


MEMBERSHIP



*“Transforming lives through knowing
Jesus and making Him known”*

 *“I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.”*
1 Cor 9:22



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Becoming a Member of Bethany Baptist Church

Key Understandings

Bethany Baptist Church is a local expression of the body of Christ that meets in Richmond, BC. As Christ followers, we are committed to be people who live out the truth of being made new through Jesus' sacrificial death on the Cross and to be a people who are transformed, who grow, and who thrive because of our faith in Jesus Christ. This is the walk of discipleship where He calls us to live consistently obedient with what God teaches in His Word. The Bible is the ultimate authority and judge for what we believe and how we live. We acknowledge that it is the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit who gives us the ability to live in a way that pleases God.

“So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God”. Ephesians 2:19

As this expression of God's family, we affirm that Jesus is central to our faith. To that end, we proclaim that Jesus is our Saviour, our Sanctifier and our Coming King. It is to these truths we uncompromisingly hold and which we unreservedly proclaim.

Key Truths

When we received God's gift of salvation offered us through Jesus' death on the Cross, we immediately became a member of Christ's family however He also calls us to be part of His local gathered body.

A Christian who functions independently without being part of a local expression of Christ's Body, the church, is acting in a manner inconsistent with what the Bible teaches. In fact, we are warned “Not to neglect meeting together, as is the habit of some, but to encourage one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:25

Expression to our saving faith in Jesus, is made by believers' baptism which is a requirement for membership for those wanting to commit themselves to the family of Christ at Bethany Baptist Church.

What It Means to Be a Member

Membership expresses a desire to be fully involved with what it means to be a Christ follower. That means being: faithful in our attendance; faithful in our giving (Acts 2:42-47); faithful in prayer (Romans 12:12) and faithful in making Jesus known (Matthew 28:18-20.) We do this because:

1. Christ is Committed to the Church

“Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.” Ephesians 5:25

2. We are Committed to Live as Obedient Followers of Jesus in the Family of Christ

Membership identifies our family. It also identifies and affirms beliefs and practices that Christ followers are to hold in common. In Acts 2:42-47 we are given a picture of the Church that learns and worships together, serves together, prays together and unselfishly, loves together.

3. We are Accountable to Each Other for Spiritual Growth

The New Testament places a major emphasis on the need for Christians to be accountable to each other for spiritual growth. You can't be accountable without commitment to a specific church family. Hebrews 10:25

Understanding the Church

Bethany is structured to facilitate bringing people to Christ and growing people in Christ so that, *“The word of Christ dwells in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”* Colossians 3:16

The Church is a Fellowship

“They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship”. Acts 2:42

A priority in our church is harmony, unity and “preferring one another in love.”

“Maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” Ephesians 4:3

“Let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.” Romans 14:19

Any attitude that causes disunity is sin. Unity does not mean we necessarily agree on all things but it does mean we won't have a spirit of disunity and contention. It also doesn't mean known sin is ignored or dismissed as irrelevant rather *the word of Christ is to richly within us as we teach and admonish one another* (Colossians 3:16).

“(Often)... when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. For, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you.” 1 Corinthians 11:17-18

The Church is a Family

“All of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.” 1 Peter 3:8, also Galatians 6:10, Hebrews 2:10-12, 1 Peter 4:17

So, we operate on the basis of relationships consistent with how Christ calls us to live.

“Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity” 1 Timothy 5:1-2 *“He (a leader) must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?”* 1 Timothy 3:4-5

The Church is a Body

1 Corinthians 12:27, Ephesians 5:23, Ephesians 1:22-23, Colossians 1:18, 2:19

We are a body, not a business, an organism, not an organization! In an organization, “maintenance” is the focus but in an organism, “ministry” is the focus. As a living organism we are a local gathering of believers and disciples of Jesus Christ who prefer one another in love and who commit to serve the body of Christ both inside and outside church walls. Therefore, we function on the basis of spiritual gifts. At Bethany Baptist Church, structures need to be continually evaluated to ensure ministry is maximized.

“For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us”. Romans 12:4-6

The Church is a Flock

Jesus' favorite description of the church: John 10:1-30, Matthew 26:31, Matthew 25:33

Therefore, it is cared for and led by Shepherds. The New Testament most commonly identifies pastors (Ephesians 4:11) and spiritual leaders (1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9) as the leadership in the local church who are to serve the Lord with integrity and in all humility.

Our Passion, Our Hope, Our Values

“Transforming lives through knowing Jesus and making Him known”

“I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.”

1 Corinthians 9:22

Our purpose is to glorify God by helping people know God personally and to share Jesus Christ’s love with others. Within that purpose, we want to be known as a church that is committed to helping individuals and families thrive in the spiritual, emotional, and relational areas of life.

Our Passion

We exist so people come to know Jesus and are equipped to become love-filled, faith-demonstrating followers of Jesus.

Our Hope

To see Bethany be a thriving and growing community of believers who take faith seriously as we engage and serve the Hamilton/Queensborough and surrounding communities. In this, we desire to be church that embraces and represents all – described in Revelation 7:9 as people from *‘every nation, tribe, people, and language’*. As believers we are called to be people who speak out and live out justice and hope to a broken and needy world.

Our Values

Authenticity

We acknowledge that we are an ‘in process’, Grace given people who sometimes fail and who sometimes disappoint. But, our focus is to follow and obey Jesus and as we do, model His love to all we meet.

Faithfulness

We believe in the truth of God’s Word and seek to live in accordance with that. That truth calls us as Grace given people to be grace giving people who *‘prefer one another in love and good deeds.’*

Creativity and Joy

We believe creativity and joy are reflections of our Creator, inspiring us to be innovative and relevant with the message of Christ in our world.

Teachable Spirits

We desire to be a people who are always growing in our walk of faith, so the reality of Jesus is more evident in what is seen than what is said.

Connecting Hearts

Our goal is to be people who are first relationally connected and accountable to our living Lord – then attractively and compellingly connected with others, as we invest our lives in our families, our friends, our neighbours and those with whom we study, work and play.

Our Success – That as Christ Followers We are People ALIVE IN FAITH:

- **LIVING OUT** what we believe
- **REACHING OUT** so others are invited to believe
- **LOVING OUT** so others are attracted by seeing what we believe
- **GIVING OUT** so others are impacted by what we believe:
 - in how we serve
 - in how we give, so current and new ministries and needs to which God leads us are well supported

We Become What We are Committed to, so Our Objective is to Be:

Christ Centered in Worship

Christ followers who meet regularly to celebrate God's presence through the teaching of the Word, prayer, fellowship, proclamation, communion and giving. Jesus centered worship gives testimony that it is only through His saving death on the Cross that we can be forgiven and have relationship with God the Father.

Disciple Builders in Commitment

Christ followers who are growing in their faith to be more and more like Christ demonstrated in transformed attitudes, transformed actions, and transformed relationships.

Responders in Heart

Being a people who assist with the needs within our family as well as in the communities in which we are engaged.

World Focused in Mission

Fulfillers of the Great Commission who share the Gospel and make disciples at home and throughout the world.

Essentials We Follow – Baptism & Communion

Jesus gives His followers two commands: to be baptized and to remember Him in Communion.

Believer's Baptism

Baptism is an outward expression of an inward reality, whereby repentance of our sin, we have been forgiven and made new by God. Without Jesus, we were without hope, dead and buried in our sins but because of Jesus' shed blood on the Cross, our sins have been forgiven and we've been raised to new life in Christ. We stand in Jesus' righteousness not our own. Baptism is a witness to the world that our lives are no longer ours, they are Christ's. Baptism does not save us rather it is an act of obedience that follows confession of our sin. That is what is meant by 'believer's' baptism – when we are old enough to acknowledge and turn from our sin, accepting Jesus' salvation as the only answer for our sin. At Bethany we practice baptism by immersion which best represents the meaning of the word and the picture Scripture give. Romans 6:1-6; Colossians 2:11, 12.

Communion – The Lord's Supper

At the Last Supper Jesus told His disciples, "This do in remembrance of Me". The bread and wine picture what Jesus did when He took our sin upon Himself, His blood paying sin's penalty. Our participation in this serves as constant reminder of His sacrificial love as well as giving a focus that Jesus is coming again when we will forever be with Him 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. Because of what the bread and wine represent, we are cautioned not to take these 'emblems' lightly nor take them if we are holding unforgiveness with another. In the latter case, we are to go and make things right with them and only then take communion 1 Corinthians 11:17,18 & 27-32. This celebration of Jesus' love and forgiveness is only for those who are believers in Jesus.

The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended to the dead. The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints, the Forgiveness of sins, the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life Everlasting.

Statement of Beliefs

We believe:

The Bible is God's word given by divine inspiration, the record of God's revelation of Himself to humanity.

2 Timothy 3:16

It is trustworthy, sufficient, without error—the supreme authority and guide for all doctrine and conduct. 1 Peter 1:23–25; John 17:17; II Timothy 3:16–17. It is the truth by which God brings people into a saving relationship with Himself and leads them to Christian maturity John 20:31, 1 John 5:9–12; Matthew 4:4; 1 Peter 2:2.

In the one living and true God, perfect in wisdom, sovereignty, holiness, justice, mercy, and love.

1 Timothy 1:17; Psalm 86:15; Deuteronomy 32:3–4

He exists eternally in three coequal persons who act together in creation, providence and redemption. Genesis 1:26; I Peter 1:2; Hebrews 1:1–3.

The **FATHER** reigns with providential care over all life and history in the created universe I Timothy 1:17; Psalm 86:15; Deuteronomy 32:3–4. He hears and answers prayer. 1 Chronicles 29:11–13; Matthew 7:11. He initiated salvation by sending His Son and He is Father to those who by faith accept His Son as Lord and Savior. 1 John 4:9–10; John 3:16; John 1:12; Acts 16:31

The **SON** became man, Jesus Christ, who was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary John 1:14; Matthew 1:18. Being fully God and fully man, He revealed God through His sinless life, miracles, and teaching. John 14:9; Hebrews 4:15; Matthew 4:23–24. He provided salvation through His atoning death in our place and by His bodily resurrection. I Corinthians 15:3–4; II Corinthians 5:21; Romans 4:23–25. He ascended into heaven where He rules over all creation Phil 2:5–11. He intercedes for all believers and dwells in them as their ever-present Lord. Romans 8:34; John 14:23.

The **HOLY SPIRIT** inspired men to write the Scriptures. 1 Timothy 1:17; Psalm 86:15; Deuteronomy 32:3, II Peter 1:21. Through this Word, He convicts individuals of their sinfulness and of the righteousness of Christ, draws them to the Savior, and bears witness to their new birth. James 1:18; John 16:7–11; 1 Thessalonians 1:5–6; Romans 8:16. At regeneration and conversion, the believer is baptized in the Holy Spirit. I Corinthians 12:13. The Spirit indwells, seals, and gives spiritual gifts to all believers for ministry in the church and society. Romans 8:9–11; Ephesians 1:13–14; Romans 12:5–8; I Peter 4:10. He empowers, guides, teaches, fills, sanctifies, and produces the fruit of Christlikeness in all who yield to Him. Acts 4:31; Romans 8:14; 1 Corinthians 2:10–13; Ephesians 5:18; II Thessalonians 2:13; Galatians 5:16, 22–23.

God created an order of spiritual beings called angels to serve him and do his will.

Psalm 148:1–5; Colossians 1:16

The holy angels are obedient spirits ministering to the heirs of salvation and glorifying God. Hebrews 1:6–7, 13–14. Certain angels, called demons, Satan being their chief, through deliberate choice revolted and fell from their exalted position. Revelation 12:7–9. They now tempt individuals to rebel against God. 1 Timothy 4:1; 1 Peter 5:8. Their destiny in hell has been sealed by Christ's victory over sin and death. Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 20:10.

We believe God created man in his own image to have fellowship with himself and to be steward over His creation.

Genesis 1:26–28.

As a result, each person is unique, possesses dignity, and is worthy of respect. Psalm 139:13–17. Through the temptation of Satan, Adam chose to disobey God; this brought sin and death to the human race and suffering to all creation. Genesis 3; Romans 5:12–21, 8–22. Therefore, everyone is born with a sinful nature and needs to be reconciled to God. Romans 3:9–18, 23. Satan tempts people to rebel against God, even those who love Him. Ephesians 4:27; II Corinthians 2:11; Matthew 16:23. Nonetheless, everyone is personally responsible to God for thoughts, actions, and beliefs and has the right to approach Him directly through Jesus Christ, the only mediator. Romans 14:12; 1 Timothy 2:5.

Salvation is redemption by Christ of the whole person from sin and death.

II Timothy 1:9–10; 1 Thessalonians 5:23

It is offered as a free gift by God to all and must be received personally through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. 1 Timothy 2:4; Ephesians 2:8–9; Acts 20:21. An individual is united to Christ by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. Galatians 2:20; Colossians 1:27. As a child of God, the believer is acquitted of all guilt and brought into a new relationship of peace. Romans 5:1. Christians grow as the Holy Spirit enables them to understand and obey the Word of God. 2 Peter 3:18; Ephesians 4:15; 1 Thessalonians 3:12.

The Church is the body of which Christ is the head and all who believe in him are members

Ephesians 1:22–23; Romans 12:4–5

Christians are commanded to be baptized upon profession of faith and to unite with a local church for mutual encouragement and growth in discipleship through worship, nurture, service, and the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world. Acts 2:41–42, 47; Luke 24:45–48. Each church is a self-governing body under the lordship of Christ with all members sharing responsibility. Acts 13:1–3; 14:26–28. The form of government is understood to be congregational. Matthew 18:17; Acts 6:3–6; 15:22–23.

The ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:18–20. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of the Savior

Jesus Christ. Romans 6:3–5. The Lord’s Supper is the partaking of the bread and of the cup by believers together as a continuing memorial of the broken body and shed blood of Christ. It is an act of thankful dedication to Him and serves to unite His people until He returns. 1 Corinthians 11:23–26.

To express unity in Christ, local churches form associations and a conference for mutual counsel, fellowship, and a more effective fulfillment of Christ’s commission. Acts 15; 1 Corinthians 6:1–3

Religious liberty, rooted in Scripture, is the inalienable right of all individuals to freedom of conscience with ultimate accountability to God.

Genesis 1:27; John 8:32; 2 Corinthians 3:17; Romans 8:21; Acts 5:29

Church and state exist by the will of God. Each has distinctive concerns and responsibilities, free from control by the other. Matthew 22:21. Christians should pray for civil leaders and obey and support government in matters not contrary to Scripture. 1 Timothy 2:1–4; Romans 13:1–7; 1 Peter 2:13–16. The state should guarantee religious liberty to all persons and groups regardless of their religious preferences, consistent with the common good.

Christians, individually and collectively, are salt and light in society.

Matthew 5:13–16

In a Christlike spirit, they oppose greed, selfishness and vice; they promote truth, justice and peace; they aid the needy and preserve the dignity of people of all races and conditions Heb 13:5; Lk 9:23; Tit 2:12; Phil 4:8–9; 1 John 3:16–17; James 2:1–4.

We affirm the family as the basic unit of society and seek to preserve its integrity and stability.
Genesis 2:21–25; Ephesians 6:1–4.

We believe the Bible teaches that marriage refers to the covenant relationship exclusively between one man and one woman, as instituted by God in the beginning. Genesis 2:20b–24; 1 Corinthians 7:2; Hebrews 13:4.

God, in his own time and in his own way, will bring all things to their appropriate end and establish the new Heaven and the new Earth.

Ephesians 1:9–10, Revelation 21:1

The certain hope of the Christian is that Jesus Christ will return to the earth suddenly, personally, and visibly in glory according to His promise. Titus 2:13; Revelation 1:7; 3:11; John 14:1–3. The dead will be raised, and Christ will judge mankind in righteousness. John 5:28–29. The unrighteous will be consigned to the everlasting punishment prepared for the devil and his angels. Matthew 25:41, 46; Revelation 20:10. The righteous, in their resurrected and glorified bodies, will receive their reward and dwell forever with the Lord. Philippians 3:20–21; II Corinthians 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18.

Bethany Baptist Church's Affiliation

Bethany is a member of North American Baptist denomination and is committed to spread the good news of the Gospel in the community we serve and to the world where we are called. Matthew 28:19, 20

Bethany's Membership Covenant

I have accepted the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ) and the Holy Spirit as the one-and-only-one true God. In order to grow in my relationship with Him, I have chosen to enter into a covenant relationship with Bethany Baptist Church for accountability and spiritual growth. I promise to live according to what the Bible teaches in doctrine and lifestyle (1 Tim 4:16), adhering to the Ten Commandments (Ex 20), the Greatest Commandment (Mk 12:29,30), and the values of Bethany Baptist Church, I hold to the Apostle's Creed and the "Statement of Beliefs" as adopted by the North American Baptist Conference August 1982. If I move to another location I agree to unite with another congregation where I can continue to live out the spirit of this covenant. If I am wilfully living in a consistent, unrepentant, and unbiblical way in life or in doctrine, I give Bethany Baptist Church the right to remove my membership. I would be welcome to attend the church, but I would not be able to hold any positions of leadership and/or teaching.

As people who have received Jesus as our Saviour and Lord, and who have given expression to that faith in believers' baptism, we commit ourselves to the family of Christ at Bethany Baptist Church by:

Protecting the Unity of my Church

By acting in biblically defined love with other members. When disagreements or conflicts arise, I commit to being quick to forgive and, "so far as it depends on 'me', live peaceably with all" Romans 12:18 and "by 'my' obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart" 1 Peter 1:22. "Live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus." Romans 15:5

By edifying one another – being people filled with the Spirit whose actions are characterized by: "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, ... anything worthy of praise, think about these things." Philippians 4:8 "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear." Ephesians 4:29

Following Leaders as they Faithfully OBEY and Follow Christ

"Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning." Hebrews 13:17

Actively Engaging in the Ministry of this Church by:

- praying for its growth
- inviting the unchurched to attend
- warmly welcoming newcomers

“Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled.” Luke 14:23.

“Welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.” Romans 15:7

and by:

- discovering my gifts and talents
- serving the family of God with a servant’s heart

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's grace.” 1 Peter 4:10 *“Each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who ... emptied himself, taking the form of a servant.”* Philippians 2:4,5, 7

Supporting the Ministry of My Church

- by attending faithfully
- by living a godly life
- by giving regularly and faithfully

“Not neglecting to meet together ... but encouraging one another.” Hebrews 10:25 *“Let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ.”* Philippians 1:27 *“Concerning the collection for the saints ..., on the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside...”* 1 Corinthians 16:2 *“Every tithe of the land ... is the LORD's; it is holy to the LORD.”* Leviticus 27:30

How Bethany is Structured

Election of the Leadership Team

Bethany functions with a ‘congregational’ form of governance interchangeably known as the Leadership Team or the Board. Except as set out in Bethany Bylaws, the Leadership Team alongside the Lead Pastor, give direction to the church. 1 Timothy 3:1-16, Titus 1:5-9

Nominations for election to the Board is made by the Nominating Committee. Eligible individuals must:

- be a Member at least 19 years of age and in good standing
- have been a member of the Church for a minimum of one year;
- meet the qualifications for the office as set out in Scripture (1 Timothy 3, Titus 1)
- have demonstrated leadership in areas of service in the church.

In order to be elected to the Board, a nominee must receive at least a majority of the ballots cast.

Members' Affirmation of Leadership

Members vote to elect members of the Leadership Team as well as approving the budget and financial statements, the purchase of land or buildings and any changes in the church bylaws. Members may also be asked to vote on specific resolutions presented by the Leadership Team at the Annual General Meeting or other called meetings of the membership from time to time throughout the calendar year.

At General Meetings, where membership affirmation is required, voting can be conducted by a show of hands upon agreement by the membership. Members may make a motion to request voting by ballot. This motion must be approved by the members present at the meeting.

Participants in congregational affirmation, adhere to the following conditions:

- Each Member in good standing present at a meeting is entitled to one vote.
- Voting by proxy is not permitted, except as otherwise required by law.
- Matters voted on shall be passed by Ordinary Resolution except where the Bylaws or any applicable legislation require that such matter be passed by Special Resolution.

Members in Good Standing

All Members are in good standing except:

- a Member who, as determined by the Board, has failed to remain active in the Church, meaning that the Member has been absent from the normal activities of the Church for a period of six (6) consecutive months or more and has not communicated an interest in remaining a Member of the Church; and
- a Member who is under discipline or suspension. Bethany endeavours to be a community characterized by forgiveness and restoration however, when necessary, Bethany follows the restoration process outlined in Matthew 18:15–20, 1 Corinthians 5 and elsewhere in Scripture.

Relinquishing Membership

A person shall cease to be a Member of Bethany Baptist Church:

- by delivering written resignation (letter, e mail, text) to the Board;
- on death;
- by transfer to another church;
- by the Board passing a Special Resolution which terminates membership upon failing to maintain the Qualifications for Membership or having accepted membership in another church;
- on being expelled as a result any disciplinary process; or
- on having not been a Member in good standing for 12 consecutive months.

Requisites for Membership

Saving Faith in Jesus to Forgive our Sin

I acknowledge that I have confessed and repented of my sins and have received God's gift of forgiveness offered me through the saving blood of Jesus. Saving faith requires genuine repentance (metanoia) – turning from our sin and the life we once led and turning to Jesus and in obedience, following Him. As Scripture states, we who were dead in our sin have been made alive in Christ. Our identity has been completely changed, completely made new - 1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 6:4; Colossians 3:9; Ephesians 4:24; Romans 6:11,12. By faith, I acknowledge that I have been saved by faith alone in Christ as God's only way of salvation.

Being Baptized as a Follower of Jesus in Obedience to Christ's Command

As a member of Christ's church at Bethany, I have expressed my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ by obeying His command to be baptized as an outward expression that my life has been given to Him as my salvation and my only hope for being made right with God. Baptism is a public, definitive declaration of our faith that we have been raised to new life in Christ - Matthew 28:19,20; Romans 6:1-5; Acts 2:38-41. I understand that Bethany Baptist Church practices believer's baptism by immersion.

Expressed Desire and Commitment to Live in Accordance with God's Word as an Obedient Follower of Jesus

This does not imply sinless perfection, but it is a clear decision and commitment to the life we are called to live. *For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.* (Romans 6:6) *In the same way we consider ourselves dead to sin* (Rom 6:11). This is to say our identity and way of living has been changed when we are in Christ Jesus. When we do sin, we repent and confess our sin and then return to follow Christ – walking in the light as He is in the light - Romans 6 & 8; 1 Timothy 1:13-17; Colossians 3:9; 1 John 1:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19,20; 1 Peter 2:9; Ephesians 4:24; Ephesians 5:8-15; 1 John 1:7.

In Summary:

As a Christian, I am one who:

- by faith, has accepted God's forgiveness for my sin through Christ's shed blood on the Cross. I understand and accept Jesus' word that He alone is, *The Way, The Truth and The Life and that no one comes to God the Father except through Him.*

- has been called to be Christ's disciple and that means faithfully living to please Him in all ways. His Word, the Bible, gives me direction on how my life is to be lived and my commitment is to allow it, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to be the ultimate authority for my life.
- is indwelt by the Holy Spirit and I acknowledge it is He who gives me the power to live the life to which I have been called.
- has been obedient to Christ's command and have received believer's baptism as an outward expression of my faith in Christ.
- is in full agreement with what is stated in *BETHANY's Statement of Faith, Members in Good Standing and Relinquishing Membership*.

Acknowledgement

Having read this document including the Scriptures referenced and being in agreement with what has been stated herein (most importantly, the Scriptures referenced) and indicating that I am committed to live my life in accordance with these beliefs that are consistent with being a follower of Jesus, I, _____, (print name) acknowledge my decision to become a member of Bethany Baptist Church.

Signature:

Date: