

What is Church Membership?

Becoming a part of a church family is a crucial decision. Some people say that there is no such thing as church membership in the Bible! Superficially that may be true. But at another level it is obvious that each church knew those who belonged to their own fellowship of gathered believers. It is not difficult then to imagine that someone, somewhere, had a list of those who were part of the local fellowship and it is there that you have the real essence of church membership.

Church Membership is about belonging to a local Christian community and being involved in its life, work and witness. These things are common themes in the letters of the New Testament.

What is expected of a church member?

There are two main things:

- First of all, a member needs to be someone with a **personal Christian faith**, which may have come through a specific experience or as part of a gradual process.

- Secondly, a member is someone who is **committed to the local church** and who is involved in its life, its work and its worship. A member is someone who recognises that a particular fellowship is their spiritual home, where through faith they belong.

Do members have to get baptised?

No. In common with Baptist Union churches, we operate what's called "open membership" - membership open both to those baptised as believers and to other Christians. Whilst as a Baptist Church, we believe that baptism should be as we find it in the Bible, that is, as an expression of faith, we also welcome people into membership who come from non-Baptist backgrounds "**on profession of faith**" - faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

What is the process of Becoming a church member?

1. Contact

Indicate your desire to join CPBC in membership by speaking to our minister or someone on the church leadership team (deacon).

2. Information

Having shown your interest the minister or a church leader will want to go through a short course with you to help you understand deeper what membership is all about. We call this **STEPPING UP** (step 3) and it is part of our church '*stepping stones*' programme. This will involve looking at Church doctrine and belief, and the roles and responsibilities of the church to members but also members to the church.

3. Application

Upon completion of the short course if you are wanting to continue with an application for membership then a deacon and church member will come to visit you for an informal chat and interview. This is to allow them the time to get to know you and for you to get to know them. The time spent together will also include looking at how you can best get involved in service within our church.

Becoming part of our church family



A short guide
To the process of
Becoming a member at
Clarence Park Baptist Church

What do I need to do next?

If you have already decided to ask for church membership, or if you would like to talk about it further, please contact the Minister:

Rev Steve Christian

It is easiest to contact Steve via the manse on 01934 628659. If he is not available then please leave a message and he will get back to you as soon as possible.

If you want to know more about what believers' baptism means, and about services of believers' baptism at Clarence Park Baptist Church, please take the similar leaflet on that theme, or else speak with our minister: Rev Steve Christian or a member of our leadership team.

Further details can be found
Via the church web site:

www.cpbc.co.uk

Or email the church

enquiries@cpbc.co.uk

4. Approval

All new members are approved by the church meeting. Those who visit you will bring a short account of the interview and a recommendation to the church.

Depending on where you have come from in your Christian life, your approval may be based on Christian experience, a letter of transfer from a previous church, or pending baptism.

5. Welcome

We welcome new members into our church fellowship during a communion service. This is traditionally where you will be extended the "right hand of fellowship" illustrating the special bond of fellowship that believers share and will give us the opportunity to pray with you as you begin the next chapter of your spiritual life in membership with us.