

Prayer of Invocation

O God of grace who gave Jesus Christ to be our Savior: Help us to overcome our darkness with his light, our selfishness with his love, our procrastination with his steadfast devotion, that we may live ever as in your presence and perform faithfully our appointed tasks, and finally come to everlasting life, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I am the church! You are the church!

We are the Church together.

All who follow Jesus all around the world!

Yes, we are the church together.

You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. **And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself.**

Ephesians 2:19b-20 NLT

1932 – 2014: *Pentecost M.C.*

*“We are a People of Power:
A House of Prayer,
an Authentic Community,
and Joyful Witnesses
to the Kingdom of God here on earth.”*



You're no longer strangers or outsiders. You belong here, with as much right to the name Christian as anyone. **God is building a home. He's using us all—irrespective of how we got here—in what he is building.** He used the apostles and prophets for the foundation. **Now he's using you, fitting you in brick by brick, stone by stone, with Christ Jesus as the cornerstone that holds all the parts together.** We see it taking shape day after day—a holy temple built by God, all of us built into it, a temple in which God is quite at home.

Ephesians 2:19b-22 Message

It's clear that in the days of the apostles, it was the universal practice to receive believers into the visible church. It's possible that a true believer, because of some unusual circumstances, may fail to unite with the church. One may, for instance, believe in Christ and die before receiving baptism, or joining a local church. But such instances are exceptional. **The Scriptural rule is that while membership is not a prerequisite for salvation, it is a necessary consequence of salvation.**

R B Kuiper
1886-1966

I know there are some who say 'Well, I hope I have given myself to the Lord, but I do not intend to give myself to any church.' I say, 'Now, why not?' 'Because I can be a Christian without it.' Now, are you quite clear about that? You can be as good a Christian by disobedience to your Lord's commands as by being obedient? Well, suppose everybody else did the same, suppose all Christians in the world said, 'I shall not join the Church.' There would be no visible Church, there would be no ordinances. That would be a very bad thing, and yet, one doing it—what is right for one is right for all—why should not all of us do it?" Then you believe that if you were to do an act which has a tendency to destroy the visible Church of God, you would be as good a Christian as if you did your best to build up that Church? *I do not believe it, sir! Nor do you either.* You have not any such a belief; it is only a trumpery (rubbish) excuse for something else.

There is a brick—a very good one. What is the brick made for? To help to build a house with. It is of no use for that brick to tell you that it is just as good a brick while it is kicking about on the ground as it would be in the house. It is a good-for-nothing brick; until it is built into the wall, it is no good.

So you rolling-stone Christians, I do not believe that you are answering your purpose; you are living contrary to the life which Christ would have you live, and you are much to blame for the injury you do.

Charles Spurgeon about local church membership

The Meaning of Membership

When persons unite with a local Methodist Church, they profess their faith in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son; and in the Holy Spirit. Thus, they make known their desire to live their daily lives as disciples of Jesus Christ. They covenant together with God and with the members of the local church to keep the vows which are part of the order of confirmation and reception into the Church.

1. To confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and pledge their allegiance to His Kingdom,
2. To receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments,
3. To promise according to the grace given them to live a Christian life and always remain faithful members of Christ's holy Church,
4. And to be loyal to The Methodist Church and uphold it by their prayers, their presence, their gifts, and their service.

(B.O.D. Para 109)

The Meaning of Membership

Faithful membership in the local church is essential for personal growth and for developing an increasing sensitivity to the will and grace of God. As members involve themselves in private and public prayer, worship, the Sacraments, study, Christian action, systematic giving and holy discipline, they grow in their appreciation of Christ, understanding of God at work in history and the natural order, and an understanding of themselves.

(B.O.D. Para 110)

The Meaning of Membership

Faithful discipleship includes the obligation to participate in the corporate life of the congregation with fellow members of the Body of Christ. A member is bound in sacred covenant to shoulder the burdens, share the risks and celebrate the joys of fellow members. A Christian is called to speak the truth in love, always ready to confront conflict in the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation.

(B.O.D. Para 111)

The Meaning of Membership

All members are to be held accountable for their faithfulness to their covenant and vows with God and the other members of the church. Should any member be accused of violating the covenant and failing to keep the vows which the member entered into with God and the other members of the local church as stated in 109, it shall be the responsibility of the local church and the pastor to minister to that person in compliance with the provisions of 130, 131 and 132 in an effort to enable the member to faithfully perform the vows and covenant of membership.

(B.O.D. Para 114)

**God
Help
Us
All**