



St Mark's **GUIDE** to PLUMSTEAD **MEMBERSHIP**

Romans 12 ⁴⁻⁵ " For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

“Why bother with church membership?”

Perhaps you've been coming to church for a long time but you've never thought about officially becoming a 'member'.

Here are just a few reasons that church membership is something you should be thinking seriously about:

1) BELIEVERS ARE MEANT TO BELONG TO A BIGGER BODY

Becoming a member of a local church is a way you commit to belonging to this particular local body.

Most of the New Testament is addressed to congregations, not

individuals. The New Testament knows no Christians floating around in “just me and Jesus” land. Believers belong to churches.

2) MAKING A COMMITMENT IS A POWERFUL STATEMENT IN A LOW-COMMITMENT CULTURE

Ours is a consumer culture where everything is tailored to meet our needs and satisfy our preferences. When those needs aren't met, we can always move on to the next product, or job, or spouse.

Joining a church in such an environment makes a counter-cultural statement. It says “I am committed to this group of people and they are committed to me. I am here to give, more than get.”

3) CHURCH MEMBERSHIP KEEPS US ACCOUNTABLE

When we join a church we are offering ourselves to one another to be encouraged, rebuked, corrected, and served. We are placing ourselves under leaders and submitting to their authority (Heb. 13:7). We are saying, "I am here to stay. I want to help you grow in godliness. Will you help me to do the same?"

4) BECOMING A MEMBER WILL HELP YOUR PASTOR AND ELDERS BE MORE FAITHFUL SHEPHERDS.

Hebrews 13:7 says *"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account."*

Our church leadership takes very seriously our responsibility before God to watch and care for souls. This is not an easy task, but it's even harder when we don't know who is really a part of this flock.

To give just one example, we try to be diligent in following up with people who haven't been at our church for a while. This is a challenge. But if you never become a member, we can't tell if you are

really gone, because we might not be sure if you were ever here! It's nearly impossible for the elders to shepherd the flock when they don't know who really considers them their shepherds.

5) JOINING A CHURCH GIVES YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE PROMISES.

When someone becomes a member of St. Mark's, they make promises to pray, give, serve, attend gatherings and be part of the church's mission. We ought not to make these promises lightly. They are solemn vows. And we must hold each other to them. If you don't join the church, you miss an opportunity to publicly make these promises, inviting the elders and the rest of the body to hold you to these promises - which would be missing out on great spiritual benefit, for you, your leaders, and the whole church.

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Membership matters more than most people think. If you really want to be a counter-cultural revolutionary, sign up for the membership class!