

**Newport Pagnell
Baptist Church**



**Introduction to
membership**

LIVING OUT GOD'S LOVE

So, those who welcomed his message were baptised,
and that day about three thousand persons were added.
They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship,
to the breaking of bread and to prayers.

Acts 2: 41-42



An introduction to Membership

For 50 years, we've been a vibrant, multi-generational family of people exploring what it means to follow Jesus; discovering all the joys and challenges of doing life and faith together.

We have a passion to be God's love in this community and to see His Good News shared with all those we meet.

As a Baptist Church, the idea of membership is really important to us. It's our way of interpreting what the Bible says about the early church, and helping to create a family of people following Jesus, committed to God and to one another.

In the following pages, we've outlined a little more of what that means, with the hope that you'll hear God's voice as to whether you should become a member here. If you do, we'd love to welcome you amongst our members.

Steve Wood
Pastor

Peter Young
Pastor

Why membership?

There are 3 underlying biblical principles we might consider:

1 God chooses to work through his people

From the beginning of the Old Testament, God has worked with and through the people he has chosen. This continues for us today.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. 1 Peter 2:9

2 The church is a gathering of God's people

The church is God's way of bringing all those people together. Not in a building (which is what is so commonly associated with church) but in providing a community of people, united spiritually and, usually, geographically.

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. 1 Corinthians 12:27

3 Covenant is key

The theme of covenant or commitment is huge within the Bible - think Abraham, Moses, David and so on. This idea is just as important when it comes to church. Where commitment exists - to God and the body - churches can become strong, as we journey together in following Jesus.

They devoted themselves... Acts 2:42a



Being Baptist

NPBC exists to see God's kingdom come on earth. More than anything else, that's what we're about. Being church is simply a local expression of God's people organising themselves for worship, family and taking the Good News of Jesus out to the world.

However, also being part of a bigger family is definitely important to us. We've chosen to be a Baptist church which involves a few specific ways of operating and a constitution. It also links us to a heritage of 400 years and to a wider family of Baptists within the UK and an estimated 110 million around the world.

For Baptists, there are 5 things that we might say make us, us..

- 1 Collaboration - working together in an environment where everyone has something to contribute is part of our DNA
- 2 Diversity: we embrace, celebrate and maintain unity recognising our differences
- 3 Discernment: it's our heart to see everybody participate in discerning God's heart
- 4 Grassroots: we are equipped and encouraged into swift, responsive, contextual action
- 5 Baptism; we want everyone to follow Jesus' example in baptism by full immersion

Within the context of a Baptist Church

Membership demonstrates...

- 1 an understanding of the importance of church as part of God's mission
- 2 the reality of our own personal commitment to God
- 3 a commitment to building up the body (knowing that we will be supported in the same way)

In practice, this looks like:

1 We invest time
in being together, meeting regularly in weekly Life groups, Sunday gatherings, Church family meetings and other activities.

2 We invest our talents
in serving where our hearts are, as well as developing a heart to serve wherever we are needed. Church, and all its activities inside and out, is never meant to be about a few people doing all the work and everyone else watching on. It works best when we all take ownership.

There are many ways to serve at NPBC and we always need people to volunteer on the following teams: Worship | Media | Children* | Youth* | Prayer ministry | Welcome | Setting up and clearing away | Security
**Team membership begins with a short interview process and DBS checks.
We provide training and guidelines for all of the above.*

3 We invest our treasure
giving financially to the life of the church, its mission and all its related activities. It's a way of life that recognises that everything we own comes from God; we are simply stewards of the gifts he has given us. Plus, we're a self-supporting church so we can only spend what we first give - find out more at www.npbc.org.uk/give

Church Members' meetings

We meet 7 times a year to gather for two different types of meeting

At the end of every quarter

We come together for a meeting driven by a business agenda. We use these meetings to worship and pray, update the church on key initiatives and review items such as leadership nominations, finance, safeguarding and premises.

In 2022, these meetings are scheduled for:

- Monday 24 January
- Monday 25 April (also our Annual Church Meeting)
- Monday 18 July
- Monday 7 November

To focus on key aspects of church life

These are meetings dedicated to going deeper on key parts of church life, such as the building project, mission, pastoral care etc. They leave greater space for worship and discussion so that we can seek God's heart on something specific.

In 2022, these meetings are scheduled for:

- Tuesday 8 March (focused on the building development project)
- Monday 6 June (focused on mission)
- Monday 12 September (focused on looking ahead to 2023)

Note: whilst anyone is welcome to join us at a Church Members' meeting, only members are eligible to vote.

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Newport Pagnell Baptist Church is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Registered Charity Number: 1175783