

MEMBERSHIP

at Cambray



CAMBRAY
BAPTIST CHURCH
CHELtenham
LOVE + GROW + GO

BECOMING A MEMBER

Once you've got to know the church a bit, met with one of the Pastors, and been with us for a few months, we'd love you to consider how you might commit yourself to Cambray as your Church family.

At Cambray we have a church "membership" - not in order to create an exclusive group within the church, but because we believe passionately in the Biblical commitment to unite as God's "living stones" within His local church, grow together in Him, and submit to the authority of Elders.

Because people come from a variety of church backgrounds, this leaflet explains more about membership

Unite as God's living stones
within his local church.

and aims to answer many of your questions. Please do talk with any of the Elders if you have other questions before more formally chatting with us about entering church membership.

FUNDAMENTALS

Membership is open to all who have put their trust in Jesus as their saviour, who have been baptised as believers by immersion, are walking with Him as Lord and who wish to join with God's people in the work of God through Cambray.



If you have joined with us but have not yet come to know Jesus as your saviour, then it is vital that you seek Jesus as saviour and Lord first.

There are many within the church who will be able to discuss what it means to know Jesus as your saviour, so just ask around or approach one of the Pastors to know more. Similarly, if you want to talk to us about baptism, we'd love to chat with you further.

If you do know Jesus as your saviour and are walking with Him, read on...

THINKING DEEPER

It is common to think of membership in “institutional” terms – like joining a sports club, being a member of the RAC, etc. But, that's not a helpful way to think!

The Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20) urges believers to be committed to the ongoing process of making disciples – and this is the heart of church membership! From their first steps of faith in Jesus and their baptism, new believers should be welcomed into the warmth of a community of fellow disciples who together seek to share the Gospel and encourage each other to grow

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more and more like Jesus (Col 3:12-14, Eph 3:11-16). And this requires commitment ... a commitment first of all to Jesus, but also to one another. It's a commitment to journey through life together, praying with each other and seeking to help each other to grow in Christ in all circumstances through His enabling and wisdom.

The word we use to describe the kind of relationship involved in belonging to the church is *covenant*. A covenant is a two-way commitment that is open-ended and unconditional. A covenant relationship is a deep bond between two parties which does not anticipate an end and is not dependent upon love being earned. This is the amazing relationship that we can have with God because

of the redeeming work of Jesus! But it also describes the kind of ‘covenant’ relationship between an individual and the rest of the church community. Each church, therefore, should be a covenant community – a group of disciples of Jesus who are deeply committed to God and to one another!

So, membership isn’t about the power, privilege or responsibility to make decisions. Rather it is about a covenant commitment to God, to personal discipleship that produces Christ-likeness, and to each other as His local community of believers who, with servant hearts, are actively involved in serving and encouraging each other. The key question to ask yourself is simply this – “Is that what I understand church to be about?”. If the answer is “no”, then we would invite you to

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talk with one of the Pastors about what you see church as being about before going further.

PARTNERSHIP

Thinking about membership in terms of a list of responsibilities and privileges isn't very helpful. It's better, in thinking about how membership is outworked, to think in terms of that covenant to each other – a covenant of **TRUST**.

Truth – God's word as our guide

We place ourselves under the authority and guidance of God's word in all things. So, we ask that



you confirm that you accept and will unite around the truths of the gospel as identified within the Basis of Faith (see page 11) and that you do not promote or divide over other matters.

Responsibility – grow in God

We have responsibility for each other's spiritual growth - we ask that you make a point of praying for one another (2 Thess 1:11, James 5:16), greeting one another (Romans 16:16, Phil 4:21), offering hospitality (Heb 13:2, 1 Pet 4:9), and encouraging and teaching one another (Col 3:16). We have

responsibility for financial support of the work of CBC and the missionaries it supports, contributing as we are able (1 Cor 16, 2 Cor 8-9).

Unity – together become like Jesus

We recognise that God has brought people into Cambray from many different church backgrounds and traditions. Yet, whatever our differences, as we unite, God uses these very differences to strengthen the fellowship and show His glory (Eph 2:11-22). So, we ask you to commit yourselves to oneness in Christ, showing loyalty and love for one another (1 Jn 4:11-12; Rom 12:10), refraining from gossip (2 Cor 12:20; 1 Tim 5:13), forgiving those who wrong you (Eph 4:32; Col 3:13), and respecting and submitting to the leadership (1

Thess 5:12; Heb 13:17) as they seek to lead the church as shepherds of God's flock (1 Pet 5:1-3).

Service – share the

Lord's work We depend not only on your financial gifts, but also on each one

Truth

Responsibility

Unity

Service

Testimony

putting our spiritual and natural gifts on the altar of service for God. We ask you to be active in discovering your gifts (1 Cor 12:4-31), to seek out training if needed (Rom 12:6-8; Tit 3:14) and to seek that God develop in you a servant heart (Mark 10:45; Rom 12:11) as you seek to minister within Cambray.

Testimony – point all to Jesus

We want to be always pointing to Jesus! We ask that the church family encourage one another by attending worship services and meetings regularly (1 Thess 5:11; Heb 10:25) and by constantly speaking of God and His Word to one another (Col 3:16-17) as well as by our service. We testify about

Jesus in the church and beyond by living godly lives and declaring our faith before others (Col 4:6; 1 Peter 2:12, 3:15) and by developing relationships and speaking of Jesus with those who do not yet know Him (Luke 15:4; 1 Cor 9:19-23).

SO HOW DO I BECOME A MEMBER?

The reality is that all believers should wish to become members because it simply expresses the reality of what God wants for the church, as we have seen. So, what about it? Will you join us?

If you have been baptised as a believer and want to become a member there is an easy process to



bring you into membership. It's designed to help you ask any questions and to confirm in your heart that this is what God wants for you.

If you decide that you don't want to proceed, that's ok – we will leave it until God prepares you on another occasion.

We will arrange for at least two longer standing church members to meet with you. They will want to hear about how you became a Christian and your subsequent spiritual journey and also discuss what it means to be a member. If, after this, both you and those who have met with you, believe that you are able to become a member, a recommendation will be made to the church leaders. The leaders will then commend you to the members of the church at a Members' Meeting. Following a successful vote, you will be welcomed as a member within a morning service.

THE MEMBERSHIP PROCESS

1. Connect to the life of the church by actively and prayerfully joining with us for at least 6 months
2. Consider whether you are in agreement with the Basis of Faith and vision of the church
3. Pray for God's peace about joining God's people in Cambray Baptist Church
4. Request membership by asking one of the Pastors or Elders about membership
5. Discuss with nominated church members in an informal interview

THE NEXT STEP

You've now heard all that is necessary to consider membership.

Go and pray over it and ask for God's direction.

Then approach one of the Elders or Pastors [contact details on back cover] about taking membership further.

Before we finish, however, we do want to talk about one more thing...





LEAVING MEMBERSHIP

Before you come into membership, we do want you to know that we recognise that there may come a time when God calls you from Cambray to another place.

Membership is a public covenant of commitment to God's people in a particular place and so leaving a church should never be taken lightly. But there are a few Biblically appropriate reasons why you might have to move on:

- ◆ You're moving, or already live at a distance from Cambray, and wish to be involved in a local church
- ◆ There are opportunities for service in another church and Cambray leaders wish to send you to aid that church

- ◆ There is a clear drift from the Basis of Faith of the church and the leadership are not acting to deal with it (1Tim 4:13, 2Tim 3:13-17, Titus 1:9)
- ◆ The leadership are not matching the requirements of Elders and Deacons (1 Tim 3:1-13, 5:17-20, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Pet 5:1-4)

Other reasons are not normally appropriate. Actually, if we feel we should leave for any other reason we should actually examine our hearts so that we test ourselves against God's word. Paul's instructions to the church at Corinth (1 Cor 4-9, 2 Cor 4:5) are helpful.

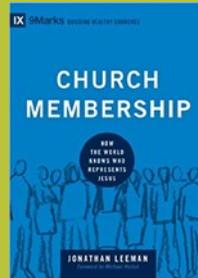
If, having examined your heart, your reason to leave is Biblically appropriate, the process by which you leave membership is as follows:

- ◆ Pray, seeking God regarding the reasons for moving on. Ensure these are Biblical reasons.
- ◆ Invite the elders to meet with you as early as possible in your thinking and praying.
- ◆ Meet and pray with the elders as you investigate the way ahead and consider God's word. Agree whether it is appropriate to leave or appropriate to stay.

We are keen that you should be linked to a church as rapidly as possible after leaving. We will help in pointing out good churches to consider, and will continue to contact you and pray for you while you are looking until you settle into the church God has for you. Then:

- ◆ The leaders contact the church leaders of the church you are moving to, commending you to them.
- ◆ Your resignation is communicated to members at the next members' meeting.
- ◆ The church will collectively pray for you as you move on in the next mutually convenient morning church service.

If you want to read more on Church Membership, we recommend the following book:



Jonathan Leeman
IX Marks
Building Healthy Churches series

CAMBRAY'S BASIS OF FAITH

The Church follows the Reformed/Calvinistic Baptist tradition adhering to the following Statement of Faith:

- ◆ The divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures as originally given, not only containing but being in themselves the Word of God; their final authority for the believer in all matters of faith and practice.
- ◆ In the one Godhead there are three equal Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
- ◆ The Sovereignty, Holiness, Love and Grace of God as revealed in Creation, Providence and Redemption.
- ◆ The Person of our Lord Jesus Christ - His true Deity as the Son of God; His virgin birth; His real and perfect humanity; The absolute authority of His teaching and the infallibility of all His utterances; His finished work of Atonement for sinners by His suffering and dying as their substitute; His bodily Resurrection and His Ascension into Heaven; His present High Priestly intercession for His people; His personal return.
- ◆ The work of the Holy Spirit in the new birth, conversion and holy living.
- ◆ The corruption of every part of human nature as a result of sin and the necessity of new birth.
- ◆ The sinner is put right with God through the atoning work of our Lord Jesus Christ and this blessing is to be received by faith alone.
- ◆ The resurrection of the body and the judgement of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ.
- ◆ Two ordinances of divine institution are observed: the Communion of the Lord's Supper as an act of remembrance and fellowship; believers' baptism by immersion as a confession of faith and an act of obedience.
- ◆ The Church of Jesus Christ is composed of all those who, confessing their repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, have been born again by the Holy Spirit.

MEMBERSHIP CONTACTS

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