

The Newcomer's Guide to Lakeview Community Church

We're so glad you've decided to take this very important step of learning more about our church. This guide should help you see who we are, what we're about, and how you might be able to fit yourself in to what's going on here at Lakeview. We certainly are grateful for your interest, and we want you to know that we need you to fit in and be a part of what we're doing in order for us to grow in healthy ways as a church together. By the end of this guide you should also have a pretty good idea of what would be expected of you if you were to take the next step of becoming a member of Lakeview Community Church.

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I. Our Affiliation and History:

In this section you should learn a little about who we are, where we've come from, and where we're headed. You're attending this class at an interesting time in the life of our church, as you might have gathered already. This should fill you in on some of the details.



Affiliation: Lakeview is part of the Evangelical Free Churches of America (EFCA), which is headquartered in Minneapolis, MN. There are approximately 1,500 EFCA churches in the US, which is divided up into 17 regional districts. Our district consists of the states of Texas and Oklahoma (excluding El Paso), and our district superintendent is Dr. Bob Rowley. Though we are technically “free” in the sense that there are no demands made of us, we align ourselves with the EFCA and comply willingly with other EFCA churches. Part of this affiliation is that we share our resources in what is called the “FairShare” program. Each church pledges to give 1% of its annual budget to the national office, and 2% to the district office. Our affiliation with the EFCA affords us invaluable

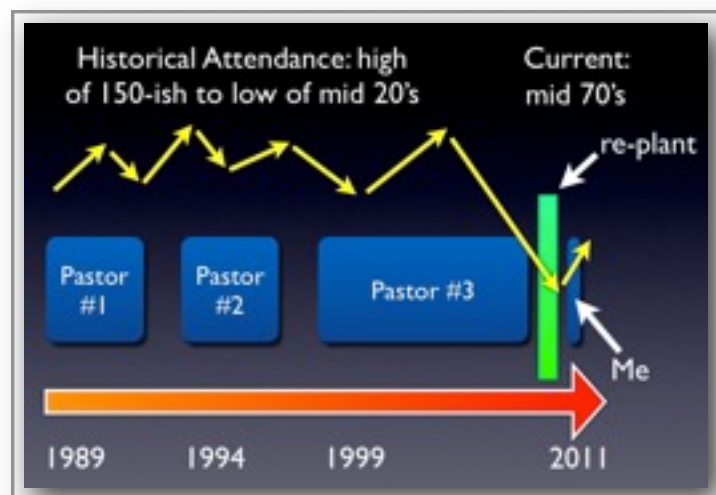
resources and training opportunities for leaders and members, as well as wonderful accountability and support. As our district motto goes: “We’re better together!”

History: Our church was started in 1988 by a group of people from Faith Bible Church in DeSoto, TX. They met at the home of then-Dallas Theological Seminary student, Dave Stevens, and his wife Cathy. There were about six couples who joined together to make Dave's idea of planting a smaller outreach church in nearby Cedar Hill become a reality, and they met together for about six months before moving into a rented church building on US 67 near Pleasant Run Road. Suggestions for naming the new church were submitted by members of the group and a name was chosen honoring the new lake under construction adjacent to Cedar Hill (Joe Pool Lake, I believe).

A generous friend of the young church donated a large parcel of land on Mt. Lebanon Road in Cedar Hill, enabling the group to construct the present building, and they moved into it early in 1991.

Dave Stevens pastored Lakeview for five years, and then he and his family returned to the east coast. A pastor search committee then found and invited Steve and Tricia Thompson. Steve and Tricia also stayed at Lakeview for five years before moving to Hawaii. In 1999 the building was enlarged with the addition of three classrooms. Paul Kozar, his wife Pam, and their children Matt and Elizabeth were welcomed to Lakeview at that time. After twelve years of faithful

service, Paul notified the church in early 2011 that he and his family would be moving on. He left at the end of April, which is where I (Daniel Lowery) come in. I'm the church's 4th pastor, and with my wife, Lauren, and daughter Edie, we started our tenure here in May of 2011. The church, at the suggestion of our district, underwent a "re-plant" of sorts, treating the situation as much like a new church plant as possible.



Future: Our outlook is quite positive here at Lakeview, as these are exciting times to be a part, indeed. As of our "re-plant" efforts in May of 2011, we have seen very encouraging signs of growth towards health. God has been at work among us, as anyone who's been a part would no doubt attest. Much of what will follow in this guide reflects the "growing pains" of our current state. Much of it is being reworked in an attempt to make it clearer and perhaps also simpler. As the signs often say in stores being renovated: "please excuse our dust". We're a work in progress, so please bear with us!

II. Our Statements and Strategy:

In this section you should find out a little bit about what we believe, and how we feel we should go about responding to what we believe. We'll begin with our church's constitution, which includes our "Declaration of Faith", among other things. For clarity's sake (and for strategic skimming!), the constitution will be marked by a different color font (a dark blue). Some of this might still be a little unclear after you've read through it, so we'll follow this up with some illustrations that should help make some things a little more clear.

CONSTITUTION

Preamble

In order to affirm and preserve the principles of our faith, to guarantee that this body may be governed in an orderly and efficient manner consistent with the Scriptures, and for the purposes of preserving the unity of this church, the liberties inherent in each individual member, and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to other churches of the same faith, we do declare and establish this constitution.

Article I — Name

The name of this church shall be the Lakeview Community Evangelical Free Church of Cedar Hill, Texas, incorporated under the laws of the state of Texas, April 21, 1989.

Article II — Purpose

The purpose of which this church is established is to honor our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, by carrying out his command to make disciples of all nations (Matt 28.18-20). This work involves both winning the lost and equipping the saved (Eph 4.11-16), and is carried out through providing for and promoting:

1. The worship of God,
2. the teaching of Scriptures,
3. meaningful fellowship among believers, and,
4. outreach into the community and the world in evangelism and service.

Article III — Declaration of Faith

1. **The Bible** — We believe that the Bible is God's inspired Word, that it is absolutely trustworthy and has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct (2 Tim 3.16-17; 2 Pet 1.19-21).
2. **The Trinity** — We believe that there is but one living and true God, the Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of all things, who is perfect in holiness, infinite in wisdom, and measureless in power. He exists eternally in three persons—Father, Son and

- Holy Spirit, all possessing the same nature and attributes yet each distinct in office and activity (Deut 6.4; 1 Chron 29.11-12; Matt 28.19; Rom 11.33; Rev 4.1).
3. **Jesus Christ** — We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten son, conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, fully God and fully man, and who made atonement for the sins of the world by his death on the cross as a substitutionary sacrifice. We believe in his bodily resurrection and ascension into heaven, his high priestly intercession for his people, and his personal, visible return to the world according to his promise (Luke 1.34-35; John 14.9; Rom 3.24-26, 4.25; 1 Cor 15.4, 20-24; Phil 2.9-10; Heb 4.14-16; 1 Thes 4.13-17).
 4. **The Holy Spirit** — We believe in the Holy Spirit, who convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment; who regenerates, baptizes, indwells, seals, and sanctifies those who believe in Jesus Christ (John 3.3-7, 16.8-11; Rom 8.9; 1 Cor 6.11, 12.12-13; Eph 1.13).
 5. **Man** — We believe that man was created in the image of God but fell into sin; that as a result, all men are sinners by nature and by choice, and are unable apart from divine grace to establish fellowship with God (Gen 1.26; Rom 3.23, 5.12, 19; Eph 2.1-2; Titus 3.5-7).
 6. **Salvation** — We believe that salvation is based on the shed blood and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ and that it is received by grace through faith, not of works. We believe that those who receive by faith Jesus Christ as Savior will rejoice eternally in God's presence, while those who do not will be eternally separated from God in conscious punishment (Matt 13.40-43; John 1.12, 10.27-29; Rom 8.28-30; Eph 2.8-9).
 7. **The Church** — We believe that the true Church is composed of all such persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit and are unified together in the body of Christ of which he is the head (Eph 1.22-23; Col 1.18).
 8. **The Ordinances** — We believe that the ordinances of the church, to be observed until Christ's return, are baptism and the Lord's supper. They themselves have no saving merit, but are symbols of Gospel truths (Matt 28.19; Luke 22.19-20; Rom 6.3-5; 1 Cor 11.23-26).
 9. **The End Times** — We believe in the personal, pre-millennial coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and this "Blessed Hope" has a vital bearing on the personal life and service of the believer (Acts 1.11; 1 Thes 4.16-18; Titus 2.13-14).

Article IV — Membership

Any person who professes faith in Jesus Christ as his or her personal savior, and who is in substantial agreement with the "Declaration of Faith" (Article III, above) and the By-laws is eligible for membership.

Article V — Form of Government

The government of this church is vested in its members, and it is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body.

Article VI – Officers

The officers of this church are the Senior Pastor and Elder(s), and the By-laws shall determine their election, term, and succession. The church shall elect and appoint to the various forms of service indicated by their titles as defined in the By-laws such other officers as are deemed advisable.

Article VII – Meetings

The meetings shall be set forth by the By-laws.

Article VIII – Affiliation

This church shall be affiliated with the Evangelical Free Churches of America. It shall cooperate with the Evangelical Free Church at large and with its various functions that prove in accord with our purpose.

Article IX – Amendments

The Constitution may be amended in accordance with the prerequisites set forth in the By-laws (Article VII, Section 4).

Well, that ends the church constitution portion of the guide. Next we'll move to a discussion of what we're coming to understand our mission and purpose is, as a church (not really changing the constitutional purposes, above, just making them a bit clearer).

The Mission of Lakeview Community Church: *to glorify God as a healthy church that makes disciples.* We will be healthy and accomplish this mission only by giving attention to each of the five primary purposes of church, as pictured below. The process begins with (1) **outreach**, where new followers of Christ are won. They are brought into the fold and experience (2) **fellowship** with other believers. They then begin to grow towards maturity as they are made into (3) **disciples**, or followers, of Christ. As they grow they begin to express their gifts in (4) **service** to the other members of the body, contributing towards its "growth together in love, as each does its part" (Eph 4.16). These purposes of the church are energized and controlled by the beating heart of the church, which is a vibrant and life-changing (5) **worship** of God together.

As the arrow "hands" on the illustration suggest, this process is dynamic and ongoing, moving from one to the next, like the hands of a clock. Like a clock that stops is broken (or disconnected from its power source), so is a church that "stops" on one or more of these purposes without moving consistently through all of them, over and over again. To



be healthy is to give full attention to all of them, anchored and energized by a life of individual and communal worship. *Note: we're under no illusion that we're "there yet" as a church. This is something we're working towards together (and seeing progress!).*

Our Strategy at Lakeview Community Church: Our strategy in accomplishing our mission involves first understanding what Rick Warren calls the "Five Circles of Commitment." We recognize that everyone who comes through the doors of our church (and those who don't!) fits into one of these circles. The unchurched are in our **community**, the regular attenders constitute the **crowd**, the members make up our **congregation**, the growing members constitute the **committed**, and our lay ministers form the **core** of our church. Each level, from outside moving inward, is marked by a growing commitment level to the mission and purposes of the church.

At Lakeview, it's our goal to move folks from the outside to the inside of this diagram.



That is, making disciples (a big part of our mission) involves growing our church through these circles. A church that does this in a balanced and consistent way is considered healthy. And a healthy church that makes disciples pleases God (i.e., glorifies him).

KEY: EACH OF THE PURPOSES OF THE CHURCH CORRESPONDS TO ONE OF THESE LEVELS OF COMMITMENT.

Do you see the connection? Each of the 5 purposes of the church helps us move through the levels of commitment (or grow, in other words). Bringing the community to the church at all begins with **outreach**, and the crowd gathers for church on Sunday for **worship**. Church members (that is, the congregation) experience **fellowship** in ways the crowd cannot yet, and the committed grow as they are made into more mature **disciples**. And finally, the core ministers to others in the church in their **service** towards one another.

When we say that a healthy church “makes disciples” in our mission statement, we refer to this entire process. To make a disciple begins with outreach and moves toward the

committed believer serving as a valuable contributing member of the church. Of course it doesn't stop there, as the disciple goes and finds more folks to make disciples of, starting the whole process over again.

One final note: We go about our activities with all of these purposes and commitment levels in mind. Consequently, we conduct ourselves on Sunday morning in such a way that what we do and say should be accessible to the **crowd** (which should also include some from the **community**). In other words, our communal worship on Sundays is done in such a way that the **community** and the **crowd** are not excluded, but rather are drawn in. Though the **congregation** can and should be built up and encouraged by Sundays, we have other activities to grow our members into more **committed**, and even **core** members. In other words, in no way do we expect Sunday service will fully “equip” the **committed** and the **core** members. For example, our small group ministry exists to strengthen our fellowship, grow us as disciples, and to provide opportunities for service as leaders and leaders in training.

III. Our Structure:

In this section you'll get a look “under our hood” to see how we operate as a church. You should also consider in this section how you might fit into all of this as a potential member of our church. As you'll see, there are still many ways to pitch in and help us grow—many different ways you can fit in and play a part. Note once more that a lot of this is “under construction,” but you should still be able to come away from this section with a lot better idea of how things work around here. Note also that a visual version of our leadership structure forms the appendix.

General Structural Elements:

1. **Political Structure:** Lakeview Community Church holds to a congregational form of government. This means that the members (i.e., congregation) elect church officers (such as elders and deacons), vote on the call or dismissal of a pastor, and are the final authority on all major issues.
2. **Staff:** Currently the church has two paid staff members: a pastor (full-time) and a music minister (on a part-time basis).
3. **Elders:** The elders of the church generally oversee the spiritual matters of the church. We are currently being led by a team of overseers functioning in an elder capacity called our “Steering Team.” You may find the names of our Steering Team in the chart below. Note that we will soon be shifting back our structure of leadership to elders and deacons. Our “Steering Team” is only temporary.
4. **Deacons:** The deacons of the church generally oversee the physical matters of the church. We are currently being led by a team of servant leaders functioning in many ways like deacons, called our “Serving Team.” You can also find the names of those currently on our Serving Team in the chart below. See note for #3, above. The same applies here.
5. **Church Meetings:** The church has an annual business meeting each year in December to vote on the next year's budget. Special congregational meetings are called as the need arises. If you'd like to see our current budget, just ask!

6. **Source of Income:** The church's sole source of income is through the giving of those who attend. This is how the church supports itself.
7. **Facilities:** Our current building is owned by the church outright, and it sits on 10 acres (or so) which it currently shares (i.e., rents) with the Cedar Hill Soccer Association.

Specific Leadership Structure/Areas for Service:

The names in parentheses indicate the person serving in the stated capacity. When no name exists, that indicates a leadership need (that you can possibly fill!). For clarity's sake, the needs are highlighted in red. *Of course, any and all areas you're interested in could likely use your help even if there's already a leader in place!* Note that Steering and Serving Teams are not highlighted in red, but if you should aspire to serve in these capacities, please do let us know. The same applies for those aspiring to lead a small group, though every leader must first serve as an apprentice.

1. **Steering Team** (in alphabetical order by last name): James Fincher, Eric Hoff, Doug Hudgin, Daniel Lowery, Dave Lowery, Dale Magee, Steve Miller, Brian Trogdon
 - 1.1. Small Groups (Daniel Lowery)
 - 1.1.1. Sunday Group (Leader: Eric Hoff & James Fincher, Apprentice: Sean Isom)
 - 1.1.2. Tuesday Group (Leader: Daniel Lowery, Apprentice: Daniel Miller)
 - 1.1.3. Wednesday Group (Leader: Brian Trogdon, Apprentice: Dale Magee)
 - 1.1.4. Thursday Group (Leader: Dave Lowery, Apprentice: Jim Matthews)
 - 1.2. Sunday Service (Daniel Lowery)
 - 1.2.1. Music (Daniel Miller)
 - 1.2.2. Communion administration (Karen Hudgin & Laura Fincher)
 - 1.2.3. Scripture Reading (Music Team)
 - 1.2.4. Offering (Mark Brynsvold)
 - 1.3. **Children's Ministry**
 - 1.3.1. Promise Land (Katy Hoff)
 - 1.3.2. Nursery (Lea Anne Edwards)
 - 1.4. Mission & Outreach (Debbie Miller & Dan Hill)
 - 1.5. **Men's Ministry**
 - 1.6. **Women's Ministry**
2. **Serving Team** (in alphabetical order by last name): Mark Brynsvold, Joey Edwards, Drew Epperley, Karen Hudgin, Donna Magee, Jeff McCallister
 - 2.1. **Maintenance**
 - 2.1.1. **Lawn & flowers**
 - 2.1.2. **Repairs**
 - 2.1.3. **Workdays**
 - 2.2. Finance (Mark Brynsvold)
 - 2.2.1. Finance Secretary (Donna Magee)
 - 2.3. Hospitality (Donna Magee or Karen Hudgin)
 - 2.3.1. **Showers**

- 2.3.2. Potlucks
- 2.3.3. Meals on Wheels
- 2.4. Cleaning (Donna Magee or Karen Hudgin)
- 2.5. Sunday Tasks (Joey Edwards)
 - 2.5.1. Communion preparation
 - 2.5.2. Making coffee
 - 2.5.3. Handling A/C units
 - 2.5.4. Emptying trash
 - 2.5.5. Tracking attendance figures
 - 2.5.6. Locking the building up
 - 2.5.7. Folding the bulletin
 - 2.5.8. Handling the lights
- 2.6. Greeters/Assimilation (Jeff McCallister)
 - 2.6.1. Visitor info (Adelle Trogdon)
 - 2.6.2. Parking lot and door greeting (Bob Neill)
 - 2.6.3. Sanctuary greeters
 - 2.6.4. Sneaky Lunch team
- 2.7. Kitchen (Donna Magee or Karen Hudgin)
- 2.8. Technology (Drew Epperley)
 - 2.8.1. Bulletin (Gerri Trogdon, Lea Anne Edwards, Karen Hudgin)
 - 2.8.2. Website (Drew Epperley)
 - 2.8.3. Sound room Technicians (Zach Miller, but we need 3 or 4 more)
 - 2.8.4. Copier
 - 2.8.5. Projector
- 2.9. Supplies (Donna Magee or Karen Hudgin)

Remember, the red areas indicate that no leader currently is serving in this capacity. If you're interested and/or gifted in some of the other areas, please speak up because the leaders would definitely love to have your help as we seek to grow this church "together in love, as each does its part" (Eph 4.16).

IV. Our Members

This section will give you a better idea of what would be expected of you if you were to join Lakeview Community Church as a member. First of all, the relevant section of the By-laws will be included concerning membership (the remainder of the by-laws are currently being re-typed. A digital file of an older copy can be obtained upon request). Once again, this will be marked by a blue font. This will be followed by a Member Covenant that we'll ask you to sign, so you know what you're getting into and we know you know it! Note: see also the relevant section of the church constitution, above (Article IV – Membership).

From our By-laws:

Article I – Membership

1. **Qualifications:** To be received into this church, each person shall have:

- a. Professed faith in Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior.
- b. Expressed substantial agreement with the “Declaration of Faith” and the By-laws.
2. **Procedure:** An examination committee, appointed by the board of elders and composed of at least two of its members, shall examine each candidate for membership concerning these qualifications. The membership of the church shall consist of those who are received by vote of the church on recommendation of the senior pastor and elders.
3. **Recognition:** The senior pastor, elders, and members shall extend to all new members the right hand of fellowship in recognition of the admission to all rights and privileges of the church.
4. **Duties:** Members are expected to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life. In addition,
 - a. Every person wishing to unite with this church shall be instructed as to the significance and importance of believer’s baptism according to the Scriptures (Matt 28.19; Acts 2.41, 8.38, 18.18; Rom 6.3-5).
 - b. Every person wishing to unite with this church shall be instructed as to the responsibilities of the church membership, including attendance at church business meetings.
5. **Dismissal:** All dismissals shall be made upon the recommendation of the senior pastor and the elders of the church.
 - a. Any member in good and regular standing who so desires may obtain a letter of dismissal to attend another church.
 - b. Any member who shall unite with any other church shall be dropped automatically from the church roll.
 - c. Any member absent without reasonable excuse for six months from normal service or ministries of the church shall be contacted by the pastor or his designee to ascertain whether there is continued interest in membership. Every effort shall be made to restore the member to active fellowship. If the member shows no interest, or if the member cannot be contacted with a concerted effort, or if the member has left the geographic area, that member shall be dropped from the membership rolls, upon recommendation by the elders and a two-thirds vote of the members at any business meeting.
 - d. It shall be the duty of the elders to examine the membership roll prior to the business meeting to recommend exclusion of delinquent members.
 - e. A member may be subject to dismissal by church discipline (see Article II of the By-laws).

The following 2 pages contain the Member Covenant, below.

Member Covenant:

This portion of the Newcomer's Guide should be printed up, detached & stapled, and brought with the potential member to their membership interview. Note that Scripture quotations below are all from the New Living Translation unless otherwise stated.

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and being in agreement with Lakeview's statements, strategy, and structure, I now desire to unite myself with the Lakeview Community Church family. In so doing, *I commit myself to God and to other members to do the following:*

1. I will **protect the unity** of my church
 - ...by acting in love towards other members
 - ...by refusing to gossip
 - ...by following the leaders

"So then, let us aim for harmony in the church and try to build each other up." (Rom 14:19)

"You were cleansed from your sins when you obeyed the truth, so now you must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters. Love each other deeply with all your heart." (1 Pet 1:22)

"Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them." (Eph 4:29)

"Obey your spiritual leaders, and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this with joy and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit." (Heb 13:17)

2. I will **share the responsibility** of my church
 - ...by praying for its growth
 - ...by inviting the unchurched to attend
 - ...by warmly welcoming those who visit

"...to the church... We always thank God for all of you and pray for you constantly." (1Thes 1:1-2)

"So his master said, 'Go out into the country lanes and behind the hedges and urge anyone you find to come, so that the house will be full.'" (Luke 14:23)

"Therefore, accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory." (Rom 15:7)

- 3. I will **serve the ministry** of my church
 - ...by discovering my gifts and talents
 - ...by being equipped to serve by the leaders
 - ...by developing a servant's heart

"God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another." (1 Pet 4:10)

"Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ." (Eph 4:11-12)

"Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had." (Phil 2:3-5)

- 4. I will **support the testimony** of my church
 - ...by attending faithfully
 - ...by being an active participant in a small group
 - ...by living a godly life
 - ...by giving regularly

"And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near." (Heb 10:25)

"Above all, you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ." (Phil 1:27)

"On the first day of each week, you should each put aside a portion of the money you have earned. Don't wait until I get there and then try to collect it all at once." (1 Cor 16:2)

"One tenth of [all] the produce... belongs to the LORD and must be set apart to him as holy." (Lev 27:30)

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

