

Membership at Seacoast Community Church

Why is membership important?

Seacoast Community Church exists to help people discover life in Christ and learn to follow Him. In order to do this, we need encouragement, structure, support and accountability. This is what membership is about.

If you're a believer in Jesus Christ, you have been born into God's spiritual Family, the "body of Christ." We all need our spiritual brothers and sisters to encourage us and help us become the person God made us to be. God made us to grow and mature in the context of relationships with others in His Family.

Membership in the body of Christ is different from membership at Seacoast. Membership at Seacoast identifies us to the leaders as someone desiring shepherding, maturing and equipping for ministry. Ephesians 4:11-16 The pastors and elders are committed to helping members develop their leadership abilities. Membership allows us to give input into the decision making process by voting on important issues facing the church. Membership demonstrates our commitment to each other and to God's purposes.

Members of Seacoast Community Church share the following ideals:

- * We agree with our statement of faith
- * We submit to the leadership of the Elders of Seacoast
- * We support our church constitution
- * If we are considering leaving Seacoast, we will talk directly to a pastor or elder about the real reasons we are considering leaving. If reconciliation is needed, we agree to work on this before leaving.

What is desired of Seacoast Members?

Encounter God in worship:

- * Jesus Christ is the Lord of our lives. We adopt His teachings and purposes as the focus of our lives.
- * We maintain a lifestyle of worship and we regularly participate in corporate worship
- * We pursue spiritual maturity through prayer, introspection, responding to the timeless truths of scriptures, feedback from others, pursuing emotional maturity recognizing spiritual maturity is inseparable from emotional maturity

Connect with others in community:

- * Members are connected to others in the church, having close, meaningful, caring relationships with other believers, like a close, healthy family. This is most commonly achieved through participation in a Life Group.
- * We pursue unity in our relationships with each other. In the church, unity does not mean we always agree with each other, but rather it is our commitment to pursue a loving, respecting, and listening, attentive care for each other, as parts of the body and as members of God's family.

Go and live the ways of Jesus in everyday life:

- * We serve others in the church, using the gifts God has given to us to build up others.
- * We seek to be salt and light in the world in order to share Christ with others.
- * We give generously and faithfully to support the ministry of Seacoast.

Membership Process at Seacoast

1. We recommend you participate in “Rooted”. This gives you a good overview of what Seacoast is all about and how we seek to live as followers of Christ.
2. Participate in baptism after confessing faith as a believer (This does not have to be done at Seacoast). Please read the enclosed document entitled “Baptism at Seacoast Community Church”.
3. Serve in a ministry at Seacoast
4. Join a life group. Talk with our Life Group Pastor about which group would be best for you.
5. Complete this application and return it to the office.
6. Select a date with an elder to be interviewed.
7. Upon the elders voting you as a member, you will be welcomed into the church on a Sunday morning.

Application for Membership

Seacoast Community Church

Basic Info:

Name: _____

Spouse's name if married: _____

Children's names and ages (if applicable)

ADDRESS _____

E-mail _____

Phone(s)

Home _____ Mobile _____

Tell Us About You:

How long have you been attending Seacoast?

Why are you interested in membership?

Briefly describe how you became a Christian:

Have you been baptized as a believer? If so, brief describe when you were baptized, by whom?

If you have not been baptized, are you willing to be baptized?

What was your former church (if you had one) and why did you leave?

Are you reconciled with your former church?

Have you ever been under church “discipline”? If so, briefly describe what occurred

How are you currently serving at Seacoast Community Church?

Have you read our Constitution and Statement on Faith?

Are you in agreement with Seacoast’s Constitution and Statement of Faith?

Any questions or comments?

Your signature: _____

Date submitted: _____

Elder interview date: _____

Names of Elders at Interview:

1. _____

2. _____

Elder's Section

Membership accepted or declined (Circle one) Date: _____

Elder Signatures : x_____ x_____

If declined, please state reason:

Next Steps for applicant/member:

– APPENDIX –

BAPTISM

We believe Baptism is an exciting “sign of life” and an important piece of our Christian life.

***Luke 3:3** And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins;*

***Matthew 28:19** Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,*

***Acts 8:34** The eunuch answered Philip and said, “Please tell me, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself or of someone else?” **35** Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him. **36** As they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch *said, “Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?” **37** [[And Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” And he answered and said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”] **38** And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him.*

What is Baptism?

There are many traditions of baptism and differences of when and how baptism is performed. The actual tradition of baptism has roots in ritual cleansing ceremonies and in conversion rituals from the Ancient Near East. By the time of Christ, baptism was being performed as a symbolic cleansing that signified repentance from sins.

***Mark 1:5** and all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.*

Paul compared baptism to the Israelites deliverance from the Egyptians in the Red Sea (1 Corinthians 10:2). Peter compared baptism to Noah’s climbing onto the ark as a sign of trusting God to save us from sins (1 Peter 3:21).

For us at Seacoast Church. we practice what is called, “believer’s baptism”. This is baptism that follows one’s profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

In all cases, the consistent theme is baptism is a sign that identifies us with the work that God is doing. Baptism is a response to God’s work in our lives. It is a symbol of the work of God.

Common myths about Baptism?

Myth : *Baptism is required for salvation.*

Truth: We are saved by grace alone through faith. It is a gift of God and not because of our works. Baptism is a sign of the saving work Jesus did for us.

Myth: *You need baptism after every major failing.*

Truth: Because baptism is a symbol of the work of God and not the work itself, one does not need to be “re-baptized” after a time of wandering from God. If you were baptized at a point in your life when you did not fully understand your faith, or if you have recommitted your life, you may want to be “re-baptized” as a symbol of that new commitment but it is not necessary.

Myth: *After baptism you will never struggle again.*

Truth: Baptism is an act of obedience but it clearly does not mean all struggles with sin are now gone forever. Life continues to happen and temptations remain real but your baptism serves as a reminder that Jesus has washed your sins away once and for all.

Myth: *Baptism is not a big deal.*

Truth: Jesus instructed his followers to be baptized as an outward sign of the new life in us. It is an exciting thing and an important expression of our faith.

Why we baptize.

Galatians 3:27 *For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.*

Romans 6:3 *Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?
4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.*

Colossians 2:12 *having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.*

We baptize because it is a symbol of the work Jesus has done in us and it tells the world around us that we have new life. It reminds us that the old life is gone and we no longer have to live in the consequences of sin in our lives. We are free to live new lives and our identity is secure. Our old lives are buried with Christ and we are raised, like coming out of the water in baptism, to new life.

When we baptize we remember what God has done, we profess our belief, and we celebrate the new life in us. We love the symbolism of baptism and love to celebrate the life God brings to us.

Response

- **Have you been baptized since professing faith in Jesus Christ? What is your memory of baptism?**
- **If you have not been baptized, do you want to take that next step?**

EFCA Statement of Faith

Seacoast Community Church is part of an association of churches called *The Evangelical Free Church of America* (EFCA). This is not a denomination, but rather a group of churches with shared core values and beliefs who choose to officially “associate” with one another. This association provides a level of accountability and support for each individual church.

The EFCA gives freedom to each local church in how the church is structured and freedom in living out the unique God-given vision for the church. In this association, we agree to the following shared beliefs:

EFCA Statement of Faith

Adopted by the Conference on June 26, 2008

The Evangelical Free Church of America is an association of autonomous churches united around these theological convictions:

God

1. We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.

The Bible

2. We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

The Human Condition

3. We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God’s saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled and renewed.

Jesus Christ

4. We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus—Israel’s promised Messiah—was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.

The Work of Christ

5. We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.

The Holy Spirit

6. We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

The Church

7. We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.

Christian Living

8. We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.

Christ's Return

9. We believe in the personal, bodily and premillennial return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.

Response and Eternal Destiny

10. We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace. Amen.