



EVERGREEN
C H U R C H

Evergreen Presbyterian Church Member/Attender Manual

The elders of Evergreen welcome you to Evergreen Church! We are so glad that you have taken an interest in our church. We want you to know that we are here to serve you in any way we can. We have prepared this manual to help you understand a few things about Evergreen Presbyterian Church that may be helpful for you as you seek to grow in the context of our church family. Here are the topics that you will find in this manual:

Who We Are and Where We've Been

What We Do - Programs

Children and Youth

Our Mission

Volunteers

Finances

Missions

Appendix 1 - A Brief Summary of Our Beliefs

Appendix 2 - Membership Vows

Who We Are and Where We've Been

Evergreen Presbyterian Church was founded in 1984 with the purpose of reaching Sevier County for Christ. Evergreen is part of the Presbyterian Church in America (<http://www.pcanet.org>).

All of our elders subscribe to the *Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms*, which is the historic confession of the Presbyterian Church (see a summary of its key

points in the appendix to this manual). Our members include people of a Baptist, charismatic, and non-denominational perspective, since our church only requires a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior for membership.

In addition, we seek to be a church that is welcoming to everyone who comes, to be a place where everyone can be loved and embraced and learn and grow at their own pace. We are thankful that God has brought you to be a part of us today, and we are committed to loving you, helping you grow, and encouraging you in whatever way God has called you to be of service to the world.

Evergreen Presbyterian Church has had four Pastors during its existence. The first was Rev. Randy Davis. Pastor Randy helped get the church started and oversaw the construction of our first building (the church building by Belk in Sevierville).

Our second pastor was Rev. David Geib. Pastor David helped simplify our church structure and oversaw a very productive time of ministry in the life of Evergreen Church.

Our third pastor was Rev. Brad Bradford. Pastor Brad had a special gift for articulating the wonders of the grace of God, which was an encouragement to so many in our church.

During Pastor Brad's time as minister, he and the elders had a vision for a broader ministry in connection with a daycare in a building on the Dolly Parton Parkway. This effort led us to move to that building as our place of ministry.

In 2008, the stock market crashed, and our vacation industry was very hard hit. It was a difficult time for many in our church. This set in motion a chain of events that led to Pastor Brad's departure in August 2013 and the loss of our building during Christmas of 2013. This was a very traumatic event in the life of our church.

One advantage of our Presbyterian government is that our church is governed by a group of men we call "elders" who serve on a body we call a "Session." These men have been a constant in our church through the ups and downs of our church life. After the loss of our building and departure of our pastor, the elders stepped up and provided the leadership that our church needed. A large number of our people saw something beautiful at Evergreen that they believed should continue in spite of the hardships. This resilient group continued the work of the church and brought it forward.

In January 2015, Rev. Wes White came with his wife and seven children to serve as Pastor of Evergreen. Pastor Wes was enthused about this group and willing to embrace our new situation. He has overseen a reorganization of our church as a mobile church embracing the new shape of our ministry.

In May 2015, God opened the door for us to worship at a wonderful conference center right in the middle of Sevierville at The River Plantation RV Park. This has served as our worship space since that time, and the Lord has also provided an office space right in the middle of town.

Pastor Wes serves with the other elders of our church on our Session. Each of them helps with the pastoral care of the congregation, and you should consider them a resource for prayer, encouragement, and growth in grace.

We also have a group of deacons who oversee the finances, organization, and church benevolence (more below). They are assigned to the elder districts as noted above. You should feel free to call them for any financial, physical, or benevolence need.

Each one of the elders and deacons is assigned a specific “district” consisting of people with the last names as follows:

A-E - Elder Steve Bain (865-221-5372); Deacon Keiji Asano (865-382-5416)

F-J - Elder Michael Beagan (865-850-1160); Deacon Keith Bradley (865-936-1211)

K-O - Elder Larry Love (865-654-3068); Deacon Marty Huddleston (865-776-5619)

P-S - Elder Jeremy Daley (865-255-1654); Deacon Mark Smothers (865-712-9968)

T-Z - Elder Dwight Wilkinson (865-654-5649); Deacon Josh Winder (865-202-2737)

We also organize our church by *ministries and ministry leaders*. You should feel free to contact any of these folks, if you have any questions about any of our ministries. Kerri Bradley is our director of Evergreen Kids (865-455-1564). Sarah Huddleston is our youth director (865-236-7808). Brennon Carpenter serves as our director of worship arts (865-654-9780). Jennifer Love is our missions coordinator (865-924-0518).

You can also contact Pastor Wes at any time at 865-567-6763 or pastorwes@evergreentn.com.

Evergreen Presbyterian Church is part of a larger body of churches known as the Presbyterian Church in America. The General Assembly is the national level of this body. The regional level is known as a Presbytery. We are part of the Tennessee Valley Presbytery, a group of churches in Knoxville and Chattanooga. Our church is accountable to our Presbytery, and we work together with the churches of our Presbytery for common mission and mutual encouragement and support.

What We Do - Our Programs

Our most important program is our worship service. We use contemporary and traditional elements to provide a worship service that is joyful, reverent, Christ-centered, and Scripture-filled. Our goal is to provide a place where people can encounter God, grow and learn, and be inspired to trust in, love, and serve the Lord

Jesus Christ. Following the service, we invite everyone to stay and enjoy a time of fellowship and coffee.

Outside of the worship service, we provide a variety of small groups that study books of the Bible or topics from a Scriptural perspective. There are always opportunities here for those who might want to lead a group or have a vision for bringing people together. We form new groups twice a year, but you are always welcome to join a group at any time of the year or form a new one as God leads.

We also hold events designed for outreach and fellowship. Every 2nd Sunday of the month, we have a fellowship meal after the worship service. Throughout the year, we have outreach events where we try to connect with the community. This usually involves doing something together like attending the Bloomin' BBQ and Bluegrass Festival or serving the community through a Trunk or Treat event downtown. You can find out about these events in the bulletin or social media (see below).

Children and Youth

At Evergreen, we love kids! We believe that the worship service is for children as well as adults. We also believe in having a special time for our children to After the sermon, we invite all our children up to pray for them. Children 5 years old and under have the nursery available prior to that time. We pray for our children and then dismiss them to children's church where they study the Bible on their own level. This takes place in the other half of the building at the River Plantation Conference Center. After children's church is over, the children remain in the children's church area until the parents come to get them.

Kerri Bradley is the children's director, and she leads a wonderful group of men and women who volunteer to serve our children. Each of them undergoes a background check and receives training in the safety and security of our children. They are committed to loving our children and helping them grow.

In addition, we match each of our children up with an adult in the congregation as "prayer buddy." This person commits to praying for that child, and every couple of months, the children and the prayer buddies get together for a time of cookies and prayer following children's church.

Our youth meet on Wednesday nights at the Discipleship Focus Lodge. Sarah Huddleston is our youth director who leads a great group of young men and women who lead our youth program. Kids ages 9-11 also have an opportunity to meet there for our Evertweens program. Both of these programs include a time of Bible study as well as fellowship, food, and games.

In addition to these regular activities, we also hold youth and children's events. The youth attend retreats and other events. The children have the opportunity each summer to attend Vacation Bible School, which is a week long event that meets at the Sevierville City Park.

Our Mission

Our mission is summarized in three words: Love. Nurture. Send.

A longer version of our mission statement is this:

Each member of the Evergreen family, rooted and grounded in the love of God in Jesus Christ, will seek to **love** and welcome all whom God brings our way; **nurture** them in the truths of the Gospel, practical wisdom, and use of their gifts; and **send** them out to love their families, neighborhoods, and communities, joining what God is already doing in bringing redemption and restoration to the Sevier County area and beyond. Love. Nurture. Send.

We invite you to be a part of what we are doing here at Evergreen!

Volunteers

In order for all this to take place, everyone needs to work together. Our goal is to try to get everyone involved so that everyone can have an opportunity to serve.

We would like to encourage you to get involved in as many places as you feel that you can. There are opportunities each Sunday morning to pull the trailer that has our sound and children's equipment. We also need volunteers to unload it and put things back in place. We want to be a welcoming church, so we ask for several greeters to volunteer to help welcome everyone who comes in. We also need volunteers in our children's ministry and on our worship team.

If you have teaching or leadership gifts, we invite you to use them through our small groups, teaching children or youth, or being involved in the leadership teams of one of our ministries.

We also rotate our elders and deacons, and so we are always open to men whom God might call to lead as elders or deacons at Evergreen. If you have someone you think would be a good elder or deacon, you should feel free to bring that name to the attention of Pastor Wes or one of the other elders.

Finances

Evergreen is a church that is financed through the gifts of its members and other donors. The people of Evergreen give generously to the support of our church and its work. We invite you to serve God in this way, though you are welcome to be a part of Evergreen, even if you do not feel that you can give. You will not be pressured into giving money to the work of Evergreen. We trust God and His people to provide what we need.

We take the gifts of the people of God seriously, and we seek to be good stewards of what God has given us. Each year, the elders produce a budget for our church based on our needs and the expectation of gifts that we may receive. Ms. Deb

Bain is our treasurer. She keeps track of our finances and provides monthly financial reports that are made available to the congregation. She reports to our deacons who oversee the finances of the church.

In addition, to our regular giving, we have two funds that are separate from the general fund. The first is benevolence. All money in the benevolence fund is given directly to those in need. The deacons oversee the disbursement of this fund. Each month when we have communion, we take up an offering for benevolence, though you are welcome to give at any time to this fund.

The second fund is our Facilities and Development Fund. This is a fund that is available for use by approval of a majority of members at a congregational meeting of our church for future facilities or other ministries as needed in the future. We have approximately \$260,000 in this fund. If our revenue exceeds our expenses, then we generally put the excess into this fund. This is currently our only method for accumulating money in this fund, but you are welcome to contribute it at any time. We believe that one way God provides for our future needs is through this fund.

Missions

Our elders have committed our church to giving at least 10% of our revenue to the work of our ministry partners. This includes the work of our denomination on both our General Assembly level (national) and Presbyterian level (regional).

In addition, we support the following missionaries. You can use the links to get more information on each of these ministries.

- Phil and Tiara Alfrey – Young Life Military: mcym.org
- Bruce and Kathy Alwood – Dublin, Ireland: serge.org
- Fawzy and Linda Attia – Amman, Jordan: Pioneers.org
- Bob and Andrea Burnham – Odessa, Ukraine: Burnhamsnapshots.com/blog
- Life Care Center – Izmail, Ukraine: lcc-izmail.org/en
- David and Debbie Frank – L’Arcada Camp, Spain: larcadausa.gutensite.net
- Peter and Kate Nash – scripture website building, Wycliffe: kalaam.org
- Marty Huddleston – Disaster Relief, MNA: pcamna.org
- Discipleship Focus – Pigeon Forge: dfocus.org
- Bridgemont Camp – Wears Valley: bridgemontcamp.com
- Smoky Mountain Young Life: smokymountain.younglife.org
- Women’s Care Center of Sevier County: wccsevier.org
- Smoky Mountain Area Rescue Ministry: smarm.org
- Nations 4 Christ (international student ministry) – Pigeon Forge: nations4christ.org

Social Media

We encourage you to connect with Evergreen throughout the week.

We use a variety of methods to share what is going on at Evergreen Church.

We use a platform called “Church Updates” to send out a weekly email that lists news items and prayer requests. You click on the link, and then you can view these items. This platform also contains a directory of members (click on the book button). You can find that here: <http://www.churchupdates.org/evergreentn>

You can also find events posted at our Evergreen Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/evergreentn> This is a public page for noting events and encouraging words.

For more private concerns, we have the private group, the Evergreen Church Forum. You can join it by going to:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/162905050804127/>

We also have a web page, which is primarily to help those seeking to find out about the church for the first time: <http://www.evergreentn.com>

Finally, Pastor Wes writes a post each week about his upcoming sermon. You can read it here: <http://www.weswhite.net>

Further Questions?

Please feel free to ask anything at any time to any of our ministry leaders. We are here to serve you and want to be available for you. Thank you for taking an interest in Evergreen Church!

Appendix - A Summary of Our Faith

1. We believe in one God, the sovereign Creator and Sustainer of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. To Him be all honor, glory and praise forever!
2. Jesus Christ, the living Word, became flesh through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth. He who is true God became true man united in one Person forever. He died on the cross a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. On the third day He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, where, at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He now is our High Priest and Mediator.
3. The Holy Spirit has come to glorify Christ and to apply the saving work of Christ to our hearts. He convicts us of sin and draws us to the Savior. Indwelling our hearts, He gives new life to us, empowers and imparts gifts to us for service. He instructs and guides us into all truth, and seals us for the day of redemption.

4. Being estranged from God and condemned by our sinfulness, our salvation is wholly dependent upon the work of God's free grace. God credits His righteousness to those who put their faith in Christ alone for their salvation, thereby justifies them in His sight. Only such as are born of the Holy Spirit and receive Jesus Christ become children of God and heirs of eternal life.
5. The true Church is composed of all persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit are united together in the body of Christ. The Church finds her visible, yet imperfect, expression in local congregations where the Word of God is preached in its purity and the sacraments are administered in their integrity; where scriptural discipline is practiced, and where loving fellowship is maintained. For her perfecting, she awaits the return of her Lord.
6. Jesus Christ will come again to the earth—personally, visibly, and bodily—to judge the living and the dead, and to consummate history and the eternal plan of God. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20).
7. The Lord Jesus Christ commands all believers to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world and to make disciples of all nations. Obedience to the Great Commission requires total commitment to "Him who loved us and gave Himself for us." He calls us to a life of self-denying love and service. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

Appendix 2 – Membership Vows

We believe that all Christians should become members of a local church. This just means that they commit to participate in and be under the care and oversight of a local church.

In the early church, whenever someone believed in Jesus, they were baptized and added to the number of the church. We believe that this is still what God wants us to do. He wants us to commit ourselves to love and be loved by a specific group of Christians.

Becoming a member is a way of saying to the people of a local church that you are open to them. You want to love them, and you are open to receiving their love. It tells the leaders of the church that you are open to their leadership.

Becoming a member at Evergreen is simple. You simply need to be a Christian and want to be a member. If you were previously a member of another church, you can simply transfer your membership to our church. If you were not or have not

made a profession of faith, then we ask you to affirm five basic questions and either have been baptized or be baptized.

1. Do you acknowledge yourselves to be sinners in the sight of God, justly deserving His displeasure, and without hope save in His sovereign mercy?

As we look around, we can see that the world is not as it ought to be. But the Christian has come to recognize that he is not as he ought to be. He is a sinner. He has rejected God, mistreated others, misused creation, and lived a selfish life. The conscience convicts him that he has sinned, and that God is inalterably opposed to such sin. Have you come to see that you are a sinner (Rom. 3:23) and that the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23) from which you cannot possibly escape by your own powers, good works, or human effort?

2. Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered in the Gospel?

While our conscience and nature tell us that there is a God, and that our sin is worthy of death, they do not give us a solution. The solution is found in the gospel, the good news that Jesus Christ, the true Son of God, innocent of all sin, suffered in your place the death that you deserved and has risen again so that you might have new life and escape the old way of sin. This salvation from sin is offered as a free gift to you. Have you accepted it?

3. Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becomes the followers of Christ?

God does not leave us in our sin when he saves us (that wouldn't be salvation!). Instead, he calls us to live a new life in obedience to Jesus Christ. He calls you to live a life that is pure, holy, good, right, just, and loving by faith in Him. Have you committed to following Christ's leadership in your life?

4. Do you promise to support the Church in its worship and work to the best of your ability?

Jesus wants you not merely to love Him but love His people. You should love all of them, but we need to love the specific people where we are by gathering with them, serving them, and being accountable to them. Answering this question affirmatively means that you want to be a part of this particular organization (Evergreen Church) and support its work. Supporting the work of the church means that you will also give financially to the Lord as you feel led, but it also means that you will make being part of the activities of the church a priority. One of the best ways to

encourage those who are in the church as well as visitors is by simply attending our activities. Are you ready to support this church in its work?

5. Do you submit yourselves to the government and discipline of the Church, and promise to study its purity and peace?

God is our ultimate leader, but He also wants us to have earthly leaders who help us love and serve Him (Heb. 13:17). We as the leaders of Evergreen Church are committed on our part to being available to each member and helping you in your Christian walk. We want to encourage you in every way we can in your walk with Christ, and we also believe that we are called to challenge you when we see that you are living in a way that is not pleasing to Christ or may be harmful to you. Are you ready to submit to the leadership in this church, to have us as your pastor and elders?