prayers for healing to everyone on the streets of Canterbury.

Higher Education Chaplain: The Chaplains lead worship and run social and educational events

Some of the missionaries we support in various parts of the world include:

Tom Miyashiro – Serving as an Evangelist in The United States working to reach mainly the youth and young adults with the Gospel.

Pastor David Rowlands – Serving as a Pastor in Papenburg Germany, where he lives with his family.

In order for us to attain our Vision and values we depend on the Holy Spirit and we appropriate His gifts and anointing. We seek to be Spirit-led as we believe that a Spirit-led Church is dynamic and impacts its community and generation (**Acts 2:42-47**).

We believe that good leadership and diversity of gifting are essential for the health and growth of the Church (**Ephesians 4:11-13**). We seek as a Church to honour our leaders and to equip and raise new leaders wherever and whenever we can so that God's people have an opportunity to use their gifts to serve others. We believe that God has called us to **receive, equip and release** His people for effective ministry.



Leadership

We believe that Christ alone is the head of the Church; however, He has appointed some to serve as overseers of local churches. These overseers or leaders serve the body of Christ by leading the people and overseeing the spiritual growth of the Church (**1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, Hebrews 13:7**).

What should you expect New Life leaders to be like?

- Live by and preach the Word of God to you.
- People of faith – faith which is worth imitating and which attracts you to trust and follow us as we follow Christ (**1 Corinthians 11:1**).
- Keep watch over you and regard ourselves as answerable to God for your spiritual welfare and progress.
- Set good examples in all things that pertain to godliness.

As Leaders WHAT SHOULD WE EXPECT OF YOU?

- Receive the Word of God readily from us and make every effort to search the scriptures to confirm that word.
- Make our responsibility over you a joy and not a burden, by humbly accepting authority – you will receive a blessing (Hebrews 13:17, Ephesians 6:1, Matthew 10:41). Elders are accountable to God for you! Submission is an attitude of heart and to submit is to voluntarily place yourself under the care, protection and guidance of your leaders. Willing submission to spiritual authority brings great blessing because those ‘under authority’ find they have authority: Matthew 8:9. Remember submission is confirmed through obedience.
- Follow our example (as we follow Christ) and the leadership we give.
- Pray for us and our families.

Leadership Structure

Trustees

As a registered charity, the legal affairs of the church are overseen by a board of trustees.

- Aaron Berko
- William White
- Jonathan White
- Shadreck Chikomba
- Andrew Parfitt

Elders: The elders are mainly responsible for long term vision, discipline and spiritual oversight of the church. They deal with all difficult pastoral issues and address all matters relating to direction (vision), doctrine and discipline

- Aaron Berko: Senior Minister
Aaron’s main responsibility is to lead the Church with the help of the Elders. He oversees preaching, training, Children’s ministry and Outreach.
- William White: Associate Pastor
Will oversees the Multi-media department, worship and is involved with teaching
- Shadreck Chikomba: Associate Pastor
Shadreck heads the Men’s ministry and is involved with teaching.

The Equipping Team

These leaders are responsible for the day to day running of the church including ministry oversight, training, discipleship, current practices and envisioning.

Akua Berko
Violet Chikomba
Nicholas Stephenson
Judith Stephenson
Joanna Addison
Justice Addison
Ronke Adeyanju
David Adeyanju

The INSPIRE Team

The senior leadership team is supported by ministry heads and Connect Group leaders along with their coordinators/deputies in realising our God given vision.

We encourage greater participation by all members and we expect every member to serve by volunteering at least once a month.



Membership

We believe that there is one Church, the body of Christ. This body however has local representations and for Christians to grow and flourish as members of the body, they need to be members of a local church. The local church will provide them with a place where they can grow in their love and knowledge of God, be nurtured and equipped to use their gifting to serve God and others in His household. Local church membership is implied in the

Bible; whenever Paul wrote an epistle he wrote it to a local church and often addressed and greeted members of those churches (**Galatians 1:2**). In one instance, he states that a sinning brother who refuses correction should be cast out of the church, which is a clear Biblical example of local churches or smaller representations of the Body of Christ and membership of such representations.



Your Next Step

How can I become a member of New Life Church?

We seek as a church to be inclusive, which is in keeping with the nature of our Lord Jesus Christ. We therefore seek to make everyone feel loved and welcome when they attend our services – but when we talk about membership we refer to those who have moved from casual attendance to a place of commitment to the Church. This commitment is expressed in the giving of your time, prayers, offering and tithes to help the church fulfil its God-given mission. It refers to

those who have moved from being **receivers** – merely feeling accepted and blessed by the body – to becoming **givers**: those who are actively a part of the congregation, and are consistently involved in the building up of the body through involvement in ministry and the life of the church.

You will not be joining a building but a people, a family of God who are working together to fulfil His plan and purpose. Before you make such a decision you must be clear that God is leading you to be a

part of this representation of His Body and that this is His plan and purpose for you in this season of your life.



Criteria for joining

- 1. You must be a born-again believer (if you are not already).**
2. Baptised: you must be willing to be water baptised in our next baptism service if you haven't already been baptised.
3. Be baptised or be seeking to be baptised in the Holy Spirit: you need to be in pursuit of an ever-increasing fullness of the Spirit in your life.
4. Be submitted to the leadership, sound doctrine and be devoted to the people of the Church.
5. Be committed to helping the Church in realising its God-given vision by supporting the leadership in this pursuit.
6. Envision Gatherings: you must be willing to attend our once a term gathering that shares the vision and mission of the Church.
7. As this is an important decision, we recommend that you attend our services for at least three months before committing to membership. However, if you are sure, you can join before the three-month period is up.

We believe that each believer possesses a spiritual gift administered by the Holy Spirit which is to be used in building up the body so in addition to the above criteria, the leadership will have the following expectations of every member:

1. Regular attendance of Sunday Meetings (and be a part of a Sunday Serving Team that serves about once per month). Your membership will lapse if you fail to attend services for a continuous period of more than four months (unless you are away on mission or for a similar reason).
2. Be a committed member of a connect group.
3. Be deliberate in community and friendship-making.
4. Be financially committed to the Church through the giving of monthly tithes and offerings to the church.



Frequently asked Questions

1. Is it OK to be in two churches?

Common sense says 'no'. You will have a split vision and all the tensions of trying to realise two visions at the same time, this will lead to 'di'-vision and confusion. Possible exceptions might include if you are a student who is temporarily living away from your hometown. In that case we ask that

whilst you are in Canterbury you commit to no more than one church in Canterbury.

2. My church doesn't have connect groups. Can I be in one of your cell groups but go to my church on Sunday?

Not for long as we believe you would feel torn.

3. Do I have to attend an Envision Gathering before I join?

Yes, as it is important that everyone wishing to be a member of the church be well versed with our history, values and culture. Such individual should also be aware of what our mission and vision is and what role the individual can play to help the church achieve our local and global mandate as Christians.

4. How will I know if God is calling me to join this church?

You will have an inner peace with regard to joining. You will feel excited by the vision, values, culture and people of the church. You will sense the presence of God in the church. You will feel challenged and stretched. And you will understand that it is not a perfect church but you will feel at home in the midst of it nevertheless.

5. What if I join the church but after a few weeks realize that I have made a mistake? No problem. We will willingly release you from membership.

6. Will I have to meet one of the leaders before becoming a member?

Yes, one of the senior leaders will help answer any questions you may have prior to joining.

7. I don't feel membership is for me right now. Can I continue to attend service?

Yes, you can. New Life is a house of prayer for all nations and we endeavour to be welcoming to everyone.

As a member of the Church, the leadership promises to:

- Lead you with all diligence through sound teaching and Christian counsel.
- Support you through difficult times.
- Conduct your wedding ceremony, baptisms, and funerals should you require us to do so free of charge. We will support you in any way we can in holding your wedding ceremony and making it a memorable one.
- We will also correct you when needed without fear and we will create a loving environment in which you can grow to be all that God had created you to be.
- Allow you to freely download teaching resources from our web site for your personal use.

* Honorary membership can also be given to people at the discretion of the Church Council. These people will have to satisfy strict criteria laid down by the council as they see fit.

Events and Ceremonies

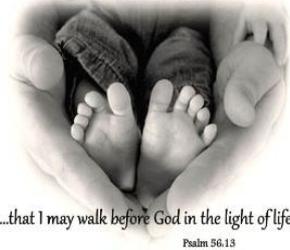
As a church, we are very much interested in the welfare/well-being of our members and also in sharing and being a part of every season of their lives. Useful information regarding the way we go about events and ceremonies are below:



Weddings:

Church members who are proposing to get married are expected to make their intentions known to the senior pastor or the associate pastors at the earliest possible time. There are mandatory pre-wedding counselling sessions that couples are expected to attend prior to their wedding. This would normally start six months to a year before the wedding.

Parent-Child Dedication



Child Dedication:

Members who wish to dedicate their babies are expected to e-mail the church office with all the necessary details (e.g. date/time) about the dedication. The associate pastors will then contact the member with the possible/available dates and arrange to meet with the parents of the child to discuss details.



Baptism :

All members are encouraged to be baptised by immersion in water after salvation. There are baptismal classes that members are expected to attend prior to being baptised. You must be willing to be water baptised in our next baptism service if you haven't already been baptised.



Funerals:

Members may inform their connect group leaders in case of any bereavement. The Church will stand by and support our members in every way possible at such times.

Such members can then send an e-mail to the church office with the details (date/time/venue) of the funeral and the associate pastors will contact the member with the available dates.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Address

Telephone number _____

Email _____

Date of Baptism _____

Reference (Please provide details of Minister / Pastor of your former church below)

Name: _____

Church: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Date you first attended service at New Life _____

Are you a gift aid giver? _____

If no, would you like to be a gift aid giver? _____

Would you like your contact details to be made available to other members? _____

For Official Use only

Assigned Cell/ Pastoral supporter _____

Log in details _____

Gift Aid Number _____