

PEACHCROFT CHRISTIAN CENTRE - GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERSHIP

These guidelines are intended to help people who are considering applying for membership of the Christian Centre.

Entering into membership of the Christian Centre

People would normally be invited to enter into church membership in one of the following ways: -

- After making a profession of faith in Jesus - having already been baptized.
- After being baptized as a believer or by confirmation.
- By transfer of membership of another denominational church to the Christian Centre.

What are the privileges of membership?

Members are able to take part in the decision making process for the Centre; together with other members they seek the mind of Christ for the life of the Centre.

Members are entitled to attend all Church Meetings for the Centre, to elect Church Council members and approve other appointments.

Members are eligible for election to the Church Council or membership of other committees and leadership roles.

What are the responsibilities of membership?

Members undertake to be faithful in private and public prayer, Bible study and worship.

Members take seriously Biblical teaching on stewardship of time, talents and money.

Members are committed to the mutual support and interdependence of church members.

Members are involved in the work and witness of the local church.

Members are aligned to the mission, vision and values of the church.

Introduction to Membership

Appropriate ways of preparing applicants for membership would be arranged (including preparation for baptism or confirmation if appropriate). Depending on the individual, preparation for membership may only require a single discussion, though a short course would normally be anticipated to include aspects of the work of the church, the governance of the church and a Bible study that explains the meaning and purpose of membership. The minister would lead the course and/or others approved by the Church Council.

The Church Council, on the recommendation of the minister and others involved in preparation, would share the responsibility of accepting and affirming people in their membership.

The 'welcome' would normally be in the Centre in the context of a Communion service

- The 'welcome' would include an affirmation of faith and recognition of the privileges and responsibilities of membership by a form of liturgical promises agreed by the Church Council.
- A card of 'welcome' or certificate of membership (with the offer of the right hand of fellowship).

Holy Communion

It is anticipated that all members, as an expression of their commitment to Christ, will want to receive bread and wine regularly at Communion Services as well as regularly attend meetings for worship and prayer.

Associate Membership

It is important that people are able to feel that they belong the Christian Centre who may not be able to fulfil the privileges and responsibilities of membership (e.g. because they are: - attending another church, living away, not yet been baptised, or their denominational allegiance prevents them from becoming a member, there is a personal discipleship issue or disagreement with the values and vision of the church) A formal 'welcome' would not be given to Associate Members but a recommendation to the Church Council after visitation should still be made. Associate members may be considered for membership of committees or leadership roles where they agree with the vision and values of the church, are recommended by the minister and approved by the church council. They will not be eligible to be elected to the church council or vote at church meetings.

Associate Members may be removed from the list by the Church Council on recommendation by the Minister.

When Membership Ceases

Members can resign, transfer to another church or move away. Members not seeming to give serious consideration to the 'privileges and responsibilities' of membership* shall if possible, be visited or at least contacted by two people, one of which will normally be the minister. A report shall be given to CC who will then decide whether to transfer the member to the Associate Membership or to regard their membership as ceased. (e.g. by only attending meetings for worship or prayer very infrequently over a period of 6 months or more without good reason or not giving due regard to stewardship of time and money or not responding to concerns about disunity, disturbance, serious moral issues, etc.) This would normally be confirmed in writing.

The Membership and Associate Membership rolls will be reviewed every year in June.