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# THE ROLE OF MEMBERSHIP

REC is an inclusive church. We want every believer from whatever background to feel welcome and involved. Our priorities are worship, God's word, fellowship and witness – and we operate by the principles in the REC ethos. It is a mark of these priorities if people who come regularly regard REC as their church. And we want to involve all such, and be blessed in close fellowship and service together.

## **Why we need a formal membership**

The constitution of REC gives us a congregational form of government: the ultimate decision making body is the members' meeting. For this to work well, membership has to be clearly defined. Membership allows a person to participate in members meetings and share in important discussions and decisions. Members therefore need to be people who are living consistent Christian lives, believe the church's doctrinal basis, agree to work within the rules of the constitution, and are happy with the ethos and its outworking in REC.

## **Identification with the church**

Membership is for those who are converted and living a consistent life, and who also agree with the overall stance of REC and are fully involved. This will be evidenced in their regular attendance (circumstances permitting) at Sunday Services, prayer times and midweek meetings. They will support as they are able the outreach and other activities of the church as well as supporting in prayer, practical service and giving.

## **Beliefs and lifestyle**

Members are personally in agreement with the doctrinal basis of the church. Their lifestyle is consistent with their beliefs, and they are seeking to grow spiritually and to serve the Lord as they are able.

## **Member's privileges**

Being involved in the decision making of the church is both a privilege and a responsibility. Church business meetings are seen as an important part of church life and members are expected to attend where possible, share their views (publicly, or privately with the eldership) and to vote. Members are asked to be prayerful about decisions, to make their views known in discussions, and to graciously support one another.

Members have in a particular way placed themselves under the pastoral care of the church and eldership.

## **Procedure**

A person asking for church membership will be visited by one or two elders. The implications of membership will be discussed and the statement of doctrine signed. If accepted, the person concerned will be welcomed into membership at a Sunday service, with opportunity being given for sharing their testimony.

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## **Termination of membership**

Any member thinking of terminating their membership is asked to discuss any problems with an elder before coming to a final decision. The eldership may remove a person from membership (after attempting to discuss things with them) if their lifestyle is inconsistent with their Christian profession, or if they consistently fail in the duties of church membership.

## **Non-members**

REC is inclusive. We recognise that for various reasons individuals may be committed to Christ, regular at REC, and feel very much part of the church, but find it inappropriate to join as a member. We appreciate that and do not draw a distinction in day to day church life: we want all believers to grow through service and belonging to the church in whatever way they can.