

CHRIST BAPTIST CHURCH
PHILOSOPHY OF MEMBERSHIP

1. What is church membership?

Scripture teaches that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ and repent of their sins are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united body called the church, the family of God, of which Jesus Christ is head (1 Corinthians 12:13).

2. Who should be in the body of Christ, the church?

The body of Christ is made up of saved sheep: John 10:14-15, 26-29.

These are men and women who were redeemed by Christ and are born again: 1 Peter 1:18-19, 22-25. They are washed, justified, and sanctified: 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

3. How do you become a member of the body of Christ?

Membership of the body of Christ (the invisible church) is not an option but a requirement.

Membership of the invisible church (body of Christ) is through regeneration and Spirit baptism (conversion and belonging). John 3:5, 8; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13.

Whoever is not a member of the invisible church, is definitely not a Christian.

4. Why is local church membership important?

A local church is a body of believers made up of different people. These people are believers who trusted the person and the work of Christ. A local church is a definable group of people.

The local church membership is important for the following reasons:

- It is a sign of commitment to the local church and the leadership of the church (Hebrews 13:17).
- It reveals the willingness to be accountable to other believers and the elders (Hebrews 13:17)
- It reveals the desire to edify other believers with your gift (1 Peter 4:10-11)
- It is the acknowledgement of responsibility (1 Thessalonians 1:10)
- It identifies who are and who are not sheep (John 10:14, 27).

The elders must shepherd the sheep (flock) of God entrusted to them by the Lord Jesus (1 Peter 5:2; Acts 20:28).

5. Who is a local church member?

A local church member is a person who is committed, covenanted, accountable, submissive, responsible and belonging to the local body of Christ.

6. How does a person become a member of the local church?

- Regeneration and conversion followed by believer's baptism which is by immersion.
- Affirmation of the salvation testimony by the local church leadership.

Membership of the local church is only for those who have been saved and baptized by immersion. The applicant must have a salvation testimony that has been affirmed by the church leadership.

Membership of the local church is not an option but a requirement for every born again believer.

7. Process

At CBC, the process towards membership is as follows:

- a) Attend membership class
- b) Review and subscribe to the doctrinal statement and statement of faith of the Church
- c) Complete the membership application form
Complete the salvation testimony sheet
If transferring from another church, present a letter of good standing from that church.
- d) Welcome an assigned elder or CBC member into the home to:
 - i) answer any questions from the applicant(s)
 - ii) clarify and assist in the completion of the required documents
 - iii) ascertain the salvation testimony and believer's baptism
- e) The elder or CBC member will recommend the applicant(s) to the eldership
- f) If the eldership is satisfied and there are no further concerns, the elders will announce the name(s) of the applicant(s) before the congregation for affirmation.
- g) Members shall have the opportunity to state reasons they believe the applicant(s) should not be received as members
- h) If there are no adequate objections the applicant(s) will be accepted into the membership, after two or three weeks of the announcement.
- i) Applicant(s) for membership will be welcomed into membership during the first week of June and the first week of December.
- j) The new member(s) will be introduced to the Church during the morning general service, if need be, they must be given the opportunity to respond publicly.
- k) The Church will keep the record of all its members with: Names, telephone numbers, emails, residential address, postal address, date of birth, gender, marital status, occupation, date of membership, date of baptism, etc.
- l) The new member(s) must give written consent for the church to keep the information in (k) above in accordance with the POPI Act.

8. Involvement

New members must be informed of the member's responsibilities and privileges. And the leadership must see to it that all the members are involved in the life of the body.

The following responsibilities are essential for every member:

- A member should attend Sunday church services regularly (Hebrews 10:25). Sunday services and mid-week services are meant for a corporate worship, fellowship, and edification.
- A member should join a growth group or mid-week group (Acts 2:42; 17:11).
- A member should partake of the Lord's Supper regularly (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).
- A member should read and study the word of God regularly (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:3). The leadership has the responsibility to see that every member is growing in Christ.
- A member should pray alone, with others, and for others regularly (1 Thessalonians 5:17; James 5:16).
- A member should witness Christ regularly (Acts 1:8; Mark 8:38).

- A member should support the church financially (1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8-9).
- A member should attend the member's meeting of the church (Acts 15:4, 22).

9. When can a member be removed from the membership roll?

- a) When a member is living in an unrepentant sin after church restoration procedure is exhausted.
- b) At death.
- c) At a member's request.
- d) After relocation that resulted in the member not participating in the life of the church.
- e) When a member is transferred to another likeminded church.
- f) When they have become members of another church
- g) When a member is imprisoned for a long term.
- h) Church plant involvement in another location. The leadership decided to release certain members to support a new church plant.
- i) After non-attendance of twelve (12) continuous months.
Exceptions are due to health issues and physical disabilities.
Absentee members will be contacted by the church leadership to renew their membership within three months or to transfer their membership to another church.

The leadership of the church shall make a public announcement during the morning general service following the removal of a member from membership roll.

10. Restoration of member into membership

Restoration of any member into membership shall be approved by the elders following a public announcement during the morning general service.

Members who have been removed due to disciplinary action cannot be restored without following the process of application for membership. If a public announcement was made with regards to their removal, a public announcement needs to be made regarding their restoration into membership.

11. DUAL CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

What is dual church membership?

This is basically a person belonging to two churches that are in different locations.

a. Statement on a single church membership

A Christian must be accountable to a local church. He or she should submit to the leadership, attend church regularly, support the church financially, serve faithfully, and fulfil the one another's of the Bible.

It is not applicable that a person can be a loyal member in good standing while attending two churches. Therefore, a Christian should be intentional about being a member of one church.

b. Position on a single church membership

A Christian should belong to one local church. He or she must be committed, submissive, serve, and be accountable to one body.

If business people, students, soldiers, doctors, and church planters foresee that their engagement will cause them to miss church for twelve (12) continuous months, they should take membership of the new church in that location. An exception will be made for missionaries who are sent by CBC to do missions work.

Approved by CBC Elders on 08 November 2022

Joseph Mahlaola

Mark Melville

Andrew Isiaho

Charlie Rampfumedzi

William Vaughan