

**GENERAL**

1. Membership is voluntary commitment to a local church congregation. The New Testament presents a picture of definable groups of people who, once committed to the Lord, identified and committed themselves to a particular local church (Ro 16:1; 1 Cor 1:2; 2 Cor 8:1; Phil 1:1; Acts 11:26).
2. In order to implement the principles of accountability and commitment to the local body of Christ, as defined in the New Testament and practiced in the early churches, Pleasantville Baptist Church recognizes the need for formal membership.

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**CANDIDACY AND MEMBERSHIP**

3. Any person 12 (twelve) years or older who has personally received Christ as their Saviour and Lord, who has been baptized by immersion, and who desires to be committed to this local church, may become members of Pleasantville Baptist Church, as per our bylaws.
4. A prospective candidate shall approach the pastor or a deacon and express their desire to be a member of the church.
5. The candidate shall attend a membership class or complete other requirements as deemed appropriate by the leadership of the church.
6. The candidate shall come before a minimum of two deacons and verbalize their personal testimony of conversion and religious experience, and express their desire to be committed to Pleasantville Baptist Church as a local body of believers.
7. A signed membership application shall be used to affirm one's desire for membership, agreement with the church covenant, and to serve as a formal record of one's membership.
8. All candidates shall be received into membership upon the recommendation of the deacons and by a majority vote at any duly called business meeting, as per our bylaws.
9. A new member shall be formally introduced to the congregation at a mutually agreed time during a worship service. This takes place usually, but not always, after the celebration of the Lord's Table

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**TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP**

10. A person who is currently a member of another church within the Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada, and who has been baptized by immersion, will need to supply a letter of transfer from their previous Church before membership can be finalized at this Church.

11. A person who is a member of a Church not associated with the Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada shall supply, if possible, a letter of dismissal from the previous church stating that they were a member in good standing.
12. A person who is not currently a member of a church but who has been previously baptized by immersion, provided the baptism took place after Christian conversion, may be received into membership through the regular process of membership.

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**OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP**

13. Membership is not a one-time statement, but a living commitment. The most fundamental duty Christians have in relation to the congregation is to regularly attend the gatherings of the congregation and to support the church by giving financially (Heb 10:25; Acts 2:42; 2 Cor 9:7). Therefore, all members are expected to maintain regular attendance and financial support. Regular attendance should be visibly consistent, and at the minimum means frequent attendances for at least short periods every year at regularly scheduled corporate worship services. If over the course of a year, a member has not attended regularly scheduled corporate worship services, and has not financially contributed, then it shall be recognized that the person has voluntarily withdrawn his or her membership and their name shall be removed from the membership list. The deacons may recommend an exemption under extenuating circumstances.
14. It is recognized that there are members who, by reason of age or physical and/or mental disability, may not be able to attend on a regular basis or attend at all. Their faithfulness through the years shall be honoured, and their desire to be with us shall be recognized. These individuals will remain as members of this Church.
15. A person who has moved away from the geographical area and is no longer able to attend, shall be encouraged to find another church to live out his or her Christian obligations. Unless a person has been commissioned by this Church and sent out to do a particular ministry, he or she will not be able to retain their membership at this Church.
16. Students living away for periods of study shall be maintained on the membership list.

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**DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS**

17. Discipline is an exercise of scriptural authority for which the local church is responsible. The aim of discipline is to protect the purity of the church from anything that would hinder its reputation, message, and mission while seeking the repentance and restoration of the church member. Occasions for discipline can be summarized into three categories: 1) False doctrines that reject the essential beliefs of the Christian faith, 2) moral and ethical infractions that violate the holiness and purity of life, and, 3) divisions and factions that

destroy Christian unity and fellowship (Ro 16:17-18; 1 Cor 5:1-13; 2 Thess 3:6-15; 1 Tim 1:20; 2 Tim 2:17-18; Titus 3:9-10; Rev 2:14-16).

18. The procedure for church discipline shall be done according to Mathew 18:15-17, and will apply to members and to those who regularly attend or fellowship at Pleasantville Baptist Church.
19. It shall be the duty of any Church member who has knowledge of an erring individual's unbiblical beliefs or misconduct to warn and lovingly correct that individual in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. If the individual does not heed this warning, then the next step shall be taken, as described in 21.
20. The warning member shall go again to the erring member accompanied by one or two witnesses to warn and correct the erring person, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. If the erring person still refuses to heed this warning, then the next step shall be taken, as described in 22.
21. The matter shall be brought to the attention of the deacons. The deacons will appropriately investigate any allegation brought by one church member against another. If these allegations are warranted, two or more of the deacons will contact the erring person and seek his or her repentance and restoration. If the erring person refuses to be restored, the matter shall be brought before the entire deacons group, who will act to protect the church by recommending to the congregation at a business meeting that such person be removed from membership.
22. It is understood that the above process from 20-22 will continue to conclusion, whether the erring person leaves the church or otherwise seeks to withdraw from membership to avoid the discipline process.
23. If a claim or dispute cannot be resolved in accordance with Matthew 18 principles, then the leadership will consult with the Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada for further recommendations.
24. If such dismissed member heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement, he or she shall be publicly restored to membership through the recommendation of the deacons, and by congregational vote at a business meeting.

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**MEMBERSHIP RECORDS**

25. The deacons and pastor shall oversee the membership list and care of members, including the process of church discipline, and report any such changes to the congregation and church secretary.

26. The congregation shall vote on any proposed changes, as per our bylaws.
27. The church secretary shall ensure that an accurate membership list is kept up to date.

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**MEMBERSHIP COVENANT**

Having been led as we believe by the Holy Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and, on profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, most solemnly and joyfully enter into the covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

***In our relationship with God, we will***

- Make every effort to imitate Christ in our attitudes and actions.
- Cultivate our relationship with God through prayer and personal Bible study.
- Strive, by God's grace, to put off harmful habits and put on godly habits.
- Seek to glorify God in all that we do.

***In our relationship with other believers, we will***

- Support the worship of the church by attending faithfully.
- Share in the ministry of the church by looking for opportunities to use our gifts and talents.
- Guard the unity of the church by acting in love towards other members.
- Build up the fellowship of the church by praying for and helping those who are struggling.

***In our relationship with the world, we will***

- Support the spread of the gospel and the mission of the church by giving regularly.
- Build relationships with the unchurched, invite them to attend, and warmly welcome those who visit.
- Seek and pray for the salvation of our family and friends and teach our children the ways of God.
- Support the testimony of the church by obeying God's moral standards and living carefully in the world.

We encourage that when we remove from this place, we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of the Word of God.