



devonport

church of christ

CORE

**COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIP**

| Pursuing **Jesus** | Connecting **Communities** |
| Releasing **Compassion** | Transforming **Lives** |



WELCOME



Firstly, thanks for taking the time to get your hands on this resource and for beginning to explore the very exciting idea of becoming a 'Core Community Partner' with Devonport Church of Christ.

At Devonport Church of Christ we believe one of the very best ways you can experience and give expression to the love and inclusive nature of God is through the local church, and every local church has a unique vision and mission.

Core Community Partnership is the 'rubber hits the road' opportunity as our public declaration and commitment to one another, and to the unique vision and mission of us as a local church. So it's kind of a big deal!

As you gain clarity on us and what we're about, our hope is that it will help you to discover and discern whether Devonport Church of Christ is the local church community that best aligns with your personal call, vision and missional expression.

The decision to become a 'Core Community' Partner is a big decision and we understand that it takes prayerful consideration and ongoing commitment. However, we want you to know that whether you decide to become a Core Community partner or not, you are always included and welcome with us.

If you have any further questions please don't hesitate to contact us.

Blessings,
Blake Moore, *Senior Minister*

WHAT IS CORE COMMUNITY?

The term Core Community describes how people who are committed to the life of Devonport Church of Christ can be fully involved in the Vision, Mission and Ministry God has given us. Your decision to become a Core Community Partner signals to the Devonport Church of Christ family your desire to belong and contribute to this vision.

In the Western Church, many people are content to simply attend, but we are made for more than just showing up. The concept of 'Core Community' means many things, but one thing it does not mean is to simply be present. Core Community carries the weight of action and involvement. In the New Testament, there is never a picture of people simply 'going to Church'. Instead, we see disciples partnering together on mission, 'being the Church.'

A Core Community Partner is a person who is developing in a growing relationship with Jesus Christ and expresses that through partnership with the Vision, Mission and Ministry of Devonport Church of Christ. It's a genuine partnership; not only with our finances but also with the mission God has given us. Core Community Partners are loyal, faithful people who have a desire to see us reach our community with the love and grace of Jesus Christ.



'CORE COMMUNITY' is Devonport Church of Christ's equivalent of Church membership as described in our constitution.



PREREQUISITES FOR CORE COMMUNITY

These prerequisites are intended to ensure both the individual and the wider community are fully aware of who we are and what we are about, and that we all benefit in moving forward.

WHY SHOULD I PARTNER WITH THE LOCAL CHURCH?

To give a tangible expression to the inclusive nature and love of God for people in community. (Acts 2: 41-42)

To be equipped and empowered for ministry as the Church. (Ephesians 4)

To discover and utilise my gift in ministry to the Church. (Romans 12:4)

This commitment to become part of the Core Community will replace the previous system of Church Membership. **The 'membership register' of Devonport Church of Christ as described in the Constitution will be the regular revised list of Core Community Partners.**

Prospective Core Community Partners must be approved by the Council of Church Leaders (CCL) before they can be added to the list of Core Community. The CCL reserves the right, if required, to remove individuals from the Core Community list from time to time.

BORN AGAIN

We are a Christian Church, so believing in Jesus and being born again, by grace and through faith in Him, might sound like an obvious prerequisite but we think it's important to put it right up front, just so we're clear.

BE BAPTISED

Full immersion baptism is core to our Church's beliefs and values and the way we publically demonstrate that we have been born again. A commitment of similar standing will be considered if a believer from another Christian Church desires to commit to Core Community and demonstrates that they have fulfilled rights of similar standing e.g. Anglican Confirmation. This decision is solely at the discretion of the Council of Church Leaders.

BE VISIBLE

Attendance and visibility over a period of time allows every prospective new Core Community Partner and the Church the opportunity to prayerfully consider whether we, together, will be able to give effective, and tangible expression to the commitments outlined in this document. Time also allows for you to discern whether our unique vision and mission aligns with yours. Some people might not need as much time as others to 'lock in' their commitment to Core Community, but we're suggesting that 6 months' attendance is a good base level amount of time for us to get to know one another enough to make this commitment.

AGREEMENT

If you decide that Core Community Partnership is for you, we will assume that you support the theological view and philosophy of ministry of Devonport Church of Christ.

COVENANT

The Israelites were constantly reminded, to remember the Lord and their commitment to Him through the cutting of a covenant. We also believe that people need to periodically reaffirm their commitment to their local Church through signing the 'Core Community Covenant' to Devonport Church of Christ every 3 years.

CORE COMMUNITY COMMITMENTS

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Core Community Partners take personal responsibility for their transformation, development and spiritual growth. Core Community Partners love God, love others and partner together on mission.

GENEROSITY AND CONTRIBUTION

Core Community Partners give generously, sacrificially and faithfully in response to God's great and lavish love for them. They invest and support through their tithe (finances), time and talents. (Matthew 6:21)

SERVICE

Core Community Partners know their spiritual gifts and deploy them by actively serving in the local church on a team and also outside the walls of the church building. Spiritual gifts are given by God and must be used for God. (1 Corinthians 12:4-7)

COMMITMENT AND UNITY

Core Community Partners are visible and demonstrate that through regular attendance. Core Community Partners protect the unity of the church by loving and supporting others and refraining from gossip. For the sake of unity, we also set aside our personal preferences for the gospel. (1 Corinthians 9:23)

RECOGNIZE THE AUTHORITY OF THE LEADERSHIP

Jesus is the head of the Church, and although Jesus is the ultimate authority in the Church, He also left human leaders in place to care for her. Core Community Partners recognize the authority of the Leadership of the Church as those responsible for the spiritual oversight, well-being and direction, and agree to pray for them, encourage them and support them. (Hebrews 13:17)

PARTICIPATE IN MAKING 'BIG' DECISIONS

Core Community Partners have the great privilege of prayerful and considerate voting on some important decisions in the life of Devonport Church of Christ. This includes selecting a new senior minister, borrowing money and the selling or acquisition of property.



egrets



BECOMING A CORE COMMUNITY PARTNER

Once you have decided to become a Core Community Partner please sign and complete the Core Community Covenant and return it to the Next Steps Desk. All Covenants will be affirmed by the CCL before people are added to the list of Devonport Church of Christ's Core Community Partners.

DEVONPORT CHURCH OF CHRIST'S COMMITMENT TO CORE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

TRANSFORMATION

We are committed to supporting every partner of the Core Community of our Church through teaching the Word of God and preaching the Gospel faithfully. Transformation begins with a commitment to discover who we are; is found in Jesus, and He determines what we do.

TRANSPERANCY

We will live openly and honestly. We're committed to being transparent when it comes to the Devonport Church of Christ and the unique vision and mission we feel God has called us and mandated us to give expression to in our community.

CARE

We commit to stand by one another in any time of need, burden or personal crisis. When your part of the family of God, His Church you're never alone. We are committed to providing a safe environment where every partner can flourish, free from condemnation and guilt.

RESIGNATION FROM CORE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

We understand that life is all about seasons as is somebody's commitment to a local Church. Therefore, people will be removed from the list of 'Core Community' if they:

- *Leave the Church.*
- *Do not reaffirm their commitment every three years in writing.*
- *Do not maintain an evident commitment to the values of the Church and as expressed above.*
- *Have been dismissed from the Church congregation by the CCL as described in the Church Discipline Policy (available by request).*
- *Advise the Church in writing that they wish to withdraw their Core Community Partnership.*

The decision to become part of Devonport Church of Christ's Core Community requires time, prayerful consideration and ongoing commitment. However, we want you to know that whether you decide to be part of the Core Community of Devonport Church of Christ or not, you are always included and welcome with us!



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