

COTR – Membership Requirements

- 1) **The Gospel** – Show that a person understands the Gospel of Christ according to Scripture. Be able to sufficiently explain the Gospel and what makes a saved follower of Jesus. A person’s verbal testimony will be heard in a meeting with a pastor-elder(s), where the individual’s understanding of doctrines necessary for salvation will be confirmed, including:
 - Sufficient understanding of God’s triune nature and character, as Creator and sustainer of all things.
 - Affirmation of the sinful nature of all people after the Fall and inability to please God on their own.
 - Sufficient understanding of Christ’s person (fully God and fully man in one person) and finished work on the cross and resurrection, dying for our sins and rising in victory for us.
 - Affirmation that salvation is by God’s grace, received through repentance and faith alone, in Christ alone, for God’s glory alone.
 - Affirmation that the Bible is God’s inspired, authoritative, and inerrant Word.
 - A desire to grow in Christ-likeness by obedience to God’s Word and love for God and others, to the end of one’s life, through a dependence on the work of the Holy Spirit.
 - A hope in Christ’s personal and visible Second Coming, our future bodily resurrection, the final judgment, where all will stand before the Lord, leading to one of two eternal destinies, with God in Heaven or in Hell.
- 2) **Believer's Baptism** – Trinitarian, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; by submersion, not sprinkling; AFTER one's conversion. A person’s believer’s baptism will be confirmed in a meeting with a pastor-elder(s).
- 3) **Doctrinal Standards** – Read the *1689 London Baptist Confession*, which can be downloaded from our website. A modern English version of the 1689 LBC can be accessed online at <https://1689londonbaptistconfession.com/> or <https://founders.org/library/1689-confession/>. Our members are not required to believe everything written therein, but should know that all our teaching will fit within these parameters. If a person has substantial disagreements with this confessional statement, then likely our local church is not a good fit. Further, if a person disagrees in areas of biblical orthodoxy, doctrines necessary to believe for salvation, then their membership will be denied. Also please read our “[Amendments to the LBC 1689](#)” and “[COTR Bylaws](#),” with links found on our church’s website. When reading these church documents, please write down any questions you have to discuss with a pastor-elder.
- 4) **Check with Previous Local Church** – Those who arrive at COTR from a previous local church, must have left their previous church in good standing, not under church discipline and by leaving in a God honoring way. The pastor-elders will make contact with the person’s previous local church to confirm this.
- 5) **The Council of Elders’ Affirmation** – All pastor-elders at COTR must be in agreement about receiving a person into church membership, although only one pastor-elder will take the lead in the process outlined here.

- 6) **Membership Form** – Download it from our website to read, understanding one will agree before God and the congregation to be recognized as a member of our local church body and to be treated as such with all the responsibilities and privileges. It's one form per person. Here's the link: [COTR-Covenant-of-Membership-2021.pdf \(churchoftheredeemerll.org\)](https://www.churchoftheredeemerll.org/COTR-Covenant-of-Membership-2021.pdf).
- 7) **Membership Entrance Ceremony** – At the end of a Sunday morning worship service, new members are called forward to publicly testify before the congregation of their desire to become a member of our local church, by affirming each point in the membership form. Also, the pastor-elders are called forward to stand with the new member in order to affirm their responsibility to care for the new member(s) biblically. During this time, the existing members have the opportunity to renew their vows and to recognize the new member(s) as now included in the membership for mutual care and accountability, to partner in the expansion of the Gospel, for the glory of Christ. Finally, one pastor-elder will pray for the new member(s).

Recommended Resources for New Members:

- *Resolving Everyday Conflict* by Ken Sande
- *Evangelism: How the Whole Church Speaks of Jesus* by J. Mack Stiles
- *Christian Beliefs: Twenty Basics Every Christian Should Know* by Wayne Grudem
- *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* by Donald S. Whitney
- *Spiritual Disciplines within the Church* by Donald S. Whitney
- *Church Membership* by Jonathan Leeman