

Frequently Asked Questions about Membership at MDPC

Being a member of MDPC is saying *Yes to the Family* and *Yes to the Mission* that God has given us at MDPC. Becoming a member of a church is an important step of faith after saying *Yes to Jesus* and becoming a Christian.

The New Member Class is our process for learning the history, vision, and mission of MDPC. The class will be led by Associate Pastors, Elders, and staff, and you will be invited to explore if becoming a member is the right next step in your faith in Jesus. After finishing the class and deciding that becoming a member is indeed the right next step, you will be introduced at a worship service to the congregation and invited to meet with Session (board of elders) to be received as a member of MDPC.

What does it mean to become a member of MDPC? Because "membership" is a term used for lots of organizations like gyms, country clubs, and streaming services, it can be pretty confusing when we apply it to churches. Whereas membership in the other things consists of paying a fee to receive services, church membership is about partnering alongside the other church members and pastors under Jesus' leadership to accomplish the mission and vision that God has given us.

The confusion on membership is why our family of churches also refers to church membership as Covenant Partnership. A covenant is a binding commitment made between two parties, and partnership implies a collaborative relationship of working together toward a common purpose. So becoming a member (or covenant partner) at MDPC is a commitment from MDPC to you to support you, equip you, and nourish you as a disciple of Jesus. It is also a commitment from you to the whole church to embrace the family and mission of MDPC as you follow Jesus as a disciple. And together in partnership, we will work as a family toward the mission and vision that God has given MDPC.

What happens in a New Member Class? The New Member class is a series of meetings through which you will:

- 1) Be introduced to the history, vision, and mission of Memorial Drive Presbyterian through brief presentations made by the Associate Pastors, Elders and staff.
 - 2) Meet in small groups to get to know one another better and talk about the brief presentations.
 - 3) Share briefly about your faith experience by using the #LifeIsMore Story Starters resource.
- After attending the New Member Class, you will be invited to meet with the Session (MDPC's board of elders) to be received as members of the church.

Do I have to become a member if I attend the class? Nope. You are welcome to attend the classes to learn about MDPC, meet some people, or explore what it is to become a member. If you decide along the way that becoming a member isn't the right step for you, that's okay! We'd love to help you get connected and discover your next step of faith.

Do I have to be a Christian to become a member? You are welcome to participate and belong at MDPC no matter what you believe about faith or Jesus. However, you do need to trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord (i.e. be a Christian) *to become a church member*. The family and mission

at MDPC flows out of our love of Jesus and our desire to be a people and church that reflect his vision for the world. Because Jesus is the source of our family and mission, we believe it is necessary to be a Christian before fully embracing MDPC as a church member.

If you want to learn about Jesus or would like to become a Christian, [Click Here](#) to contact Pastor Dan Aikins. He would love to talk to you about faith in Jesus.

I have never been baptized. Can I still become a member? Baptism marks a person's adoption in God's global family of Christians around the world. Becoming a church member marks a person's partnership with a particular church family like MDPC. Becoming a Christian and saying *Yes to Jesus* always comes before becoming a church member. If you are a Christian but have not been baptized, you can be baptized as part of becoming a member. Simply let us know when you sign up for the class that you haven't been baptized. [Click Here](#) to email Pastor Dan Aikins if you have questions about being baptized.

I was baptized at a different church. Will I be baptized again at MDPC to become a member? If you were baptized with water at another Christian church through infant baptism or believer baptism, you will not be baptized again to become a member at MDPC. Our family of churches believes that once you've received Christian baptism, it is not necessary to be baptized again. We understand Christian baptism as any baptism by water made in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

I am thinking about becoming a member. What should I do?

If you're ready, you can sign up for an upcoming New Member Class at membership.mdpc.org. Or you can contact Pastor Dan Aikins at daikins@mdpc.org or 713-490-9292. He will be glad to talk to about membership at MDPC and try to answer any questions you may have. Though we appreciate it when you let us know you will attend a New Member Class, it is not altogether necessary. We also welcome a last-minute decision to show up at a class series! If the class happens to be an online class, then you'll need to sign-up or contact us for the Zoom information.

What if I am not ready to become a member, can I still participate in a New Member class?

Of course! Being ready to join the church is not an expectation of those who attend the classes. We want participants to be free to think through membership at MDPC and what is involved with that commitment. Each class series regularly includes people who are still exploring their faith, or for other reasons are not yet prepared to join the church. We encourage people to continue to worship with us and take part in all our ministries. Should you, sometime in the future, decide to join MDPC, we will gladly welcome you into membership.