

WHY IS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP IMPORTANT?

Joining a church is more than adding your name to a list—it's a step of obedience and commitment. It shows that you're serious about your faith, your growth, and your role in God's family.

Through membership, you say, "I belong here. I'm committed to this church, and I want to grow, serve, and walk faithfully with others." It's a visible sign of your spiritual connection to the body of Christ.



HOW DO I BECOME A MEMBER?

At Spotswood, we welcome into membership anyone who has placed their faith in Jesus Christ and has been baptized by immersion.

STEPS TO JOIN:

1. Visit the Next Steps Station

Let our Welcome Team know you're ready to take the next step.

2. Meet a Counselor

We'll talk through your next step and gather some information:

- Contact details
- Family info
- Prior church info (if applicable)

Membership is individual. Your family can come forward together, but everyone may need to take different steps to become a member.



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MEMBERSHIP
WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?



WHAT IS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP?

When a person is saved, they become part of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). Because they are united to Christ and to His people, they are called to commit themselves to a local body of believers. Church membership is that commitment.

To be a member of a church is to join with others who have gathered for God's purposes: to grow through the teaching of His Word (1 Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 4:2), to serve one another through the use of spiritual gifts (Rom. 12:3–8; 1 Pet. 4:10–11), to participate in the ordinances of the church (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38–42), and to proclaim the gospel to the world (Matt. 28:18–20).

It also involves placing oneself under the care and guidance of the pastors God has provided—leaders who shepherd, teach, and watch over the church (Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:2).

IS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP BIBLICAL?

Although the Bible doesn't include a direct command to "join a church," the concept of membership is found throughout the New Testament. It's reflected in four key areas:

1. EXAMPLE OF THE EARLY CHURCH

From the beginning, those who trusted Christ were counted as part of a local church (Acts 2:42). They didn't walk the Christian life alone—they gathered regularly, shared life together, and were recognized as members of a specific church community.

We see further evidence in the letters of the New Testament—written to identifiable churches and groups of believers. Even when someone moved away, churches exchanged letters of commendation (Acts 18:27; Rom. 16:1), indicating a clear sense of belonging and transfer of membership.

2. CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Pastors (also called elders or overseers) are given the responsibility to care for and lead a specific group of believers (Acts 20:28; 1 Thess. 5:12; Heb. 13:17). They are accountable before God for the people in their care, which assumes a defined membership.

Likewise, believers are called to submit to their leaders (Heb. 13:17). This mutual relationship can only happen when it's clear who the leaders and the members are.

3. CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Jesus taught that if a believer persists in sin, the issue should be brought before "the church" (Matt. 18:15–17). This only works within a community where people are known and accountable to each other. Church discipline, as described in Matthew 18 and 1 Corinthians 5, requires a defined membership to be carried out biblically and lovingly.

4. MUTUAL EDIFICATION

God calls every believer to build up the body of Christ through love, encouragement, and service (Heb. 10:24–25; Rom. 12:6–8). The "one-another" commands of Scripture assume deep, ongoing relationships within a local church. Church membership is how believers formally commit to one another for that purpose.

