



JACOB'S
WELL
CHURCH

Membership / Baptism / Communion

**Process for
Elementary Age Children**

(Updated 8/18/2022)

God has so richly blessed Jacob's Well with so many children. Children are indeed a blessing from the Lord and we have been given the privilege to raise them up as the future leaders of Christ's Church.

It is our hope and prayer that many children come to trust in Christ during their time at Jacob's Well Church. We long to welcome them to the Lord's Table, to membership in the church and the blessed sacrament of baptism. With that said, the following process is an opportunity to evaluate if they have truly owned their faith and trusted in Christ as their Savior. It is also a means to help them grow in their faith.

Step #1: Sign your child up for communicant's class.

- Communicants class is a 6 week class that typically takes place two times a year. Once in the fall during second service sermon, and once in the spring during second service sermon.
- To sign up e-mail children@jacobsowellgb.org

Step #2: Review the membership questions with your child.

- You can do this while your child is taking communicants class or after or both.
- On the following pages you will find questions to help process the membership vows with your children. These are vows that could be taken at any faithful Christian church. The first three vows focus on what it means to be a Christian and the final two vows focus on our relationship to the church.
- When you review these vows with your children, DO NOT GIVE THEM THIS SHEET. Rather ask them the questions, let them wrestle with it and process the answers with them. If you can give

them illustrations that help explain the answer, that is even better! We would recommend going through one membership question a night instead of doing it all at once.

- Also, the elders will probably ask questions that are not on this sheet to try and further discern the child's heart and understanding of the Gospel.

Step #3: Set up a time for a “check in” to see if they are ready for a membership interview.

- In the past, some children have gone through the membership interview and it was determined that they were not ready for communion or baptism. For some kids (and parents) this can be very discouraging, even though it is not intended to be. So in order to make this a more positive experience for the children (and parents) we would like for you to set up a “check in” with one of the pastors or elders of your choice. If you have no preference, Pastor Spencer would be happy to do the check in on a Sunday morning during the sermon of our second service. To set up this “check in” please e-mail Angie at admin@jacobsowellgb.org
- Please be sure to attend the first service, and be ready at this “check in” to share what fruit you have seen in your child's life that leads you to believe that he has taken ownership of his or her faith. Also, please understand that we might say, “lets slow down and go a bit deeper” into certain gospel truths.
- The elder will make a recommendation on if they believe the child is ready to move forward with the membership interview
- You can skip this step if you want, but to protect your child's heart, we would not recommend that.

Step #4: Sign your child up for a membership interview.

- If you believe that your child is ready, please sit down with your child to sign them up for a membership interview with the elders. Please sign up at least 3 weeks prior to baptism Sunday (if they are hoping to be baptized)
 - To sign them up, click “GET INVOLVED” on our website, then click on “MEMBERSHIP” and then “MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION” (Or you can just go to <https://jacobsowellgb.breezechms.com/form/065478>)
 - Please communicate to your child (and any other parents or family members) that elders may say, “not yet” and decide to slow the process down to help the child grow in certain areas of understanding the Gospel before membership/baptism/communion. This is OK and a good thing, because of the opportunity to go deeper with them and grow their understanding of the Gospel.
 - One or two parents can join their child in the membership interview, and can at times clarify a question, but they should not feed their children the answers.
 - Please be ready to share the fruits of salvation that you have observed in your child.
 - We don’t expect children to answer these questions in the same way an adult would. We are looking for a “credible profession of faith” and for them to answer these questions according to their age.
 - If the elders determine the child is not ready yet, we will work with you on how we can help the child in their spiritual progress.

Common Questions

1. Why do elders admit children (& adults) for baptism/membership/communion? Why not the parents?

- In the scriptures, elders are set over the churches and commanded to “encourage others in sound doctrine” , “direct the affairs of the church”, “Keep watch over the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseer. Be Shepherds of the church of God.” “Keep watch over (the flock) as men who must give an account” “Be Shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers” We believe that to be faithful to these commandments from God, the elders are to bear the responsibility of admitting people to the sacraments of the church.
- (1Co 11:29-30) “For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.” God’s warnings concerning the Lord’s Supper are serious and the elders take seriously their responsibility to protect the flock, even from themselves.
- While we acknowledge many parents could do well at “gatekeeping” the elders must be consistent. We cannot interview some kids whom we think have non-Christian parents and then not interview kids whom we think have strong Christian parents.
- From a more practical standpoint (speaking from our experience), parents are both biased towards their children (because they love them so much) and biased against their children (because they see how sinful they can be). A membership interview allows for godly men whom the Lord has put in place, to give perspective and to help discern if the child is ready to move forward with the sacraments and membership.

2. Why is baptism tied to membership?

- The term “membership” comes from the illustration Paul uses (1 Cor 12; Rom 12) to describe believers as “members” of the body of Christ, which is His church. In this sense, every believer is a “member” of the universal church and also of their local church. Membership celebrates and formalizes the welcoming into the body of believers at Jacob’s Well and the church universal.

3. My children were baptized when they were younger, but they seem to have really owned their faith in Christ now, can they be rebaptized?

- First off, praise God that your child has become a Christian or taken a significant step forward in their faith! With that said, whether baptism is administered before or after a persons professes faith in Christ, baptism always communicates the same wonderful truths. It communicates the cleansing blood of Christ, a person being dedicated to God, and their connection to the “visible” church. There is no need for rebaptism, but we can celebrate that they are more and more making the truths of baptism their own.

4. Can we have the baptism at my house or at a lake or camp?

- With the understanding that baptism is not only to dedicate ourselves to the Lord, but also to celebrate our inclusion and membership into the church, we believe it is best to celebrate your baptism in the local church during a Sunday worship service (1 Corinthians 12:12-26).

PCA Membership Vows

This document is put together to help you (as parents) work through and process the PCA membership vows with your children. The vows are in black, the suggested exploration questions to discuss with your children are in red and some helpful answers are in blue.

Feel free to add more questions as the Holy Spirit guides you in this beautiful discussion with your children. I would also encourage you to take your time with these, maybe do one question a day and let them really process the weight of these vows.

The first three questions focus on the foundations of Christianity. Questions four and five focus on the commitment of a church member

Opening Question: Why do you want to become a member of the church? (Or why do you want to be baptized? Why do you want to take communion?)

MEMBERSHIP QUESTION 1.

Do you acknowledge yourselves to be sinners in the sight of God, justly deserving His displeasure, and without hope save in [i.e., except for] His sovereign mercy?

1. Do you acknowledge yourselves to be sinners in the sight of God,

+Q: Do you acknowledge you are a sinner?

+Q: How do you know if you are a sinner?

A: Through Experience and Scripture

+Q: Do you ever sin? Can you give some examples?

+ Q: What do you deserve because of your sin? (i.e. God's displeasure)

A: His punishment and Hell

+ What is 'Mercy'?

A: Not getting what you deserve.

+ Can you give an example of when someone has shown you mercy? Or when you have shown someone else mercy?

MEMBERSHIP QUESTION 2.

2. Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered in the gospel?

+ Q: What does it mean that Jesus is "Lord"?

A: I am His servant and He is my King and ruler and authority over every area of my life.

+ What does it mean that Jesus is the "Son of God"? Why does it matter?

A: It means that God is Jesus Father. It is important because it means Jesus is able to mediate between us and God,

+ What does it mean Jesus is "Savior"?

A: Saves us from penalty of our sin (Hell). Saves us onto God.

A: Jesus also saves us from the power of sin. Giving us freedom (slowly) from the sin in our life.

+ Do you really need a “Savior”? Why?

and do you receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation

+ What is the difference between receiving and resting upon Jesus for Salvation?

A: Receive - one time action of trusting in Christ for salvation.

A: Rest- Continual peace and security and trusting in Christ work for our salvation (and not our own goodness). --- A helpful illustration is sitting in a sturdy chair. You received it as a sturdy chair when you first sat on it, but you continue to trust its sturdiness as you rest in it.

as He is offered in the gospel?

+ What is the Gospel? (i.e. The good news about Jesus?)

A: 1 Cor 15:1-4 *1Co 15:1-4 Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, (2) and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. (3) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, (4) that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,*

MEMBERSHIP QUESTION 3.

3. Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as a follower of Christ?

+ Q: What does it mean to “resolve and promise”?

A: To pledge yourself to strive for something.

+ Q: What does it mean to live as a follower of Christ?

A: To live according to the ways of Jesus and the heart of Jesus.

- To try and do things the way Jesus would want us to do them.

+ Q: Where does the Holy Spirit Live?

A: Inside of Christians

+ Q: What does it mean to rely “upon the grace of the Holy Spirit?” What would be missing if this question removed the phrase “In humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit”?

A: It means to rely on the Holy Spirit inside of us to give us the power to live like a follower of Jesus. If this phrase was not included, it would be up to us and our own power and wisdom.

+ Q: What are some ways (‘means of Grace’) the Holy Spirit gives to us that we might better follow Christ?

A: Scripture, Fellowship, prayer, worship, community, preached word, communion, etc.

MEMBERSHIP QUESTION 4

4. Do you promise to support the Church in its worship and work to the best of your ability?

+ Who or what is the church?

A: It is the people, not the steeple 😊

+ How can you 'support the church' in it's **worship**?

A: Showing up, participating, serving, tithing, singing, welcoming others

+ How can you 'support the church' in it's **work**?

A: By using your gifts, by loving the new kids, by helping your neighbor, by signing up to serve on Sundays or special events.

MEMBERSHIP QUESTION 5

5. Do you submit yourselves to the government and discipline of the Church, and promise to study (promote) its purity and peace?

+ Q: What does it mean to submit?

A: To obey and support the church even when you disagree.

+ Q: If you disagree with the church, what should you do?

A: Talk to one of the leaders of the church to express your concerns.

+ Q: Can you think of any examples of when you might need to submit?

A: (possibility) If you wanted a program or wanted to change a program in the church and the leadership thought it was unwise to start up or change.

+ Q: How can you promote the ‘purity’ of the church?

A1: Personal purity, pursuing holiness and helping others pursue holiness.

A2: Doctrinally Purity- If you hear something being taught that goes against the Bible, go & talk to the person who is taught it.

+ Q: How do you promote the peace of the church? (May need to ask the question of “what do you do when you feel like someone has wronged you?”)

A: Review Mat 18:15-17 ; 2 Cor 12:20

1. Go to the person one on one.
2. If it is not resolved, then involve your parents.
3. If it is still not resolved, then involve your pastors and elders.

Bonus: Seedling to Saplings Questions-

Have you repented of your sin and put your faith in Christ as your Lord and Savior? (Q1) Why are you a follower of Christ?

(Q3) How would you explain to another person what makes someone a Christian? (Q1, Q2, Q3) What is sin (in your own

words)? (Q1) What did Jesus do for you in reference to your sin? (Q2) How has your life changed since you became a

Christian (or what is God doing in your life recently)? (Q3)

What are some ways you can grow as a Christian? (Q3, Q4, Q5)

Name some ways you will support the church in its worship and work. (Q4, Q5)