

Membership @ TCSC

The Lord Jesus Christ is building his Church and is the one who makes persons members of his Church. His Church is seen in the world through the many local churches and for this reason The Church of St. Charles believes that being a member of a local church is not to be taken lightly nor is the receiving of persons into the membership of a local church to be taken lightly. TCSC delights in receiving believers into its body and it is our joy to communicate what is involved in becoming a member of The Church of St. Charles. We hope that you find the following information about becoming a TCSC member helpful and informative.

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Why Membership?

"I don't have to belong to a church to be a Christian. I can be a Christian without being a member of a church." These statements represent the belief of many Christians today in an age where commitment to anything is rare and individualism is the chief concern. Consider this, when a believer commits to being a member of a church, that believer is saying that he cares about publicly identifying with Christ and his people and proclaiming the gospel (Matt 28:18-20, Acts 1:8, Phil 6), that she cares about fellowshiping with other believers (Acts 2:42), that he cares about submitting to the leadership of the church (Heb 13:17), that she cares about

submitting to the authority of the word of God faithfully taught by the pastors and teachers in the church (Eph 4:11-13, James 1:22), that he cares about using his spiritual gifts to minister to others in the church (1 Cor 12:4-31, Rom 12:3-8). A believer that doesn't want to commit to being a member of a church is really saying, "I don't care about those things."

Why membership? Believers are to care about those things. Why membership? In the New Testament when people were saved they were immediately a part of an identifiable body of believers, a church. Why membership? Believers devote themselves to the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Why membership? In the early church "all who believed were together" and "day by day they attended the temple together" Why membership? Each believer has been granted spiritual gifts for the mutual benefit of the church. Why membership? It is the church that is the representation of Christ in this world and as every believer properly functions within a local body of believers is the church able to fully represent Christ.

Believers are placed into a relationship of love and commitment to God and one another when they are saved by Jesus and are made part of the church by the Holy Spirit. Membership in a church is a formal way for a believer to say that he or she does care about being in this relationship of love and commitment to God and other believers.

How to become a Member of TCSC

There are several ways in which a person may become a member of TCSC. It all begins with completing a TCSC Application

for Membership and submitting it to one of the elders. Upon review of the application, a meeting will be schedule with the prospective member and the elders to discuss the application and the process of becoming a member. The purpose of the application and the meeting is to begin to get to know the prospective member. TCSC is interested in learning about the prospective member's experience in the church, beliefs, salvation confession, baptism, etc. so that the elder's might rightly assess the person's spiritual condition and initial fitness for membership in The Church of St. Charles. TCSC will be looking for evidence that God has given spiritual life to the prospective member. This new spiritual life is made evident by the fruit of faith and repentance along with devotion to Jesus Christ as Lord. Once the person's spiritual condition is affirmed and it is deemed appropriate to move forward in the membership process then that person will be given a date as to when the membership process will begin.

The membership process involves several components which are required to be fulfilled in order for an individual to be received as a member of TCSC. The components listed below are requirements for all seeking membership in TCSC and are in the order in which they are required.

1. Completion and submission of TCSC Membership Application
2. Completion of the membership orientation (TCSC Orientation)
3. Public confession of faith and testimony of salvation before the members of TCSC. The prospective member must be able to articulate his or her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as he or she is called to be a witness of Christ.

4. Agreement with and signing of the TCSC Membership Covenant.

In addition to the requirements above, if the person is a:

- A. Believer seeking to transfer membership from a like church
 - TCSC requires a letter from the other church stating that the person is a member in good standing and has received a believer's baptism
- B. New believer
 - TCSC requires water baptism (The public confession of faith and testimony of salvation before the members of TCSC, as required above, will be given during the water baptism ceremony) TCSC membership application requirement waived for a person newly saved while attending TCSC.
- C. A believer with no membership in a like church
 - TCSC will discuss with the believer the circumstances by which there is no association with a church or the association with a church of unlike doctrine
 - TCSC may require water baptism

Privileges of Membership in TCSC

The privileges that come with being a member of a local church are often not clearly communicated to believers. Membership in a local church provides a means by which much spiritual growth and increasing love and devotion to Jesus can

occur in the service of him. Some of the privileges of membership at TCSC:

- ❖ Members are able to enjoy full fellowship and a sense of community with the Lord Jesus Christ and his church
- ❖ Members are able to know in an ever increasing manner the abundant grace that God bestows upon his church through the living out of the word of God in relationship with other believers
- ❖ Members are able to participate in all the ministries/activities of the church
- ❖ Members are able to serve on committees and/or in leadership positions according to how God has gifted and provides opportunities
- ❖ Members are able to teach or assist in teaching in TCSC's teaching ministries according to how God has gifted and provides opportunities
- ❖ Members receive priority when needing assistance from the benevolence, counseling or other ministries of the church
- ❖ Members are able to serve in the outreach ministries in a leadership capacity according to how God has gifted and provides opportunities

Expectations of Members of TCSC

It is not The Church of St. Charles's desire in making known the expectations of its members to place burdensome regulations or unbiblical requirements for belonging to the church or serving Jesus, but rather to make known the expectations that the Lord Jesus himself has for his people. Each member of TCSC is expected to:

- ❖ Hold fast to the faith (1 Corinthians 15:2, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-15)
- ❖ Obey the Word of God (Luke 11:28, John 14:23, 1 John 3:24, 5:3)
- ❖ Engage in the regular study of the Bible which involves
 - Personal Bible reading and study (1 Tim 2:15, Acts 17:11, Ps 119:11-16,)
 - Community Bible study – participation in TCSC Bible studies, small group bible studies, etc. (Acts 2:42,)
- ❖ Submit to the leadership of the church (Hebrews 13:17)
- ❖ Participate consistently in the regular meeting together of the church (Hebrews 10:25)
- ❖ To serve Christ in the area in which the Holy Spirit has gifted (Romans 12:3-8)
- ❖ To be intentional in proclaiming Jesus by mouth and by lifestyle (Acts 1:8, Matthew 28:19, 20)
- ❖ Give to the ministries of the church cheerfully and freely as you are able (2 Corinthians 9:7)
- ❖ Pray for the Holy Spirit's work in the church (Ephesians 1:16-23)
- ❖ Submit to TCSC's Statement of Faith (What We Teach), Bylaws, and Covenant
- ❖ Submit to the church's disciplinary procedure (Matt 18:15-20, Proverbs 3:11-12, Hebrews 12:5-11)

To find out more information about The Church of St. Charles please check out our website: www.churchofstcharles.com.

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