

Application for Church Membership

1.5

Revised 04/08/10

Admission of Members

To be admitted into church membership, applicants must follow the approved process of membership, defined by the Elders and maintained on this application for membership, and then be recommended by the Elders for admission, and shall at that point relinquish their membership in other churches. The process for membership shall include the qualifications listed in the preceding paragraph and be subject to alteration by the Elders.

A candidate for church membership is one who is participating in the new membership process. In order to become a member they must meet the following qualifications.

1. A personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.

In order to insure that a candidate has experienced regeneration, a determination of their salvation experience shall be made by those conducting the “Discovering Church Membership” class. In making this determination, they may rely on a person’s profession of faith, or such other evidence, as they deem appropriate.

2. A Believer’s Baptism as a testimony to their salvation.

Baptisms from other churches are accepted, provided that the baptism was conducted *in response to the person’s commitment in faith* and was *by immersion*, unless providentially hindered for medical conditions. It is the practice of Harvest Baptist Church to conduct baptisms by immersion.

3. Completion of the Church’s membership class, “Discovering Church Membership.”

4. A commitment to submit to the teachings of Scripture as stated in the Statement of Faith of this Church and to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant.

Once the candidate has met the above qualifications, those conducting the membership class shall recommend them for admission into church membership. A vote to accept the candidate for membership shall be done by the members at any annual or special meeting of members. This should be done in a timely manner upon completion of the qualifications for the benefit of the candidate and the Church.

To apply for church membership, you must:

1. Make a personal commitment to faith in Jesus Christ.
2. Submit to believer’s baptism or provide documentation of such.
3. Attend and complete the “Discovering Church Membership” class.
4. Conscientiously read and agree to the Statement of Faith of HBC and pledge to keep the commitments set forth in the Church Covenant.
5. Fill out the Application for Church Membership form (see attached).

Statement of Faith

THESE THINGS WE BELIEVE:

1. ABOUT THE BIBLE

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. (Psalms 12:6, 119:105, 160; Proverbs 30:5; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21)

2. ABOUT GOD

God is the creator of the universe. He reigns with providential care over His creation. He eternally exists in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God. (Genesis 1:1, 26, Isaiah 43:10-13, Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Timothy 1:17; 1 Peter 1:2)

3. ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father. Born of a virgin, Jesus lived a sinless life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all men by dying on the cross. He arose from the dead on the third day to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven's glory and will return again to earth, to reign as King of kings, and Lord of lords. (Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:22-23; John 1:1-5, 14:10-15; Acts 1:9-11; Romans 1:3-4; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Hebrews 1:1-3, 4:14-15; 1 Timothy 6:14-15; Titus 2:13)

4. ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. The Christian seeks to live under His control every day. (John 14:16-17, 16:7-13; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16; 2 Corinthians 3:17; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 1:13-14, 5:18)

5. ABOUT MAN

Man is made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. He is the crowning work of God's creation. Although man has tremendous potential for good, he is marred by disobedience toward God called "sin." This sin separates man from God. (Genesis 1:27; Psalms 8:3-8; Isaiah 53:6a; Isaiah 59:1-2; Romans 3:23)

6. ABOUT SALVATION

Salvation is a free gift from God to man. Man can never make up for his sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting Jesus Christ as God's offer for forgiveness can man be saved from sin's penalty; the one who refuses this offer will suffer the penalty for his sin. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his/her life by faith. (John 1:12, 14:3-6; Romans 5:1, 6:23; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 2:11-14, 3:5)

7. ABOUT ETERNITY

Man was created to exist forever. He will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or in union with God through forgiveness and salvation. Jesus will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord. (John 3:16, 6:40; Romans 6:23; 1 John 2:25, 5:11-13; Revelation 20:15)

8. ABOUT ETERNAL SECURITY

Because God gives man eternal life through Jesus Christ, the believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and keeping power of God that gives this security. (John 10:28-29; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25, 10:10, 14; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 1 John 5:13)

9. ABOUT BAPTISM

Baptism is an outward sign of an inward change. Biblical baptism takes place after conversion and in the mode of immersion. Baptism is an act of obedience to the teachings of Jesus Christ and is a witness of salvation not a part of salvation. (Matthew 3:6, 13-17, 28:18-20; Acts 2:38-41, 8:26-40, 16:25-34)

10. ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN WALK

The Christian life should be a life of sanctification and holiness. Such a life cannot be lived through a person's own efforts but only through the presence of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 6:22, Galatians 3:3, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7; I Peter 1:13-16)

11. ABOUT THE CHURCH

The local Church is made up of those redeemed through Christ who are baptized believers. The mission is to declare the gospel of redemption to a lost world. The local Church is an autonomous body, operating through democratic processes under the lordship of Jesus Christ. In the church, each member is responsible to one another. (Acts 2:41-47, 5:11-14; Ephesians 2:19-22; Colossians 1:18)

12. ABOUT STEWARDSHIP

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Therefore, we are under obligation to serve Him with our time, talents, and material possessions, and we should recognize all these as entrusted to us to use for the glory of God and for helping others. We should contribute cheerfully, regularly, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the cause of Christ. (Matthew 6:1-4, 19-21; Luke 12:16-21, 42-48; Acts 2:44-47, 5:1-11, Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 12:4-7; 16:1-4; Philippians 4:10-19)

Our full statement of faith can be found in its entirety in "The Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention May 9, 1963 and updated on June 14, 2000. This partial statement simply serves as a summary.

Church Covenant.

Having been led by the Grace of God to repent and believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, and on our profession of faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we now, relying on His gracious aid, and understanding Harvest's beliefs, purpose, structure, and lifestyle, seriously and joyfully commit ourselves to covenant with each other in this local body of Christ.

We will faithfully attend worship to promote the growth of the church and ourselves while bringing glory to God. Also, we will have personal and family devotional time in God's word and prayer in order to grow in Christ and walk in His will.

We will work and pray for the unity of the church in the Spirit of Christ. We will pray for each other, especially the leaders who serve and for others in need.

We will fellowship with each other by spending time, giving aid, and sharing life together. We will rejoice at each other's happiness and give tenderness and sympathy during distress to bear each other's burdens.

We will walk together in Christian love, as members of a Christian Church, exercising affectionate care and attention over each other and faithfully admonish, edify, and encourage one another as occasions may require. We will avoid all actions and talk that would not demonstrate Christian love, but handle conflicts according to God's directions and grace, being ready to ask for and give forgiveness, slow to take offense, and being ready to reconcile without delay, mindful of the rules of our Savior.

We will rear those God has placed in our care, either our children or others, in the training and instruction of the Lord and by living as an example so that they may seek salvation in Christ.

We will seek, by the Holy Spirit's aid, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and remembering that as we have been voluntarily buried in baptism and raised again from the symbolic grave, so there is on us a special obligation to lead a new and holy life.

We will work together for the faithful evangelical ministry in this church, as we worship, disciple, minister, and witness. We will seek to invite others to know Jesus Christ personally and join us in this body of Christ.

We will help the ministry of this church by growing in maturity in Christ, being willing to learn, to be trained, to discover God's gifts, and to work at the ministry in which God places us for the growth of this church.

We will give cheerfully, regularly, and sacrificially of our incomes and possessions to support the ministry and expenses of the church, to give relief to those in need, and for the spread of the Gospel in all nations.

We will as soon as possible, if we move from this place, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.