

# The Meaning of Membership

In

## The Body of Christ (Presbyterian)

The incarnation in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ gives to the church not only its mission but also its understanding of membership. One becomes an active member of the church through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and acceptance because of his Lordship in all of life.

**Baptism and a public profession of faith in Jesus as Lord are the visible signs of entrance into the active membership of the church.**

### Reception of members

Person may enter into active church membership in the following ways:

- By profession of faith
- Reaffirmation of faith in Jesus Christ
- Transfer or certificate from some other church

By Profession of Faith (previously baptized)

When persons baptized as infants reach an age when they are ready to make public their profession of faith and accept their responsibility in the life of the church, the session should invite, encourage, and help them prepare for their responsibility as active church members, The age at which young persons should make such public profession is not precisely fixed. Its is left to the prudence od the session to judge, after careful examination the readiness of those who apply for active membership.

By Profession of Faith (not previously baptized)

When persons who have not been baptized desire to profess their faith in Christ and be incorporated in the life of the church as believers, they shall do so be making public their profession of faith and receiving baptism after appropriate instruction and examination of the session.

By Transfer (Certificate) of Membership

Persons who have made a profession of faith and have been received into membership in a particular church may be received by the session upon receipt of certificate from the church in which they have been most recently a member.

## By Reaffirmation of Faith

It is sometimes the case that persons who previously made a profession of faith and became active members in a particular church are unable to secure a certificate of transfer or other evidence of church membership. After instruction and examination by the session, these persons shall reaffirm publicly their profession of faith and their acceptance of responsibility in the life of the church.

## Membership as Ministry

A faithful member accepts Christ's call to be involved responsibly in the ministry of his Church. Such involvement includes:

- Proclaiming the good news
- Taking part in the common life and worship of a particular church
- Praying and studying Scripture and the faith of the Christian Church
- Supporting the work of the church through the giving of money, time, and talents
- Participating in the governing responsibilities of the church
- Demonstration a new quality of life within and through the church
- Living responsibly in the personal, familial vocational, political, cultural, and social relationships of life
- Working in the world for peace, justice, freedom, and human fulfillment

## Review of Membership

Accepting the responsibility of membership in the Church of Jesus Christ (Presbyterian) is a commitment to Christ that binds the individual to fulfillment of the obligations of membership.

By the Member:

Members shall, when encouraged by the session, regularly review and evaluate the integrity with which they are involved in the ministry of the church and consider ways in which their participation in the worship and service of the church may be increased and made more meaningful.

By the Governing Body:

The session shall review the roll of members at least annually, and shall counsel with those who have neglected the responsibilities of membership.