

## **ARTICLE V**

### **THE MEMBERSHIP OF THIS CHURCH**

To join Trinity Reformed Baptist Church means that the individual and the corporate body enter into a unique commitment to one another. Church membership is a mutual relationship with both the individual and the corporate body having specific responsibilities.

When someone joins Trinity Reformed Baptist Church, the church family commits to teach that person the Word of God (*II Tim. 3:15; 4:1-4; I Pet. 2:2; Eph. 5:26*); provide opportunities for growth, nurturing, and service (*Eph. 4:12-14; II Tim. 1:6; I Cor. 12:4-7*); provide a framework for building godly relationships (*Eph. 4:16; I Cor. 12:12-27; Rom. 12:3-21*); to carry out responsibilities of reproving, rebuking, exhorting, caring, and disciplining (*Eph. 4:14-16; II Tim. 3:16-17; I Thess. 5:14; Gal. 6:1-5; Matt. 18:15-17*); and to broaden the believer's concern and perspective on the non-Christian world (*Matt. 28:18-20; Rom. 1:14-17; Phil. 1:27-28*).

The church member commits to developing in personal growth and sanctification (*Rom. 6:19; Eph. 4:15; I Pet. 2:2*); to be faithful in attendance and participation (*Heb. 10:24-25*); to support the ministries of the church through giving and service (*I Cor. 16:1-2; II Cor. 9:6-8; I Pet. 4:10*); to seek to preserve the unity of the church (*Eph. 4:3*); and to maintaining a good testimony toward unbelievers (*I Thess. 2:11-12; 4:11-12*).

#### **SECTION 1: The Eligibility of Membership**

1. The qualifications of membership are:
  - a. Profession of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.
  - b. Evidence that this profession is genuinely seen in a scriptural experience of conversion, baptism by immersion following repentance and faith, willing submission to the teaching and government of the church, and consistent Christian living.
2. Applicants for membership must have been in regular attendance at the worship services of the church. No one may be received, with the exception of a new pastor, automatically by transfer from another church. No one may apply for baptism apart from consideration of church membership.

#### **SECTION 2: The Procedure For Membership**

1. The Elder Board will interview all applicants for membership. Before the interview, the applicant(s) will be asked to read and study the Basis of Faith and the Constitution and By-Laws of the church and discuss any points about which they may have questions or which may not be clear to them. The applicant(s) should be examined concerning their prior church membership, their profession of faith, their baptism(s), and any other matters the Elders may deem necessary to examine.

## **SECTION 2: The Procedure For Membership** *(continued)*

2. If any areas are found lacking such a question of whether or not the person was Scripturally baptized (this means baptism by immersion following one's profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and according to the concept of baptism as presented in the basis of Faith), the area(s) must be dealt with before the membership process can continue.
3. After the interview process is completed, the applicant must complete the New Member's class.
4. Following the interview and completion of the New Member's Class, the Elders will bring the application to the church for their consideration. Two weeks will be given for the members to share any concerns or reasons with the elders as to why the applicant should not be received.
5. At the end of this two week time frame, if there are no serious objections, the applicant will be asked to give an account of their faith and conversion to the church. Those requiring baptism for membership will be baptized as soon as possible. If there are serious objections to the application for membership, the elders will again interview the applicant discussing with them the objections that have been made and the elders and the applicant will determine whether to proceed with the application or not.
6. If the church lacks elders, then two church officers or two senior church members should fulfill the role of the elders in the membership process.
7. Applicants can apply for membership in one of the following ways:
  - a. By profession of faith in Christ for baptism as a believer.
  - b. By presenting oneself as a believer who needs to be Scripturally baptized (see #2 above).
  - c. By transfer of one's church letter from another Baptist church.
  - d. By statement that the individual has been saved, Scripturally baptized, and has been a member of another church of like-doctrine in regard to the essentials of faith.

## **SECTION 3: The Responsibilities and Privileges of Membership**

1. Members will normally be expected to be present regularly at services for public worship, especially the two Sunday services, the Lord's Table, prayer meetings, and business meetings. Attendance is not only a duty but a privilege given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **SECTION 3: The Responsibilities and Privileges of Membership** *(continued)*

2. The responsibility of praying together with other members of this church on a regular basis must be clearly established for membership to be a reality (*Acts 2:42, 4:24, 12:5,12, 13:3; Matt. 18:19-20*).
3. Each member should strive to seek his own spiritual advancement through the use of regular Bible reading and study, with both private and family prayer, and by having a proper reverence for the Lord's Day. A member may also request from the pastor the opportunity of one-on-one discipleship. There should never be one-on-one discipleship between a man and a woman; it should always be a woman disciplining a woman or a man disciplining a man (*Deut. 6:4-9; Acts 17:11; // Tim. 2:15; Ex. 20:8-11; Heb. 10:24-25*).
4. Members shall seek to obey the teachings of Scripture in respect to family life: the husband and father as the God-appointed head of the family ruling over the household in gentleness and love but with wisdom and firmness, and the wife in subjection to her husband in all things as his God-appointed helper. The husband with the wife must nurture their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord by setting a godly example before them by consistently teaching them in the Scriptures and by wise and firm chastening as Scripture affirms (*Gen. 2:18-25, 3:16; Eph. 5:22-33; Prov. 13:24; 22:6; Tit. 2:4-5*).
5. Regular proportionate giving to the Lord's work according to our means and out of a spirit of generosity is a mark of a true worshipper, and is pleasing to God. Tithing of one's substance is commended as a guideline to giving (*I Cor. 16:2; // Cor. 8:1-15, 9:1-15; Heb. 13:6; Rom. 12:13; Mal. 3:8-11*).
6. Elders, being ordained by the Holy Spirit to rule and pastor the flock of Jesus Christ, are to be honored and members of the flock are to submit to their spiritual authority (*Acts 20:28; I Cor. 9:14; I Thess. 5:12-13; I Tim. 5:17-20; Heb. 13:17; I Pet. 5:1-4*).
7. Members are to work and pray zealously for the welfare and coming of the kingdom of God and seek by all possible means to promote the gospel of Jesus Christ (*Rom. 12:11; Phil. 1:27; I Cor. 9:19-23*).
8. Members should undertake all Christian service connected with the church in consultation with the elders and other members rather than acting independently (*Acts 13:1-3, 14:27; Rom. 12:3-10, 16; I Cor. 12:12-27*).
9. Members should seek to avoid all causes of division in the body and strive to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. All members are to discern their place in the body of Christ and honor one another above themselves (*Rom. 14:13; I Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:2-3; Phil. 2:1-4; Col. 3:12-14; Heb. 12:15*).

### **SECTION 3: The Responsibilities and Privileges of Membership** *(continued)*

10. Members are to promote holiness, edification and love among themselves, by praying for one another, by spurring one another on towards love and good deeds, by admonishing one another, by showing hospitality, by bearing one another's burdens, and by forgiving one another. Members are to pray particularly for the elders and deacons in the discharge of their duties (*Rom. 12:10-13; Gal. 6:1-2; Eph. 4:32, 6:18-20; Col. 3:16; Heb. 10:24-25; I Pet. 1:22, 4:8*).
11. The behavior of believers in the community must accord with that wisdom and discretion which commends the gospel of Christ (*Rom. 13:1-7; I Cor. 6:1-6; Col. 4:5-6; I Thess. 4:11-12; I Tim. 6:1; Titus 2:5-8; I Pet. 2:12-17, 3:15-16*).
12. Members are obligated to read, understand, and accept the basis of faith and the Constitution and By-Laws of the TRINITY REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH.