

# Membership

## In a Lutheran Brethren Congregation

Church of the **Lutheran Brethren**

### What does membership mean?

1. It means that you have publicly declared you are a Christian and therefore a part of Christ's body, the church. It is a testimony before the world that you know Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord.
2. It means that you have joined with the body of Christ and will therefore support that body of believers with your loyalty, tithes and offerings, and service through the use of your spiritual gifts.
3. It means that you have submitted to the Lordship of Christ. By becoming a member you are committed to the congregation's teaching, spiritual guidance and fellowship.
4. It means that if you are of voting age you can participate in the organizational life of the congregation as a member with voting rights and that you may hold office as guided by the congregation's constitution.

We welcome you to the Lutheran Brethren Church and invite you to consider membership in a fellowship of believers in which you may grow in Christ and serve him freely in the grace and gifts he has given you.



11/21

Church of the **Lutheran Brethren**

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## *Membership in a Lutheran Brethren Congregation*

### **About Membership**

Church membership is an important part of the life of a growing Christian. From the very beginning Christians have joined with others in worshipping God, confessing their faith, and serving God's kingdom in this world through a community of believers with which they choose to fellowship. Here are some questions and answers which will explain how you may become part of a Lutheran Brethren congregation.

### **In what ways can a person become affiliated with a Lutheran Brethren congregation?**

1. By becoming a **Parishioner**. We use the term parishioner to include all the people who make this congregation their church home. Within this larger family, a person may also be affiliated in other ways. Parishioners constitute the largest circle in the church family. Our congregations are happy to welcome you into this circle. Baptized children of the congregation become Parishioners upon reaching voting age if they have not been received as confessing members.
2. By becoming a **Baptized Child of the Congregation**. Baptized children of the congregation are the children who have been baptized in the congregation as well as those baptized children who may have transferred into the congregation with their parents. This status continues until they reach the voting age determined by the congregation, or are accepted as confessing members of the congregation.
3. By becoming a **Confessing Member**. Confessing members are those who are above confirmation age, and, after requesting membership, have been accepted into the congregation. There are two types

of confessing members: voting and non-voting. Non-voting members are those who have not yet reached the age to vote in business meetings as required by the church constitution, usually 18 or 21.

### **How can I become a Confessing Member of a Lutheran Brethren congregation?**

The process may include all of the following steps. The process may vary slightly from one congregation to another.

1. A membership class. These are conducted in order that prospective members may have an opportunity to be informed about the beliefs and practices of the congregation. These classes do not obligate you to join. Church attendance does not lead to automatic membership. If you are interested in membership, ask the pastor of the congregation for information regarding becoming a member.
2. An interview with the Board of Elders, or a committee from the board, follows your request for membership. These leaders of the congregation are interested in learning of your Christian beliefs, background, experience, and interests in serving Christ.
3. Following an interview with you, the Board of Elders will recommend you for membership to the congregation. This recommendation will be voted on at a congregational meeting and is based on your confession of faith in Jesus Christ and your desire to join in the fellowship, services, and support of the congregation's ministry and mission.
4. You will be publicly welcomed at the next Sunday worship service or Communion service.

### **May I transfer my membership from another congregation?**

Usually you may. Check with the pastor of the congregation you wish to join. He will be happy to discuss the procedure for transferring your membership.

### **Does confirmation make me a member of this congregation?**

The purpose of confirmation classes is to develop a core knowledge of the Christian faith. Any Baptized Child of the Congregation or any other child who is of confirmation age (usually grade seven or eight) may attend the two-year course of instruction in basic Bible teaching using Luther's Small Catechism. This course ends with public catechization and a service of confirmation. Completion of the course, however, does not make you a Confessing Member. If you are already a Baptized Child of the Congregation, your status remains the same. However, you may at this time request to become a Confessing Member.

### **What are the requirements for Confessing Membership?**

1. All applicants must confess that they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as God's only way of salvation and that they have personally received this salvation based on faith in the atoning work of Jesus Christ through his death on the cross.
2. All applicants must agree to abide by the Lutheran Brethren Statement of Faith and the constitution of their local congregation.