

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH

Towson, Maryland · Founded 1890

MEMBERSHIP CLASS

Church Covenant Course

A Four-Week Journey from Visitor to Covenant Member

May 2026.

Source Declaration: All content is extracted directly from the Calvary Baptist Church Ministry Master Plan (341 pages, compiled 2025–2026). Mission Statement (p.308); Vision (p.308); Identity Statement (p.308); Core Values (p.309); Church Covenant (pp.310–311); Five Discipleship Stages (pp.172–173); Membership Class outline (p.173); SHAPE Framework (p.126); Onboarding Flow (pp.139, 164); Retention research (pp.119, 126, 165); Ministry Role descriptions (pp.159–161). Curriculum compiled by Rev. Emmanuel O. Faleye, May 2026.

Welcome to the Membership Class

Dear Friend,

You are holding in your hands something more than a workbook. This four-week course is an invitation — an invitation to move from attending Calvary Baptist Church to belonging to it.

Membership in a local church is not a formality. It is not simply adding your name to a list. In the New Testament, belonging to a local church was a serious, visible, accountable commitment — a covenant made before God and with a community of believers who would walk with you, pray for you, correct you, celebrate with you, serve alongside you, and send you out.

About This Course

This 4-week curriculum is Calvary Baptist Church's formal pathway to membership. Every person who wishes to join Calvary as a covenant member passes through this course, held quarterly. It is not a lecture series — it is a formation experience. Each session combines biblical teaching, personal reflection, group discussion, and a practical action step that connects the candidate fully to the Calvary family.

The Four Sessions

The four questions we will explore together are the most important questions you will ever answer about your life in community with God's people:

Week 1	WHO IS GOD?	The gospel, salvation, and what God demands of us
Week 2	WHO ARE WE?	Calvary's history, mission, vision, values, and theology— what is Calvary Baptist Church, what do we believe, and where are we going?
Week 3	WHO ARE YOU?	Your personal testimony, and Spiritual gifts — what gifts has God placed in you, and what is your calling?
Week 4	WHAT DO WE COVENANT?	Church membership as a sacred covenant commitment— what am I actually committing to when I join this church?

We take this class seriously because we take you seriously. We are not looking for members who will fill a seat. We are looking for ministers who will own a mission.

At the end of Week 4, you will meet individually with the Lead Pastor. Those who are ready will be received into membership at the next Sunday service — publicly welcomed, prayed over, and immediately connected to a small group and a serving role.

Welcome to the family. Let's begin.

In Christ,

Rev. Emmanuel Oluwalagbara Faleye

Lead Pastor, Calvary Baptist Church

How This Course Works

Format & Schedule

Frequency & Format	Quarterly — offered 4 times per year Four weekly sessions, The class meets as a group. Some material is taught, some is discussed, and some is personal reflection.
Group size	Open to all interested; no minimum or maximum
Location	Church fellowship space; comfortable, relational setting
Facilitator	The Pastor (or designated elder/deacon)
After completion	After Week 4, Individual meeting with the Pastor for a brief personal conversation before being received into membership.; membership received at next Sunday service

THE FIVE STAGES OF DISCIPLESHIP AT CALVARY

Every person at Calvary is somewhere on this pathway. This course moves a person from Stage 1 (Guest) to Stage 3 (Member), and sets them on the trajectory toward Stages 4 and 5.

1

GUEST

First-time or occasional attendee. Not yet connected.

Priority: Warm welcome, personal follow-up within 48 hours, clear pathway communicated.

2

ATTENDEE

Regular Sunday attender. Knows some people but not yet in community.

Priority: Invitation to a small group and/or a connecting conversation with the pastor.

3

MEMBER – where you are now

Formally joined through the Church Covenant Course. In a small group. Understands the vision.

Priority: Gifts discovery and invitation to serve. ← THIS IS WHERE THIS CURRICULUM LEADS.

4

SERVING MEMBER

Active volunteer in at least one ministry area. Serving monthly. Growing in role.

Priority: Development into ministry leadership; theological deepening through midweek study.

5

MINISTER / LEADER

Leading a ministry area. Discipling others. Developed toward church planting.

Priority: Formal mentorship, theological training, and eventual sending.

WEEK 1 OF 4

Who Is God?

Key Scripture: John 3:16; Romans 3:21–26; 1 Corinthians 15:1–4

Everything we do as a church, everything we ask of you as a member, rests on this foundation: who God is and what He has done in Jesus Christ. Before we talk about Calvary, before we talk about your gifts, before we talk about the covenant — we must first be clear on the gospel itself. Without this, nothing else makes sense.

1.1 The Character of God

The Bible reveals God as the eternal, self-existent Creator and Sustainer of all things. He is infinite, personal, and perfectly holy. He is not distant or indifferent — He is actively present in His creation and He speaks. His primary self-revelation is through Scripture and supremely through His Son, Jesus Christ.

ATTRIBUTE OF GOD	MEANING AND SCRIPTURE
God is Holy	Set apart, morally perfect, utterly without sin. He cannot tolerate or overlook unrighteousness. (Isaiah 6:3; Habakkuk 1:13)
God is Just	He governs the universe with perfect justice. Sin must be accounted for. There is no moral ledger that goes unbalanced before God. (Deuteronomy 32:4; Romans 2:5–6)
God is Loving	He is not merely capable of love — He IS love. His love is not sentimental. It moves toward action, sacrifice, and covenant. (1 John 4:8; John 3:16)
God is Sovereign	He rules over all of history, all nations, all circumstances. Nothing surprises Him. Nothing defeats Him. (Isaiah 46:10; Daniel 4:35)
God is Trinity	One God eternally existing in three co-equal, co-eternal Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Not three Gods. Not one God wearing three hats. One God, three Persons. (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)
God is Faithful	He keeps every promise He has ever made. His word does not fail. His covenant does not collapse. (Lamentations 3:22–23; Numbers 23:19)

1.2 The Human Problem

The Bible has a word for what is wrong with every human being: sin. Sin is not merely wrongdoing. It is a fundamental orientation of the human heart away from God — a posture of independence and rebellion that began with the first humans (Genesis 3) and has been inherited by every person since.

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

— **Romans 3:23**

The consequences of sin are not merely moral — they are relational and eternal. Sin has broken our relationship with God, with one another, and with the world. Left unaddressed, it leads to spiritual death — permanent separation from the God who made us and for whom we were made.

- Sin is not just what we do — it is what we are. Our nature is bent toward self and away from God.
- No amount of good works, religious effort, or moral improvement can bridge the gap sin has created.
- Every human being — without exception — stands before God in need of rescue.

1.3 The Gospel — God's Rescue

The word "gospel" means good news. The gospel is the announcement that God has acted in history to do what human beings could not do for themselves: rescue sinners and restore the broken relationship between humanity and God. This rescue came through Jesus Christ.

"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." — 1 Corinthians 15:3–4

The gospel has four essential movements. All four are necessary. Removing any one of them changes the gospel into something else.

THE GOSPEL IN FOUR MOVEMENTS	CONTENT
GOD	God is the holy and just Creator who is rightfully offended by sin. He is also the loving Father who initiates rescue. The gospel begins with who God is — not with human need.
MAN	Every human being has sinned and is under God's just judgment. We cannot save ourselves, improve ourselves into acceptance, or earn God's favour by religious effort.
CHRIST	Jesus Christ — fully God and fully man — lived the perfect life we could not live, died the death we deserved, was buried, and rose bodily from the dead on the third day. His resurrection is not symbolic — it is historical. It is the vindication of His atoning work.
RESPONSE	God calls every person to respond to this news with repentance (a genuine turning from sin and self-rule) and faith (trusting in Christ alone — not Christ plus anything else). This response produces a new life, a new community, and new purpose.

1.4 What the Gospel Demands

The gospel is not merely information to be believed — it is a claim upon the whole of a person's life. Paul writes that those who are in Christ are "a new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17). This has profound implications.

- Repentance is not merely feeling sorry for sin — it is a genuine turning away from sin and self-rule, and a turning toward God. It is a reorientation of the whole life.
- Faith is not merely intellectual agreement with facts about Jesus — it is a personal trust in the person of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. "Lord" means He has authority over your life. "Saviour" means you trust Him completely for your rescue.
- The gospel demands community. The New Testament knows nothing of a Christian who is not part of a local church. Salvation is individual; discipleship is communal.
- The gospel demands obedience — not to earn salvation, but as the fruit of it. Those who are saved are saved for good works (Ephesians 2:8–10).
- The gospel demands witness. Those who have received good news do not hoard it. They share it.

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."
— Ephesians 2:8–10

1.5 The Holy Spirit

The gospel does not leave you to obey in your own strength. At the moment of genuine faith, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in the believer. He is not a force or an experience — He is the third Person of the Trinity, fully God, personally present within every true Christian.

- The Spirit produces in us the character of Christ over time — love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22–23).
- The Spirit gives each believer spiritual gifts — abilities for building up the church and advancing God's mission (1 Corinthians 12:7–11).
- The Spirit intercedes for us in prayer when we do not know what to pray (Romans 8:26–27).
- The Spirit seals us — guaranteeing our final inheritance in Christ (Ephesians 1:13–14).

1.6 What Calvary Believes — Core Doctrinal Commitments

Calvary Baptist Church holds to the historic evangelical faith as summarised in Baptist confessional tradition. The following represents our core theological commitments.

DOCTRINE	CALVARY'S POSITION
Scripture	The Bible — 66 books of the Old and New Testaments — is the inspired, inerrant, and sufficient Word of God. It is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice.
The Trinity	There is one God, eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each Person is fully and equally God.
Jesus Christ	Jesus is fully God and fully man. He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died a substitutionary atoning death, rose bodily from the dead, ascended to the Father, and will return bodily to judge the living and the dead.
Salvation	Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. It is God's gift — not a human achievement. Justification (being declared righteous before God) is by faith alone, not by works.
The Church	The local church is the primary community in which Christians live the gospel. Membership is meaningful. The church gathers for worship, teaching, prayer, fellowship, and the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
Baptism	Baptism is by immersion of believers only — those who have repented of sin and trusted in Christ. It is a public declaration of faith, not a means of salvation.
Lord's Supper	Communion is a memorial ordinance proclaiming the Lord's death until He comes. It is for baptised believers who are walking in faith.
The Return of Christ	Jesus will return bodily, visibly, and in judgment. All who have died will be resurrected — believers to eternal life, unbelievers to eternal judgment. This hope shapes how we live now.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In your own words, what is the gospel? Try to explain it in 2–3 sentences as if to someone who has never heard it.
2. What part of the gospel is most personally significant to you right now, and why?
3. What does it mean to you that salvation is "by grace alone, through faith alone"? What does that rule out?
4. What does it mean that Jesus is "Lord" — not just Saviour? Where does that claim feel most challenging in your daily life?
5. What questions do you have about God, the gospel, or Calvary's doctrine?

BEFORE NEXT WEEK

- ☐ Read Romans 3:21–26 slowly. Write down: (1) what God did, (2) what it cost, (3) what we receive.
- ☐ Read 1 Corinthians 15:1–11. List every historical fact Paul states. Why does he say "if Christ has not been raised"?
- ☐ Write a 1-paragraph version of your personal testimony: your life before Christ, how you came to faith, and how your life has changed.
- ☐ Bring your testimony draft to Week 3 — you will share it there.

WEEK 2 OF 4

Who Are We?*Key Scripture: 1 Peter 2:9–10; Ephesians 4:1–16; Acts 2:42–47*

Now that we are clear on who God is and what the gospel demands, we turn to a more specific question: who is Calvary Baptist Church? Before you commit to a community, you need to know what that community is — its history, its identity, its doctrine, and its direction. This week answers that question fully.

2.1 Our History — 135 Years of Grace

Calvary Baptist Church was founded in December 1889 in Towson, Maryland — one of the oldest Baptist congregations in the Towson/Baltimore area, with a 135-year legacy of worship, service, and community presence. The church has served through generations of neighbourhood change, including sponsoring Cuban refugees (1965), Vietnamese families (1980s). 135 years of history in this community. The church celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2015.

2.2 Our Identity — Who We Are in Christ

"You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God."

— 1 Peter 2:9–10

Identity Statement: "We are Calvary Baptist Church — a chosen people, called by God out of darkness into His marvelous light. We are a royal priesthood, consecrated to offer spiritual sacrifices and declare God's excellencies. We are a holy nation, set apart for His purposes in this city and generation. We are God's own possession, belonging not to our traditions, our preferences, or our past — but to Him alone."

IDENTITY ELEMENT	MEANING FOR CALVARY
A Chosen People	Our existence as a church is not an accident. God has chosen and gathered us for His purposes in Towson in this generation.
A Royal Priesthood	Every believer has direct access to God and the responsibility to bring others to Him. There is no separate clergy class that stands between you and God.
A Holy Nation	We are set apart — not isolated from the world, but distinct from the world's values and operating by different standards.
God's Own Possession	We do not belong to tradition, preference, or institutional history. We belong to God. He sets the agenda.

2.3 Our Mission — Why We Exist

"Calvary Baptist Church exists to glorify God, united in Christ, devoted to biblical teaching, fellowship, prayer, worship, service, and the making of disciples of all nations."
— CBC Mission Statement

2.4 Our Vision — Where We Are Going

"Calvary Baptist Church envisions a Christ-centred, multicultural community where people of all ages and backgrounds are transformed by the gospel and equipped to serve God's kingdom in Towson and beyond."
— CBC Vision Statement

The vision is multicultural by design — not as a social programme, but as a theological conviction. Revelation 7:9 pictures the final gathering of God's people as "a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language."

2.5 Our Core Values — How We Make Decisions

Values are not aspirations printed on a wall. They are the actual convictions that drive how a community behaves when it has to choose. The following seven values have been formally adopted by Calvary Baptist Church.

CORE VALUE	WHAT IT MEANS IN PRACTICE
A. Identity Before Strategy	Who we are defines what we do. All ministry plans must answer: "How does this reflect who we are in Christ?" We prioritise identity over tradition and people over buildings.
B. Mission Over Institution	Every programme, structure, and budget must serve the mission — not protect the institution. If a structure is not advancing the mission, it must be changed or removed.
C. Biblical Teaching	We devote ourselves to the biblical teaching as the foundation of spiritual growth. The Bible drives the sermon, the sermon drives the church's values, and the values drive the culture.
D. Authentic Community	We pursue genuine togetherness — real fellowship, not performed community. We bear one another's burdens. We know each other's names, families, and struggles.
E. Discipleship Culture	We make disciples — not converts, not attenders. Making disciples means teaching people to obey everything Christ commanded (Matthew 28:20), which takes time and intentionality.
F. Compassion and Service	We serve the needy within and beyond our congregation. The gospel produces generosity. We are a tangible expression of the gospel in our community.
G. Worship, Praise, and Prayer	We are a praying church. Prayer is not a preliminary to the real work — it IS the work. Prayer is the lifeline of the church. Worship is a lifestyle, not an event. Our prayer meeting is the engine room of everything we do.

2.6 Our Structure — How We Are Organised

Calvary operates according to the Jethro Model of distributed leadership (Exodus 18:17–23). Four tiers of leadership ensure that care, service, and oversight are spread throughout the congregation — not centralised in one person.

LEADERSHIP TIER	ROLE AND SCOPE
Tier 1 — Lead Pastor	Spiritual oversight, doctrine, vision, prayer, final decisions. The Lead/Senior Pastor
Tier 2 — Department Leaders	Each major ministry area (Worship, Discipleship, Outreach, Children, Youth, Care, Administration, Hospitality, Prayer, Missions) has a named leader accountable to the Lead Pastor.
Tier 3 — Ministry Team Leaders	Each team within a department has a named leader who coordinates volunteers and resolves routine issues.
Tier 4 — Volunteers	Every member of Calvary is a minister — a servant with a role, a responsibility, and a relationship to the community they serve.

2.7 Our Practices — What We Do Together

When you join Calvary, you are joining a specific rhythm of gathered life. These are not optional extras — they are the practices that form us as disciples and bind us together as community.

GATHERING	PURPOSE AND EXPECTATION
Sunday Worship (11:00 AM)	Corporate worship, expository preaching, the Lord's Supper (monthly), congregational prayer. Arrive by 9:45 AM for Sunday School.
Sunday School (9:45 AM)	Age-graded Bible teaching: Adults, Youth (13–18), Children (3–12). This is not optional for members — it is the primary discipleship gathering.
Thursday Prayer Meeting (10.30 AM)	The single most important weekly gathering at Calvary. Intercession for souls, members, and the community.
Home Cell Fellowship	Bi-weekly small group in a member's home. Structure: Meal → Scripture → Prayer → Care. This is where real community is formed.
Tuesday Outreach (11.30 AM)	Weekly street evangelism in the Towson community. Teams of two. Every member is expected to participate at minimum once per month.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What drew you to Calvary Baptist Church specifically? What made you want to explore membership here rather than somewhere else?
2. Which of Calvary's seven core values resonates most deeply with you, and which challenges you the most?
3. Looking at the Sunday schedule and weekly rhythm — which gathering will be the most challenging for you to attend consistently, and why?
5. Is there anything about Calvary's theology, direction, or structure that you have questions or concerns about?

WEEK 3 OF 4

Who Are You?*Key Scripture: 1 Peter 4:10; 1 Corinthians 12:4–11; Romans 12:1–8*

We have established who God is and who Calvary is. Now the most personal question: who are you? Not who does the world say you are — not your job title, your nationality, your past, or your performance. Who has God made you, and what has He placed in you for the building up of His church? This week is about gifts, testimony, and calling.

1. Sharing Your Personal Testimony

Invite each candidate to share their 2–3 minute testimony. Facilitator listens actively and affirms — not to evaluate, but to honour. This is a holy moment. The class is the first audience for every person's story.

A testimony is not a performance — it is a declaration of what God has done in your life. Every believer has one. Your testimony is one of the most powerful evangelistic tools you possess, because no one can argue with your experience.

A clear testimony has three movements:

SECTION	CONTENT AND GUIDANCE
BEFORE — Your life before Christ	What was your life like before you came to faith? What were you trusting in instead of God? This is not about how "bad" you were — it is about where you were apart from Christ.
HOW — How you came to faith	What happened? Who shared the gospel with you? What Scripture, circumstance, or person was God using? When did you repent and place your trust in Christ?— this is the heart of your testimony.
AFTER — How your life has changed	What is different now? How has the gospel changed your desires, relationships, habits, or purpose? Genuine change, however gradual, is evidence of genuine conversion.

2. Core Teaching — Every Believer Is a Minister**Ephesians 4:11–12**

“God gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers — not to DO the ministry themselves — but to equip the saints for the work of ministry.”

The entire strategy of Calvary's revitalization rests on one irreducible biblical conviction: every regenerate believer has been given a spiritual gift by the Holy Spirit, and every gift was given for the building up of the body and the advance of the gospel.

1 Peter 4:10

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.”

“While pastors and missionaries are called to THE ministry, every Christian is called to A ministry. It may not be your full-time job, but it is your lifetime calling. There is no category of “ordinary Christian” who simply sits and receives. The passive, spectator model of church membership is a cultural distortion, not a biblical one.”

3. The SHAPE Framework (15 min)

Letter	Dimension	Definition	Scripture	Examples
S	SPIRITUAL GIFTS	The specific abilities the Holy Spirit gave you for ministry	<i>1 Cor. 12; Rom. 12; Eph. 4</i>	Teaching, Mercy, Evangelism, Leadership, Helps?
H	HEART / PASSION	What burdens or excites you most about God's work	<i>Ps. 37:4; Neh. 1:4</i>	Children? Immigrants? Students? The elderly?
A	ABILITIES	Your natural talents, skills, and life competencies	<i>Exod. 31:3–5</i>	Music, admin, construction, technology, hospitality?
P	PERSONALITY	Your temperament and relational style — how God wired you	<i>Ps. 139:13–14</i>	Introvert or extrovert? Task-focused or people-focused?
E	EXPERIENCE	Your life story — including pain, failure, and redemption	<i>Rom. 8:28; 2 Cor. 1:4</i>	What has God brought you through that prepares you to serve?

3.1 The Theology of Spiritual Gifts

Every believer, at the moment of genuine faith in Christ, receives one or more spiritual gifts from the Holy Spirit. This is not reserved for an elite spiritual class — it is the common inheritance of every member of the body of Christ.

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."
— 1 Peter 4:10

Three things are non-negotiable about spiritual gifts:

1. Every believer has at least one. "Each of you" in 1 Peter 4:10 is comprehensive. If you are genuinely in Christ, you have been gifted.
2. Every gift is for others. The gifts are not primarily for your personal benefit — they are "to serve others." The sign of a genuine spiritual gift is that it builds up the body.
3. You are a steward, not an owner. You did not earn or choose your gift — you received it. The question is not "what gift do I want?" but "what has God entrusted to me, and am I deploying it faithfully?"

3.2 The Spiritual Gifts — A Survey

Scripture lists spiritual gifts in several passages (Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, 1 Peter 4). The following survey is not exhaustive — it is representative. Use it as a tool for reflection and conversation, not as a definitive catalogue.

GIFT	DESCRIPTION	SCRIPTURE S
Teaching	Communicating Scripture clearly and accurately so that others grow in understanding and apply it to their lives. Distinct from preaching — can happen in small groups, Sunday School, and one-on-one conversations.	<i>Romans 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28</i>

Encouragement	Strengthening, comforting, and urging people toward faith and obedience. Often the first gift noticed in quiet, faithful people who seem to arrive at exactly the right moment.	<i>Romans 12:8; Acts 11:23–24</i>
Leadership	Setting direction, motivating others, and taking responsibility for a group moving toward a God-honouring goal. Not domination — servant leadership.	<i>Romans 12:8; 1 Tim. 3:1–7</i>
Service/Helps	Practical assistance that enables others to use their gifts more effectively. The gift that keeps every ministry functioning. Often invisible and always indispensable.	<i>Romans 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28</i>
Giving	Generous, proportionate, joyful giving of financial and material resources to advance God's kingdom. Not a gift only for the wealthy — it is characterised by sacrifice and cheerfulness.	<i>Romans 12:8; 2 Cor. 9:6–7</i>
Mercy	Compassionate, practical care for those who are suffering — the sick, grieving, marginalised, and struggling. Distinct from general Christian compassion by its consistency and depth.	<i>Romans 12:8; Luke 10:33–35</i>
Evangelism	Communicating the gospel clearly and compellingly to unbelievers. Not the same as sharing your faith (which all Christians do) — marked by unusual effectiveness in leading others to Christ.	<i>Ephesians 4:11; Acts 8:5–6</i>
Hospitality	Creating environments where people feel genuinely welcomed and known. More than hosting — it is the spiritual capacity to make the outsider feel they belong.	<i>1 Peter 4:9; Romans 12:13</i>
Wisdom	The Spirit-given ability to apply biblical truth to complex situations and give sound counsel. Often paired with life experience but distinct from mere intelligence or knowledge.	<i>1 Cor. 12:8; James 1:5</i>
Administration	Organising people, resources, and processes so that the body can function effectively. The gift that turns vision into reality.	<i>1 Cor. 12:28; Exodus 18:21</i>
Intercession	Sustained, fervent, faith-filled prayer on behalf of others and the church's mission. Some believers are called to extraordinary depth of intercessory prayer.	<i>Romans 8:26–27; Col. 4:12</i>
Prophecy	Speaking God's word with clarity and relevance to build up, encourage, and strengthen the church. In a congregational context, primarily the gift of applying Scripture with prophetic insight.	<i>1 Cor. 14:3; Romans 12:6</i>

3.3 Discovering Your Gifts — A Reflection Exercise

Gifts are best discovered in community and in service. The following questions are not a definitive assessment — they are starting points for self-reflection and conversation with those who know you.

After completing this class, the Pastor will have a personal conversation with you about your gifts and where they best fit in our and your ministry.

3.5 Your Calling

Beyond individual gifts, each believer has a sense of calling — a direction toward which their gifts, their passion, and their circumstances point. Calling is not always dramatic. For most believers it is the quiet, persistent sense that God has placed them in a particular place, with particular people, for a particular purpose and this must lead us to three calling questions:

- What — what area of ministry or service does God seem to be drawing you toward?
- Who — what specific people or community does your heart consistently move toward?
- Where — in what context or setting are your gifts most naturally deployed?

3.6. Ministry Areas at Calvary

Ministry Area	Specific Roles	Gifts Best Suited
Worship & Music	Worship leader, vocalist, instrumentalist, sound/AV, livestream coordinator	Musical ability, worship, service, technical aptitude
Children's Ministry	Sunday school teacher, helper, nursery worker, check-in coordinator	Teaching, mercy, encouragement, shepherding
Youth & Students	Youth ministry leader, small group leader, event coordinator, media lead	Shepherding, teaching, evangelism, discipleship
Hospitality & Welcome	Door greeter, welcome desk host, refreshments, visitor follow-up	Hospitality, encouragement, mercy, administration
Outreach & Evangelism	Community outreach coordinator, campus liaison, ESL volunteer, immigrant welcome team	Evangelism, helps, cross-cultural sensitivity, leadership
Prayer & Intercession	Prayer team leader, prayer team member	Intercession, faith, leadership
Administration & Operations	Church administrator, facilities team, financial stewardship team	Administration, organization, service, stewardship

5. Discussion Questions

- Q1.** What spiritual gifts appeared most strongly in your Gifts Survey? Were you surprised?
- Q2.** Looking at the SHAPE framework — what dimension have you never thought of as a “ministry gift” before?
- Q3.** “The enemy’s strategy is to convince ordinary believers that real ministry belongs only to the ordained.” Have you believed this? How has it affected your serving life?
- Q4.** Which ministry area at Calvary feels like the best fit for you right now? Why?
- Q5.** What has held you back from serving in a church in the past? What would it take for that to change?

BEFORE NEXT WEEK

- ☐ Complete the personal testimony (3–5 min version) — you will share it in this session.
- ☐ After the session: write down the one or two spiritual gifts you believe God has given you. Ask someone who knows you well if they agree.
- ☐ Read 1 Corinthians 12:4–27. Note: (1) who gives the gifts, (2) what purpose they serve, (3) what the body analogy teaches about your role.
- ☐ Think through: in what specific serving role at Calvary could your gifts be deployed immediately? Come to Week 4 ready to discuss this.

WEEK 4 OF 4

What Do We Covenant?

Key Scripture: Nehemiah 9–10; Hebrews 10:24–25; Matthew 18:15–20

This is the most important session of the four. Everything in the first three weeks has been preparation for this moment. The question before you now is not theological or historical — it is personal and binding: what are you willing to covenant before God and with this community?

4.1 Why Covenant Matters

The word "covenant" may feel old-fashioned. But it is one of the most important words in the entire Bible. God does not merely make agreements — He makes covenants. He bound Himself to Noah, to Abraham, to Moses, to David, and ultimately to all humanity in the new covenant through Jesus Christ.

A covenant is not a contract. A contract is a legal arrangement between parties who don't fully trust each other, designed to protect each side's interests. A covenant is a binding pledge of faithfulness made by people who are choosing to trust each other in the sight of God.

When Nehemiah's community had been rebuilt spiritually — after the Word was read, after they wept, after they worshipped — the natural conclusion was a covenant. They signed their names. They made binding commitments. Belonging was not assumed — it was declared. — **Nehemiah 9:38**

Church membership at Calvary works the same way. It is not a transaction. It is a covenant — made before God, with a community, with specific obligations on both sides.

4.2 What Calvary Covenants to You

Membership is not a one-way commitment. When you join Calvary, the church makes commitments to you as much as you make commitments to the church.

CALVARY'S COVENANT TO YOU	WHAT IT MEANS IN PRACTICE
Pastoral Care	You will be known by name. The Pastor will pray for you personally. In times of illness, loss, or crisis, the church will show up.
Spiritual Feeding	You will receive consistent, faithful, expository preaching and teaching from God's Word every week. You will not be fed spiritual junk food.
Community	You will be connected to a small group where you are known beyond Sunday morning. You will not be left as an anonymous attender.
A Place to Serve	Your gifts will be identified and deployed. You will not sit unused. You will be placed in a serving role that fits who God has made you.
Honest Accountability	The church will tell you the truth in love. You will not be flattered or left in sin unchallenged. You will be treated as a mature adult who can handle the truth.
Blessing When You Go	If God calls you to serve elsewhere, Calvary will send you with blessing — not guilt, not pressure to stay. A healthy church celebrates sending.

4.3 The Church Covenant — What You Are Signing

The following is Calvary Baptist Church's Church Covenant — formally adopted by the congregation. Read every clause carefully. Do not sign it unless you genuinely intend to keep it. This is a covenant before God, not a membership card.

Having been called out of darkness into the marvellous light of Jesus Christ, and having been united together as the family of Calvary Baptist Church, we solemnly and joyfully covenant before God and with one another as follows:

Clause I — In Worship and Prayer

We covenant to gather consistently for corporate worship, the breaking of bread, and prayer. We will praise God with sincerity and gladness, and we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together (Hebrews 10:24–25).

What this means practically: you commit to consistent Sunday attendance, participation in the Lord's Supper, and personal engagement in the church's prayer life — including the Thursday prayer meeting.

Clause II — In Teaching and Discipleship

We covenant to sit under the apostles' teaching — receiving, obeying, and passing on the whole counsel of God's Word. We will make disciples, baptise the repentant, and teach all that Christ has commanded (Matthew 28:19–20).

What this means practically: you attend Sunday School. You commit to personal Bible reading. You do not merely receive discipleship — you participate in making disciples of others.

Clause III — In Fellowship

We covenant to pursue genuine togetherness and unity — meeting house-to-house, bearing one another's burdens, and sharing life with transparency, love, and accountability (Galatians 6:2; Acts 2:46).

What this means practically: you join a Home Cell Fellowship. You open your life to the people in your group. You do not merely attend — you participate in shared life.

Clause IV — In Service and Generosity

We covenant to serve the needy within and beyond our congregation, sharing our resources as each has need, and being a tangible expression of the gospel in our community (James 2:14–17; 2 Corinthians 9:6–8).

What this means practically: you give financially to Calvary — proportionately and cheerfully. You serve in at least one ministry role. You participate in community outreach.

Clause V — In Mission and Identity

We covenant to hold our identity in Christ above all institutional preferences, to distinguish between mission and mere memory, and to embrace every new season as an opportunity for faithful obedience — not nostalgic preservation.

What this means practically: you support Calvary's revitalisation direction. When change comes — in worship style, in programming, in priorities — you engage with discernment rather than reacting from preference.

Clause VI — In Faithfulness to Scripture

We covenant to continually align our identity with Scripture, our practices with the early church model, and our mission with the Great Commission, so that we may declare the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His wonderful light (1 Peter 2:9).

Clause VII — In Dependence on the Holy Spirit

We covenant to pursue no ministry, programme, or mission in mere human strength. We will seek the leading and empowering of the Holy Spirit in all that we do, acknowledging that apart from Him we can do nothing of lasting Kingdom value (John 15:5).

Clause VIII — In Membership and Mutual Accountability

We covenant to take our membership seriously — not as a formality, but as a sacred commitment to walk together in love, truth, and accountability. We will handle conflict according to Scripture, distinguishing mission-essential convictions from personal preferences, and submitting our disagreements to prayerful, humble discernment under God's Word (Matthew 18:15–17; Ephesians 4:1–3).

Clause IX — In Conflict Resolution

We covenant to seek the glory of God and the unity of the Spirit above all personal preference. We will address disagreements openly and charitably, and submit all unresolved tensions to the authority of Scripture and the prayerful discernment of the church's leadership (Matthew 18:15–17; Romans 14:19).

4.4 What Membership Means Day to Day

Membership is not a Sunday-only commitment. The following is what consistent, faithful Calvary membership looks like in practice.

AREA OF MEMBERSHIP	PRACTICAL EXPECTATION
Attendance	Regular Sunday worship (10:00 AM). Sunday School (9:45 AM). A commitment to contact the church when you will be absent for more than 2 weeks.
Giving	Regular, proportionate financial giving. The biblical pattern is the tithe (10% of income) as a starting point. If that is a stretch right now, begin where you are and grow. Set up recurring giving at calvarybc-towson.org/give .
Small Group	Active participation in a Home Cell Fellowship — bi-weekly minimum. This is where accountability, community, and pastoral care primarily happen outside Sunday.
Serving	Identified and deployed in at least one ministry role. Attending the monthly volunteer gathering. Participating in Tuesday community outreach at minimum once per month.
Prayer	Personal daily prayer. Participation in the Thursday prayer meeting (11:00 AM) as often as your schedule allows. Subscribing to the prayer chain.
Communication	Responding to communication from church leadership. Informing your small group leader or department head when you are struggling, absent, or considering leaving.
Conflict	Bringing concerns and disagreements directly to the person involved, then to the pastor if unresolved — never to social media, never to gossip. Following Matthew 18:15–17 in every situation.

4.5 What Happens Next

At the conclusion of this session, here is what comes next for every class participant:

1. Personal meeting with the Pastor— scheduled within one week of Week 4. This is a 20–30 minute conversation: your testimony, your gifts, your questions, and your readiness for membership. It is a conversation, not an interview.
2. Membership Sunday — at the next appropriate Sunday service after your personal meeting, if you are ready, you will be publicly received into membership. Your name will be called. Your testimony (brief) will be shared. You will be prayed over. The congregation will welcome you.
3. Small group connection — within one week of membership, you will be connected to a specific Home Cell Fellowship. You will be introduced to the group leader personally.
4. Serving role — within your first month of membership, a department head will contact you about a specific serving role that fits your gifts. You will not be left without a place to contribute.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which clause of the Church Covenant feels most challenging to you personally — and why?
2. What does regular, proportionate financial giving look like for you right now? Have you thought through this concretely?
3. Is there anything in the covenant, the membership expectations, or Calvary's direction that you need clarity on before you can sign?
4. How has this four-week class changed how you think about church membership?
5. What serving role do you feel drawn toward, based on what you learned about your gifts in Week 3?

4.6 The Covenant Signing

If you are ready to make this covenant, sign below. This is not a legal document — it is a spiritual declaration. Sign it thoughtfully and prayerfully.

CHURCH COVENANT DECLARATION

I, _____, having heard and understood the gospel of Jesus Christ, having received the teaching of Calvary Baptist Church, and having prayerfully considered the commitments of this covenant, do hereby declare my intention to join Calvary Baptist Church as a covenant member.

I commit to the nine clauses of the Church Covenant as stated above. I do this not in my own strength, but in the power of the Holy Spirit, trusting that God who began a good work in me will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:6).

I understand that this is a covenant before God, and I enter it sincerely and joyfully.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Full Name (printed): _____

Contact number: _____ Email: _____

Received by the Lead Pastor on: _____

A Final Word

You have now completed the Calvary Baptist Church Membership Class and the Church Covenant Course.

Over four weeks you have wrestled with the character of God and the demands of the gospel. You have learned the history, identity, values, and direction of this church. You have begun to discover your spiritual gifts and heard God's call on your life. And you have read — carefully — the covenant you are being invited to make.

Membership is not the destination. It is the starting line. The question was never merely "will you join?" The question is "will you build?" Will you pray, give, serve, show up, stay when it is hard, and go when God calls?

We believe God has brought you to Calvary Baptist Church for a reason. We believe your gifts are needed here. We believe the community you will build with these people — imperfect, faithful, praying, and mission-driven — will be one of the most important communities of your life.

Welcome.

Scriptures for Memorisation

REFERENCE	TEXT
1 Peter 2:9	"You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession."
Acts 2:42	"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."
1 Peter 4:10	"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."
Hebrews 10:24–25	"Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together."
Matthew 28:19–20	"Go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."
Galatians 6:2	"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ."
Philippians 1:6	"He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."
Ephesians 2:10	"We are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Source Declaration: All content is extracted directly from the Calvary Baptist Church Ministry Master Plan (341 pages, compiled 2025–2026). Mission Statement (p.308); Vision (p.308); Identity Statement (p.308); Core Values (p.309); Church Covenant (pp.310–311); Five Discipleship Stages (pp.172–173); Membership Class outline (p.173); SHAPE Framework (p.126); Onboarding Flow (pp.139, 164); Retention research (pp.119, 126, 165); Ministry Role descriptions (pp.159–161). Curriculum compiled by Rev. Emmanuel O. Faleye, May 2026.

Personal Notes Pages

Week 1 Notes — Who Is God?

Week 2 Notes — Who Are We?

Week 3 Notes — Who Are You?

Week 4 Notes — What Do We Covenant?
