

NorthRidge Membership Manual

Introduction to NorthRidge Membership

Creating events, gathering crowds, even bringing people to Jesus, while important, are not mentioned in the Great Commission. Jesus asked us to make disciples! Our goal then is to help people become mature believers, to follow God in their everyday lives. How do we know if we're doing this effectively? We define what people on the road to full devotion look like, and then we affirm those among us who are on that road. We call these people "participating members". They are no longer spectators. They're even more than sideline cheerleaders. They're down on the playing field, and are now full-on "in the game". Only it's not a game. It's our very reason for being on earth.

Becoming a member is the culmination of a series of important steps, but it's not an end in itself, any more than finally being hired means your work is finished. To become a participating member of NorthRidge is to affirm both where you are now spiritually, and where you are going. It's a step of discipleship, a milestone on the lifelong path of a committed follower of Jesus.

Why Membership?

So, we who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Romans 12:5

Four reasons for having formal membership:

1. We believe the concept of membership is biblical. While the term "church member" is never used in the Bible, the concept is implicit throughout the New Testament. Believers clearly identified themselves with a specific local body and were challenged to become devoted participants.
2. Formal membership is valuable to the leaders of the church as they fulfil their God-given task of caring for the members of the congregation. NorthRidge by its very design, attracts the unchurched. We hope that will always be the case. At some point, however, it is important to identify those who are part of the church body here at NorthRidge - the core that can be counted on to build and sustain the ministries of the church. These are also the "family members" who should receive priority in the allocation of church resources (as commanded in Galatians 6:10: *So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith*).
3. And perhaps most importantly, experience shows that membership benefits the individual. In a culture where commitment is no longer highly valued, recognizable membership is an important step that moves each of us into the place of committed participation. It presents a challenge to "step out of the stands" and publicly affirm a commitment to Christ and to a specific local body. In this sense, membership can be a significant defining moment in one's lifelong discipleship journey.
4. As a registered Canadian corporation, we are required by law to have formal membership to authorize certain legal transactions, such as property purchases and sales. Legally, members must be 18 years old or older.

What is a Member?

This is a legitimate question that needs some clarification, since the Bible actually describes two kinds of "membership". We who are in Christ are technically already full members of the body of Christ. There is an invisible, unbreakable bond that links us to Christ, and to each other. This is "positional membership".

The Bible also urges "positional members" to continue growing by becoming "participating members" in a specific local assembly (Romans 12:4-8). Obviously, you may be a "participating member" of several different bodies during the course of your lifetime, while maintaining a permanent "positional membership" in Christ's universal Church.

Common Commitments of NorthRidge Members (Acts 2:38-47)

1. Saved (38, 40)
2. Water baptized or willing to be (38, 41)
3. Spirit filled or seeking (38, 39)
4. Supportive of the Foursquare Statement of Faith and local church leaders (42; see 22-24)
5. Identified and actively involved with this community of believers (42,46)
6. Committed to prayer and growing in Christ (42)
7. Practices tithing and giving as God directs (44-45)
8. Connected to a smaller group for fellowship and mentoring (46)
9. Loves God and expresses that love through worship (47)
10. Loves people and expresses that love through witness and service (47)

How do I become a Member?

We believe that the Christian life is a process. It involves continuous healing, growth and fruitfulness. Members of NorthRidge will be moving forward in that process, following in the footsteps of discipleship laid down by the members of the first church (Acts 2:38-47).

The process of becoming a participating member of NorthRidge:

1. Thoroughly read through this Membership Manual.
2. Confirm your practice of the common commitments of NorthRidge Members.
3. Confirm your agreement with our doctrinal statement and family values.
4. Fill out the NorthRidge Membership Application.
5. Be welcomed by church leadership into membership at a public church gathering.

Individuals may be asked to reaffirm their commitment to participating membership periodically. Our intent is not to burden people by asking for this reaffirmation, but to ensure that our membership list is current and that the practice of membership remains a meaningful covenant for all who participate.

The following information is important background for those who represent NorthRidge Foursquare Church.

The Birth of NorthRidge

“Church planting” doesn’t have to be a scary subject. NorthRidge was born out of a call from God for adventure! Some families attending the Northside Foursquare Church in Coquitlam/Port Coquitlam were commuting from Maple Ridge. While meeting as a home group in their own neighbourhood they suddenly realized they had the potential within their group to create a new church community closer to home. They approached Rob and Jan Buzza to provide oversight while they did the work.... and work they did! In May 08 they began their demographic studies and determined we needed a family-focused church on the eastside of Maple Ridge with a creative approach to community outreach. NorthRidge, the idea, was born.

After a community fair in July, where the new church outreach took a leading role with a Plinko exhibit, live band, and kid’s races, NorthRidge began attracting attention. The rest of July and August included a rotation of 40 days of fasting and prayer, kicking off an emphasis on prayer that remains a cornerstone of NorthRidge.

However, faith without works is dead so next up was an extensive door-to-door delivery of flyers promoting our own free carnival the first Saturday of September. Over 400 kids and parents joined us for this beautiful day filled with sunshine, games, prizes, bouncy castles, facepainting, fire trucks, big screen video games and sumo suits for the teens, and free food for everyone, including the skaters at the adjacent skate park. When parents came back the next day to the Rotunda of Thomas Haney Centre (the high school that has become our church home) to pick up their free photos, many stayed for our kickoff service and free barbeque. Other events followed. November featured a movie night with over a hundred kids, teens, and parents camped out on sleeping bags enjoying free popcorn and a double-feature. December included a Breakfast With Santa

Claus where over 350 experienced an amazing morning with Santa, his reindeer, Frosty, and even the Tooth Fairy. Of course, there were free photos available for pick-up the next day at church.

The church has grown from the original group of 60 adults and children from Northside to a recent average of over 300. Many of the new people are unchurched or nominal church attenders attracted by the progressive music, relevant teaching, and very active children's ministries. An unexpected group of teens also started to gather. The teachings in the adult church and children's church are coordinated as we journey through the whole Bible this first year. Home groups have started up, offering Alpha, Beta, the Truth Project, True to You, Deeds for Needs, marriage courses, and a variety of Bible studies.

One of the founding values of NorthRidge is giving, so each week since we started we pray for and give our loose offerings to another Maple Ridge church or community service group. In the next year, as we began the process to become our own chartered church and pay Northside back for the \$30,000 we borrowed to start the church, God showed us why He asked us to do that! Through three separate sources our entire debt was paid off in one week. We started the new year debt-free with minimal overhead and reenergized faith to be a blessing in our community. Since then God has continued to bless. Last year we gave away to the community and to missions around the world almost half of our revenues. We're here to tell everyone that church planting can be a whole lot of fun!!

History of the Foursquare Gospel Church

It was a hundred years ago, in the little insignificant town of Ingersol, about an hour's drive from London, Ontario, that Aimee Kennedy was born to a Salvation Army mom and a Methodist dad. In the early 1900's Ingersol was not so small that its school system was not affected by the new *in teachings* of Darwinism, and secular humanism, which rides on its shoulders. At 17 years old, Aimee was faced with the same questions and doubts that our teens face today: "Is there a God?", "Does He care about me?"

Around that time, the buzz around town was about a young Irish evangelist named Robert Semple who was holding revival meetings. It was the very week when young Aimee had cried out to God to reveal Himself to her if He did exist. Robert was speaking the first night on Acts 2:3: *Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.* Three days later Aimee gave her life to Jesus as her Saviour.

Immediately, she had a desire to be a soul winner, but soon found that everyone who was an effective witness in the New Testament was filled with the Holy Spirit. Aimee prayed for a week until she was baptized in the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues. She felt a fire burning in her from that time forth to take responsibility to win the whole world for Jesus—but she was a woman, and in 1907 women didn't preach! A very few weeks passed and one night while young Aimee was sitting with some sick children, who should come to the door but that tall, handsome, young evangelist, Robert Semple! He had somehow understood that he was responsible to sit with the children that night. It ended up with them both sitting and talking late into the evening. Aimee told her new friend the dream she'd had about "sinners going by like a deep, black river without God."

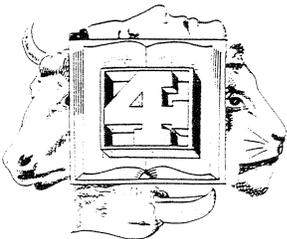
He responded that he'd been called to China as a missionary to preach the Gospel to the Chinese who'd never heard of Jesus. The conversation that followed included Aimee's words, "I'd love to go to China!" and Robert's cautious question, "Will you marry me?" Right then and there the couple knelt down and prayed for God's guidance. Aimee saw a vision of the two of them walking hand in hand; when suddenly the scenery changed and she was walking alone! Robert and Aimee Semple were married very soon after and headed for their first stop in Great Britain. After visiting with Robert's family in Ireland, they disembarked at London where they hoped to get some money from a wealthy contact. It was there that this young teenager, by chance, preached her first sermon to thousands of veteran ministers. She preached "in the Spirit" for well over half an hour and gave an amazing prophecy explaining the application of the book of Joel to our days. The crowd was electrified!

After less than two years in China, while Aimee, not yet twenty, was about to give birth to their first child, Robert died of dysentery. As he was fading from this life, he whispered “Good night dear, I’ll see you in the morning.” Roberta was born one month later in 1910. It all seemed so impossible, that Aimee, suffering herself from dysentery, came home to New York where her mother was then living. She married Harold McPherson in 1912.

In 1913, Rolf McPherson was born and Aimee was dying. On her deathbed, God called Aimee Semple McPherson to preach. After trying many excuses, she finally gave in and said she would. She was instantly healed and set out to preach. She at first traveled with her husband, Harold; but later he left her and went back to his business. She continued alone with two young children, often rising at dawn, setting up her gospel tent, leading worship, preaching, praying with the sick until late at night, cooking supper over a campfire for her children, and resting in her pup tent for a few hours until the next day.

It was the early days of the Pentecostal revival, and people flocked to see the young woman evangelist. She was a sensation. In July 1922 in Oakland, California, while Aimee was preaching from Ezekiel about his vision of the four-headed cherubim, the Foursquare Gospel was born. Here's how she tells it: “The great tent was packed, with multitudes standing around its borders, unable to find a seat beneath the big-top. The Spirit of God was manifest in a wonderful degree. The great audience listened with rapt attention to my message on *The Vision of Ezekiel*. My soul was awed, and my heart a thrill, for the blazing story of that heavenly vision seemed to fill and permeate not only the tabernacle but the whole earth. In the clouds of heaven, which folded and unfolded in fiery glory, Ezekiel had beheld the Being whose glory no mortal can describe. As he gazed upon the marvelous revelation of the Omnipotent One, he perceived four faces, those of a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle.

In the face of the lion, we behold that of the mighty Baptizer with the Holy Ghost and fire. The face of the ox typifies the great Burden-bearer, who himself took our infirmities and carried our sicknesses, who in his boundless love and divine provision has met our every need. In the face of the eagle, we see reflected soul-enrapturing visions of the coming King, whose pinions soon will cleave the shining heavens, whose voice will vibrate through the universe in thrilling cadences of resurrection power as he comes to catch his waiting bride away. And in the face of the man we behold the Saviour, the man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, dying



upon the tree for our sins. Here is a perfect gospel, a complete gospel, for body, for soul, for spirit, and for eternity, a gospel facing squarely in every direction. Since that day when the Lord gave me that illumination, the term Foursquare Gospel has been carried around the world, as vividly and fittingly distinguishing the message He had commissioned me to preach of Jesus the Saviour, Jesus the Baptizer with the Holy Spirit, Jesus the Healer, and Jesus the Coming King.”

It never was her intention to begin a denomination. In 1923 Angelus Temple was constructed and still reads on its cornerstone: *dedicated unto the cause of interdenominational and worldwide evangelism*. The temple in Glendale, California sat 5,300 and was filled four times every Sunday. Aimee’s schedule was staggering. In the beginning she personally conducted twenty-one services per week at the church, and she often wrote the dramas, pageants and oratorios that were presented by the Temple’s huge staff.

Her dramatic services captured the imagination and curiosity of the public. In one service Sister Aimee, dressed as a policeman, drove onto the stage on a motorcycle, blew a whistle and shouted, “Stop, you are going to hell!” In another service city firefighters pulled up with sirens blaring to rescue a man trapped high above the people’s heads while Sister Aimee connected the illustration to what Jesus did to save us. These extravaganzas made her a celebrity from coast to coast and gained her press attention equal to that of any Hollywood star.

All was not drama and glamour at the Temple, however. In 1927, the Angelus Temple commissary was opened to feed the hungry and clothe the poor. When the Depression hit the nation in 1929, the Temple fed and clothed more than one and a half million needy people in the Los Angeles area. Among those who

received food in those hard times was the movie star Anthony Quinn and the past Chaplain of the U.S. Senate, Richard Halverson. The most famous person to ever walk the aisles in Angelus Temple was a young Quaker boy named Richard Milhouse Nixon.

In May 1926, Aimee disappeared from a beach near Los Angeles, and her whereabouts was unknown for several weeks. When she reappeared in June in New Mexico, she claimed to have been kidnapped. Many rumors circulated about “the vanishing evangelist”, but in a subsequent court case she was acquitted of any fraud or wrongdoing.

In 1927, Aimee organized her own denomination. True to her 1922 vision, it was called the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, with headquarters at Angelus Temple. The new church was identical to the Assemblies of God in doctrine, while differing in organizational structure and policy. Under Aimee’s careful guidance, it developed a strongly centralized structure with all church properties owned by the parent corporation.

The Foursquare doctrinal statement placed it in the mainstream of the American Pentecostal movement. Trinitarian and evangelical, the church adhered to the doctrine that glossolalia (speaking in unknown tongues) is the initial physical evidence of Spirit baptism. The early days of the new organization saw explosive growth through bold church pioneering and as many independent Pentecostal congregations applied to join the movement. By 1928, there were more than fifty Foursquare churches in Southern California, with scores of others throughout the country applying to join. Soon missionaries were carrying the Foursquare Gospel banner to Canada, Great Britain and many other nations.

Aimee often traveled to the missionary field. In 1943, she was on such a trip in Mexico when she contracted a tropical fever. A year later, on September 22, 1944, she died after preaching a sermon in Oakland, California. Her death certificate indicated she had died from “shock and respiratory failure” after she took sleeping capsules prescribed by a doctor.

After Aimee’s death, leadership of the denomination passed to her son, Rolf McPherson, who served as president until 1988. To carry on administration, McPherson relied on a General Field Supervisor and District Supervisors for the United States who carried out the day-to-day affairs of the denomination. In addition, a Director of World Missions was given supervision of the church’s foreign missionaries. Since 1927, the growth of the church has been steady though not as spectacular as in the early days. By 1944 the number of congregations in the United States had reached five hundred. After a period of slow growth in the 1950’s and 1960’s, the church experienced a revival in the 1970’s and 1980’s during the charismatic renewal of the mainline churches. By 1985 the number of churches in the United States had surpassed 1,200. Of all the classical Pentecostal denominations, the Foursquare Church has been the most affected by the charismatic renewal. To many outsiders, the worship services of the church are such that charismatics from mainline denominations, feel immediately at home.

For most of its history the American church was larger than the churches on the mission fields. In 1952, for instance, only one third of the church's members lived outside the United States. By 1960, the numbers were about the same. By 2003, however, more than two-thirds of the church membership lived overseas. The latest statistics (December 2008) show how explosive our growth has been around the world in close to 150 nations.

The percentages show the increases over the year before:

- Salvations 2,470,219 (+53%)
- Water Baptisms 628,200 (+47%)
- Holy Spirit Baptisms 794,165 (+82%)
- Total Members 3,370,789 (+6%)
- Total Churches 57,761 (+7%)
- Total Licensed Ministers 63,286 (+3%)
- Bible Colleges/Institutes 1,363 (+191%)

That is 6,768 souls saved and 11 churches planted every day! With the cost spent on Foursquare missions and the corresponding numbers of decisions for Christ it works out to less than \$3.50 (Canadian) per soul! Upon reflection, one more soul in heaven is a much better value than a Starbucks coffee!

The Canadian church began as an evangelistic outreach of sister McPherson's back in 1928 when the Kingsway Foursquare Church was built at 440 Kingsway in Burnaby. Anna Britton was its first pastor and her vision was "Canada for Christ." From the Burnaby church, other churches were started in Victoria, Sydney, Vancouver, Calgary, and Winnipeg. Today there are about seventy churches in Canada.

In 1982, the Foursquare Gospel Church of Canada was incorporated as a separate entity from the U.S. church. Currently the national church is led by Barry Buzza, the pastor of our founding church Northside, who also serves as the National President and General Supervisor under appointment of the National Board.

What the Foursquare Church Believes

1. The Holy Scriptures. We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God: true, immutable, steadfast, and unchangeable. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17)
2. The Eternal Godhead. We believe God is Triune, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; the Three are coexistent, coeternal, and equal in divine perfection. (1 John 5:7)
3. The Fall of Man. We believe that man was created in the image of God, but that by voluntary disobedience he fell from perfection. (Genesis 1:27; Romans 5:12)
4. The Plan of Redemption. We believe that while we were still sinners Christ died for us, and with His life's blood purchased the pardon for all who believe in Him. (John 3:16; Romans 5:8)
5. Salvation Through Grace. We believe that we are saved from our sin completely through God's grace; that we have no righteousness or ability to contribute to receiving God's love and favour. (Ephesians 2:8)
6. Repentance and Acceptance. We believe that upon sincere repentance and a whole-hearted acceptance of Christ, we are justified before God, accepted as though we had no sin. (Romans 10:6-10; 1 John 1:9)
7. The New Birth. We believe that the change that takes place in the heart and life at conversion is a very real one and after we receive Christ and His Spirit, we will have new desires, interests and pursuits in life. (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20)
8. Daily Christian Life. We believe that it is the will of God that we be sanctified (cleansed from sin) daily, growing stronger in faith, power, prayer, love, holiness and service. (2 Corinthians 7:1)
9. Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that water baptism by immersion in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is an essential response to Jesus' command and testifies to His lordship as Christ and King. (Matthew 28:19; Romans 6:4). We believe in remembering Jesus' death as we observe the Lord's Supper by receiving the symbols of the bread and juice of the vine and rejoice in His triumph over death on the cross. (1 Corinthians 11:24-26)
10. Baptism of the Holy Spirit. We believe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit empowers believers to exalt Jesus, to live lives of holiness, and to be witnesses of God's saving grace. (Acts 1:5, 8; 2:4)
11. The Spirit Filled Life. We believe that it is the will of God that believers walk in the Spirit daily and He gives us the grace to do so. (Ephesians 4:30-32)
12. The Gifts and Fruit of the Holy Spirit. We believe that the Holy Spirit gives gifts to believer, and these will build up the Body of Christ (His Church). As evidence of a spirit-filled life, believers show spiritual "fruit" as a result: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. (1 Corinthians 12:1-11; Galatians 5:22)
13. Moderation. We believe that the experience and daily walk of the believer should not lead them into extremes or fanaticism. Their lives will model that of Christ in uprightness, balance, humility and self-sacrifice. (Colossians 3:12, 13; Philippians 4:5)
14. Divine Healing. We believe that divine healing is the power of Christ to heal the sick in answer to the prayer of faith. He, who does not change, is still willing and able to heal the body, as well as the soul and spirit. (Mark 16:17, 18; James 5:14-16)
15. The Second Coming of Christ. We believe that the second coming of Christ is personal and imminent; the certainty of His coming and the fact that no man knows the hour of His coming prompt our

- evangelistic efforts; that the Lord Himself will descend from Heaven, the dead in Christ shall rise and the redeemed will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. (Matthew 24:36, 42, 44; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17)
16. Church Relationship. We believe it is our sacred responsibility to identify ourselves with a congregation of believers with whom we can worship God, observe the ordinances (Marriage, Baptism and the Lord's Supper), exhort and support one another, work together for the salvation of others and the advance of the Lord's Kingdom. (Acts 16:5; Hebrews 10:24, 25)
 17. Civil Government. We believe that civil government is by divine appointment and that civil laws should be upheld at all times except in things opposed to the will of God. (Acts 4:18-20; Romans 13:1-5)
 18. Judgment. We believe that all will stand someday before the judgment seat of Christ; the redeemed to receive everlasting life, and the unrepentant to receive everlasting punishment. (Revelation 20:11,12; 2 Corinthians 5:10)
 19. Heaven. We believe that heaven is the glorious eternal home of the living God and of all believers who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour. (John 14:2; Revelation 7:15-17)
 20. Hell. We believe that hell is a place of darkness, deepest sorrow, and unquenchable fire, which was not prepared for man but for the devil and his angels; yet it will become the place of eternal separation from God for all who reject Christ as their Saviour. (Matthew 13:41, 42; Revelation 10:10, 15)
 21. Evangelism. We believe that bringing others into relationship with Jesus Christ as their Saviour is the most important responsibility of the Church. (James 5:20; Mark 16:15)
 22. Tithes and Offerings. We believe that tithes and offerings are ordained of God for the support and growth of His cause, to sustain His ministry, spread the Gospel and release personal blessing. (Malachi 3:10; 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2)

In Essentials – Unity, In Non-essentials – Liberty, In All Things - Charity

NorthRidge Family Values

What's in a name?

NorthRidge Foursquare Church

North connects us to our sponsoring church, Northside, a multi-campus church in the Tricities.

(see www.northsidechurch.ca)

Ridge refers to our location, the beautiful Ridge Meadows community in the foothills of the Golden Ears mountains.

Foursquare identifies NorthRidge with a global family of churches sharing the message of Jesus: Saviour, Baptizer with the Holy Spirit, Healer, and Coming King.

(see www.foursquare.ca and www.foursquare.org)

Our Purpose

NorthRidge Foursquare Church is a family gathering, where we express our love for God by loving and serving each other and our community.

Our Family Values

Loving God - Loving People.

Our values flow out of the words of Jesus: *You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: Love your neighbor as yourself.*

Matthew 22:37-39

Loving God

1. God is our source.

This church was birthed in prayer and we will only fulfill our purpose when we are vitally connected to the Father. Our emphasis is on relationship with God, not religious ritual.

2. His Word determines how we live. Our message is the Living Word, Jesus, as revealed in the written Word, the Bible. We teach from the whole counsel of God, anchored in the history of His people, but extending in relevant application to our lives today.

3. His Spirit challenges us to reach out.
While rooted in the stability of God's Word, we also want to reach out our hands in exuberant Spirit-led worship to our God and in loving service to our community. We believe the gifts of His Spirit are to be super“natural” expressions of God's love and healing power to the world around us.

Loving People

1. Our Family
Integrity and ministry begins in the home, the proving ground for all relationships. When we strengthen each family unit, we can change the world.
2. Our Community
We believe every member of God's family – children, teens, men, and women – have a unique God-given ability to help bring other individuals and families in our community to wholeness. Everyone is welcome in the family of God.
3. Our World
God so loved the world and so must we. We are a giving church, committed to fulfilling the Great Commission, which we can only do in partnership with the larger family of believers, locally and globally. God's family is international, interdenominational, and intergenerational.

For more, see www.NRchurch.ca

Application for NorthRidge Membership

Name: _____ Birth date: _____

Phone number: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal code: _____

Date of salvation: _____ Date of water baptism: _____

Former church affiliation: _____

Date of application: _____

I am at least 18 years old. I agree with and put into practice the common commitments of NorthRidge members as based on Acts 2:38-47 (please check the applicable boxes):

- I am saved (38, 40)
- I am water baptized or willing to be (38, 41)
- I am Spirit filled or seeking (38, 39)
- I am supportive of the Foursquare Statement of Faith and local church leaders (42; see 22-24)
- I am identified and actively involved with this community of believers (42,46)
- I am committed to prayer and growing in Christ (42)
- I practice tithing and giving as God directs (44-45)
- I am connected to a smaller group for fellowship and mentoring (46)
- I love God and express that love through worship (47)
- I love people and express that love through witness and service (47)

If you were unable to check any of the above statements please provide an explanation:

I hereby apply to be a member of NorthRidge Foursquare Church and attest that the information I've provided is true:

Signed: _____