

Sun City Church / New Life Church Adoption Merger

Frequently Asked Questions

How did all this even begin?

The first time we met Pastor Steve was just before the Valleyfest parade in 2014. We were getting ready to launch Sun City Church that next spring and had a box truck with our church name on it that was part of the parade. There was an immediate connection between us and Pastor Steve. He let us know how glad he was to have another great church in the area and opened up the New Life church building for our very first worship practices and a few launch team meetings before we had our office space.

We continued a friendship over the next couple years and in the fall of 2016, Pastor Steve brought up the idea of joining forces and becoming one church. That led to many conversations between the leadership teams of both churches and their respective overseers. After a lot of prayer and discussion, we have come to believe this is more than just a good idea. The fingerprints of God are all over this journey we've been on and we are convinced that combining our resources and strengths will be a huge win for the kingdom of God.

Why is New Life considering a merger?

New Life Church has a rich legacy of reaching people for Christ and ministering to the community. In the past few years, they have experienced financial struggles that have limited their ability to minister. Rather than giving up the foundation they have laid over decades of faithfulness, their leadership team has explored the idea of a merge to revitalize their church community.

Why are Sun City Church and New Life Church a good fit for a merge?

One of the reasons we connected so quickly with Pastor Steve is our similar passion to reach people for Jesus and be actively involved in our community. The mission statement of Sun City Church is "helping people far from God know Him & become like Him." It's similar to the mission statement of New Life Church and deeply resonates with their leadership team.

What does an "adoption merger" mean?

Sun City Church will be the the lead church with New Life Church joining and adding to the momentum that is already taking place. The two congregations will take on the name and established government structure of Sun City Church. New Life Church will dissolve it's corporation and all assets and liabilities will be transferred to the new Sun City Church.

How is this a win for both churches?

Sun City Church is young, full of energy and positive momentum but navigating the next steps on finding a permanent location so that ministry can continue to expand. New Life Church has a rich legacy and reputation for generosity inside of our community but has been working through financial difficulties over the past couple years. Combining the two congregations provides a strong, vibrant, renewed church that is able to focus wholeheartedly on our mission of reaching people for Jesus instead of being distracted with the challenges we have separately faced.

What is going to change?

New Life will be adopting Sun City's name, model of ministry, and culture as the lead church in the merge. Sun City Church will start hosting services in the current New Life building. We anticipate more growth as people in the community come to check out what's taking place through this merge.

Who will be the lead pastor?

Danny and Jamie Schulz currently lead Sun City Church together with complementary leadership styles and strengths. They will be leading up the pastoral team for the new Sun City Church.

What role will Pastor Steve have?

Pastor Steve Williams would be transitioning to a role as Community Pastor in the new Sun City Church. His natural gifting and heart for ministering to people both in the church and surrounding community will allow us to extend our reach into schools, businesses, and local government.

Will the worship services change?

There will be a different feel in some areas mostly because of the change of venue. A permanent location will give us the opportunity to improve greatly in much of what we do. We have intentionally designed our Sunday morning experience to introduce people to Jesus. As a result, we have the opportunity of leading people into a relationship with Christ every single week during each of our services. Our worship songs and preaching style are more similar than they are different and we anticipate the changes you experience not being too drastic.

What will happen to our existing leadership team?

The New Life board will be replaced by the Sun City board of elders that are currently governing. There will be a season of transition as we work to integrate the New Life staff into the leadership teams of Sun City Church. This will look different in every area. The Youth Ministry of New Life will continue to gather on Wednesday nights and the current Sun City youth leaders will join what is already happening at New Life.

We have been spending a lot of time with the existing leadership team at New Life and have come to love and respect what they bring to the table. All of this will be a journey with challenges that we don't even know about yet but we are committed to the process, believing that we are stronger together than we are apart.

What are the financial liabilities of this merger?

New Life comes into the merger with no liabilities other than the mortgage on the building. It is currently valued at 4.4 million dollars and the congregation still carries a note of 2.2 million.

Sun City is a debt free congregation with 156,000 in savings.

We are prayerfully considering the financial situation as we move forward. There are many wise, seasoned pastors helping us navigate through the questions and challenges that come up. Ultimately, we know that there is always risk involved in advancing the Kingdom of God. Our heart in this will be to seek wise counsel, pray with great faith, and respond in boldness to whatever God is asking us to do.

What is the procedure and timeline of this merge?

From the announcement on March 26th to the vote on April 9th, we will host a number of special gatherings to answer questions and dream about the possibilities of the future. Danny Schulz will be speaking at New Life Church on April 2nd. On April 9th, the members of both churches will vote. If 2/3 or more of the congregational members approve the elders recommendation to merge, the merge will be completed. If the vote confirms the elders recommendation we will host a celebration service commemorating the rich history of great ministry God has given New Life Church on April 30th. Then on May 7th, we will mark our new beginning and the first service as one combined congregation.

What happens if the congregational votes pass?

If both congregations decide to pursue this strategic merger, then we will begin an implementation period in the weeks following the vote. Practically, we would begin meeting as one church on May 7th.

What happens if the congregational votes do not pass?

If either church votes “no” to the merger, then the churches will not merge. In that event - whether you vote “yes” or “no” on your ballot - you will remain a member of your current church under the leadership of that church. Each church would then proceed independently of the other.

What should I do now?

1. Celebrate the wonderful opportunity God has presented to our congregation
2. Pray for the leadership team as they work out the details of the possible merger
3. Explore the possibilities by attending our special desert nights and town hall meetings to ask questions
4. Seek God’s will for the future of both churches and it’s impact on His Kingdom
5. Vote on April 9th to acknowledge what you believe to be God’s will for us.