CABOOLTURE
BAPTIST CHURCH

Membership

What does it involve?

Introduction

It is suggested that Baptist Churches have two tiers of Membership and to some degree this is true. Baptists adhere to the Biblical teaching of the Universal Church. That is, once a person becomes a follower of Jesus they automatically become a member of God's family known as the Church. (Acts 2:37-47)

However because Baptists also adhere to the Biblical teaching of the Church being "the priesthood of all believers" (1 Peter 2:4-5), meaning there is no hierarchy in God's Church, Baptists need another level of Membership and that is local Baptist Church Membership. This is not an elite group but a Biblical compliance as explained in following paragraphs.

Biblical teaching about the Spiritual Gifts within the Church is very clear that every gift is important. There are many gifts but one Body or Church. (1 Corinthians 12:12-20)

Added to this mix of truths the Apostle Paul instructs us in Romans 13:5 that we are to submit to the authorities who are over us. It is part of our Australian statutes whereby every organisation (whether a sports club, knitting group, business, and even churches) must have a person/s responsible for the operation of that group.

So, who is in charge? Every organisation needs a leader! True, but special leadership is vital.

Notes

One final point

Believers Baptism??? What is this?

It is our firm belief according to Scripture that baptism pertains to “Believers”. It is not an Infant Baptism and neither is it an Adult Baptism. It is a Believer’s Baptism.

It is also our firm Biblical belief that Believer’s Baptism should be administered by immersion in water. Paul writing to the Romans in Romans 6:3-4, describes our baptism as being a dying to sin and a burial with Christ demonstrating our rising to new life with Jesus. A clear word picture of one being buried and raised again and from the example in Matthews Gospel it is obvious that the medium was that of water.

HOWEVER, here at Caboolture Baptist Church the emphasis is upon Believers Baptism not the mode. More and more we meet people who publicly professed their faith in Jesus through other acts of initiation eg sprinkling, or perhaps without water at all. It is not our desire to become legalistic but to remain graciously Biblical by receiving into Membership those who have professed Jesus through Believers Baptism.

Conclusion

If you are sensing God has placed you in this local Church family to serve Him and under His leading in partnership with other Members, you desire to enquire further about becoming a Member, why not begin the process. Ask a Leader, enquire at our Welcome Desk or contact our Church Office to get things happening in this regard.

We delight to see God’s Church grow as He adds committed followers of Jesus to His local Church family.

How does this work?

Many other denominational groups within our nation operate on the basis of hierarchy and so whoever is the top leader becomes the one responsible to Government for the existence of that denomination. (eg there are Bishops, Session Clerks, Church Councils etc) As Baptists we do not have this hierarchical style of leadership so in order to comply with the authorities of our land we have a second tier of membership whereby if a government official asked us who was in charge we would hand them our Membership Roll.

Baptist Church Membership therefore is not a position of authority or power but one of feeling a sense of God’s leading to become a servant accepting responsibility for the ministry of the local Church under the leadership of God.

In a nutshell it is accepting responsibility for the governance of God’s Church in the local community where God has placed you.

What does this involve?

Firstly, we have already stated God's Church is made up of those who are followers of Jesus. So there needs to be a personal testimony of you accepting Jesus as your Lord and Saviour.

Secondly, by Biblical conviction, it is one of our Baptistic principles that our salvation experience should be demonstrated by Believer's Baptism. In Matthew 3:13-17 we read of Jesus' baptism because it was what God required. An act of obedience to fulfil righteousness. Then, prior to Jesus' ascension in Matthew 28:19-20 Jesus commissioned His followers to make disciples, baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This recipe became the blueprint for the early Church throughout the Book of Acts. A person believed, was baptised and added to the Church.

Thirdly it involves responsibility. Every follower of Jesus has been given a spiritual gift to add to their personal abilities and resources to use for the glory of God in His local Church.

Therefore becoming a member of a Baptist Church involves being a follower of Jesus, being baptised as a Believer and a willingness to serve God in His Church.

What do I do now?

If you sense God is nudging you to become a member of Caboolture Baptist Church then please advise one of our Church Leaders and a process will begin:

1. You will be given a copy of our Church Constitution which explains who we are, what we believe and how we function as a local Church family under the Headship of Jesus.

2. Your name and intent to join our Church will be mentioned for two consecutive Sundays in our Church Bulletin. This is to advise the wider Church family of your intentions.
3. Two current Members will be asked to set up an appointment to visit with you. This is not an inquisition but an experience of fellowship. An opportunity for you to ask questions about our Church and an opportunity for the Members to hear of your journey with Jesus. It provides an opportunity also for you to ask questions about the Constitution and the ministries we offer as a local Baptist Church.
4. On the basis of this visit with you a brief report of the visit will be submitted to our Church Overseers. Subject to this report being acceptable (and usually it is) a recommendation will be made for you be welcomed into our Membership.
5. Official recognition and welcome to Membership normally occurs at a Communion Service (but not necessarily so) when a Certificate of Membership will be given to you and normally a prayer will be offered asking God's mutual blessing upon you and our wider Church family as we continue to fulfil His purposes for us as a Church in the local district.
6. You will then be expected to attend our services and other activities regularly, support our local Church with your spiritual gifts, talents and resources and to regularly uphold our Church in prayer. In addition to this in terms of governance you are encouraged to attend our periodic Members Meeting to receive Reports and discuss matters as required and when necessary vote on matters being presented for a decision.