

Local Church Membership

The Importance of Church Membership

Spirit Quest International strongly supports the Biblical concept of belonging to a body of born-again believers. While there is no specific scripture that makes church membership mandatory, many scriptures allude to the desirability of being joined with like believers.

Biblical Evidences for Church Membership are as follows:

1. Shepherds care for their flocks.
Church membership is implied in the way the New Testament requires Elders to care for the flocks in their charge. Peter speaks to the Elders in 1st Peter 5:2-3 "FEED THE FLOCK OF GOD WHICH IS AMONG YOU, TAKING THE OVERSIGHT THEREOF, NOT BY CONSTRAINT, BUT WILLINGLY; NOT FOR FILTHY LUCRE, BUT OF A READY MIND; NEITHER AS BEING LORDS OVER GOD'S HERITAGE, BUT BEING EXAMPLES TO THE FLOCK." "Those in your charge" implies the Elders knew whom they were responsible.
2. Examples of the Body
Church membership is implied by the "body" in 1st Corinthians 12:12-14 "FOR JUST AS THE BODY IS ONE AND HAS MANY MEMBERS, AND ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE BODY, THOUGH MANY, ARE ONE BODY, SO IT IS WITH CHRIST. FOR IN ONE SPIRIT WE WERE ALL BAPTIZED INTO ONE BODY - JEWS OR GREEKS, SLAVES OR FREE - AND ALL WERE MADE TO DRINK OF ONE SPIRIT. FOR THE BODY DOES NOT CONSIST OF ONE MEMBER BUT OF MANY." There is unity in a relationship where all feel they are part.
3. Submission to Leadership
The New Testament speaks about the relationship of the church body to her leaders in Hebrews 13:17 "OBEY YOUR LEADERS AND SUBMIT TO THEM, FOR THEY ARE KEEPING WATCH OVER YOUR SOULS, AS THOSE WHO WILL HAVE TO GIVE AN ACCOUNT.", in 1st Thessalonians 5: 12-13 "WE ASK YOU, BROTHERS, TO RESPECT THOSE WHO LABOR AMONG YOU AND ARE OVER YOU IN THE LORD AND ADMONISH YOU, AND TO ESTEEM THEM VERY HIGHLY IN LOVE BECAUSE OF THEIR WORK.", and in 1st Timothy 5:17 "LET THE ELDERS WHO RULE WELL BE CONSIDERED WORTHY OF DOUBLE HONOR, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO LABOR IN PREACHING AND TEACHING." If there are no members, the Leaders cannot lead.

Spirit Quest International believes that local church membership is essential to the continued spiritual growth of the individual. Therefore, we advocate a process by which candidates for membership express their willingness and desire to become a part of the local Spirit Quest International body.

Rules for Membership

1. In as much as Spirit Quest International believes in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures and that the Scriptures are the final spiritual and moral authority, the member must study the Bible diligently and build on its teaching in their daily work and conversation.
2. The member must have experienced salvation through their faith in Jesus Christ.

3. The member must conform to the teachings, general rules, doctrines, and Articles of Faith of Spirit Quest International.
4. The member must neither manufacture or ingest intoxicants or drugs that adversely effect health, including tobacco products.
5. The member will refrain from premarital or extra-marital sex.
6. The member will practice regular tithing to the local church body.
7. The member will practice brotherly love and compassion for others as is exemplified by Christ.

Affirming the Covenant of Commitment

The following should be read by the Senior Pastor to those aspiring to become members of the local church:

Covenant - (To Be Read Aloud by the Senior Pastor)

As spoken in Romans 12:17-18, "RECOMPENSE TO NO MAN EVIL FOR EVIL. PROVIDE THINGS HONEST IN THE SIGHT OF ALL MEN. IF IT BE POSSIBLE, AS MUCH AS LIETH IN YOU, LIVE PEACEABLY WITH ALL MEN."

As spoken in Ephesians 4:32, "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

As spoken in Galatians 5:22-23 "THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS LOVE, JOY, PEACE, LONG-SUFFERING, GENTLENESS, GOODNESS, FAITH, MEEKNESS, TEMPERANCE AGAINST SUCH THERE IS NO LAW."

As spoken in Ephesians 5:11, "HAVE NO FELLOWSHIP WITH THE UNFRUITFUL WORKS OF DARKNESS, BUT RATHER REPROVE THEM."

As spoken in James 1:17, "PURE RELIGION AND UNDEFILED BEFORE GOD AND THE FATHER IS THIS, TO VISIT THE FATHERLESS AND WIDOWS IN THEIR AFFLICTION, AND TO KEEP HIMSELF UNSPOTTED FROM THE WORLD."

As spoken in James 3:17-18, "WISDOM THAT IS FROM ABOVE IS FIRST PURE, THEN PEACEABLE, GENTLE, AND EASY TO BE ENTREATED, FULL OF MERCY AND GOOD FRUITS, WITHOUT PARTIALITY, AND WITHOUT HYPOCRISY. AND THE FRUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS IS SOWN IN PEACE OF THEM THAT MAKE PEACE."

All this will we do, God being our Helper.

Response - (Read by the Senior Pastor, Repeated by the Members)

We accept the obligations of this covenant in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Records

Each Spirit Quest International Church will keep a faithful record of church membership. This record shall be maintained by the church secretary and updated annually.