



**Bible Study Guide to Church Membership
Based on the Book of Ephesians & Acts 2**

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INTRODUCTION

Session 1 - WE ARE CHURCH

Abbey Wood Community Church was started in 2016 when about 30 members of the Slade Evangelical Church Plumstead were sent out to plant a new church in Abbey Wood.

Abbey Wood Community Church is now recognised by the charities commission as an independent church and charity and needs members to function legally as such, but also from a biblical perspective we believe it is right to have identifiable church members.

This booklet is part of Abbey Wood Community Church's guide to church membership that goes along side a set of videos that are available on YouTube and our website, that provide biblical teaching on church and information about becoming a member of Abbey Wood Community Church.

This series covers the basics of what we believe, who we are and what we do as church along with explaining what is involved in being a member of the Church.

The study seeks to show how church isn't about buildings or being an organisation or even simply about meetings but that Church is people. **WE ARE CHURCH!** The church throughout the world and Abbey Wood Community Church is a group of people who have something very special in common. We have encountered Christ and becoming part of God's family and are now seeking to function as a family by supporting each other and by partnering together in seeking to fulfil God's plans and purposes as his people in the world.

We are a diverse bunch of people of a mixture of ages, backgrounds and nationalities and together **WE ARE CHURCH**, and this is our vision.

ABBEY WOOD COMMUNITY CHURCH'S VISION

To be a Church Family of all ages, nationalities and backgrounds who worship God and follow Jesus in the power of the Spirit according to God's word.

As our vision statement indicates, everything we believe as Christians is based on the word of God; the Bible. Therefore everything that we will look at in this series on the church comes from the scriptures. We are going to especially focus on the book of **Ephesians** as this book particularly clarifies;

What the church believes (BELIEFS)

Who the church is (IDENTITY)

What the church does (PURPOSES)

We'll also consider **Acts 2** as an example of what church was like at its origins and how that still shapes what we do today.

We hope this resource will both inform and inspire you about the church and the way to benefit from it the most is by using it alongside the accompanying videos that can be found on YouTube or on our website.

YouTube: AWCC— Abbey Wood Community Church

Website: abbeywoodcc.org

Each video session is linked to a section of this handbook with the same title. Both the videos and the handbook have the relevant Bible passage. The video provides some teaching and the handbook a few follow up questions. After watching the video the idea is to answer the questions in the section of the handbook with the same title as the video.

We've divided this series into three main parts

PART 1 BELIEFS (What we believe)

PART 2 DENTITY (Who we are)

PART 3 PURPOSE (What we do)

Within each of those parts are subsections that break things down into more detail. There is an introduction and then 10 bible study sessions and then a final session specifically looking at church membership.

If you are ready to continue with Abbey Wood Community Church's guide to membership then please proceed to both the video and the section in the handbook in **PART 1 BELIEFS** called **FAITH IN GOD** (session 2).

PART 1

BELIEFS

(What we Believe)

Session 2 - Faith in GOD

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Ephesians 1:3-14

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. 4he chose us in him before the creation of the world (for us) to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love 5predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— 6the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. 7him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace 8he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, 9made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, 10be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ. 11him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, 12order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. 13you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, 14is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

Ephesians 2:1-9

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. 3of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. 4because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. 6God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. 8it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9by works, so that no one can boast.

Session 2 - Faith in GOD

Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Hebrews 11:6

TALK ABOUT

1. What things might make it hard for people to believe in God's existence?
2. If you do believe, what contributed to you having faith in God?

STUDY Ephesians 1:3-14

3. Who and what is involved in being saved?

What is the role of the Father ? (3-10)

What is the role of Jesus the Son? (7-10)

What is the role of the Spirit? (13-14)

What is our role? (13)

STUDY Ephesians 2:1-9

4. In what condition and state are all people until they have faith in God and receive his gift of salvation?
5. Everyone is saved on the same basis. What is that basis and what does this teach us about God?

Session 3 - Follow JESUS

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Ephesians 2:8-10

8it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9not by works, so that no one can boast. 10we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 4:17-24

¹⁷So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. ¹⁸They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. ¹⁹Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed. ²⁰That, however, is not the way of life you learned ²¹when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. ²²You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Session 3 - Follow JESUS

Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:1-2

TALK ABOUT

1. What do you think it means to follow Jesus?
2. Rather than Eph 2:10 being a contradiction of Eph 2:8-9 what is the connection between salvation and good works?

STUDY Ephesians 4:17– 24

3. How should followers of Jesus live? Why?
4. What positive things are Christians to pursue (put on)?
5. What are followers of Jesus to avoid (put off)?

Session 4 - Filling of THE SPIRIT

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Ephesians 1:13-20

¹³And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory. ¹⁵For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, ¹⁶I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ¹⁷I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. ¹⁸I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, ¹⁹and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength ²⁰he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms...

Ephesians 5:15-21

¹⁵Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. ¹⁸Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, ²⁰always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Session 4 - Filling of THE SPIRIT

*Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead,
be filled with the Holy Spirit.*
Ephesians 5:18 (NLT)

TALK ABOUT

1. How hard is it to follow Jesus and be like Him?
2. What might our lives look like if the Holy Spirit really led our day-to-day lives?

STUDY Ephesians 1:13-20

3. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in both confirming and fulfilling the promises of God for those who believe?
4. How does the illustration of being under the influence of alcohol help us understand what it means to 'be filled with the Spirit'?
5. What will characterise our relationship with God and with others when we are filled with the Spirit?

PART 2

IDENTITY (Who we are)

Session 5 - Family of GOD (Equally Saved)

READING

Ephesians 2:12-18

¹² Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. ¹⁷ He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

Ephesians 4:1-6

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

² Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³ Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Session 5 - Family of GOD (Equally Saved)

God decided in advance to adopt us into his family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:5 (NLT)

TALK ABOUT

1. What comes to your mind when you hear the word 'church'?

STUDY Ephesians 2:11-18

2. How has Christ's made it possible for everyone to be part of and belong to the church? (12-13)
3. Who is reconciled to who and how? (16-18)
4. What does it mean to have access to the Father & how should this impact how we view each other?

STUDY Ephesians 4:1-6

5. Paul repeats the word 'one' seven times in these verses. How does the loving unity of God as trinity (One God in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit) relate to church unity and being like a family?

Session 6 - Body of CHRIST (Equally Special)

SCRIPTURE READING

Ephesians 4:7-16

⁷But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. ⁸This is why it says: ⁹(What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? ¹⁰He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) ¹¹So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

¹⁴Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Session 6 - Body of CHRIST (Equally Special)

And God placed all things under his (Christ's) feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fulness of him who fills everything in every way.

Ephesians 1:22-23

TALK ABOUT

1. Is 'church commitment' more about attending meetings or about mutually caring for one-another?

STUDY Ephesians 4:7-16

2. How does the illustration of the church being *a body* challenge the idea that being a follower of Jesus could be an individual adventure or personal pursuit?
3. Who is needed for the body of Christ (the church) to function and grow?
4. What is the particular function of those mentioned in verse 11 and what impact are they to have on the rest of the body?
5. How does this illustration of the body and these verses encourage unity but not uniformity?

Session 7 - Temple of THE SPIRIT (Equally Supplied)

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Ephesians 2:18-22

⁸*For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.*

¹⁹*Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²²And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.*

Ephesians 4:1-6

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

²*Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.*

Session 7 - Temple of THE SPIRIT (Equally Supplied)

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

Ephesians 1:3

TALK ABOUT

1. Based on what you may know already about the Temple in the Old Testament times, how might comparing the church with the temple a positive picture?

STUDY Ephesians 2:19-22

2. What does having access to the Father by the Spirit mean?
3. What does being described as God's temple building express about our relationship to God, to each other and the watching world?

STUDY Ephesians 4:1-6

4. What is the unity of the Spirit?
5. How can all followers of Jesus encourage the development and growth of the church (the spiritual building project)?

PART 3

PURPOSE **(What we do)**

Session 8 – GROW from the Word

SCRIPTURE READING

Acts 2:38-47

³⁸Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.³⁹The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.'

⁴⁰With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.'⁴¹Those who accepted his message were baptised, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.⁴³Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.⁴⁴All the believers were together and had everything in common.⁴⁵They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.

⁴⁶Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Session 8 – GROW from the Word

*"Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may **grow** up in your salvation"*

1 Peter 2:2

TALK ABOUT

1. Describe and comment on your own personal experience of studying the Bible with others so far?

STUDY Acts 2:38-47

2. Considering **Acts 2:42-47** what would it look like to be devoted to the teachings of the apostles (the scriptures) as a church?

A word on growth

Jesus preached to the masses, met many individuals and also spent a lot of time focusing on a few in a small group. After preaching the good news to all, his small group of disciples appeared to be a priority. In the **New Testament** and especially the book of Acts we see this model of gathering in both large and small groups continued and today the same model will help us grow. We have small groups called **Growth groups** that meet regularly to study God's word, pray and encourage each other. These groups enable us to also grow spiritually, grow in knowledge, grow in our friendships and grow in our mutual care of each other too. Growth groups are for anyone and everyone, but church members would be expected to belong to one and be committed to growing this way as far as they are able.

Session 9 – GATHER to Worship

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Acts 2:42, 46-47

⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

⁴⁶Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Ephesians 5:18-20

Be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always Giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Session 9 – GATHER to Worship

Let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another.

Hebrews 10:24-25

TALK ABOUT

1. What is your understanding of the term *Worship*?

STUDY Acts 2: 38-47 & Ephesians 5:18-20

2. Looking at the activities and attitudes of the first followers of Jesus, what effect did the promised filling of the Holy Spirit have on what the believers did and how they lived?
3. What did the early church's gatherings involve and look like do you think?
4. To what extent do all of these have a continuing relevance for a local church today?
5. What is the suggested outcome of doing things this way?

Session 10 – GIVE by Works

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Ephesians 4:16

¹⁶From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Ephesians 5:1-2,

¹Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children²and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Acts 2:44

⁴⁴All the believers were together and had everything in common.⁴⁵They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.

Acts 4:32-34

³²All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.³³With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all³⁴that there was no needy person among them...

Session 10 – GIVE by Works

*For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works,
which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

Ephesians 2:10

TALK ABOUT

1. Considering session 6 on the body of Christ, how might an understanding of the church being a body impact and influence the way we allocate our time and resources?

STUDY the verses on the previous page

2. Think about what you can do and the way that God has gifted you. What can you give to church life and what works of service could you be involved in?
3. What can we learn from these verses about God's way of providing for our needs as church?

Session 11 – GO as Witnesses

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Matthew 5:16

¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

John 17:20-21

²⁰My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,²¹that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

Acts 1:8

⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.'

Acts 20:21 & 24

²¹I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus...²⁴I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me— the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace.

Romans 10:9-15

⁹If you declare your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," believe your heart that God raised him from the dead, will be saved.¹⁰For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.¹¹As Scripture says, "Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame."¹²For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all richly blesses all who call on him,¹³for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord be saved."¹⁴How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?¹⁵And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news

Session 11 – GO as Witnesses

⁸For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light...Be very careful, then, how you live— not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity...

Ephesians 5: 8 & 15-16

LIVES

STUDY Matthew 5:16

1. What makes the life of a Christian stand out and shine?
2. What is the result of such a life?

LOVE

STUDY John 17:20-21

3. What does Jesus pray for his disciples? Why?
4. What is the connection between this and the world believing the message?

LIPS

STUDY Acts 1:8 , Acts 20:21-24 and Romans 10:9-15

5. What is a major task and calling of us as church?
6. How can we all be involved in some and differing ways in sharing in this collective calling and responsibility?

MEMBERSHIP

Session 12 – MEMBERSHIP

1. Who is Church Membership for?

Church membership is for anyone who has personally trusted in Jesus for salvation and preferably professed faith publicly through baptism too.

Whoever has done that is now identified as a child of God and part of His family, the church, which is His people throughout the world – often referred to as the universal church.

All true believers are members of the 'Universal Church' and wherever possible should belong to a 'Local Church'. A local church is a group of Christians who live locally to each other and are committed to mutually support and encourage each other through the study of God's word, worshipping together and working for each other's good. The local church is also God's way of providing a witness to Him in many and various geographical locations throughout the world.

Abbey Wood Community Church is one of many such local churches made up of local people sharing life together and we are specifically seeking to reach the people of Abbey Wood and its surrounding area with the gospel.

While everyone is welcome to access Sunday services and growth groups and while it's possible to be part of this church family without being a member, membership involves more than occasional attendance. Membership is for those who feel called and are willing to commit to this church family and to the mission of the church in this locality.

So, if you feel Abbey Wood Community Church is the family unit you belong to where you feel you can serve and in the place you feel called to reach, then membership is for you.

2. Why Church Membership?

Membership is a way of formalising and stating a **commitment** to support and serve each other and share God's love and the message of salvation with local people.

Membership helps **identify** who is committed to this local family group and to reaching this local community. Such a formal and public commitment also includes agreeing to mutual **accountability** as representatives of the church.

Membership is also about taking shared ownership of **welcoming others** and no longer being just a visitor or attender of the church but a host and carer of the young, the new and the vulnerable.

Membership is also a way of participating and partnering in **decisions**. There are not many things the church would need to vote on but there will be things that need to be discussed and a consensus found. The main thing members will decide is on the leaders. Although leaders are called to lead and make decisions on behalf of the church family, deciding the leaders in the first place is the role and responsibility of members.

Membership is a way of showing your commitment to this local church that will enable us to grow as we mutually care and seek to minister to the local community together.

3. What is involved in Church Membership?

Church Membership is largely about commitment to the mission of the church and therefore to these four things.

GROWING

Members are to be committed to growing spiritually and encouraging others in their faith through regular participation around word based ministries: Sunday gatherings and growth groups.

Membership is about being, as much as possible, a contributor rather than a consumer and a participator rather than a passive observer, so that together we may be built up and grow as each person participates according to their giftings, knowledge and personality.

GATHERING

Although we need to be alert to our responsibilities to family, friends and employment, we also remember the command in Hebrews 10 v25 to not neglect our meeting together. Members attend regularly Sunday morning worship and participate in growth groups and prayer times, recognising that our praying and praising together and engaging with preaching **are** the engine room of the Church.

GIVING

Caring for one another is commanded by Jesus and considered our greatest form of witness to the world (John 13:34-35). We are to show love to each other in action, not just words (1 John 3:18) and bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2).

Serving in ministry as the Holy Spirit empowers and entrusts is something each believer is to do for the benefit and blessing of the whole body. We would encourage all members to realise their gifts and use them for the edification and building up of the Church.

Financially Supporting the Church is a shared responsibility of its members as an independent and autonomous church and charity. The finances could cover a whole range of things: paying

staff, renting premises, maintaining any properties, teaching materials, as well as outreach costs including overseas mission support. The Old Testament principle of giving 10% of your income to ministry and mission is widely still considered a good guide for God's people today, however the New Testament simply teaches that each member is to be a 'cheerful giver' (2 Corinthians 9:7) and give according to their means.

GOING

As Jesus' followers we are called to be Witnesses in the world, starting from where we are to the ends of the earth (Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8). Members are those who are committed to share their faith with friends and family as God enables and to also, either get involved personally or support to some degree the outreach ministries and overseas mission of Abbey Wood Community Church.

4. Who can be a Leader and Teacher?

Church leaders are appointed by the members and will generally be existing members of the church unless specifically called from elsewhere to fulfil a specific role.

They are those whose character, and gifting along with their knowledge and ability to teach the scriptures has been tested over time and are seen to be qualified to fulfil the role and function of leader among the people according to the scriptures (Titus 1:5-9, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 1 Peter 5:1-4). They are referred to in the Bible as Elders and their role is to oversee and pastor the church together. They are responsible to God for teaching, modelling by example and leading the church in dependence on the Spirit and in accordance with God's word.

Similar expectations are required for other members who take on the leadership of a specific Church Ministry or have any teaching role or responsibility. Only members can fulfil such roles as those who have formalised their commitment to this family grouping and are willing to be accountable within it and work towards its growth through fulfilling its mission and purposes.

Summary of Members Commitment to the Church's Mission and Purposes.

GROWING to be more like Christ through Studying God's Word

GATHERING to know Christ better through Sunday Worship

GIVING to Christ through Works of Service

GOING to make Christ better know through Sharing the gospel as Witnesses

APPENDIX 1

BASIS OF FAITH (FIEC—fiec.org.uk/about-us/beliefs)

GOD there is one God, who exists eternally in three distinct but equal Persons; The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. God is unchangeable in His holiness, justice, wisdom and love. He is the Al- mighty Creator, Saviour and Judge who sustains and governs all things according to His Sovereign will for His own glory.

THE BIBLE God has revealed Himself in the Bible, which consists of the Old and New Testament alone. Every word was inspired by God through human authors, so that the Bible as originally given is in its entirety the Word of God, without error and fully reliable in fact and doctrine. The Bible alone speaks with final authority and is always sufficient for all matters of belief and practice.

THE HUMAN RACE all men and women, being created in the image of God, have inherent and equal dignity and worth. Their greatest purpose is to obey, worship and love God. As a result of the fall of our first parents, every aspect of human nature has been corrupted and all men and women are without spiritual life, guilty sinners and hostile to God. Every person is, therefore, under the just condemnation of God and needs to be born again, forgiven and reconciled to God in order to know and please Him.

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST is fully God and fully man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin and lived a sinless life in obedience to the Father. He taught with authority and all His words are true. On the cross He died in the place of sinners, bearing God's punishment for their sin, redeeming them by His blood. He rose from the dead and in His resurrection body ascended into heaven where He is exalted as Lord of all. He intercedes for His people in the presence of the Father.

SALVATION is entirely a work of God's grace and cannot be earned or deserved. It has been accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ and is offered to all in the Gospel. God in His love forgives sinners whom He calls, granting them repentance and faith. All who believe in Christ are justified by faith alone, adopted into the family of God and receive eternal life.

THE HOLY SPIRIT has been sent from heaven to glorify Christ and to apply His work of salvation. He convicts sinners, imparts spiritual life and gives a true understanding of the Scriptures. He in- dwells all believers, brings assurance of salvation and produces increasing likeness to Christ. He builds up the Church and empowers its members for worship, service and mission.

THE CHURCH The universal Church is the body of which Christ is the head and to which all who are saved belong. It is made visible in local churches, which are congregations of believers who are committed to each other for the worship of God, the preaching of the Word, the administering of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for pastoral care and discipline and for evangelism. The unity of the body of Christ is expressed within and between churches by mutual love, care and encouragement. True fellowship between churches exists only where they are faithful to the Gospel.

BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER have been given to the churches by Christ as visible signs of the Gospel. Baptism is a symbol of union with Christ and entry into His Church but does not impart spiritual life. The Lord's Supper is a commemoration of Christ's sacrifice offered once for all and involves no change in the bread and wine. All its blessings are received by faith

THE FUTURE The Lord Jesus Christ will return in glory. He will raise the dead and judge the world in righteousness. The wicked will be sent to eternal punishment and the righteous will be welcomed into a life of eternal joy in fellowship with God. God will make all things new and will be glorified forever.

APPENDIX 2

ABBEY WOOD COMMUNITY CHURCH MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

If you believe that the Lord is directing you to join Abbey Wood Community Church as a core and committed partner and church member then please consider if you can happily agree with the following statements and then fill in the application form.

I personally have faith in God's gift of grace: Jesus Christ alone for Salvation and my desire is to follow Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit.

I understand and agree with the Doctrinal Statement of the Church (FIEC Statement of faith).

I have read and studied the verses in this booklet and accept the Church should be governed in accordance with the biblical and practical principles set out in it.

I am committed, as far as I am able, to be involved in and maintain the mission of the church by

Gathering for Sunday Worship

Growing through participation in a growth (study of the Word) group

Giving to the Work of the church in service and financially.

Going as a Witness to friends & family & people locally and supporting missionaries.

Application for Membership

Name (full):

Phone Number:

Email:

How long have you attended AWCC?

When & how did you receive Christ as your Saviour?

What is your understanding of Salvation?

Have you been baptised? (When and Where)

Do you agree with the Doctrinal Statement, the Vision and Mission of the Church?

DATE:

SIGNED:

MORE INFORMATION

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info@abbeywoodcc.org

[Facebook.com/Abbeywoodchurch](https://www.facebook.com/Abbeywoodchurch)

YouTube: AWCC— Abbey Wood Community Church