



What is Church Membership?

When an individual believes the gospel and becomes a Christian, he or she becomes part of the universal church ([Rom. 12:5](#); [1 Cor. 12:13](#); [Acts 9:31](#)). The universal church is the worldwide body of Christ that unites all believers. In God's design, believers in the universal church carry out ministry in local assemblies known as local churches.

Becoming a member of a church means to commit oneself to a local body of believers, who have united for the purpose of teaching the gospel ([1 Tim. 4:13](#)), edification, fellowship, serving one another ([1 Cor. 12:14](#); [Rom. 12:3-8](#); [Heb. 10:25](#)), participation in the ordinances ([Acts 2:38-42](#)), proclaiming the gospel to the lost ([Matt. 28:18-20](#)), and spiritual accountability ([Matt. 18:15-17](#); [Heb. 13:17](#)). At the same time, church membership becomes a way for the other members of the church to commit to the individual Christian.

Why join a local church?

In their letters to area churches preserved in the New Testament, the apostles encouraged groups of believers to be dedicated to their local churches. Although there are many churches to choose from today, we believe membership in a single local church enables Christians to carry out the work of the ministry. Consider, for example, the "one anothers" in the Bible. To name just a few, believers are called to serve one another ([Gal. 5:13](#)), be devoted to one another ([Rom. 12:10](#)), instruct one another ([Rom. 15:14](#)), carry one another's burdens ([Gal. 6:2](#)), submit to one another ([Eph. 5:21](#)), admonish one another ([Col. 3:16](#)), and live in harmony with one another ([1 Pet. 3:8](#)). The apostles envisioned that these "one anothers" be practiced during some kind of church gathering ([Heb. 10:25](#); [1 Cor. 11:14](#)). Church membership provides a practical way for Christians to minister and practice accountability to one another.

Additionally, it may not be a stretch to say that Christians can obey and practice many of the verses in the New Testament apart from church membership, but not all. Consider a passage such as [Hebrews 13:17](#):

"Obey your leaders and submit to them, for

they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you."

Apart from church membership it is difficult for elders/leaders to know which souls to watch; and it is equally as difficult for individual Christians to know which elders to follow. Church membership brings clarity to this type of relationship.

One exciting thing about joining a local church is that it gives us the opportunity to become part of something bigger than ourselves. There are many members, but one body ([1 Cor. 12:14](#)). Joining with other Christians provides both the liberty and the opportunity to use our gifts for the good of the body of Christ and build one another up in love ([Eph. 4:1-13](#)). At RBC, we strive to keep the Gospel the main thing and rejoice when each individual member discovers the joy of participating in the furtherance of the gospel.

Process of Membership at RBC

1. Attend a Newcomers' Lunch or schedule a meeting with the elders. We will provide the meal in a casual, friendly atmosphere, present some details about the church, and answer any questions about RBC that you may have. Individuals or families who are unable to attend one of the scheduled lunches are welcome to meet with the elders at a more convenient time. To sign up for one of the Newcomers Lunches or schedule a meeting with the elders, please contact our senior pastor at pastor@ridgefieldbaptist.org.
2. Complete the attached application and return it to membership@ridgefieldbaptist.org.
3. Meet with the elders to share your faith story and discuss church membership.
4. Baptism is necessary for those who have yet to be baptized by immersion.
5. At this point the elders lead the congregation in a vote to accept new members into fellowship.

Membership Application

NOTE: All family members over the age of 18 applying for church membership should complete this application individually.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

FULL NAME

DOB (MM/DD/YYYY)

ADDRESS, CITY, STATE, ZIP

HOME PHONE (XXX-XXX-XXXX)

EMAIL ADDRESS

CELL PHONE (XXX-XXX-XXXX)

SPOUSE NAME

ANNIVERSARY (MM/DD/YYYY)

CHILD

DOB (MM/DD/YYYY)

CHILD

DOB (MM/DD/YYYY)

CHILD

DOB (MM/DD/YYYY)

CHILD

DOB (MM/DD/YYYY)

CHILD

DOB (MM/DD/YYYY)

CHILD

DOB (MM/DD/YYYY)

MINISTRIES IN WHICH YOU MAY WISH TO SERVE

PRIOR CHURCH MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY)

CHURCH NAME

CHURCH ADDRESS, CITY, STATE, ZIP

SENIOR PASTOR

I have read the RBC Constitution and the Church Covenant. I am in agreement with these statements and desire to apply for membership to Ridgefield Baptist Church.

 Please send completed form to: membership@ridgefieldbaptist.org

Personal Testimony and Baptism

Church membership is for those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ and been baptized by immersion ([Acts 2:41, 8:12](#)). We would love to hear your faith story. Please take the time to share with us your personal relationship with God through Christ.

Believer's baptism is also part of the membership process. If you have yet to experience the joy of being baptized as a believer, you will want to discuss this with one of the elders at RBC.

In the space provided below, please share your testimony (faith story):

 Please send completed form to: membership@ridgefieldbaptist.org