

# tabernacle : penarth

purpose: to reflect God's love in our church,  
Community and world.

# membership

Membership Policy Document

We are delighted you have either become a member of Tabernacle Baptist Church recently, or are interested in doing so. Our prayer is that you will very quickly find your place in the life of the church and become a fully active partner in worship, prayer and mission. We are members of one body, saved by one Lord and baptised in one Spirit. In Christ we are joined together as the family of God, and we are called to care for one another and share the love that we have received from Him. As well as many privileges, membership brings with it certain responsibilities and the purpose of this leaflet is to outline what they are and to clearly set out the process that needs to be followed in order to be admitted as a member.

Tabernacle's mission statement says that "Our purpose is to reflect God's love in our church, community and world." We chose the word 'reflect' carefully to express our belief that the love we share with one another, with our neighbours and throughout the whole world starts with God. The Bible says "Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." (1 John 4:11) As Christians who have discovered the love of God we want to share it with everyone we meet. Our vision is that as a community of believers in Jesus Christ we should convey this love both with our words and our actions.

Tabernacle consists of ordinary people of all backgrounds and ages. We are not perfect by any stretch of the imagination, but we are being changed by Christ a little more each day into his likeness through the work of the Spirit. We worship the Lord Jesus Christ whom we believe to be the Son of God who gives us peace and joy through His healing, forgiveness and new life. Whether in our worship, our witness, our teaching of the Bible, social action or a striving for social justice we want to share the Good News of God's love for the whole world.

This is a high calling which is sometimes costly! As you join us in this task we welcome you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and want you to be assured of our prayers and support as brothers and sisters in Him.

God bless you.

Roger Grafton  
Pastor, Tabernacle Baptist church, Penarth

## Member's responsibilities

**Grow in Christ.** The first and most important responsibility is to follow Christ as fully as you can to the best of your abilities. To do this you must develop and strengthen the quality of your own spiritual life. Personal prayer and the reading of the Bible are the key elements in this growth in Christ, and we urge you to commit yourself to both. If you require help with prayer or Bible study we can assist you by helping you to join a small group, get daily Bible study notes or by praying with you and laying hands on you.

**Come to Church Regularly!** Be faithful in your attendance at Church services. As Baptists we believe that the church exists where the saints gather together, and if you are missing there are two negative effects. Firstly, your own spiritual life will suffer if you 'give up the habit of meeting together.' (Hebrews 10:25), and secondly the church will be the poorer because of your absence. To be a complete body we need all the parts to be present, so please take your attendance at worship seriously.

**Join a small group.** The most effective place for pastoral care and prayer for your needs to take place is in a small group. Small groups are ideal places for sharing your needs, supporting one another, studying the Bible and being involved in effective mission activities. If you are not already in a small group we urge you to consider it, and we would be happy to recommend a group for you. Please speak to the Pastor or fill in a 'get Connected' card if you would like more details.

**Exercise your gifts.** Be actively involved in serving the Lord at Tabernacle. A church the size of Tabs can only function because of the many volunteers who make their gifts available in ministry and service. From the welcome teams to coffee making, Children's group teachers to musicians, coffee makers and dish washers to the maintenance team there are literally dozens of people involved in helping Tabs to fulfil its mission. Please pray and ask God how you might best serve him here. Please use the 'get Connected' cards to let us know how you would like to be involved.

**Give Financially.** Give generously to the finances of the church. Tabernacle has a large ministry which is not only local, but overseas as well. This ministry can only be supported because of the regular financial giving of the members. The Bible tells us that we should be generous in our financial offering to God, and that we should give cheerfully as an act of worship. Please pray about your giving and ask the Lord what you should be contributing to the work here. The preferred method of giving is by standing order and the treasurer would be delighted to give you a form for your bank. However, some members like to give through the envelope scheme, and if you would prefer this we can make dated giving envelopes available to you. Please speak to a member of the finance team for more details, or once again, use the 'Get Connected' cards by ticking the relevant boxes.

**Attend Church Meetings.** Baptist Churches are governed through the authority of the Church Meeting. At these meetings the membership gathers to pray, discuss and consider the life of the Church, and to make decisions as we are led by the Spirit. The purpose of the Church Meeting is to know the mind of Christ, and we invite you to prayerfully join us in this process. Every member has a role to play and it may well be through you that God chooses to speak to us.

**Be Reconciled.** In any family there can be disputes or grievances. This is just as true of the Church family as any other. If another member of the Church has upset or grieved you, your first response should be to try and forgive them as instructed in Colossians 3:13. If you feel you still need to take action, then follow Jesus' principle of reconciliation as outlined in Matthew 18:15-18. If you know you have offended or upset someone, be quick to go to them and settle the matter. (Matthew 5:23).

**Be a good witness.** As Christians we are called to share our faith and tell people about Jesus. Learn how to share the Gospel with your friends and family, and invite them as often as you can to Church services, to the Alpha Course or to other activities or events that we hold from time to time.

**Live a life worthy of the calling you have received.** (Ephesians 4:1) Be an ambassador for Christ and his Church at all times both in your words and deeds. At work, in school or college, at home and in the streets you should avoid words and actions that bring disrepute to the Gospel and to the Church. Avoid associations with groups or societies which are not compatible with the Christian faith such as the Spiritualist Church or other sects or cults. Freemasonry is incompatible with membership of Tabernacle Baptist Church. Remember, there are some people who will judge the whole Christian church or Tabernacle by what you do as a member.

**Associate with the wider Church.** The Christian Church is much bigger than the local Church, and Tabernacle is affiliated to a number of organisations. Where possible we invite you to support these organisations and their meetings:

The Baptist Union Of Great Britain, including Home Mission and  
The Baptist Missionary Society  
The South Wales Baptist Association  
The Evangelical Alliance  
The Penarth and District Council of Churches – Cytun

## **Becoming a member**

Our constitution says that in order to become a member of Tabernacle Baptist Church you need to “apply in a manner determined by the Church Members’ Meeting.” The process that has been agreed upon is as follows:

- Those who wish to join the Church shall apply to a minister or an appointed leader (i.e. and elder or deacon) and complete an application form which is then returned to a minister.
- The prospective member is then interviewed by two members appointed for that purpose, who shall bring a report to a Church Members Meeting.
- If accepted, the applicant will be formally received into membership on the first convenient Sunday Communion service.

## **Revising the Church roll**

A roll is kept of the names of all members. Additionally a list known as the ‘friends list’ is kept of non-members who wish to identify themselves in some way with the Church. Once members have left the area for a period of more than twelve months their membership will lapse. Members who are living or working overseas may remain on the roll if it is their intention to return to the area on their return to the United Kingdom. They will be contacted annually to ensure they wish to remain as members.

When members living in the area do not attend church at all in a twelve month period, they will be contacted by a leader of the church, and unless there is a good reason (e.g. ill health or old age) their membership will lapse. Members failing to respond to enquiries made in this manner will also allow their membership to lapse. The names of all members who lapse in this way will be brought to a Church Meeting prior to deletion from the membership roll. However, the names of all members whose membership lapses be retained on the ‘friends of Tabernacle’ list for at least two years.





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