

T.R.A.I.L – F.A.Q.

A. Why is Membership important?

Belonging means something. Belonging to something that is much bigger than yourself, brings meaning to self. Belonging to a cause that is far greater than a small group of people brings purpose.

Jesus' church, His ecclesia, was always active. It was never perpetually passive.

Thus, our membership takes to heart, mind, soul and feet T.R.A.I.L with the understanding that **together** we follow Jesus. And the results are monumental.

B. What if I am a member at a Brick-and-Mortar church?

Great question! Here is a two-fold answer: First, you will need to check with the other church to see if they have any restrictions or, if it is a denominational church, if the denomination has any restrictions.

Second, backcountry.church has no restrictions on multiple memberships. Why? Because, if we can state it this way, backcountry.church is "not in competition with brick-and-mortar churches." We are living out what the early church did without the requirement of being at a certain address.

We also know that most committed Christ-Followers have a difficult time being at a certain place, at a certain time every week. Thus, for some, backcountry.church is their second or alternative or their church when they cannot be at the brick-and-mortar location.

C. How long is my membership good for?

As long as someone is an **active** member, in perpetuity.

In order to have an active, vibrant ecclesia, we will simply review the membership every quarter and either discuss with or, if warranted, remove those who are no longer engaged.

Current, active, passionate members will undoubtedly expand God's Kingdom!

D. Do I have to sign a doctrinal statement?

While we have not incorporated a doctrinal statement, we do presume two aspects to membership:

- a. You concur with both the mission and doctrinal direction.
- b. You are following Jesus and have received the gift of eternal life.

E. Does my membership allow me to vote?

Each denomination and church is setup within their historical and/or local context. At backcountry.church, votes are not taken.

F. How is backcountry.church structured?

Backcountry.church is incorporated in the state of California as a 501 (c) (3) church. It is a Lead Pastor directed entity with an Advisory Council that oversees its finances.

G. What does T.R.A.I.L. mean?

Keeping membership simple is important. Here, we call it T.R.A.I.L. Why? Because we journey with each other in this thing called life. There is no better place to be than on the trail with each other.

Teaching - Message content and Bible study discussion. Simply put, Matthew 28:20 explains that part of what we must do is “teaching them to observe all that I have commanded.” As a result, our format and approach is very different than what most may be used to.



First, we keep the message short. Why? Because the point isn't for someone to have more information. It is for them to know what Jesus has said and to put it into practice. Second, we do a **weekly** message. Why? So you will have a week to put it into practice before going on to the next truth. Third, we keep it low key and seek to put “the cookies on the lower shelf.” It is why we record most messages in nature, as though you were on the trail with me simply talking about the subject together. It is about communicating what Jesus has commanded and asking you to participate in that context.

As a member, we ask you to listen/watch regularly. Comment on it within the app and share the message with others, especially on social media.

Regularly connecting with others on the app in groups. This is our daily connection with each other. Now, while many cannot do it daily, engage as frequently as possible. Build relationships.

Active on social media as a form of service. Everyone has a different practice when it comes to social media. We are not asking you to change what you do. But as a member, include backcountry.church in your routine. For example, if you are on Facebook with other one billion active users, then make it a point to like and share our daily posts! Share the messages that come out weekly. Same with Instagram and Twitter.

We do ask you to change your view of social media posts from a consumption standpoint to a form of service. When I share backcountry.church posts, I may never know if a person is contemplating suicide, and that post just might give them a flicker of hope. I may never know the power of liking or sharing, but as we do this consistently, daily, God takes our work and uses it for Himself. This is a key form of outreach to people none of us may ever be connected to face to face. But this is how we introduce ourselves to those who are not part of God's family...yet.

What if someone is not on social media? No problem! The point of social media is to connect with others via non-inperson means. Right? So use a telephone or text , or whatever you use, to connect them to backcountry.church.

Invest in backcountry.church through giving. Jesus said that where your treasure is, that's where your heart is. Money and giving is part of following Christ. As a member, you can view this in two ways:

1. Subscriptions are part of our world now. View this as a subscription (I know that sounds strange – but hear me out) where you have a reoccurring gift that allows the content and opportunities to keep coming. Can you give \$10 a month? \$25? \$100? \$300?
2. Jesus confirmed the tithe, giving 10% of our gross income. I have been doing this now for 48 years. You cannot out give God. Look at this as percentage giving. If you don't want to start with 10%, start smaller. You decide. But when you receive income, give that percentage to God first.

As a member, giving is part of the equation. It is expected that you give. The **amount** does not matter! Consistent giving does.

Love others through sharing the message of backcountry.church.

In your context, in your way, as a member, you will self-sacrificingly tell others about Jesus. Probably the easiest way is simply invite them into backcountry.church. Tell them about our mission: helping connect people with God, others and themselves through the enjoyment of nature.

It does not matter where a person is in their faith journey to be involved at backcountry.church. I do know that as we engage together on the app, with the preaching, with what we do, those who are far from God will connect with God and become part of His family. Jesus gave us one command: Love as I have loved you.

H. What do I do next? Take a step.

Membership doesn't mean we have our act 100% together. But it does mean I am actively heading in the direction of full and enthusiastic participation where my influence will exponentially help others connect with God, others and themselves through the enjoyment of nature.

So take a step. Here are some suggestions:

1. Do you need to be baptized? Fill out the form.
2. Do you need to setup your reoccurring giving? Set it up now.
3. Do you need to watch and participate in the weekly message? Put a reoccurring event on your calendar to remind you and go now and watch the latest message and comment on it in the app or on Facebook.
4. Do you need to be active in social media? Go to backcountry.church's Facebook or Instagram page and share the posts.
5. Do I need to be connected to others? Download the app, register at the website and join the Let's Do Life Together group.
6. Do I need to show love? Pray and ask God the best way for you, where you are, to love others as He has loved us.

Looking forward to seeing you on the TRAIL!