

Formal membership facilitates leaders of *RiverStone Church* in their task of being shepherds. While we always hope to attract those who are seeking, observing or simply guests, there are occasions when we need to be able to identify those who have committed themselves to *RiverStone Church*.



PROCESS FOR BECOMING A MEMBER

1. **Investigation** – Persons who are exploring faith at *RiverStone Church* attend worship services in which they hear biblical teaching along with adoration of God through prayer and song. When a person expresses the desire to become a member, they are invited to participate in the “New Members” class. Often, persons are encouraged to participate in a Life Group to be nurtured in the Christian life and care for one another as well as deepen their understanding of God, His purposes, and our role in the completion of His mission in the world.
2. **Affirmation** – Prospective members are asked to have a conversation with the Pastor or leader. The design of this time is for the individual to affirm whether their lives reflect the qualities outlined in the Members Covenant.
3. **Confirmation** – The Pastor, or other leader, discusses the affirmations made and confirms their becoming Professing membership. Any issues are either discussed then or referred to the Pastor.
4. **Covenant and Celebration** – Those who desire to become professing members make their covenant to God and *RiverStone Church*. Members of *RiverStone Church* then covenant to love, care and nurture the new member in their faith and walk with Jesus.

What Membership Means at *RiverStone Church*

RiverStone Church understands our body to be part the universal body of Christ, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper duly administered according to Christ’s direction.

Membership within a local church is vital in order to fully experience the Christian life. Paul makes clear in addressing his letter to the church at Corinth that membership to a local body of believers is expected. (1 Corinthians 12:12-26)

Membership at *RiverStone Church* consists of people who have experienced Christian baptism and have professed their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. When persons desire to unite with *RiverStone Church*, they are called upon to publicly profess their faith (Luke 12:8) in God who is revealed as Trinity: the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; in Jesus Christ His only Son, and in the Holy Spirit, God’s empowering presence in our lives. They make known their desire to follow Jesus as His disciple. They **covenant** together with God and members of *RiverStone Church* to:

- ✦ Renounce the spiritual forces of evil and repent of their sin (Ezekiel 14:6; Mark 1:15);
- ✦ Confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord (Romans 10:9) and put one’s whole trust in His grace (Ephesians 2:8);
- ✦ Accept the freedom and transforming power of the Holy Spirit to live a holy life (Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18);
- ✦ Receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Romans 15:4; 2

- Timothy 3:16,17; 1 Peter 1:12-21) and the classic, historical creeds recognized by the Church;
- ✦ Promise to **love** God with all one's heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30)
 - ✦ Commit to **love** others as themselves (Mark 12:31);
 - ✦ Pledge to **follow** Jesus' teaching, manner of life, practices (Luke 9:23);
 - ✦ Promise to **serve** God, His Church, and the world for Christ's sake (Joshua 24:14-15; Matthew 20:28; John 12:26; Galatians 5:13; Hebrew 9:14; 1 Peter 4:10)
 - ✦ Be loyal to Christ through *RiverStone Church* and do all in their power to strengthen its ministries;
 - ✦ Faithfully live into the following **Member's Covenant**:
 - ✦ **Prayer** (1 Thessalonians 5:17, Matthew 7:7; Mark 6:46) Praying for *RiverStone Church* Pastors, leadership, and ministries, as well as one another, is essential. Prayer is one of the chief ways to connect with God. Jesus' exemplary life flowed from His prayer life.
 - ✦ **Presence** (Exodus 20:8; Matthew 18:20; Luke 4:16; Acts 2:46; Hebrews 10:24-25) Regular attendance in worship and Life Group is essential to a vibrant Christian life. Corporate worship is an opportunity to give God praise and honor. Jesus practiced being present in worship regularly. Christ-followers encourage one another by simply being together. God promises to be present when believers come together in Jesus' name.
 - ✦ **Gifts** (Genesis 14:20; Deuteronomy 14:22; Leviticus 27:30; Malachi 3:8-10; Mark 12:42; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2Corinthians 8:7;) Generosity has through Scripture been a quality of those who walk with God. Jesus taught that we are to practice good stewardship of our material resources. God's Word established the tithe (10% of our income) as a precedent and goal to reach or exceed as God prospers our household.

- ✦ **Service** (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-26; John 13:14-17, Galatians 5:13) Exercise one's God-given gifts and abilities for the good of the body of Christ and Jesus' mission in the world.
- ✦ **Witness** (Isaiah 43:10; 1 Peter 3:15). Seek to be a witness to the love, grace and power of Jesus Christ in one's life. A positive witness of a Christ-follower expresses and demonstrates loyalty to the leadership and church body.

RiverStone Church members are bound in sacred covenant to shoulder the burdens, share the risks, and celebrate the joys of fellow members.

Members of *RiverStone Church* covenant to nurture one another in the Christian faith, life and care for one another. (John 13:34,35)

Our prayer is that through *RiverStone Church* you experience the love, freedom, and healing of God through Jesus Christ. We also pray you are drawn to respond to His gracious offer of a reconciled and restored relationship with Him. Please know our Pastor, ministry team, and members are eager to visit with you about your next steps toward a new life and membership at *RiverStone Church*.

RiverStone Church Membership Expectations

Membership at *RiverStone Church* has benefits. First, members are in union with Christ and His Body, the Church. (John 1:12, 13; Ephesians 2:13-22) Second, Scripture is clear that it's through being a participating member that you can best grow to maturity in Christ. (John 15:1-8; Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:25-31; 14:12, 26; Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Timothy 4:14-15; Hebrews 10:24-25). Committing to membership is an important step that helps you move toward transformative life change.