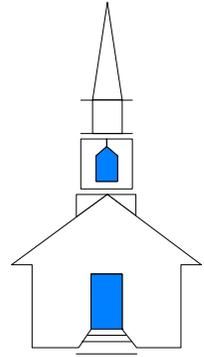


FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS **ABOUT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**



1. ***“I already actively participate in worship and/or other activities of this church. So, why should I decide to become a church member?”***

It's true that there's no magic in church membership – it doesn't earn points with God, or get us into heaven, or show us to be any more “spiritual” than a person who's *not* a member. Instead, church membership is simply a heartfelt way of expressing our personal commitment to God through the community of faith where we are currently being spiritually fed and challenged. Think of it as “*claiming the spiritual home you've already found.*” In this sense, it's our way of boldly saying to God, ourselves, our families, and to our fellow Christians, “*THIS church is my spiritual home for now, and here is where I'm going to put down my spiritual roots for as long as God says to.*”

2. ***“What are the benefits of becoming a member?”***

MANY.... A sense of community and family. ...The opportunity of being part of something greater than yourself. ...A feeling of “connectedness.” ...The satisfaction of knowing that your individual gifts and talents will now combine with those of others to do more for God than you could do alone (you become living proof of the maxim that “*the whole is greater than the sum of the parts*”). ...The opportunity to help steer and lead the Church of Jesus Christ in making a difference in our world today. ...

3. ***“I've had bad experiences as a member of other churches in the past. What's to prevent me from having similar experiences here after I become a member?”***

Unfortunately, the reality of life is that bad experiences can happen in any organization in which humans are a part (whether or not one is a member). Conversely, one can also experience blessings and joy in and through an organization whether or not one is an official “member.” So, church membership is in many respects like the commitment made by married persons: just as marriage vows encourage couples to work through their difficulties (rather than giving up too easily), so church membership can give us a sense of commitment to encourage us to work through even bad experiences, as well.

4. ***“Since my faith is a personal thing, I don’t like the idea of making a big deal of it publically by being paraded down front just to become a member.”***

While we believe that public expressions of commitment to Jesus through our church have a wonderful purpose and place, we agree that they’re not for everyone. In fact, nowhere in the Bible does it say that a person needs to “come down front” to make a membership (or any other kind of) faith commitment. That’s precisely why twice per year (Spring and Fall) our church offers something called “Decision Sunday” – an opportunity for regular guests to become church members in a small group setting outside of a regular worship service. There’s no coming down the aisle. No standing in front of a congregation – just you and others like you “*claiming the place you’ve already found*” as you sit at table enjoying good food and Christian fellowship together. If you’re interested in the next “Decision Sunday” at our church, please contact our church office or any of our pastors and they can tell you more.

5. ***“I don’t want to be tied down by church membership.”***

Far from tying a person down, church membership can provide a real sense of freedom by allowing us to experience true feelings of family and connection to one’s community of faith. And since church membership is merely a commitment for the *present*, if your circumstances change, or you move out of the area, or you even feel called by God to another church, then your move would be with our church’s blessing and good will – we easily and readily transfer memberships for all who request them. So, don’t think of church membership as something to “tie you down,” but as something that can free you to commit your whole self to God’s people in this place!

THE VOWS OF
CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

- Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, and pledge allegiance to His Kingdom? **I DO.**

- Do you receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Bible? **I DO.**

- Do you promise according to the grace given to you to live a Christian life and always remain a faithful member of Christ's holy Church? **I DO.**

- Will you be loyal to the mission and ministry of the United Methodist Church, and uphold it by your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and your witness? **I WILL.**