



Membership Process

Intro

Charis Community Church believes local church membership is important for multiple reasons. Membership helps every person understand that he or she serves a vital function. The Bible speaks of the church as a family, or the household of God. This helps us understand that church membership is not like joining a country club; it is about joining an organic family. The church is also called the Body of Christ in the New Testament and you don't just casually amputate a thumb. In fact, if the thumb is hurting, the whole body goes to its aid. This metaphor shows the commitment, the accountability and the interdependence of the church.

We do not want to treat the membership process as an insignificant event; for by treating it casually, it may send the message that membership is casual. We highlight membership by having a special service, a membership Sunday. It is a ceremony that communicates the importance of membership. Charis asks prospective members to verbalize membership vows before the rest of the congregation and sign a membership covenant.

Charis Community Church Process for Membership

PHASE I: *Initiated by prospective member*

1. *Complete the membership application*
2. *Complete the series of membership classes*

PHASE II: *Initiated by church leadership*

1. *Meet with an elder to share your testimony of faith in Christ*
2. *Recommendation to all elders*
3. *Approval by the elders*
4. *Sign the membership covenant*

PHASE I

1. Complete the membership application

Mark the appropriate box on the bulletin info card or contact an elder to receive a membership application. You may turn in the completed app to any elder. After the application is reviewed, an elder will contact you for a brief interview. (see PHASE II)

2. Complete the series of membership classes

Attend one of Charis' 3-week membership class series to meet the elders and gain a better understanding of Charis' mission and beliefs. The classes will communicate the theology of the church, our polity, our vision, how we handle conflicts and an understanding of church discipline. Additional topics will encompass the church's expectations for members including giving, respecting leadership and serving in the community.

PHASE II

1. Meet with an elder to share your testimony of faith in Christ

Charis' first priority is making sure each person has a credible profession of faith. An elder will contact you to set up a convenient meeting time with you. The elder will introduce and walk through the Membership Covenant with you. This will also be your opportunity to share your testimony and ask any questions you may have regarding Charis. The information you share will be communicated with the other elders and will be kept confidential apart from them. If you have not yet been baptized and are ready to take this step of obedience to Christ, the elder will help you begin the baptism process.

2. Recommendation to all elders

Upon completion of your membership interview, the elders will discuss the information you shared during that meeting. You do not need to meet personally with the other elders. Membership recommendations will be reviewed monthly.

3. Approval by the elders

The elders will give final authorization to your membership. You will receive a letter from the church indicating the approval of your membership application.

4. Sign the membership covenant

Included with your letter of membership approval will be two copies of the Membership Covenant. You will then sign one copy and return it to your "interview" elder. This will be kept on file by the church. The other copy is yours to keep as a reminder of your commitment to God and His church.