

PATHWAY TO



PARTNERSHIP

EST. 1868

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A Word from Pastor Joe

THE GREAT ADVENTURE

Dear Church,

Being a Christian is the greatest adventure anyone could ever step into. Being a Christian means that we are adopted into God's forever family, the Church (Romans 8:15). God has called us into a saving relationship with Himself through Christ and has provided the Church to nurture us, protect us, challenge and correct us. Together we become who He intends us to become.

The Church is God's "Plan A" for saving the world through the proclamation of the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There is no "Plan B." God, in His Wisdom, has chosen you and me to partner with Him in this "ministry of reconciliation." (1 Corinthians 5:18)

Therefore, deciding which local church you will call "home" is of great significance. For that reason, I am so pleased that you've decided to explore Partnership at New Life.

Before we discuss what it means to be a partner (member) at New Life, I want you to hear and understand my heart behind why we have this process. There is of course the required, legal aspect of establishing and maintaining church membership in accordance with the structure of our denomination and the laws of the land. All of this is necessary and good. (Romans 13:1)

But the heart of the matter, in my opinion, is that God's design for our good includes us being active partners with Him in ministry. God's goodness flows into us from Himself. And the means by which He works are located within the members of His body, the Church.

This is what I want for you:

- I want you to experience the rich and satisfying life that Jesus promises. (John 10:10)
- I want you to discover and fulfill the purpose God designed you for. (Ephesians 2:10)
- I want you to have the joy of helping others discover life in Christ. (2 Cor. 3:4-6)

In short, I want you to experience all that God has made possible for you in Jesus Christ. Together we can become who are called to become and do what He has called us to do. As we do, we will be transformed into His image and the world we live in will too.

Blessings in Christ,

Joe Wickman
Lead Pastor

WHAT IS A NEW LIFE PARTNER?

We choose to use the word “partner” rather than “member” because partners **actively** contribute.

At the end of our time together, you will choose to **partner**, to **prepare**, or to be a **participant**.

Choosing to prepare means you’re not ready to become a partner just yet, but you’re on your way.

The difference between “partners” and “participants” can be summed up in one word: *commitment*. Partners believe they are a *part* of something bigger than themselves and act on that belief. Partners don’t just participate, but actively focus on moving the mission and vision of the church forward.

Partnership is not essential, but it is highly beneficial.

Partnership is beneficial to both the partner and to the church!

Becoming a partner at New Life Ministries is more than a formality. It helps the believer understand what it means to be committed to Christ and to His Church.



CHURCH PARTNERSHIP:

1. Reminds us that we are already partners in the “Big C” Church.
2. Stands against a culture that dismisses and dishonors commitment.
3. Allows the leaders of the local church to know who can be counted on.
4. Encourages personal accountability that moves us toward spiritual growth.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME AS A PARTNER?

The expectations of partnership at New Life are outlined in the New Life Partnership Pledge (see page 23). In short, partnership means you understand and support the unique **mission** and **vision** God has given to New Life, and you commit to actively participating in it.



❖ Partnership means actively **working** for the unity of New Life Ministries. This includes

- **acting** in love toward others (1 Peter 1:22)
- **refusing** to gossip (Ephesians 4:29)
- and willingness to **follow** pastoral leadership (Hebrews 13:7).

❖ Partnership means **sharing** in the responsibility for the health of New Life Ministries. This includes

- **praying** for its growth (1 Thessalonians 1:2)
- **inviting** the un-churched to attend (Luke 14:23)
- and warmly **welcoming** our guests (Romans 15:7).

❖ Partnership means **supporting** the ministry of New Life Ministries.

This includes

- **attending** services regularly (Hebrews 10:25)
- **growing** with others in a group (Acts 2:42-47)
- **serving** in a ministry (1 Peter 4:10)
- **giving** regularly (2 Corinthians 9:6-7)
- and **living** a godly life (Philippians 1:27).

HOW CAN YOU KNOW YOU MAY BE READY
TO BECOME A PARTNER AT NEW LIFE?



SESSION 01

Partnership begins with

ANSWERING

YES

to the following seven questions:

1

Do you have **assurance** of the Holy Spirit that your sins are **forgiven** through faith in Jesus Christ?

2

Do you experience the **fullness** of the Holy Spirit with His **cleansing** of heart and **empowerment** for service, or, if not, will you seek His fullness through study, counsel, and prayer?

3

Do you believe the **Holy Scriptures** to be the revealed will of God containing all things necessary to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ?

4

Do you **accept** the Articles of Religion*, the partnership Covenant, and the Organization and Government of the Free Methodist Church, and will you endeavor to live in harmony with them?

5

Do you intend to **serve** God by the full use of the abilities He has given you? If not, will you?

6

Will you, in fellowship with your pastor and fellow partners, **participate** in the means of grace, such as: public worship of God, the ministry of the Word, the Lord's Supper, family and private prayer, and the searching of the Scriptures?

7

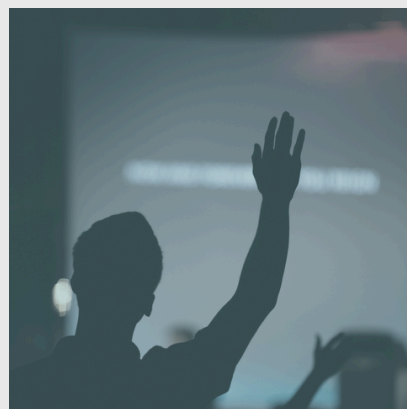
Will you practice the principles of Christian stewardship, **giving** freely of your time, talents, and treasures to Christ and His church?

OUR DESIRE

is that you will commit yourself

TO CHRIST

and to New Life Ministries

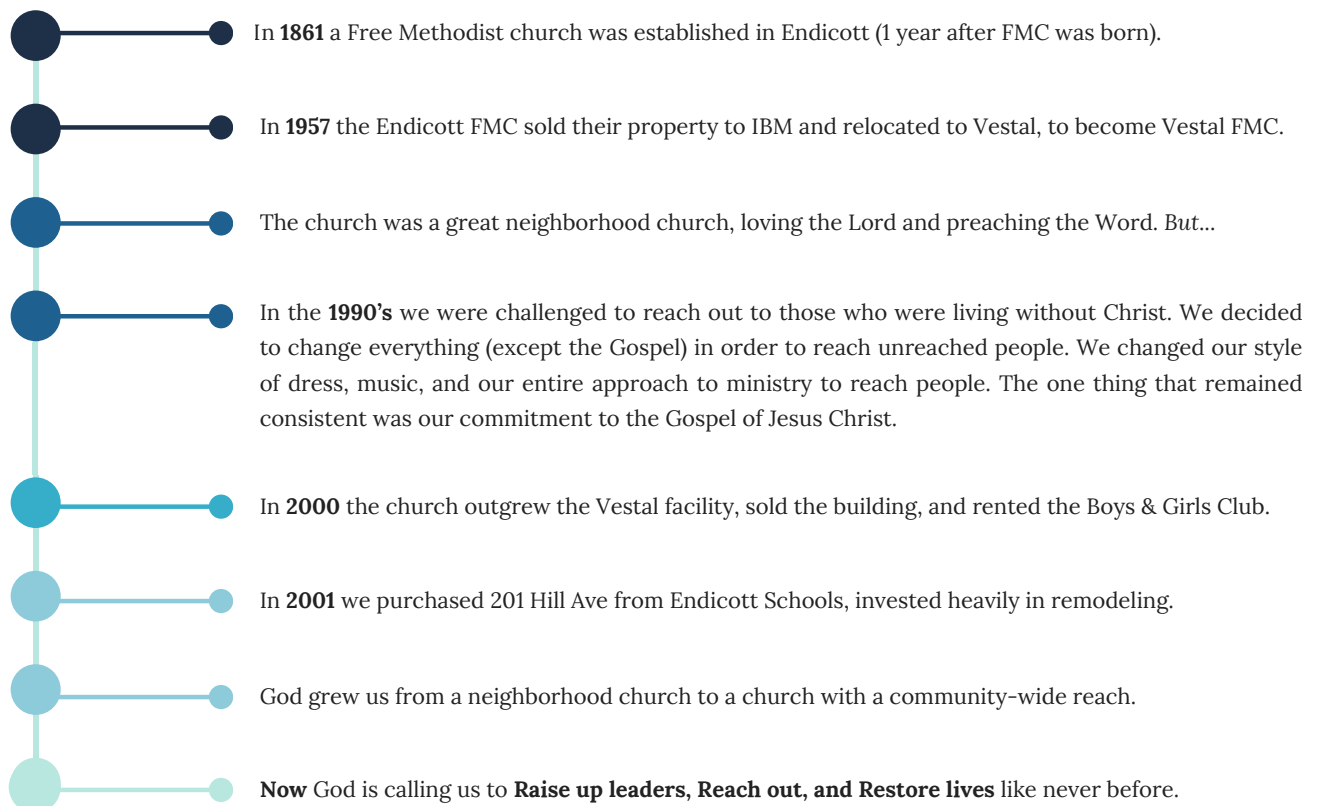


WHAT IS THE NEW LIFE STORY?

New Life Ministries is a part of the much larger body of Christ worldwide. That means we're part of God's greater story of salvation that reaches far beyond our own personal history.

New Life Ministries - A Brief History

Many people in our community think New Life is about 20 years old because that's when we made a "big splash" in our community. Did you know we have been a church in this community for **over 150 years**?



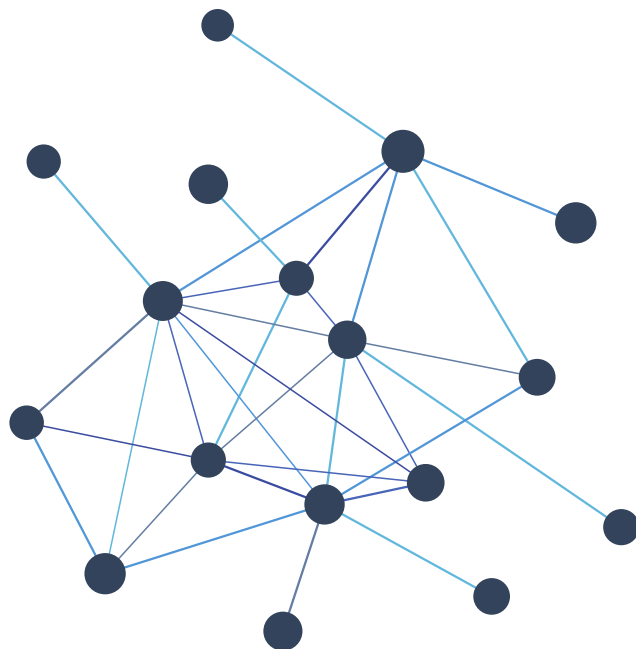
God's story at New Life is still being written. Our best chapters are ahead of us.

*Will you be a part of it? What part might He be calling you to play?
Partnership at New Life could be a Next Step for you.*

NEW LIFE'S HERITAGE

It's important that you know where we came from.

- Jesus Christ – Born A.D. 3-5
- Pentecost – The “birthday” of the Church in A.D. 35
- The Roman Catholic Church splits from what becomes the “Orthodox Church” – 1054
- The Protestant Reformation – Martin Luther posts 95 Theses in 1517
- Church of England – Begins around 1534
- Methodist Church – Begins in 1740 from John Wesley’s ministry
- Methodist Episcopal Church – Begins in 1784
- Free Methodist Church – Begins in 1860 after failed attempts to reform Methodist Church



KEY PEOPLE

John Wesley (1703-1791)


- 1728 – Ordained as an Anglican priest in the Church of England
- 1729 – Started “Methodist” Holy Clubs at Oxford
- 1735 – Became a missionary to Georgia in New England
- 1738 – Returned to England defeated and depressed
- 1738 – Aldersgate Experience, when his heart was “strangely warmed” brought assurance of salvation, empowerment for ministry
- 1739 – Class Meetings; Field Preaching; Lay Preachers; “Method” begins
- 1784 – Methodist Episcopal Church formed

John Wesley adamantly believed in the power of God to completely transform the lives of believers. His followers were called “methodists” because they methodically committed themselves to discipleship.

B.T. (Benjamin Titus) Roberts (1823-1893)

- 1852 – Ordained as Elder in the Methodist Episcopal Church
- 1853 – Attempted to reform the Methodist Episcopal Church
- 1858 – Formally stripped of ordination
- 1860 – Meets with 15 preachers and 45 laymen in Pekin, NY
- 1860 – Elected first Bishop of Free Methodist Church
- 1910 – Methodist Church restores Roberts’ credentials

THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH



New Life Ministries is a part of the Free Methodist Church USA (FMCUSA)

The Free Methodist Church is distinct from United Methodist & other Methodist denominations. The mission statement of the FMCUSA is: “To make known to all people God’s call to wholeness through forgiveness and holiness and to invite into membership all who respond in faith.” Three regional bishops oversee the FMCUSA. Our current bishop is Bishop Linda Adams. For more information about the FMCUSA, please visit www.freemethodistchurch.org.

The Free Methodist Church gets the free in its name from the following:

1. **Free people!** We believe all people should be free from slavery.
2. **Freedom from sin!** We believe that Jesus Christ has freed us from any obligation to sin.
3. **Free seats!** We do not charge for seating in church. (Seriously, that used to be a thing.)
4. **Free movement of the Holy Spirit** during worship. (We are not bound to the lectionary)
5. **Freedom for women** to pursue pastoral ministry.

The FMC Conferences

The FMCUSA is divided into several regional fellowships called Conferences.

New Life is a part of the **Genesis Conference** of the Free Methodist Church. The Genesis Conference comprises approximately 64 churches stretching from Oneonta, NY to Western NY. This conference of churches exists for mutual support, accountability, fellowship, and shared learning, and is led by a leader called a Superintendent. The current superintendent of the Genesis Conference is Pastor Pam Braman.

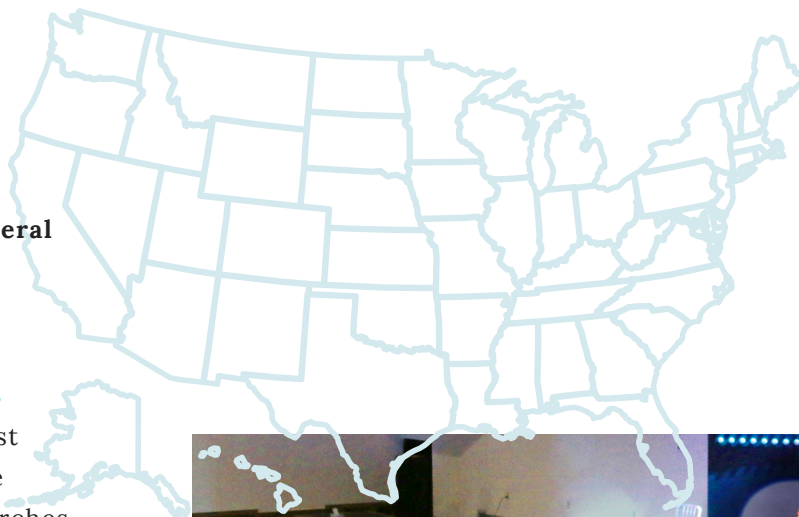
Each May the church pastors and church representatives meet for their Annual Conference to do business, set policy, and encourage one another. Pastors within the Genesis Conference are appointed by the conference. For more information about the Genesis Conference, please visit www.genesisfmc.com.

New Life finds the origin for its governance in the FMC from its Book of Discipline.

This book also serves as the regulatory manual for the Free Methodist Church. New Life has adapted its own structures and processes for church leadership within the guidelines set out in the Book of Discipline. This book is available online at www.freemethodistchurch.org.

Partners serve a legal responsibility in the FMC, as well as in New York State.

For example, here may come a time when we need to call on all our New Life Partners to help make decisions to encourage a healthy church structure and culture through voting. Tracking our number of Partners is also a requirement for keeping our 501c(3) status in New York State.



Superintendent Pastor Pam Braman installs Lead Pastor Joe Wickman, June 9, 2019.

NEW LIFE "HOUSE RULES"

The Church is not just an organization, but a living, breathing organism sustained by God Himself.

No one illustration can depict all the facets of the Church, so several are used in the New Testament. One of my favorites is,

“...you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house...”
1 Peter 2:5

Methods Change, Mission Doesn't

God is a God of order and peace (1 Corinthians 14:33, 40) and His House, the Church, should reflect that. The nature of the Church should determine its structure. The **structure** that governed us when we were 100 won't work with 1,000 attendees. Our structure has changed as we have grown, and it will continue to.



SESSION 02

Under the guidance of conference leadership we continue to adapt.

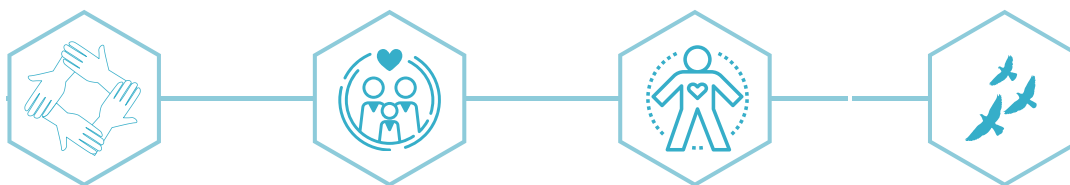
BUT THESE THINGS WON'T CHANGE:

❖ The Church is a **fellowship** (Acts 2:42). Our structure should promote unity and peace (Ephesians 4:3).

❖ The Church is a **family** (1 Peter 3:8). Our structure should emphasize relationships over rules (1 Timothy 5:1-2).

❖ The Church is a **body** (Romans 12:4-6). Our structure should help every person function in his or her own unique ministry (1 Cor. 12:7).

❖ The Church is a **flock** (Acts 20:28). This means our structure should allow shepherds to lead (1 Peter 5:1-2).



**As a partner at New Life we count on you to help us
ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN THE HEALTH OF THIS HOUSE.**

The Board

New Life operates under a church board form of governance.

This means that, while we are a **staff-led** church, major decisions (like setting the budget) are the responsibility of the **Board of Administration**. The Board is made up of the **Lead Pastor, Operations Pastor** and **six New Life Partners** who provide accountability in the areas of holiness, leadership and finances. Each lay Board Partner serves a three-year term. New partners are nominated by a nominating committee, qualified by the Board, and approved by church partnership via an up-or-down vote.

Our Board of Administration partners are:

- **Lead Pastor** - Joe Wickman
- **Financial Lead** - Mike Blachek
- Kevin Webb
- Cristina Flores-Meyer
- Chris Marvin

Our church finances come solely from the faithful generosity of the church body. We receive no funding other than the tithes and offerings of those who call New Life “home.”

Our office sends out giving statements to anyone who has contributed to New Life throughout the year, so long as they have used a check or otherwise provided their name and contact info. God uses our giving to fuel ministry. Your faithful, worshipful giving is what pays for the facilities, staff, and ministry programs of our church, and invites the hand of God’s blessing into your life!

Our church finances operate with an open book policy.

It’s important to us to be **transparent** about how we use the funds that God entrusts us with. You’ll see a breakdown of our budget later in this course.

If any contributing New Life partner wants to see the books during the year, our Operations Pastor will set up an appointment to share all our proceedings – both Board action and financial – with that partner upon request. We also invite regularly scheduled external reviews of all of our financial processes.

Ministry at New Life can’t happen at New Life without hundreds of dedicated volunteers!

While our staff lead our ministries, they of course cannot and should not do all the work themselves.

The number one job of our staff is to recruit, train and lead volunteers to accomplish the mission and vision of the church. (see Ephesians 4:11-13) We typically prefer to hire staff from our pool of committed volunteers who are fruitful in ministry long before they’re paid.



TRANSPARENT

SESSION 02

Our church is a staff-led church.

This may be different than other churches you've attended. The ministries at smaller churches tend to be led by a board or a few key people. But the complexity of larger ministries requires full-time attention.

Just as a church of 100 typically requires an "expert" pastor who has dedicated their life to leading, a larger church requires that level of dedication from numerous people who pour their efforts into leading.

Our Lead Pastor oversees the staff team, seeking God and wise counsel for vision, direction and strength. Under his direction, the staff lead the ministries, make decisions and train volunteers to carry out the day-to-day implementation of New Life's mission and vision.

Team Leads



Lead Pastor - Joe Wickman

Oversees all aspects of ministry and leads our church in the mission and vision God has called us to.



Creative Director - Heather Vestel

Oversees and manages our Creative Ministries, including Communications, Worship, Dramatic Arts, and Church Online.



Worship Leader - Sam Tichenor

Leads the congregation in worship and oversees all aspects of worship including the live stream presentation and Worship & Tech Teams.



GroupLife & Communications Pastor - Jordan Dunlap

Oversees our small group ministry, GroupLife, and our Prayer Ministry. Manages communication with our congregation.



Next Generation Director - Jamie Tichenor

Oversees our Children's, Teen, and Young Adult Ministries to foster a discipleship process that spans from birth to young adulthood.

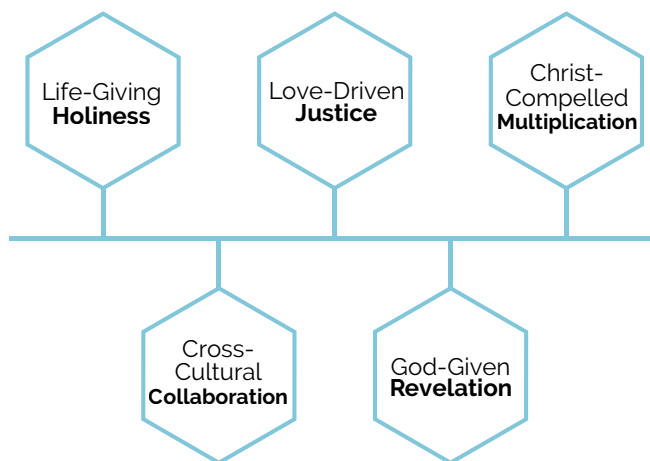
WHAT DOES NEW LIFE BELIEVE?

We want God's Word to be the standard and authority for all we do.

We recognize, however, that there are a variety of interpretations of scripture even within the Body of Christ. At some point, we will encounter theological differences with Christians from other churches and our own. When this happens, we fully embrace the old axiom: In the essentials, **unity** (Ephesians 4:4-6); in the non-essentials, **liberty** (Romans 14); in all things, **charity** (love) (1 Corinthians 13:2).

DOCTRINE AND THEOLOGY

THE FREE METHODIST WAY



Free Methodists are first and foremost a Kingdom people. Yet throughout church history, God has raised up distinct movements like ours to enrich the larger body of Christ. Building on the legacies of John Wesley and B.T. Roberts, but always discerning where God is moving today, our identity is shaped by values that are both historical and aspirational. Of the many values we hold dear, these five lie at the heart of our movement. We view them as a whole, each one bringing necessary balance to the others. In a time of rising polarization in our nation, we resist the pull toward both fundamentalism and theological liberalism — not out of a spirit of compromise, but from a radical commitment to what Wesley called “the middle way.” It is a path that takes the whole gospel seriously and continually calls us to “both/and” convictions in an “either/or” world. We call it *The Free Methodist Way*.

SESSION 03

LIFE-GIVING HOLINESS

GOD'S CALL TO HOLINESS was never meant to be a burden, but a gift that liberates us for life that is truly life by delivering us from the destructive power of sin.

All who are born again are made right with God by the finished work of Jesus Christ and called to experience the fullness of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Forgiven and filled, we approach life with confidence that we are acceptable to God even as He continues to transform our character and behavior to become more and more like Jesus. Life-giving holiness, then, is the fruit of full surrender to the loving reign of God over every aspect of our lives, establishing within us love that is truly love.

Leaving behind the legalism that once hindered our movement, *The Free Methodist Way* invites every believer to embrace the transforming work of the Holy Spirit that empowers us to love and serve God and others in joyful obedience.

LGBTQ+ and The Church

LGBTQ+ community members are welcome and safe here at New Life; we want our church to be a place where anyone, regardless of sex, gender, or orientation, can encounter Jesus. We hold a traditional view that marriage is between one man and one woman. We believe that everyone, including those who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community, can live holy and fulfilled lives in Christ by abiding by his instructions for all people concerning sexual morality. LGBTQ+ community members are respected and treated with dignity in our congregation. We walk alongside all people as they grow in their relationship with Jesus and respond to God's call to holiness.

LOVE-DRIVEN JUSTICE

LOVE IS THE WAY WE DEMONSTRATE GOD'S HEART FOR JUSTICE by valuing the image of God in all men, women, and children, acting with compassion toward the oppressed, resisting oppression, and stewarding Creation.

We devote ourselves to our founders' deep convictions around matters of injustice as they took their stand against the evils of slavery, the oppression of the poor, the marginalization of women, and the abuse of power in the church. Our heart for justice continues and expands today, fueled by God's holy love for the unborn, the vulnerable, oppressed, marginalized, and people of all races and ethnicities.

The Free Methodist Way is not only to realize a better society but that all may be reconciled to God and one another in ways that reflect God's just character.

CHRIST-COMPELLED MULTIPLICATION

THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST — the message He proclaimed, the life He lived, and the ministry He modeled — set into motion a redemptive movement destined to fill the whole earth.

Jesus' approach to discipleship was primarily a relational one in which He poured His life into a few with the full expectation that they would follow His example. His aim was not merely the transmission of information, but the transformation of lives by empowering those who followed Him to do what He had been doing. His mission is now our mission. We believe this redemptive movement of multiplication applies to every believer and should permeate our Free Methodist culture at every level: the found reaching the lost, disciples making disciples, leaders developing leaders, churches planting churches, and movements birthing movements.

The Free Methodist Way is to see God's kingdom expand exponentially as ordinary people are equipped by God's power to do extraordinary things.

CROSS-CULTURAL COLLABORATION

FROM THE BEGINNING, GOD'S INTENT WAS TO HAVE A PEOPLE FROM EVERY NATION, culture and ethnicity, united in Christ and commissioned to carry out His work in the world.

Today we celebrate the beauty of a multicultural and multiethnic church both in the U.S. and in over 100 countries around the world. In the U.S., we cling to the promise that we have been made one in Christ even as we dedicate ourselves to becoming a more diverse church that looks like the kingdom of God. Globally, we continue to send missionaries to other nations even as we rejoice that the nations are increasingly coming to us. Freely sharing our own gifts and resources, we are also challenged and inspired by the faithfulness, perseverance, ceaseless prayer, theological insights, and spiritual wisdom of our international brothers and sisters. Without question, we are better together.

The Free Methodist Way aspires to move beyond colonialism and ethnocentrism in favor of a collaborative partnership in God's global work in anticipation of the day when a great multitude from every tongue, tribe, people, and language makes up the eternal throng before the throne of God (Revelation 7:9).

GOD-GIVEN REVELATION

WE HOLD UNWAVERINGLY to our conviction that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and our final authority in all matters of faith and practice.

Drawing on our Wesleyan heritage of engaging with Scripture through the lenses of tradition, reason, and experience, we keep Scripture primary. While the church will always be tasked with authentically communicating and applying biblical truths with sensitivity to cultural dynamics, we do not subjugate the Bible's timeless truths to cultural norms or social trends.

The Free Methodist Way is to fully align our lives and our movement on the unshakeable foundation of God's Word.



THE GOSPEL AND SALVATION

No doctrine is more important than what we believe about this. It's crucial that we have an agreed understanding of the Gospel, because it is at the very core of what we share as a family united in Christ.

1. God created me to have a relationship with Him (Ephesians 1:4-5).
2. Man's sin separates him from God (Romans 3:23) and results in eternal separation from God in hell (Romans 6:23).
3. Jesus Christ saves us from our sin! The Son of God died on a cross to defeat sin (1 Corinthians 15:3-4) and rose from the dead to defeat death (Acts 2:24).
4. This salvation is a gift that is offered to everyone (John 1:12). It cannot be earned (Ephesians 2:8-9).
5. Each of us must individually believe in Him and receive the gift of salvation He offers (Romans 10:9).

Is it **time** for you to get right with God? If you haven't yet, Jesus says **now is the time**. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:15)

You can receive the gift of salvation today by praying to Jesus Christ as you **repent** and **believe** in Him.

"Dear Jesus, thank you for making me and loving me even when I've ignored You and gone my own way. I realize I am a sinner and I need You in my life. I want to turn from my sin and turn to you. I ask You to forgive me. Thank You for dying on the cross for me. Please help me to understand it more. As much as I know how, I want to follow You from now on. Please come into my life and make me a new person inside. I accept Your gift of salvation. Please help me to grow now as a Christian."

THE SACRAMENTS



At New Life, we observe two sacraments – holy practices that Jesus told us to do as His followers.

THE FIRST SACRAMENT IS **BAPTISM**.

It's important to note that Christ Himself was baptized (Matthew 3:13-15) and that He commanded us to baptize others (Matthew 28:19-20). Baptism tells the world we are truly His followers (Matthew 10:32).



Baptism doesn't make you a **believer**; it is the "outward sign of the inward change."

God's Word is clear that the act of baptism isn't what saves you. Only faith in Christ does that (Ephesians 2:8-9). Baptism is a step of obedience, an outward sign of an inward change that has already taken place.

➤ Baptism **identifies** us with Jesus Christ.

Going into and out of the water illustrates Christ's going into and out of the grave. It also makes a bold statement to others that the old life of sin is done and a new life in Christ has begun (Romans 6:4).

➤ The method of baptism isn't as important as the **motive**.

At New Life, we usually baptize by **immersion** because that's what we see in Scripture (Acts 8:38-39) and because the Greek word for baptism – *baptizo* – means “to immerse under water.” Still, the method of baptism is secondary to a heart that genuinely desires to follow Christ and let the world know about it.

➤ Younger children are most often **dedicated** to the Lord but can be baptized.

Dedication ceremonies are intended to be a covenant between the parents and God on the child's behalf (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). The parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make a personal decision for Christ. The church family agrees to pray for and care for the child within the church family. We will baptize young children who are developmentally able to understand and explain the symbolism of baptism and the importance of a relationship with Jesus Christ.

➤ Baptism is a **prerequisite** for Partnership.

Baptism is a vital step of obedience and a public declaration of faith in Jesus Christ. By requiring baptism before partnership, we're not saying baptism saves a person, but we are affirming its importance and a defining mark of a committed follower of Jesus.

THE SECOND SACRAMENT IS **COMMUNION**.

*Jesus never asked His disciples to remember His birth, but He did ask them (and us) to remember His death and resurrection (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). Communion is a simple but profound act of obedience that reminds us of the sacrifice Christ made on our behalf. We practice **open communion**.*

➤ **Self-examination** should always come before Communion.

God's Word tells us that it is possible to take Communion in “an unworthy manner” (1 Corinthians 11:27). We must focus our heart and mind on Him, attempt to restore any damaged relationships (Matt. 5:23-24), and make sure to confess any sin in our lives prior to receiving Communion (1 John 1:9).

➤ We observe Communion as a church family at least **quarterly** in church.

Jesus never told us when or how often we should observe Communion. We take communion, at a minimum, quarterly in church. We also encourage believers to observe Communion with their Small Group or at home with family. While any partner of the church is allowed to administer communion, we carefully select those whom we believe to be living holy lives.

GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



Depending on your church background, you may have had either very little education and exposure to the ministry of the Holy Spirit or quite a bit. When teaching turns to the Holy Spirit, you may be apprehensive because of either a lack of exposure or teaching that may have been unbalanced.

I hope you'll find that careful study of Scripture shows that the Spirit-filled life is normative for Christians.

Simply put, New Life firmly believes in the gifts of the Spirit and wants every believer to know and use his or her gifts regularly. God's Word tells us that the Holy Spirit guides us (John 16:13), convicts us (John 16:8), and intercedes for us (Romans 8:26). He also empowers us for ministry (1 Corinthians 12:7).

❖ Jesus promises to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask.

Before He ascended to the Father, Christ promised to leave us the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-17). Early Christians received this Promise through prayer and the laying on of hands (Acts 8:14-17).

❖ The Holy Spirit gives each of us unique gifts to serve the Church and show others God's love.

The manifestation of the Spirit is most often not just for the individual believer, but for the good of others also. There are at least three different passages in Scripture that detail the gifts of the Spirit (Romans 12:6-8, Ephesians 4:11, and 1 Corinthians 12). No particular list is exhaustive, however, and we believe there is a place for all of the gifts to be seen and used within the guidelines Scripture and wisdom provide.

❖ All spiritual gifts should be used in a manner consistent with God's Word.

Scripture clearly says not to put out the Spirit's fire or treat prophecies with contempt. Yet it also calls us to test all things and only hold on to the good (1 Thessalonians 5:19-21). This is a unique balance that can be difficult to maintain. At New Life we want to encourage the use of the more charismatic gifts (e.g. tongues, interpretation, prophecy, healing, word of knowledge), and we believe the Small Group setting is the best environment for this. This environment affords plenty of time to test everything, and a solid framework of relationship and trust. This helps us guard against sensationalism and a sense of pseudo-spiritual fabrication.

The essential doctrine of New Life Ministries is derived from the articles of doctrine of the Free Methodist Church. This is historically agreed upon biblical, evangelical Christian theology and is available in more detail on our website, newlifefm.com/new-here.

WHAT IS NEW LIFE ABOUT?

Our Mission & Vision for this community, our church, and The Church.

Every local church should look the same in many ways. We are all called to love each other and to reach the lost. We're called to preach the truth and to worship together regularly. In short, every healthy church will strive to live out the picture God gives us of His Church. Still, every local church has a Christ-given calling that is specific to its people and its community. New Life is called by God to do great things.

New Life's Mission

LOVE GOD, LOVE PEOPLE, MAKE DISCIPLES

When asked, "What is the greatest commandment? Jesus didn't say, "All of them are equal." He said that we're supposed to love God with all we have, and love our neighbors as ourselves. (Matthew 22:36-40)

He also said we are to carry the Good News to all people, inviting them to become His disciples. Then we are to baptize them, initiating them into the faith, and teach them to obey Jesus. (Matthew 28:18-20)

These purpose-defining passages are what we call the Great **Commandment** and the Great **Commission**.

New Life's Vision

RAISE UP, REACH OUT, RESTORE LIVES

But how exactly will we carry out that mission here and now? Our vision puts legs on that mission. A recent study showed that of the 195,000 people in Broome County, 95,000 of them claim no affiliation with a faith group. There are far too few people living as disciples of Jesus Christ. We aim to change that!

We **RAISE UP** leaders so we can **REACH OUT** to our community and **RESTORE LIVES** by Christ's power.

If we are going to make more disciples, we must **RAISE UP** leaders of all kinds.

► We must **RAISE UP** leaders of groups, ministry teams, sites and churches.

God has called us to **REACH OUT** so that 1% of our local population worship at New Life weekly.

► We must **REACH OUT** to unchurched people, inviting them to follow Christ.

So many of us are broken and need more than church and a small group to become whole.

► We must develop ministries that **RESTORE LIVES** by the power of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

NEW LIFE'S CORE VALUES

This is some of the stuff we really care about when it comes to who we are as a ministry.

1. WE INVITE EVERYONE

- Everyone we meet is loved by Jesus and called to a relationship with Him.
- Jesus asked all kinds of people to come follow Him. So do we.

2. COME AS YOU ARE

- No matter where you're starting from, God loves you just the way you are.
- When you come to New Life, we will show you the love of Jesus Christ.

3. GOD'S LOVE CHANGES US

- The more we experience God's love, the more we want to be like Jesus.
- Jesus died, rose, and sent the Holy Spirit so we could live transformed lives.

4. WE ALL HAVE A NEXT STEP

- God is constantly growing our faith one next step at a time.
- No matter how long you've been a Christian, God has a Next Step for you to take.

5. WE WORSHIP BIG

- When we worship together we experience God's presence in powerful ways.
- We use every bit of creativity we can to lead people into the presence of God.

6. WE LIVE GOD'S WORD

- We present God's truth found in Scripture in a way that's easy to understand and apply. We teach towards application and transformation, not just information.

7. WE GROW IN GROUPS

- Real relationships are essential to our ongoing growth in Christ.
- Life change happens best when we're gathered in circles, rather than rows.

8. WE SERVE SELFLESSLY

- We're not just consumers, we're contributors. We gladly give God our time and effort, building up His church and serving in our community with excellence.

9. WE GIVE GENEROUSLY

- We trust God with more than words. We trust Him with what He's entrusted to us. We give God our first and best, and we trust Him to help us use the rest.

10. WE INVEST IN THE NEXT GENERATION

- Our ministries for kids and teens are a huge part of who we are and who we're becoming. We want the next generation to drag their parents to church!

NEW LIFE'S BUDGET

New Life does not receive any funds outside of tithes and offerings. Without the faithful and generous giving of our New Life family, these ministries would not be possible.



**These percentages are based on the 2023 Annual Budget*

WORSHIP & CREATIVE DIRECTION

The Message never changes, but we are dedicated to continually developing new and creative ways to bring God's people passionate worship, share stories of faith and triumph, and bring real-life application to the teachings of Scripture through all forms of media and presentation.

FOUNDATIONAL MINISTRIES

Encapsulating the foundation of who we are, this portion of funds fuels Family Ministries and Group Life.

OUTREACH MINISTRIES

Loving people through compassionate work in local, regional, and international efforts, such as NLCR, Compassion Fund, and Outreach programs and events.

ADMINISTRATION

Supporting the success of all ministries, administration helps teams achieve more by providing efficient office and business operations.

FACILITIES

Caring for people by way of caring for our facilities. This includes mortgage, maintenance and improvements.

FREE METHODIST CHURCH, USA

Connecting to this network provides support for local churches and their pastors, as well as national and international emergency relief.

PATHWAY OF GENEROSITY

God's plan for generosity is a journey of trusting Him with all that we are, and all that we have. The Bible encourages us to grow in every aspect of our walk with Christ, including the grace of giving (2 Corinthians 8:7).

As you consider your next step, we encourage you to:

LISTEN TO GOD

MATTHEW 7:7-8

Prayerfully seek God's guidance as you consider your next step.

EVALUATE

MATTHEW 25:14-30

Consider that all the resources God has blessed you with ultimately belong to Him.

GET SPECIFIC

2 CORINTHIANS 9:7-8

Determine specifically how your resources can be used by God to further His kingdom.

WALK BY FAITH

MALACHI 3:10

Choose your next step, and trust God to grow your faith as you do so.



FIRST TIME

I have not yet given to God at New Life, but I want to take the **NEXT STEP** and begin giving.

INTENTIONAL

I give to God at New Life, but I want to intentionally **plan** to give regularly.

PROPORTIONAL

I consistently give to God at New Life, but I will give a **percentage** of how God has blessed me.

PRIORITIZED

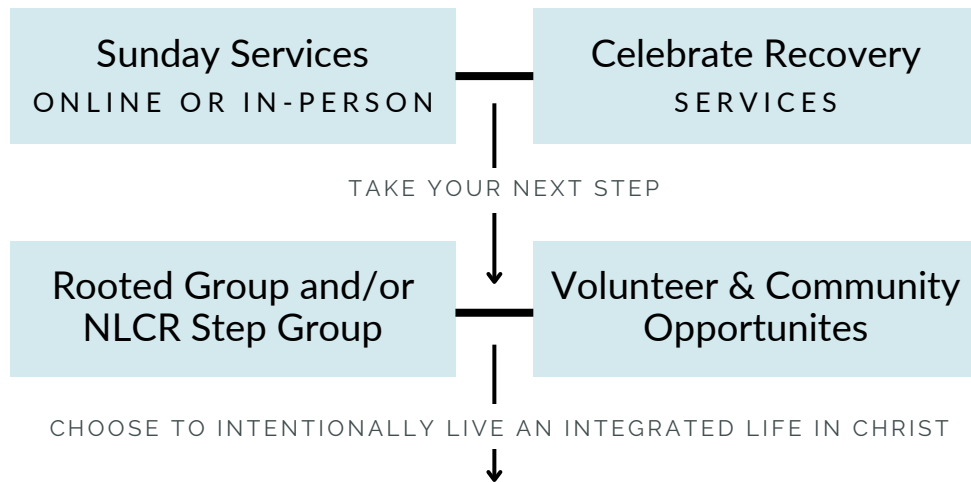
I faithfully give the **first 10%** of my income to God at New Life

GENEROUS

I give **beyond** my tithe to God at New Life, and my life is marked by generosity and blessing others

PATHWAY OF DISCIPLESHIP

YOUR JOURNEY STARTS HERE



LIVE LIFE AS A COMMITTED DISCIPLE OF CHRIST

WAYS TO BECOME

- Worship & attend service regularly (online or in-person)
- Read the Bible consistently
- Pray intentionally

WAYS TO BELONG

- Participate in events & community opportunities
- Join a small group
- Commit to Partnership

WAYS TO BLESS

- Volunteer at New Life
- Serve in the community
- Give generously
- Invite others in
- Lead as servants

God has told us who we are, where to go, and how to get there. He has called us to fulfill our mission by helping people walk a path of spiritual growth in three key areas. This “Path” is also meant to be a tool that helps keep us focused in our ministry. Our hope is that you will learn this three-part strategy and be able to communicate it to anyone who asks what New Life is about. It’s how we make disciples!

SESSION 04

Your Invitation

Thank you for choosing to be a part of our class, Pathway to Partnership. We hope that you have decided to make New Life your home church.

But what we are hoping for and asking from you goes beyond attendance; We want you to *partner* with us as we pursue the mission of loving God, loving people and making disciples because we have a **big vision**.

- ❖ We believe God is calling us to **Raise Up** leaders who will win generations to Christ
- ❖ He is asking us to **Reach Out** to those who don't yet know Him.
- ❖ And as we do, He is going to help us **Restore Lives** by the power of Jesus Christ.

We cannot accomplish the **mission**, or fulfill the **vision**, unless many of us come together.

Thank you for letting us be part of your journey, God Bless!



PARTNER, PREPARE, OR PARTICIPATE

CAREFULLY CONSIDER

and honestly answer the following questions:

- | | Y | N |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Are you confident that you are saved by placing your faith in Jesus Christ, and you have already been baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Do you have the Holy Spirit in you, transforming and empowering you to live for Him? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Do you believe what God says in Scripture about salvation and Christian living? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Can you in good conscience say that you are rejecting sin and living the Christian life? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Will you use the unique gifts God has given you by volunteering on a ministry team? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Will you participate in worship, connect with others in a group, and seek God privately? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Will you support the ministry by growing in generosity by giving of your finances? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

IF YOU CAN ANSWER YES TO ALL OF THESE QUESTIONS,
then you are ready for Partnership! If you were unsure or not able to answer yes to some of the questions, we encourage you to consider "Prepare" or "Participate" for your Next Step.

YOUR NEXT STEP

REVIEW & CHECK ONE OF THE OPTIONS BELOW

Get ready for God to do amazing things with your Next Step!



PARTNER

I am ready and all in!
Continue to the Partnership Pledge on the next page.



PREPARE

I want to be ready, but need to take some Next Steps first.
Let's set up a time to meet so we can find your perfect Next Step!



PARTICIPATE

I want to take more time getting to know New Life, and God.
Connect with us to learn more ways you can get involved with your faith.



YOUR NEXT STEP

LET'S CONNECT ABOUT YOUR CHOICE!

Your information is kept confidential.

NAME

DATE OF BIRTH

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE

ZIP CODE

EMAIL

PHONE

CARRIER

☐ CELL ☐ HOME

Marital Status: ☐ SINGLE ☐ MARRIED ☐ WIDOWED ☐ DIVORCED

If your spouse attends New Life with you, please list name and date of birth:

If you have any children that attend New Life with you,
please list his/her name and date of birth:

COMMENTS

How was your experience and would you recommend this class/event to others?



New Life Ministries' **PARTNERSHIP PLEDGE**

You have carefully considered and agree with the following statements,
determining you are ready to commit to Partnership with New Life.

I am confident that I am saved by placing my faith in Jesus Christ, and have been
baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.

I have the Holy Spirit in me, transforming and empowering me to live for Him.

I believe what God says in Scripture about salvation and Christian living.

In good conscience, I can say that I am rejecting sin and living the Christian life.

I will use the unique gifts God has given me, by volunteering on a ministry team.

I will participate in worship, connect with others in a group, and seek God privately.

I will support the ministry by growing in generosity by giving of my finances.

Sign and date this pledge as an outward expression of an inward
commitment, and congratulations! Welcome home.

PRINTED NAME _____

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

PASTOR'S SIGNATURE _____

Thank You

for your commitment to Christ and New Life.

*Together we will pursue the vision to Raise Up, Reach Out, and Restore Lives and
will uphold our Mission to Love God, Love People, and Make Disciples.*



PLEASE KEEP THIS COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS

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