

Membership Packet



Welcome

Thanks so much for taking the initiative to pursue membership here at Chatham Community Church. Our prayer for you through this process is that God will speak to you—to deepen your passion for Jesus Christ, to connect your life to the people and the mission of our church, and to reveal to you the unique role that you will play as a “teammate” on mission with us.

Membership matters. The Bible says in Romans 12:5 that we are “members of one another”. That means that we are dependent on one another for spiritual growth in Christ. Members at Chatham Community Church are those who have obediently accepted the responsibility to grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ together and to help others to do the same. Christ-followers are to live this out in the context of honest and authentic relationships with others in the body of Christ. Members are also teammates who have accepted the challenge to own the mission of our local church.

Consider a few more reasons why church membership is so important for our church and in your life:

For our church body...

- *It communicates to the other church members that you are committed to them*
- *It enables church leaders to identify whose spiritual lives they are shepherding and who is living out the vision of the church*
- *It identifies you as a follower of Christ who is committed to His body*
- *It creates a team of devoted followers of Christ to pursue something spiritually significant together*

For you...

- *It provides a spiritual family to support your walk with Christ*
- *It places you under the spiritual protection of godly leaders*
- *It provides an opportunity to discover and use your spiritual gifts to build up the body of Christ*
- *It gives you encouragement and accountability for growth in your relationship with God*

We thank God for you and we are excited to walk through this process together with you. If you have any questions along the way, please feel free to call or e-mail. We look forward to getting to know you.

Brian McCurry

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Next Steps

As you pursue membership here at Chatham Community Church, here is the process...

- 1. Attend or listen to the two sermons from our *Chatham Church DNA* series from August 2009 which communicate important vision and values our church**
 - August 9: DNA #1—Leading people to follow Jesus
 - August 16: DNA #2—Engaging our world for good

- 2. Complete and return this membership packet**
 - Read through this entire packet including our Beliefs Statement and *The Peacemaker's Pledge*
 - Write or type out your personal testimony on a separate sheet of paper
 - Complete the S.H.A.P.E. Summary (pages 9-10)
 - Return your membership materials on a Sunday to one of our greeters or you may mail them to our church mailing address (P.O. Box 1864, Pittsboro, NC 27312).

- 3. Connect with our church body**
 - Attend one of our “Membership Workshops” which will be scheduled throughout the year
 - Complete a “Personal Action Plan” at the Membership Workshop. This Personal Action Plan will articulate your plans to live out the values of our church.
 - Be presented to the congregation as a member

Chatham Church DNA Series

Please take the time now to listen to two sermons which were a part of a teaching series called *Chatham Church DNA* from August 2009. These messages help communicate important vision and values for our church.

All of our Sunday messages may be found online at our church website (www.chathamchurch.org). If you previously attended any of these services in August 2009 you are not required to listen to those again.

- **August 9: DNA #1—Leading people to follow Jesus**
- **August 16: DNA #2—Engaging our world for good**

As you listen to these sermons, please list any questions or comments that you have below.

What We Believe

In presenting our beliefs, we keep in mind the following three principles:

In all essential beliefs—we have unity.

In all non-essential beliefs—we have liberty.

In all our beliefs—we show love.

Our essential beliefs are as follows:

About God

There is one God who is infinite, eternal, almighty and perfect in holiness, truth and love. In the mystery and unity of the one God there are three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—co-existent, co-equal, and co-eternal. The Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not the Father; yet each is truly Deity.

About God the Father

God the Father is Creator of heaven and earth, and He daily sustains all His creation. He rules over all and, together with the Son and the Spirit, is the only Sovereign. His plans and purposes cannot be thwarted. He is faithful to every promise and in His unfathomable grace gave His Son, Jesus Christ, for our redemption. He made all things for His joy and His glory, and He intends for people to live as His children.

About God the Son

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Eternally existing as God, Jesus became human, fully God and fully man; he was supernaturally conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary. He lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of people by dying on a cross. He rose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven victorious and will return to earth again someday to reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

About God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is present in the world to make men aware of their need for the Savior, Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit lives in every believer from the moment of conversion. He provides the Christ-follower with strength for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer gifts for service and empowers them for ministry. As followers of Jesus, we seek to live with the Spirit's help moment-by-moment as we journey through life.

About the Bible

The Bible is God's self-revelation to His creation. It was written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. The Bible is God-breathed and it is wholly true.

About Human Beings

God made human beings in His image as the pinnacle of His creation. People were created to honor God and to enjoy a relationship with Him, but they rebelled and alienated themselves from God. This rebellion resulted in an inward depravity of all humans that is expressed in sinful attitudes and actions.

All of us are marred by sin and are incapable of living out the full humanity for which we were created. Broken and sinful people, whatever their character or achievements, are lost and without hope apart from God's salvation.

About Salvation

Salvation is God's free gift to us, but we must accept it by faith. We can never make up for our sins by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ alone as God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. Through Christ's atonement for sin, an individual is reconciled to God as Father, becomes His child, is forgiven of his sin, and is regenerated by the Holy Spirit. The natural response of faith in Jesus is to turn from our self-ruled life and follow Jesus as Lord. Followers of Jesus are empowered by the Spirit to grow in relationship with Jesus, to become more like Him, and to carry out His ministry. This part of God's work in us is called sanctification. Ultimately, all believers will be glorified with Christ, sharing in His victory over sin and death.

About the Church

The universal church, the body of Christ, consists of all those who have genuinely believed in Christ for their salvation, regardless of church or denominational affiliation. All members of the universal church are to be a vital and committed part of a local church. We believe that the local church is a gathering of believers in Jesus Christ who are joined together for the purposes of worship, prayer, observance of the ordinances, teaching, care, confession, relationships, training, serving, and evangelism. The local church should be a witness to the contemporary world. In order to fulfill the mission of evangelism and discipleship of all nations, each local church should creatively adapt its ministry, worship, and teaching to the particular context in which God has placed the church.

About the Ordinances

Jesus Christ commanded His followers to observe the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper until he returns. Water baptism serves as a public identification with Jesus—a visual and symbolic demonstration of a person's connection to Christ's death, burial and resurrection. It signifies that his former way of life has been put to death and that he is now a new creation of God. The Lord's Supper symbolizes the breaking of Christ's body and the shedding of His blood as a payment for sins. As we celebrate the Lord's Supper with an attitude of faith and self-examination, we publicly remember the death of Christ, receive spiritual nourishment for our souls, and signify our unity with other members of Christ's body. The Lord's Supper is enjoyed by believers repeatedly as a sign of continued participation in the salvation benefits of Christ's death.

About Eternity

We long for the future, physical, visible, personal, and glorious return of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead and the translation of those alive in Christ, the judgment of the just and the unjust, and the fulfillment of Christ's kingdom in the new heavens and the new earth. People were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation in Christ or exist eternally separated from God by sin. Satan with his hosts and all those without Christ will finally be separated from the benevolent presence of God and will endure eternal punishment. Those whose hope is in Christ will live forever in glorified bodies without sorrow or suffering. These will reign with Christ, serving Him and giving Him unending praise and glory. Then the whole earth will worship the God Who makes all things new.

Peacemaker's Pledge

A Commitment to Biblical Conflict Resolution

As people reconciled to God by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we believe that we are called to respond to conflict in a way that is remarkably different from the way the world deals with conflict. We also believe that conflict provides opportunities to glorify God, serve other people, and grow to be like Christ. Therefore, in response to God's love and in reliance on His grace, we commit ourselves to the following principles.

Glorify God—Instead of focusing on our own desires or dwelling on what others may do, we will rejoice in the Lord and bring him praise by depending on his forgiveness, wisdom, power, and love, as we seek to faithfully obey his commands and maintain a loving, merciful, and forgiving attitude.

Get the log out of your eye—Instead of blaming others for a conflict or resisting correction, we will trust in God's mercy and take responsibility for our own contribution to conflicts—confessing our sins to those we have wronged, asking God to help us change any attitudes and habits that lead to conflict, and seeking to repair any harm we have caused.

Gently restore—Instead of pretending that conflict doesn't exist or talking about others behind their backs, we will overlook minor offenses or we will talk personally and graciously with those whose offenses seem too serious to overlook, seeking to restore them rather than condemn them. When a conflict with a Christian brother or sister cannot be resolved in private, we will ask others in the body of Christ to help us settle the matter in a biblical manner.

Go and be reconciled—Instead of accepting premature compromise or allowing relationships to wither, we will actively pursue genuine peace and reconciliation—forgiving others as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us, and seeking just and mutually beneficial solutions to our differences.

By God's grace, we will apply these principles as a matter of stewardship, realizing that conflict is an opportunity, not an accident. We will remember that success in God's eyes is not a matter of specific results, but of faithful, dependent obedience. And we will pray that our service as peacemakers will bring praise to our Lord and lead others to know His infinite love.

(Taken from *Peacemaking Principles*, Peacemaker Ministries, www.peacemaker.net)

Sharing Your Story

Communicating how you entered into a relationship with Jesus Christ is vitally important. On a separate sheet of paper take some time now to tell us more about that experience in your life. You may either hand write your testimony or type that up on a computer. Either way, please include this document when you return your membership packet.

While you have the freedom to write your testimony in any form that you deem appropriate, many have found it easier to share their story of grace and faith by breaking down their testimony into the following three stages:

Before I received Christ:

Describe your value system, motivations and lifestyle prior to your conversion. Identify the events and circumstances that caused you to consider Jesus Christ as the solution to your spiritual need and ultimately led to your decision to accept Him as Savior. In some cases this process may have taken place over a long period of time.

How I received Christ:

Please include the specific steps that you took to become a Christian and why you believe that you have eternal life. As much as possible, try to avoid religious lingo or church clichés (“born again”, “asked Jesus into my heart”, etc.) as this will prepare you to communicate your story more clearly and authentically to your friends.

After I received Christ:

Describe the difference that Christ has made in our thinking, motivation, values, and actions. For some this may be a dramatic change from the “before” description. For others who accepted Christ at an early age, this step will allow you to think through and describe how your life is different than what it could have been and to describe the transformation that is continuing to take place in your life. In either case, please state what assurances that you have of forgiveness and eternal life.

We understand that this may be the first time you have ever written out your testimony and it can be a challenging task. If you need help, please feel free to contact Brian McCurry. (Phone: (919) 545-4504 or E-mail: bmccurry@chathamchurch.org)

We look forward to reading your story of faith and we hope that you will take the time to share it with someone else who may not know the truth of the Gospel.

S.H.A.P.E. Summary

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Birthday: _____

Spiritual Gifts (if you have discovered those) _____

Heart/Passions: from each section, please check all that are appropriate and then rank your top 3 in each section.

People groups

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0—1 yr. olds | <input type="checkbox"/> Engaged couples | <input type="checkbox"/> Internationals | <input type="checkbox"/> Other faiths |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2—3 yr. olds | <input type="checkbox"/> Grieving a loss | <input type="checkbox"/> Junior high | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior citizens |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4—5 yr. olds | <input type="checkbox"/> Handicap | <input type="checkbox"/> Married couples | <input type="checkbox"/> Single parents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1st –5th grade | <input type="checkbox"/> High school | <input type="checkbox"/> Men | <input type="checkbox"/> Singles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> College | <input type="checkbox"/> Homosexual | <input type="checkbox"/> Moms | <input type="checkbox"/> Visitors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dating couples | <input type="checkbox"/> Incarcerated | <input type="checkbox"/> New Christians | <input type="checkbox"/> Women |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced | <input type="checkbox"/> Infertile | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-believers | <input type="checkbox"/> Young married |

Areas of service

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administration | <input type="checkbox"/> Event planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Helping the needy | <input type="checkbox"/> Stewardship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Audio/visual | <input type="checkbox"/> Event set-up | <input type="checkbox"/> Missions | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching (adults) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camping/outdoors | <input type="checkbox"/> Family issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Parenting | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching (children) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer | <input type="checkbox"/> Ushering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning | <input type="checkbox"/> Food preparation | <input type="checkbox"/> Service Projects | <input type="checkbox"/> Visiting the sick |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling | <input type="checkbox"/> Food service | <input type="checkbox"/> Sharing the gospel | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crafts | <input type="checkbox"/> Generosity | <input type="checkbox"/> Singing | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discipleship | <input type="checkbox"/> Greeting | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports | _____ |

Abilities

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acting | <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Design | <input type="checkbox"/> Painting | <input type="checkbox"/> Sewing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administration | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality | <input type="checkbox"/> Phone calling | <input type="checkbox"/> Sign language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Artistic | <input type="checkbox"/> Hosting in my home | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography | <input type="checkbox"/> Singing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Audio/Visual | <input type="checkbox"/> House repairs | <input type="checkbox"/> Pioneering | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer programming | <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewing | <input type="checkbox"/> Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Video production |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer networking | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing instrument | <input type="checkbox"/> Vision/Goal setting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Composing | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing | <input type="checkbox"/> Promoting | <input type="checkbox"/> Web design |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construction | <input type="checkbox"/> Managing | <input type="checkbox"/> Recruiting | <input type="checkbox"/> Welcoming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum dev. | <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanics | <input type="checkbox"/> Research | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Editing | <input type="checkbox"/> Organizing | <input type="checkbox"/> Serving/helping | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Your Spiritual Experiences

Spiritual Experiences

I would describe my relationship with Christ right now in this way: (check one)

- I have recently trusted in Jesus as my Lord and Savior and I want to grow.
- Lack of motivation, struggling in prayer and time in the Word.
- Spiritual roller coaster of ups and downs with the Lord.
- Growing steadily, stable in my relationship with the Lord.
- Consistent walk with the Lord over an extended period of time with a desire to help others grow.

Church Experiences

Do you have a previous church affiliation? (circle one) Yes No

If so, what church did you attend? How long? _____

Do you have any frustrations or unresolved issues with your previous church? Yes No

Have you been baptized as a believer in Christ? Yes No

Ministry Experiences

Please list any current or previous ministry experiences and/or places where you have served. (Please include name of the church or ministry, city, role of service, time involved, and whether or not you enjoyed it.)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Painful Experiences

If you are willing, please describe any difficult times of trying that the Lord has brought you through which you would be willing to share with a fellow Christian who is currently going through a similar situation (optional):
