

Guide to Welcoming Someone into Church Membership

Before the Service

- Meet with the candidate(s) to explain the meaning of church membership and review the church covenant.
- Ensure they understand the promises they will make and the congregation's response.
- Confirm practical details: date, time, and placement in the service.

During the Service

- Introduction: leader explains the meaning of membership.
- Testimony (optional): Candidate(s) may share their faith story.
- Declaration of Faith and Covenant Commitment: words below
- Prayer of Thanksgiving
- Symbolic Welcome: Right hand of fellowship, embrace, or other sign of welcome.

Welcoming Someone into Church Membership

In the name of God and this worshipping community, we prepare to welcome A into membership having witnessed *her/his* profession of faith in baptism.

As A has declared *her/his* commitment to God in Jesus Christ, so we, the people of God in ??? Baptist Church are about to declare our commitment to *her/him* in our covenant relationship of faith.

Covenant questions

A, as a member of this church, do you promise to share your life and your journey of faith with these people in this place?

I do.

Together we are called to be disciples of Jesus Christ. Will you keep listening for the call of God, ready to serve others and to witness to Jesus Christ as a member of this church?

I will.

Together we are called to be disciples of Jesus Christ.

A, as a member of this church, do you promise to share your life and your journey of faith with these people in this place?

I do.

We are the body of Christ, and the Spirit shares the gifts of grace for service and witness. Will you use your gifts and talents to serve God and to further the witness of Jesus Christ as a member of this church?

With God's help, I will.

Covenant promise

The members of the church are invited to stand.

Will you, as members of ??? Baptist Church, promise to share your lives and journey of faith with A, walking together in ways that are known and yet to be made known?

We will.

Will you pray for A and do all you can to help *her/him/them* to witness to Jesus Christ?

We will.

In our life together we celebrate the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

Reception into membership

The leader offers the hand of fellowship saying

We welcome you among us as a member of this church of Jesus Christ.

May The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you.

The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen.

Prayer, which may be accompanied with the laying on of hands, should be offered, extempore or as follows

Loving God,

we thank you for bringing A to us.

We trust you for the future as together we seek to serve you in this fellowship and in your world.

Help us to be generous in time and gifts, giving and receiving from each other with humility and patience, encouraging and supporting one another as we walk together in our shared journey of life and faith.

We pray with confidence in the name of our saviour, Jesus Christ who is Lord of this fellowship. Amen.

The service continues with the Lord's Supper, at which the new members may be served first as a sign of hospitality and welcome.

Receiving members through transfer

In the name of our loving God, it is our joy to welcome A *and B* into the membership of this church. They are committed to serving God in this community, and today we acknowledge and thank God for that commitment.

They have been disciples of Jesus Christ for some years and are transferring from ... *Church* with its blessing.

Declaration of faith and Covenant questions

Do you believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit: your creator and redeemer and the sustainer of all things?

I do. This is the God in whom I trust.

Do you believe that God has led you to share in the worship, life and witness of this local congregation?

I do, and I thank God for the gift of fellowship.

Will you share with us the gifts God has given you, that together we may serve God in our local community and in the wider world?

I will. All I have is given by God.

As Baptist Christians we covenant together as a community of the disciples of Jesus Christ. Baptized into his name, we share the joys and responsibilities of fellowship: we gather for worship and to discern the mind of Christ; together we seek the kingdom of God through prayer, witness and service; and in the power of the Holy Spirit we seek to build one another up in love.

Will you share with us in this common life and service, and will you walk together with us before God, in ways that are known and yet to be made known?

I will. Thanks be to God.

Covenant promise

The church members are invited to stand and are addressed with the following questions.

Do you welcome *A and B* into the fellowship of this worshipping community?

We do. This is our joy and our calling.

God has given us the gift of *A and B* and through them has given us gifts for ministry in the life and witness of this congregation.

Will you support *A and B* in Christian service and in the responsibilities of church membership?

We will. Thanks be to God.

Will you pray for *A and B* and encourage them through hospitality, friendship and prayer?

We will, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and in the name of Jesus Christ.

The new members are welcomed with the hand of fellowship and others may share in this greeting.

We welcome you among us as a member of this church of Jesus Christ.

May The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you.

The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen.

Prayer, which may be accompanied with the laying on of hands, may be offered, extempore or as follows

Loving God,

we believe you have guided *A and B* to this church and we rejoice in the covenant promises we have made together.

We pray that they may grow in grace.

Strengthen their faith and ours and build up this community of your people, that together we may be faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

Send your Holy Spirit upon *A and B* strengthen them for service, and make them more like Jesus.

Through your grace empower us, that our life together might glorify you and witness to a needy world, though Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The service continues with the Lord's Supper. New members are usually served first as a sign of welcome.