

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MEMBER

The difference between “*attenders*” and “*members*” can be summed up in one word: COMMITMENT

At First Baptist we recognize the need for a formal membership. We ask you to commit to membership for four reasons:

**I. A BIBLICAL REASON:
CHRIST IS COMMITTED TO THE CHURCH**

“...Christ loved the church, and he gave his life for it.” Eph. 5:25

**II. A CULTURAL REASON:
IT IS AN ANTIDOTE TO OUR SOCIETY**

We live in an age where very few want to be committed to anything...a job...a marriage...our country. This attitude has even produced a generation of “church shoppers and hoppers”. Membership swims against the current of North America’s “consumer religion.” It is an unselfish decision. Commitment always builds character.

**III. A PRACTICAL REASON:
IT DEFINES WHO CAN BE COUNTED ON**

Every team must have a roster. Every school must have an enrollment. Every business has a payroll. Every army has an enlistment. Even our country takes a census and requires voter registration. Membership identifies our family.

**IV. A PERSONAL REASON:
IT PRODUCES SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

The New Testament places a major emphasis on the need for Christians to be accountable to each other for spiritual growth. You cannot be accountable when you’re not committed to any specific church family.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME AS A MEMBER?

At First Baptist we never ask our members to do more than the Bible clearly teaches. We only expect our members to do what the Bible expects every Christian to do. These responsibilities are spelled out in the . . .

THE FIRST BAPTIST MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

“Having received Christ as my Lord and Saviour and having been baptized (normally by immersion), I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the First Baptist church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

I. I WILL PROTECT THE UNITY OF MY CHURCH

...By acting in love toward other members

...By refusing to gossip

...By following with discernment and through thoughtful process the church leaders

“So let us concentrate on the things which make for harmony, and on the growth of our fellowship together.” Rom. 15:19

“Live in complete harmony with each other — each with the attitude of Christ toward each other.” Rom 15:5

“Have a sincere love for your fellow believers, love one another earnestly with all your hearts.” 1 Peter 1:22

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of our mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs...” Eph. 4:29

“Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you.” Heb. 13:17

II. I WILL SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MY CHURCH

...By praying for its growth

...By inviting the unchurched to attend

...By warmly welcoming those who visit

“To the church...we always thank God for you and pray for you constantly.” 1 Thess. 1:2

“Go out into the country...and urge anyone you find to come in, so that My House will be full.” Luke 14:23

III. I WILL SERVE THE MINISTRY OF MY CHURCH

“So, warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified.” Rom. 15:7

...By discovering my gifts and talents

...By seeking out opportunities to minister

...By developing a servant’s heart

“Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you...” 1 Peter 4:10

“God gave...some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God’s people for works of ministry, so that the body of Christ may be built up...” Eph. 4:11-12

“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ...who took on the very nature of a servant...” Phil 2:3-4, 7

IV. I WILL SUPPORT THE TESTIMONY OF MY CHURCH

...By attending faithfully and giving regularly

...By living a godly life

...By submitting to discipline in accordance with the Church’s policy

...By participating in the life of our city as “salt and light”

“Let us not give up the habit of meeting together...but let us encourage one another.” Heb. 10:25

“But whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ.” Phil. 1:27

“Each one of you, on the first day of each week, should set aside a specific sum of money in proportion to what you have earned and use it for the offering.” 1 Cor. 16:2

“A tenth of all you produce is the Lord’s, and it is holy.” Lev. 27:30

V. FINALLY, I ENGAGE THAT WHEN I REMOVE FROM THIS PLACE, I WILL INTENTIONALLY SEEK TO UNITE WITH ANOTHER CHURCH, WHERE I CAN CARRY OUT THE SPIRIT OF THIS COVENANT AND THE PRINCIPLES OF GOD’S WORD.

“Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” Hebrews 10:25

TO BE READ BY THE PASTORS AND DEACONS ...

WITH GOD’S GRACE AND TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY, WE, THE LEADERSHIP OF THIS CHURCH, COMMIT:

I. TO LIVE OUR COLLECTIVE LIFE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE BIBLE AND IN THE POWER AND FULLNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

We will listen for and obey the direction and leading of the Holy Spirit.

We are committed to the development of your life in all areas: body, soul and spirit.

We will make available the sacramental ordinances of public worship, biblical teaching, the Lord’s Supper, and baptism.

We will provide spiritual leadership by appointing pastors who meet the criteria assigned to these leadership roles in the Scriptures.

We will be on guard against false teachers.

We will exercise church discipline when necessary.

II. TO NURTURE COMMUNITY OF THE BODY OF CHRIST AT FIRST BAPTIST:

We will value your service to God and others. We will help you discover and use your spiritual gifts, offer you practical care and respect, and pray for you. We will strive to be godly examples and join with you in fulfilling our responsibilities as church members.

We will be wise stewards of the time, talent, money and resources you entrust to us as a gift to God.

We will love you by affirming and encouraging you, by serving you, and by being direct and honest in all our communication with you.

We will submit to God and to one another out of reverence for Christ. We will watch over the teaching and practice of our community of faith.

III. TO PARTICIPATE TOGETHER IN GOD’S PLAN OF WORLD-WIDE MISSION:

We will love and honour your family.

We will love and pray for your neighbors and treat them with respect regardless of race, gender, or faith.

We will strive for God-honoring excellence, purity and integrity in our work and in our leisure time.

We will serve and give to others in need.

We will lovingly proclaim Jesus Christ.

We will be good stewards of all the resources God has entrusted to us.

Signature of Member

Date

Signature of Pastor

Date

Signature of Deacon or Moderator

Date