

Unity Baptist Church Policy
November, 2015

Title of Policy: Membership Acceptance Policy

Purpose:

To specify the requirements and procedures for obtaining membership.

Scope:

Applies to all applicants for membership.

Policy:

The minimum age required to become a voting member is 18 years of age. There is no minimum age to become a non-voting member.

The applicant must have undergone Believer's Baptism by immersion (unless physical limitations prohibited immersion).

The applicant must have been a regular attendee for 12 months (once a month at minimum), except in the following situations:

1. Members of another church may forgo the 12 month limit with Council's approval.
 - a. Council requires a written recommendation from a pastor or board member of the former church which outlines the applicant's character and church involvement.
2. New pastors and their immediate family members may forgo the 12 month limit if the Council decides that the interviewing/hiring process has sufficiently vetted the individuals interested in membership.
3. The exceptions in 1 and 2 above do not grant membership at UBC; they simply allow the applicant to forgo the 12 month requirement. The policy and procedure described herein still applies.

Applicants must be approved by Council vote.

Membership elsewhere (including another North American Baptist church) does not guarantee approval for membership at UBC.

Procedures:

The applicant is to be given copies of the following *before* meeting with a Pastor or Council member:

1. Church Covenant
2. Statement of Faith (Appendix to Constitution)
3. *I Am a Church Member*, by Thom Rainer and church constitution
4. UBC Constitution

Of these documents, 1 and 2 are required to be read and signed; the 3 and 4 are recommended reading.

The applicant must sign and return the Church Covenant and Statement of Faith (Appendix to Constitution). These will be saved in the office with our membership records.

If an applicant qualifies for an exception, the Pastor or Council member must request Council to grant an exception on the applicant's behalf. Council will vote and then proceed according to the result of the vote.

A Pastor or Council Member will meet with applicant and discuss the following:

- Why the applicant is seeking membership
- Applicant's testimony of conversion and baptism
- Applicant's membership and involvement at other churches
- Introduction to UBC's mission, vision, values
- How the applicant is participating (or planning to participate) in UBC life
- Applicant's questions regarding UBC

After receiving the signed documents and having discussed the above with a Pastor or Council member, the Pastor or Council member makes a recommendation to Council for membership approval or denial.

Upon approval, new members are welcomed into membership publicly (in a Sunday service or at a business meeting) and presented with certificate of membership.

If membership or a request for an exception to the 12 month limit is denied, a representative from Council will inform the applicant.

Approved by:

- ✓ UBC Council
Date: November 25, 2015