

Church members' meetings

What is the members' meeting?

All members of SRBC are expected to get involved in the life of the church. This includes supporting the regular members' meetings. These are held at least once a quarter, sometimes at a weekend, sometimes in midweek.

As a church, we believe that all those who have declared their commitment to God and to the local church are qualified to share in discerning God's will. This is why we have congregational government through the members' meeting.

'It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us...'
Acts 16:28

At meetings, we gather to discuss and make important decisions. This might include welcoming new members, ministry developments, caring for property and sharing mission ideas.

Meetings work best when members realise that all of us together are wiser than any of us on our own. They are a sign of our spirituality and our ability to 'discern all things' because we have the 'mind of Christ'. Ideally, meetings are a 'guided democracy', led by God's Spirit. This is why attending meetings is important to seek God's direction.

*** Has this prompted questions for you?
Why not ask someone at SRBC why they are a member?**

Who, what, where and when

Stanley Road Baptist Church

We are an active, medium-sized church, based in Morecambe and Heysham. We meet each Sunday at 10.30am for our worship service. We aim to make this accessible for as many people as possible.

We also run a programme of groups, seeking to share the love of God with other members of our community, as we have done for over a century. We take seriously the need to 'build up' the church and through our Sunday services, and in other ways, we seek to help people develop their faith in Christ.



Why we do what we do

This is one of a series of leaflets, based on the Baptist Union's 'Baptist Basics' publications. Others available: Stewardship; Baptism; Legacies; Children. Further information is also available at www.stanleyroad.org.uk

Why we do what we do



Church Membership

A guide for all those interested in becoming members of Stanley Road Baptist Church



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Why we do what we do: Church Membership at Stanley Road Baptist Church

What is 'Church Membership'?

At Stanley Road Baptist Church, we encourage Christians who worship with us regularly to become church members.

'Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ... The body is not made up of one part but of many.'

1 Corinthians 12:12,14

Although it is not necessary to be a member to serve in the church, there are certain roles that can only be filled by members.

Also, it is members who will be most involved in making

significant decisions about church life, such as ministry and building matters.

But church membership is not really about having a vote or doing jobs. It is about commitment.

Church membership shows that we are committed...

- ...to the importance of the church in the mission of God. The Bible uses lots of images of Christians in community together, such as the people of God or as the body of Christ.
- ...to following Christ, living as a Christian and living alongside other Christians. It highlights the commitment to a new way of life that we make when we are baptised.

- ...to playing our part in building a strong church by using our time, energy, finance and gifts. It means we will be active in church life and in decision-making.

- ...to supporting other Christians, and being supported by them, in our Christian lives – especially during difficult times. This includes pastoral care to support and to guide.

- ...to connecting with other Christians in other churches and around the world. Membership is a solid bond that says we belong to a movement.

- ...to being contributors not consumers. Being a Christian isn't a spectator sport but requires personal and dedicated involvement in the things of God.

How to become a member

Membership is open to Christians who are committed to worshipping and serving at SRBC. It is usual to have been baptised as a believer, but we know that Christians come from different traditions and are happy to discuss what is appropriate.

It is best to talk with the pastor first of all. A couple of members will meet with you and recommend you to the church members' meeting, which will then decide. Some people are put off by this as it may seem too formal and impersonal. In reality, it is a positive and welcoming process for both church and new member.

It shows several things:

- there is a willingness from both the new member and the church to commit to each other.
- membership is based on an individual's faith in Jesus as Lord, and so this should be shared with the church.
- a new member is valued and so the church wants to get to know them and how best they might contribute to the church and be encouraged in their faith.

'Let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing...'
Hebrews 10:24-5

New members are welcomed during a Sunday communion service.