



*Our mission is
to pursue, win,
disciple the lost,
deluded, and
disillusioned for
God's glory*

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Here at Poetry Baptist Church (PBC) we realize that everyone goes through different and unique experiences in life. These experiences shape our beliefs (worldview) - and ultimately our behaviors. In order to both fulfill our charge to safeguard the integrity of our fellowship and to effectively fulfill our mission, it is essential for the serving, leading, and voting members of PBC to be in full unity agreement regarding essential biblical beliefs (doctrine), our understanding of them, and how those beliefs are practically lived out in the life and ministry of the local church. We recognize that our beliefs, and the manifestation of them through our mission and ministries, are not universally upheld.

We believe this is part of the beauty of the local church. If our vision, mission, membership, ministry, and values are incongruent with your own - we can lovingly and graciously agree to disagree. In such cases, we encourage people to either prayerfully continue at PBC as attendees, or to prayerfully seek unity in church fellowship elsewhere. This safeguard of membership has been established -NOT- to discriminate against anyone or to exclude people from our fellowship.

We simultaneously uphold the extreme diversity of the New Testament church (see Acts 10:34; Col 3:11; Rev 7:9), while maintaining the necessity for diversity (ethnic, cultural, economic, etc.) within unity agreement. Therefore, this safeguard of membership exists that we would be united to fulfill Christ's desire for us (John 17:20-23); so that in our old-self we would decrease, and He would increase! Thus, our depraved world will know through the testimony of our unity - Jesus truly has been sent by the Father as the Light of The World to rescue and redeem humanity. In this, and every, way, PBC strives to fulfill our mission

VISION: The vision for PBC isn't ours. The Word (i.e. the Bible, Scripture) paints a very clear picture of God's vision for His Bride in Proverbs 31, Matthew 28:18-20, and in Revelation 19. Our mission, membership, ministry, and values all flow from God's vision revealed throughout Scripture for His Bride.

MISSION: The mission of God is to bless all the families on earth with the reality and certainty of Christ through evangelistic discipleship. Every local church consists of a unique collection of believers representing the Body and Bride of Christ. These faithful disciples of Jesus, here and now at PBC, exist ***to pursue, win, disciple the lost, deluded, and disillusioned for God's glory.***

MEMBERS: Ultimately, membership in the Christ's Church is determined by God. Here at PBC we simply affirm membership based on certain evident and tangible realities. While some may be members of Christ's universal Church, not all are automatically permitted to serve, lead, or vote here at PBC. Those privileges are reserved for recognized members of PBC who are also in full unity covenant agreement with us.

Prerequisites to Membership at PBC:

- Confession of both sins against God (Matthew 3) and the Lordship of Christ (Romans 10:9-11) as a “born-again” committed follower of Jesus (John 3:1-3)
- Ongoing repentance from sins and rejection of practicing any acts of the flesh that demonstrate opposition to life in the Spirit (see Galatians 5)
- Full immersion baptism as an aware, willing, and born-again committed follower of Jesus (Romans 6:3-7), not “for” salvation, but an introductory step of obedience and public testimony of Christ’s Lordship in one’s life (Luke 9:26; Matt 10:32)
- General harmony with the beliefs articulated in the Baptist Faith and Message (<http://www.sbc.net/bfm2000/bfm2000.asp>). Outright rejection of any of these core beliefs (whether in thought or practice) disqualifies one from membership with Poetry Baptist Church.

Requirements for Maintaining Membership at PBC:

- Regular and frequent attendance in the ministries, worship, teaching, fellowship, prayer-life, and celebration of the Lord’s Supper in order to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 10:25; Acts 2:42; 2 Peter 3:18) for the unity and testimony of His Bride (Eph 4:12-13; John 17:20-23)
- Ongoing demonstration of submission to the Lordship of Christ, repentance from sin, and to church leadership (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 2:13; Romans 13:1-2) and the biblical meeting out of church discipline (Hebrews 12:11; Matt 8:15-20; Titus 3:9-11; Galatians 6:1; 2 Thess 3:13-15; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5; Proverbs 12:1; et al.).

CORE VALUES:

As a member of PBC, I agree to maintain full agreement with our beliefs, vision, mission, and core values. I also agree to actively live in a way that demonstrates these as a representative of PBC and ambassador of Jesus Christ:

- **Unity:** Jesus made it clear - church unity begins and ends with our fellowship in Him. The power of our testimony hinges on our unity as a church in His grace and love (John 17:20-23; 1 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 4:1; Colossians 3:14).
- **Extreme Hospitality:** Hospitality is the gateway of the Church. If a church cannot be hospitable (welcoming, kind, gracious, and loving) they certainly cannot make “church” desirable. The church was never intended to be a group of insiders. Therefore, we live and serve in unity with extreme hospitality.
- **Wisdom:** The biblical concept of wisdom isn’t the fortune cookie variety. Wisdom, according to Scripture, is living with Christ in humble, obedient, and intimate reverence (Proverbs 1:7). The result isn’t the promise of a pain-free life or benefits of any sort this side of eternity. Instead, we simultaneously anticipate rejection by the world (John 15:18-25) yet anticipate His glorious will to be accomplished in - and through - His faithful disciples united in the ministry of the Gospel.
- **Desperate Dependency:** We recognize that sin continues to cling to us this side of eternity (Romans 7:15-20). Our trust is not in a “moment” of salvation or in a prayer, but in Christ alone. Therefore, we continue to examine ourselves (2 Corinthians 13:5) to

ensure we truly are alive in Christ by producing an abundant harvest of faith (Matthew 13:8) to reveal the Holy Spirit alive in us (Galatians 5:22-23). We truly believe that apart from Christ we can do nothing to glorify God (John 15:4-5; Romans 14:23).

- **Expectancy:** We believe Satan was eternally defeated at the Cross of Calvary, which was verified at Christ's resurrection. Until Christ's return we expect Satan to continue posing as an angel of light seeking to steal, kill, and destroy (John 15:15) the ministry and mission of the church. Therefore, we pray and live-out expectant and powerful worship (2 Corinthians 5:7), trusting God's will to be accomplished in and through His united, obedient, and faithful disciples.
- **Visionary:** Resting on the accomplishments of yesterday isn't part of the DNA at PBC or any New Testament church. Nostalgia is inherently exclusive and has no place in the church. PBC is a visionary church rather than a nostalgic one because of God's vision for His Bride (Revelation 19:7-8, 21:1-7) and our desire to glorify God by welcoming all whom He leads into unity of fellowship here.
- **Ministry Empowerment:** Serving as a member of the Body of Christ is a privilege given to us by God Almighty. Members of PBC are not only expected to advance the mission of God, but are empowered to do so (Acts 1:8). We are all spiritually-gifted through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. We believe that part of God's vision for PBC is to see every member working in harmony and unity for the promotion and proclamation of the Gospel (Matthew 28:18-20).

As a member of Poetry Baptist Church (PBC), I wholeheartedly agree to walk by faith in Christ (Ephesians 4:1-9) and in the humility of Christ to continually strive to consider others as more important than self (Philippians 2) for God's glory. Furthermore, I agree to:

- Practice complete chastity unless married and, if married, complete fidelity within a heterosexual and monogamous marriage. Complete chastity and fidelity means, among other things, regardless of my marital status, I will pursue purity and abstain from sexually immoral practices such as adultery, premarital sex, and pornography.
- Preserve the gift of marriage and agree to seek counsel from the pastors and leaders of this church before seeking a divorce from my spouse.
- Refrain from any and all activities the Bible explicitly and implicitly deems foolish, selfish, or disobedient - including those that would jeopardize the unity and testimony of PBC.
- Submit to the discipline of God through His Holy Spirit as exercised by the leadership of the church by following the Biblical procedures for discipline where sin is evident in another. The hope and goal of such discipline being repentance and restoration.
- Follow the biblical path of reconciliation of church fellowship.

If you have questions about this document please feel free to contact a ministry leader or the pastor. If you wish to pledge your membership with us at PBC in full unity covenant agreement, you may do so by visiting the following link on our website home page (click button "Join PBC"), then fill out and submit the online form: https://poetrybaptist.com/joining_pbc