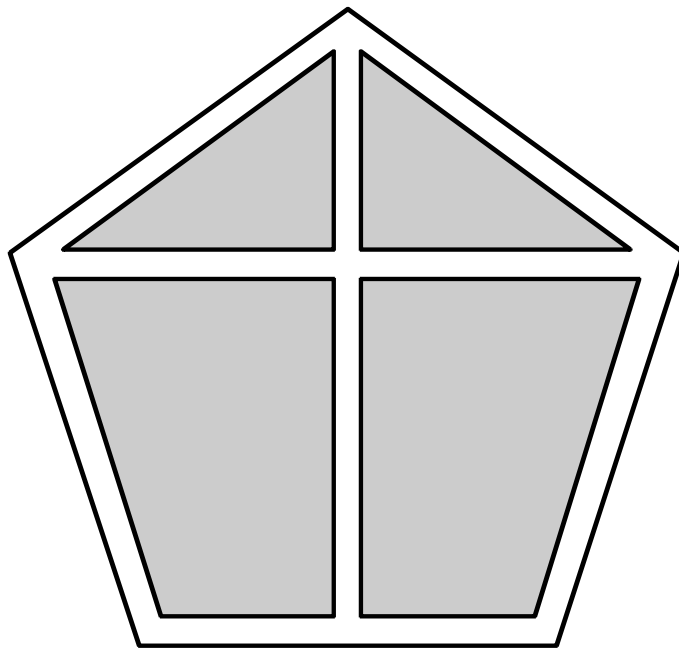


Sunny Hills Community Church

CLASS 101



Helping you live a "Purpose-Driven Life"

Welcome to CLASS 101!

Thank you for your interest in the Christian Faith and Sunny Hills Community Church! This class is designed to help you understand what the Christian faith is all about, and how Sunny Hills Community Church can help you become a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ.

Here is the class outline:

Session One: Understanding the Christian faith.

1. Getting started.
2. How to become a Christian.
3. Baptism.
4. The Purpose-Driven life.

Session Two: Understanding Sunny Hills Community Church.

1. Our statement of beliefs.
2. Frequently asked questions.
3. Why was Sunny Hills Community Church established?
4. Our purpose and vision.
5. Who we are trying to reach, "the Widgets."
6. The Sunny Hills strategy ... our plan for helping people.
7. How we organize to get things done.
8. Our ministry partners.
9. What it means to be a member.
10. The membership agreement.

Opening prayer: "Dear God, thank You for bringing us together for this special time of learning. Help us to understand Your purpose for my life and how Sunny Hills Community Church help me develop a deeper faith. Give us the insight and ability to hear You during this seminar. In Jesus name, amen."

Getting Started with a "Purpose-driven" life.

Every life is driven by something. Our decisions, desires, and values are all rooted in something. Sunny Hills Church wants you to know that God wants to be that "something" which drives your life.

Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope." God's plan and purpose for our life is designed to give us a bright future. God's plans for us are specific and special-made for us; but we have to adopt His plans as our plans. Many people live each day without much thought about their purpose. We should carefully consider what God wants for us.

Ephesians 5:17, Don't act thoughtlessly, but try to understand what the Lord wants you to do. What does God want me to do? The first and foremost response you can make to God is to invite Jesus Christ to be the leader and forgiver of your life. Look at this simple outline.

How to Become a Christian

A Admit your need. Romans 3:23, For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Because we are all sinners, we all need forgiveness.

B Believe in Christ. Romans 3:25, For God sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sins and to satisfy God's anger against us. We are made right with God when we believe that Jesus shed his blood, sacrificing his life for us. Sin is a barrier between us and God ... but believing that Jesus died for us, sacrificing His life for ours, restores a right relationship with God.

C Commit yourself to Christ. John 1:12-13, But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn! This is not a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan—this rebirth comes from God. When you commit your life to Christ you are inviting Him to be the Leader and Forgiver of your life. This gives us a spiritual rebirth ... salvation.

Here is a sample prayer of commitment: "Dear God, I admit my need for forgiveness. My sin has separated us, and I want a new start with You. So, I accept the sacrifice Jesus made for me on the Cross and I turn from my own way of life to following Jesus as my Leader. I commit my life to Christ and thank You for saving me. Amen."

You cannot live a purpose-driven life without first becoming a Christian. If you have not already done so, we encourage you to become a Christian today.

Baptism

After you become a Christian it is important to be baptized. Why?

- To follow the example set by Christ. Mark 1:9
- Because Christ commands it. Matthew 28:19-20
- It shows that I really am a believer. Acts 18:8

What is the meaning of baptism?

- It illustrates Christ's burial and resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, "...Christ died for

our sins...He was buried...He was raised on the third day..."; Colossians 2:12, "...When you were baptized, it was the same as being buried with Christ. Then you were raised to life because you had faith in the power of God, who raised Christ from death."

- It illustrates my new life as a Christian. 2 Corinthians 5:17, "When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. He is not the same anymore. A new life has begun!"

Baptism doesn't make you a believer - it shows that you already believe. Baptism does not "save" you, only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring - it's the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart. Ephesians 2:8-9, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith...it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast."

Why does Sunny Hills baptize by immersion (getting dunked completely under water)?

- Because Jesus was baptized that way. Matthew 3:16.
- Every baptism in the Bible was by immersion. Acts 8:38-39.
- The word "baptize" means to "dip under water."
- It best symbolizes a burial and resurrection.

Who should be baptized? Only those who have believed in Christ.

Acts 2:41, "And those who believed...were baptized..."

Acts 8:13, "Simon himself believed and was baptized..."

Acts 8:12, "But when they believed ... they were baptized."

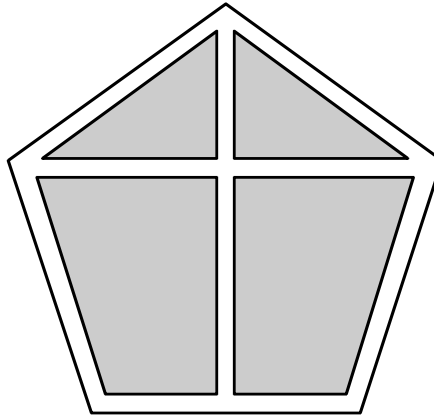
At Sunny Hills Church, we wait until our children are old enough to believe and understand the true meaning of baptism before we baptize them. Some churches practice a "baptism of confirmation" for children. This ceremony is intended to be a covenant between parents and God on the behalf of the child. The parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make his own personal confession of Christ. This custom began about 300 years after the Bible was completed. This is different from the baptism talked about in the Bible which was only for those old enough to believe. The purpose is to publicly confess your personal commitment to Christ.

At Sunny Hills Church, it is a membership requirement that every member must have been baptized the way Jesus demonstrated, even though many of us may have been "confirmed" as children.

When should I be baptized? There is no reason to delay. As soon as you have decided to receive Christ into your life, you can and should be baptized. If you wait until you are "perfect", you'll never feel "good enough"! At Sunny Hills we generally hold baptism service during the summer because we baptize in the New River.

Can my family be baptized together? Sure, if they all have placed their faith in Jesus.

The Purpose-Driven Diagram



NOTE: You will see this diagram often at Sunny Hills. Besides being our church logo, it is a teaching tool we use to explain the purpose-driven life God wants for us.

The two lines that form a cross in the middle of the diagram represent the two key relationships we need to experience full life.

- The vertical line represents our relationship with God.
- The horizontal line represents our relationship with others.

The five sides of the diagram represent the five purposes God has for every life.

- Worship. Living to please God.
- Fellowship. Loving God's church family.
- Discipleship. Become more and more like Christ.
- Ministry. Serving God by serving others.
- Missions. Sharing the Christian faith with others.

The four areas inside the diagram represent the four areas where we apply our purpose-driven lifestyle.

- With family.
- With friends.
- At work.
- At play.

You'll notice the central focus of the diagram is a cross. The Cross reminds us that Jesus gave His life for us so that we might enjoy life at its best. Sunny Hills is a group of people who have discovered the meaning and purpose that knowing Jesus brings to life.

The Purpose-Driven Life

The main thing about Sunny Hills Community Church is that we focus on helping you live out the five key purposes God has given us for our daily life.

Church Word	Ordinary Word	Helps our Church grow	Personal application
Worship	Worship	Stronger	Gives me a power to live on.
Fellowship	Connect	Warmer	Gives me a people to live with.
Discipleship	Grow	Deeper	Gives me principles to live by.
Ministry	Serve	Broader	Gives me a profession to live out.
Evangelism	Share	Larger	Gives me a purpose to live for.

You can see these five purposes in key Bible passages:

The Great Commandment: Mark 12:30-31, Jesus said, "And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength." [31] The second is equally important: "Love your neighbor as yourself." No other commandment is greater than these."

- "Loving God" is worship.
- "Loving your neighbor" is ministry.
- Discipleship deepens our relationship with God.
- Fellowship deepens our relationships with God's family, the church.
- Evangelism helps others to begin loving God.

The Great Commission: Matthew 28:19-20, "Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. [20] Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

- "I am with you" is worship. Enjoying the presence of God is a part of worship.
- "Baptizing them" is fellowship. Baptism identifies you with our church family.
- "Obey all the commands" is discipleship. Doing what God says helps us grow.
- "Teach them" is ministry. Teaching is one of many ways we can serve others.
- "Go and make disciples" is evangelism. This is the driving force of the church.

God's Great Gift: John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

- "God's love" for us is what triggers our love for him, and our worship.
- "Everyone." Being connected to others who receive Christ is fellowship.
- "He Gave His Son." God's pattern of giving prompts our ministry of service.
- "Believes." Deepening belief is discipleship.
- "Eternal life" is the ultimate product of evangelism.

END OF SESSION ONE

Session Two: SUNNY HILLS COMMUNITY CHURCH

We're glad you've chosen to find out more about Sunny Hills Church. This class is the basic introduction to our church family. Since we have members from many different church backgrounds, this session is designed to clearly explain who and what our church is about.

The basis for this class: Ephesians 2:19, "...You are members of God's very own family...and you belong in God's household with every other Christian."

Key Truths:

1. The Church is a family.
2. God expects you to be a member of a church family.
3. A Christian without a church family is an orphan.

What makes Sunny Hills a unique church family? Every family has special traditions and a personality that makes it unique. Sunny Hills Community Church is a unique church family because we have united around four things:

- What we believe about the Christian Faith.
- Why our church was established.
- The strategy we use to accomplish our purpose.
- How we organize ourselves to get things done.

What We Believe About the Christian Faith

In session one we covered the basic teachings of the Christian Faith. Sunny Hills Community Church is devoted to teaching the Bible in a simple way that is true to the historic Faith revealed in the Bible. A complete list of our essential beliefs is below.

A Statement the Essential Beliefs of Sunny Hills Community Church

In essential beliefs - we have unity.

"There is one Body and one Spirit...one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all..." Ephesians 4:4-6

In non-essential beliefs - we have liberty.

"Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters...Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls...So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God...So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God." Romans 14:1, 4, 12, 22

In all our beliefs - we show charity.

"If I...hold in my mind not only all human knowledge but the very secrets of God, and if I also have that absolute faith which can move mountains, but have no love, I amount to nothing at all." 1 Corinthians 13:2

1. ABOUT GOD

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God.

Genesis 1:1, 26, 27; 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; I Peter 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14

2. ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven's glory and will return again someday to earth to reign as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

Matthew 1:22, 23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5, 14:10-30; Hebrews 4:14, 15; 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4; Romans 1:3, 4; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Timothy 6:14, 15; Titus 2:13.

3. ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. He is present in the world to make people aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer a spiritual gift when they are saved. As Christians, we seek to live under His control daily.

2 Corinthians 3:17; John 16:7-13, 14:16, 17; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16; Ephesians 1:13; Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 5:18

4. ABOUT THE BIBLE

The Bible is God's Word to us. It was written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because it is inspired by God, it is the truth without any mixture of error.

2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20, 21; 2 Timothy 1:13; Psalm 119:105, 160, 12:6; Proverbs 30:5.

5. ABOUT HUMAN BEINGS

People are made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. People are the supreme object of God's creation. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called "sin". This attitude separates people from God and causes many problems in life.

Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6a; Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:1, 2

6. ABOUT SALVATION

Salvation is God's free gift to us, but we must accept it. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus, in faith we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith.

Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 14:6, 1:12; Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:26; Romans 5:1

7. ABOUT ETERNAL SECURITY

Because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the true believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. If you have been genuinely saved, you cannot "lose" it. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and keeping power of God that gives us this security.

John 10:29; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25; 10:10, 14; I Peter 1:3-5

8. ABOUT ETERNITY

People were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence.

John 3:16; John 14:17; Romans 8:17-18; Revelation 20:15; I Corinthians 2:7-9

These beliefs are consistent with the main beliefs of the major denominations: Baptist, Methodists, Catholics, Church of God, Lutherans, etc...

Every church tends to emphasize certain teachings or have "favorite" doctrines. Sunny Hills is a bit different in that we list "essential beliefs" (in the statement above) and don't get hung up on details that are difficult to understand.

Frequently Asked Questions About Our Beliefs

Where do you get your beliefs? We use the Bible as our basis of faith and practice.

What do you teach about Baptism? We agree with the Baptist idea of baptizing believers by immersion. Baptism is a symbolic ritual of the faith that illustrates the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. We receive Baptism to identify ourselves as followers of Christ. Colossians 2:12, For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him you were raised to a new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead. To become a member of Sunny Hills Community Church you must have been Baptized as a believer by immersion or agree to do so.

What do you teach about "the Lord's Supper"? The Thursday night before He died, Jesus shared a special meal with His followers. Christians remember that occasion by a meaningful ritual called "the Lord's Supper," "communion," or "the Eucharist." Sunny Hills Community Church celebrates the Lord's Supper at special services held typically near the holidays of Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. 1 Corinthians 11:25, In the same way, he took the cup of wine after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant between God and you, sealed by the shedding of my blood. Do this in remembrance of me as often as you drink it."

What kind of Bible do you use? Sunny Hills recommends the "New Living Translation" of the Bible because it is accurate, easy to understand, and helps people grow in their faith.

We list all of the Bible passages used on Sunday mornings in the bulletin so you can follow along. Of course, you may bring your own Bible from home to use if you have one.

Is your church "Pentecostal"? No. Sunny Hills Community Church does not employ what some call the "sign gifts" of speaking in tongues, prophecy, word of knowledge, etc. If this style of worship is important to you we'd be happy to refer you to another church in our community. We do have many folks at Sunny Hills who come from a Pentecostal background and enjoy our upbeat music and casual atmosphere.

Is your church "fundamentalist," "liberal", "conservative", or what? It's hard to label Sunny Hills Community Church because these words mean different things to different people. We're adhere closely to the teachings of the Bible and we're passionate about loving others. We don't get into politics at all. Basically, we're just ordinary people who want to follow Christ better.

Why Was Sunny Hills Community Church Established?

Sunny Hills was established in 1999 as a mission project of the Virginia Baptist Mission Board. Alan Wilder is the founding pastor. There were already more than 150 churches in Wythe County, why plant another one? Pastor Wilder had a vision to create a new church that would help ordinary people reach their full potential in Christ.

Our purpose statement: The purpose of Sunny Hills Community Church is to help ordinary people experience full life in Christ.

Our vision statement: Our vision is to influence our community by changing lives through the ministry of a church that is relevant to the daily life of ordinary people

We determined from the very beginning that we would focus our energies on helping people fulfill the five life purposes: worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry, and missions. That's ALL WE DO. We are united around these five essential tasks. 1 Corinthians 1:10, Now, dear brothers and sisters, I appeal to you by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ to stop arguing among yourselves. Let there be real harmony so there won't be divisions in the church. I plead with you to be of one mind, united in thought and purpose.

Because we are purpose-driven we don't get involved in too many extra things ... we like to stick to the basics. Some churches have favorite teachings:

- The book of Revelation.
- Charismatic gifts.
- Political action groups.
- Abortion-related movements.
- Social issue causes.

At Sunny Hills we stick to the five purposes and focus on energies on them ... not these noteworthy issues or causes.

A key resource used in establishing our church is an excellent book by Rick Warren, [The Purpose-Driven Church](#). His follow-up book, [The Purpose-Driven Life](#) is an excellent "must read" we can highly recommend.

Sunny Hills is unique in WHO it is we are here to reach. We have a specific TARGET in mind as we minister and work in this community.



Meet the Widget Family. They are a "typical" family living here in Wytheville. There's Wally Widget, his wife, Wilma, and the kids, Wesley and Wanda. They have a 3 year old Terrier Mix, named Waggles (not pictured).

This is what we call our "target family." It's who we are trying to help. We want to understand the Widgets. We desire to know them personally, become their friend, and invite them to a church service designed just for them.

Wally works in construction and often gets home after dark. Wanda is a school teacher. They both grew up in different churches. He quit as soon as he became a teenager. She tried to keep going through college, but had a hard time being consistent. They both believe in God and consider themselves to be pretty religious people. At Easter they always make a special effort to dress the kids up and go to church. But usually the Widgets are busy with other things on Sunday. Wally likes to fish with a buddy or watch football on Sundays. Wilma can catch up on some housework, or grade papers. It's hard going to church with the kids because they don't do a very good job of being quiet during the service.

They are fairly satisfied with life. They hope to get into a bigger house one day, and maybe take a trip to Disney World. Like everybody else, things could be better, but they're trying their best. Honestly, they don't see church as being all that relevant to their daily life. The services can get pretty dull sometimes, and they just never seem to "fit in" with the church crowd.

The Widgets are good people, good neighbors, and good and ready for a church that understands why attending church every Sunday isn't a big deal for them. The Widgets are ready for Sunny Hills Church. And, Sunny Hills Church is ready for the Widgets to finally discover a church that is designed from the start with them in mind.

How are we going to reach the Widgets? By adopting a strategy that gets them involved in the five purposes God has for their life.

The Strategy We Use to Accomplish the Five Purposes

An early leader in the church was the Apostle Paul. He went from place to place spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ to others. In 1 Corinthians 9:22-23 he shares his motivation and strategy in dealing with people: I try to find common ground with everyone so that I might bring them to Christ. I do all this to spread the Good News, and in doing so I enjoy its blessings.

Paul was eager to explain the message of salvation in ways others could easily understand. He went out of his way to find common ground with people. A modern word for this would be "relevance." Paul made sure his message to people connected with their daily life.

KEY POINT: Sunny Hills is determined to be relevant to the daily lives of ordinary people.

Everything we do is simple, easy to understand, enjoyable, and deeply rooted in the typical

circumstances ordinary people face every day at work, home, with family, and friends.

1. How do we help people worship God?

When we put God first in our life, we are worshipping Him genuinely. John 4:23, ...true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for anyone who will worship him that way. Sunny Hills helps you worship God by teaching you the principles of submission to God found in the Bible. We also provide a place for public group worship on Sunday mornings.

Expressions of Worship

Singing	Ephesians 5: 19
Giving	1 Corinthians 16: 1-2
Commitment	Romans 12: 1-2
Baptism	Romans 6: 3-4
Praying	Psalm 95: 6
Meditating	Habakkuk 2: 20
Hearing the Word	John 17: 17
Lord's Supper	1 Corinthians 11: 23-26

The Sunny Hills Worship Style

Celebration	Inspiration	Preparation
Psalm 122: 1	Isaiah 40: 31	Ephesians 4: 11-12

The Sunday morning worship atmosphere is casual, friendly, and energetic. We want people to be comfortable so they are free to worship God without being confused, embarrassed, or bored by what they experience in church.

2. How do we help people experience deep fellowship?

Sunny Hills encourages people to just be themselves and not worry about impressing others with how religious you can be. We value honesty, integrity, and developing genuine friendships.

You can get involved with others at Sunny Hills at your own pace. You can jump right in and join one of our small group Bible studies, or you can go easy and make new friends slowly. We have a "no pressure" atmosphere. We will be friendly and hospitable, but not pushy or invasive.

When you are ready, it is important get involved with Sunny Hills outside of your Sunday morning experience. Close connections are made in small group settings, not on Sunday mornings.

3. How do we help ordinary people grow in their Faith?

The Sunday morning worship service is designed to also be a teaching time. You can grow in your faith by attending Sunday morning and enjoying the service.

Hebrews 6:1, So let us stop going over the basics of Christianity again and again.

Let us go on instead and become mature in our understanding. Sunny Hills keeps things simple and easy to understand; but, we also want to stretch your faith to help you grow.

Participating in a small group Bible study is an excellent way to move forward in your spiritual journey. Eventually you must get involved with church activities outside of the Sunday morning service in order to move forward in your journey. As you meet more and more Sunny Hills people, you will develop more trust and a willingness to go deeper.

We encourage you to read and study the Bible for yourself. If you do not have a Bible we will gladly provide one for free. Often people might call the pastor to explain something they've read at home. At Sunny Hills you can always ask questions.

4. How do we people get involved in ministry?

We expect all of our members to be involved in one of our ongoing ministries. We want you to try out a ministry you might enjoy (music, children, donuts, greeting, making meals, VBS, sports, etc.) or start your own ministry from scratch, based on your own unique gifts and personality.

5. How do we help you discover the larger picture of world missions?

From time to time we publicize ways you can get involved in missions through our church. Either by bringing food for the Agape Food Pantry, preparing meals for others, or supporting world-wide missions organizations ... we encourage our people to have a larger world view. We hope to one day sponsor our own group of folks to participate in a hands-on mission project outside of Wythe County.

Our strategy is to never stop growing.

1. Because God loves everyone.

John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."

2. Because God commands us to reach out.

Luke 14:23, "Go out and urge anyone you find to come, so that the house will be full."

3. Because knowing God produces growth naturally.

Colossians 2:19, "...we grow only as we get our nourishment and strength from God.

Some bad reasons for NOT growing:

- "God isn't concerned about numbers." But, He is concerned about people!
- "If we get too large I won't know everyone." You will know everyone in your small group.
- "Large churches are impersonal." Lot's of people can be as friendly as a few people.
- "God wants quality, not quantity." Actually, he wants both.

How Does Our Strategy Help Us Grow?

We will grow by providing:

- a loving and accepting environment.
- meaningful worship.
- accurate and practical Bible teaching and preaching.
- opportunities for significant relationships.
- ministries that meet the heart-felt needs of people.

Our strategy flows from the needs of people. Why do many people not attend church? They say:

- “Church isn’t relevant to my life.”
- “Church is boring.”
- “The kids don’t like church.”
- “The preacher is always asking for money.”
- “I’m too busy...”

To reach these people Sunny Hills Community Church is committed to:

- Teaching the Bible in simple and relevant ways.
- Creating a church atmosphere that is joyful and fun.
- Providing children’s activities that kids enjoy.
- Keep away from fundraising appeals.
- Packing high quality experiences into shorter time frames.

At Sunny Hills we never compromise the message of the Bible. The teachings of Christ cannot be changed over time to fit in with our modern culture; but, the METHODS we use to attract and teach must always adapt to the changing needs and interests of people.

So, at Sunny Hills we do whatever it takes to understand people and present the Gospel message to them in a way that makes sense for them.

OUR STRATEGY FOR GROWTH

Barriers to Church Growth and Health	The Sunny Hills Strategy Solutions
Members won’t bring their friends to church.	S Seeker sensitive services.
Structured for control rather than growth.	U Unleash the power of individual creativity.
People don’t trust their leaders.	N Natural, honest, vulnerable leadership.
Trying to appeal to everyone.	N Narrow the ministry to the "target group."
Being driven by tradition.	Y Yesterday’s solutions are today’s stumbling blocks.
Emphasizing meetings instead of ministry.	H Help everyone discover and use a ministry gift.
Teaching without application.	I Interesting and practical messages.
Program-centered rather than process-centered.	L Life development process. (baseball diamond)
Legalism.	L Let everyone be who God created him or her to be.
People fear growth will ruin fellowship.	S Small groups for everyone.

Every church has core values that help to maintain it’s focus and mission. Our core values are:

- Obedience to Jesus Christ is our key priority.
- We will focus on the five purposes of the church, that’s all.

- People matter to God, therefore we will do whatever it takes to reach them for Christ.
- Excellence attracts.
- We want to build strong families, and especially strong husbands and fathers.
- We will start, stay, and finish on the positive.
- Our church must be culturally relevant while remaining doctrinally pure.
- Loving relationships should be evident in every area of church life.

The Three R's at Sunny Hills

"Real"

- Casual and comfortable atmosphere.
- No pretense or "putting on," just be yourself.
- Honest approach to discovering faith. No manipulation, false-guilt, or hyper-emotion.

"Relevant"

- Connect life needs with God's truth.
- Simple, easy to understand teaching.
- Focus on family, friends, work, and play.

"Responsible"

- Expect people to respond to God's leadership.
- Give tools to let people grow on their own.
- Low pressure, high commitment standards.

How We Organize to Get Things Done

Every church has some kind of structure and way they get things done. Sunny Hills Community Church has a structure and organization as well.

1 Corinthians 14:33, 40, For God is not a God of disorder but of peace, as in all the other churches. But be sure that everything is done properly and in order.

Culture, business practices, or even denominational traditions should not determine the structure of the church.

The Nature of the Church Determines its Structure

1. The Church is a fellowship.

Acts 2:42, They joined with the other believers and devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, sharing in the Lord's Supper and in prayer.

A top priority in a fellowship is harmony and unity. Ephesians 4:3, Always keep yourselves united in the Holy Spirit, and bind yourselves together with peace.

A good structure promotes unity and downplays differences.

1 Corinthians 11:17-18, But now when I mention this next issue, I cannot praise you. For it sounds as if more harm than good is done when you meet together. First of all, I hear that there are divisions among you when you meet as a church, and to some extent I believe it.

At Sunny Hills Community Church business-type meetings are kept to a minimum.

2. The Church is a family.

1 Peter 3:8, Finally, all of you should be of one mind, full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds.

The church is about relationships and love, not rules and regulations.

1 Timothy 5:1-2, Never speak harshly to an older man, but appeal to him respectfully as though he were your own father. Talk to the younger men as you would to your own brothers. Treat the older women as you would your mother, and treat the younger women with all purity as your own sisters. Do you notice the emphasis here on relationships? The church is pictured as a family.

Sunny Hills Community Church does not maintain a long list of rules and policies that might limit our church's growth.

3. The Church is a body.

Romans 12:4-6, Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, [5] so it is with Christ's body. We are all parts of his one body, and each of us has different work to do. And since we are all one body in Christ, we belong to each other, and each of us needs all the others. [6] God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out when you have faith that God is speaking through you.

We are a body -- not a business! We are an organism -- not an organization, therefore, we function on the basis of spiritual gifts, not elected offices.

At Sunny Hills the people who have received a passion and gift for a certain ministry are given the leadership for that ministry. This means our church does not use committees that make decisions for others to follow ... those who are actually doing the work make the decisions.

We believe every Christian is a minister and should be actively involved in a ministry through a local church. If God gives you a great idea for a ministry here at Sunny Hills, we will encourage and equip you to be the beginner and leader of that ministry.

4. The Church is a flock.

This was Jesus' favorite description of the Church (See: John 10:1-30; Matthew 26:31; Matthew 25:33) therefore it is cared for and led by a shepherd.

Three different terms are used in the New Testament to refer to the same church leader:

- "POIMEN": pastor (shepherd)
- "PRESBUTEROS": elder (spiritually mature)
- "EPISCOPOS": bishop (manager)

1 Peter 5:1-2, "To the elders among you....Be shepherds of God's flock... serving as overseers..."

At Sunny Hills Community Church the pastor is the key leader in the church. He equips the members for ministry and service through his teaching ministry. The pastor gives

general oversight to the vision and direction of the church while individual ministry leaders direct the details of their ministry.

Our Ministry Partners

Sunny Hills is a local, independent, self-governing church which has chosen to affiliate with other churches to extend it's ministry and enjoy mutual support. Our partners include:

The Highlands Baptist Association is a group of churches in the New River Valley that cooperate in missions projects at Radford University, Virginia Tech, and across the region.

The Baptist General Association of Virginia is a group of churches that fellowship together with the goal of sharing the Good News of Jesus across our state. www.vbmb.org.

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is the nations largest protestant denomination with more than 50,000 churches that cooperate together in a worldwide missionary effort.

Is Sunny Hills a "Baptist" church? We certainly share a common theology and missionary zeal with other Baptists ... but we've chosen not to put "Baptist" in our name because our main focus is not on reaching Baptists, but on non-religious people. We do not expect our members to identify themselves as Baptists; but, we do recognize the benefits of working cooperatively with Baptists to accomplish extraordinary missionary tasks.

Why not just be an independent church? We are an independent church! Every SBC Baptist church is completely independent. There is no denominational control or hierarchy, as there is in most other denominations. Each church is self-governed and determines its own affairs. For example:

- Every SBC church chooses its own pastor.
- Every SBC church owns its own buildings and assets.
- Every SBC church determines its own programs.

Remember...it is more important to be a CHRISTIAN than to be a member of a particular denomination. When you join Sunny Hills Community Church, you are not becoming a "Baptist", but you will be cooperating with Baptists to fulfill the Great Commission.

What It Means to Be a Member of Sunny Hills Community Church

The difference between "attenders" and "members" can be summed up in one word: Commitment. At Sunny Hills Church we recognize the need for formal membership. We ask you to commit to membership for 4 reasons:

A Biblical Reason: Christ is committed to the church. Ephesians 5:25, "...Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her."

A Cultural Reason: It is an antidote to our society. We live in an age when very few want to be committed to anything...a job...a marriage...our country. This attitude has even produced a generation of "church shoppers & hoppers." Membership swims against the current of America's "consumer religion." It is an unselfish decision. Commitment always builds character.

A Practical Reason: It defines who can be counted on. Every team must have a roster. Every school must have an enrollment. Every business has a payroll. Every army has an enlistment. Even our country takes a census and requires voter registration. Membership

identifies our family.

A Personal Reason: It produces spiritual growth. The New Testament places a major emphasis on the need for Christians to be accountable to each other for spiritual growth. You cannot be accountable when you're not committed to any specific church family.

What is expected of me as a member?

At Sunny Hills Church we never ask our members to do more than the Bible clearly teaches. We only expect our members to do what the Bible expects every Christian to do. These responsibilities are spelled out in the Membership Agreement.

Who is qualified to be a member?

To be a member of Sunny Hills Community Church you must:

- Have become a Christian by inviting Jesus to be the leader and forgiver of your life.
- Have been baptized by immersion after you became a Christian (or agree to be baptized by immersion through Sunny Hills Community Church).
- Agree with the general beliefs, purpose, and strategy of Sunny Hills Community Church.
- Sign the members agreement (below).

Membership at Sunny Hills is open to anyone who meets all four of these requirements. There is no vote or other process to go through. While membership in a local church is a key tool God uses to mature us ... church membership is not required to be a Christian or go to heaven. You can enjoy almost all of the benefits of Sunny Hills Church without being an official member.

NOTE: Only members of the church may attend business meetings, vote on the church budget, call or dismiss the Senior Pastor, amend the Constitution and By-laws, be a trustee, or make decisions regarding the purchase of land or buildings.

Membership at Sunny Hills represents your commitment to express your faith in the context of our church family. If your commitment to Sunny Hills changes (because you move away, move to another church, etc.) your membership status at Sunny Hills will end.

The Sunny Hills Community Church Members Agreement

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and having been baptized, and being in agreement with Sunny Hills Church statement, strategy, and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Sunny Hills Church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

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

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

Ephesians 4:29, 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.

Hebrews 13:17, Remember your leaders who first taught you the word of God. Think of all the good that has come from their lives, and trust the Lord as they do.

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

1 Thessalonians 1:1-2, ...To the church...we always thank God for you and pray for you constantly.

Luke 14:23, 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.

Romans 15:7, So, warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified.

3. I will serve the ministry of my church.

- By discovering my gifts and talents
- By being equipped to serve by my pastors
- By developing a servant's heart

1 Peter 4:10, God has given gifts to each of you from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Manage them well so that God's generosity can flow through you.

Ephesians 4:11-12, He is the one who gave different in the church ...and the pastors and teachers are responsible for equipping God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

Philippians 2:4-7, Don't think only about your own affairs, but be interested in others, too, and what they are doing. Your attitude should be the same that Christ Jesus had...He made himself nothing; he took the humble position of a servant.

4. I WILL SUPPORT THE TESTIMONY OF MY CHURCH

- By attending faithfully
- By living a Godly life
- By giving regularly

Hebrews 10:25, And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage and warn each other...

Philippians 1:27, You must live in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ.

1 Corinthians 16:2, On every Lord's Day, each of you should put aside some amount of money in relation to what you have earned and save it for the offering.

SUNNY HILLS CHURCH
MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

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Signed

Date