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## MEMBERSHIP POLICY

This policy establishes the requirements for beginning, continuing and ending membership in the United Church of Canada (UCC).

### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND BELIEF

We publicly and formally affirm our commitment to membership in the UCC as lived out in the Community of Faith (COF) of Central United Church (Central). Central honours the personal faith of all who seek "to continue telling the story of Jesus by embodying Christ's presence in the world." (*A Song of Faith, 2006*).

Membership does not require that all policy and doctrinal statements of the UCC be embraced by an individual. Space is always left for respectful discussion and disagreement about matters of faith. This clearly follows in the Protestant Reformed Tradition of which the UCC is a part.

We practice radical hospitality; therefore, all people are welcome to become a part of our COF.

### POLICY

- (a) All persons, 14 years of age and older, are eligible to become members of Central, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, family status, economic status, race, creed, ethnicity, age, or differing abilities.
- (b) Persons are received into full membership through Adult Baptism, Confirmation, Re-affirmation of Faith or Transfer (*Section B.3.3, The Manual, 2019*).
- (c) In order to become a full member of Central, a person seeking membership must:
  - meet with the Minister(s) or duly appointed church representative(s) to discuss membership.
  - take a course of study offered by the Worship Team.
  - have been baptized.
  - if not, be baptized in conjunction with offering a public profession of faith based on the Trinitarian formula.
  - promise to actively participate in the mission and ministry of Central.
- (d) It is recognized that children who are baptized at Central become members of the worldwide Christian faith community rather than members of Central.
- (e) Individuals who have been baptized in another Christian faith tradition do not have to be re-baptized when seeking membership.



- (f) A person who has reached 14 years of age is eligible to attend Confirmation Classes, with the intention of confirming the promises made by their parents when they were children. These classes are conducted by the Minister(s) or a duly appointed representative of the church, culminating in a public profession of faith leading to membership in the church
- (g) Generally, if a member has been absent from public worship at Central for three or more years without due cause (e.g., temporary job posting, ongoing health issues), a Re-Affirmation of Faith is required. However, it is the responsibility of the Worship Team, in collaboration with the Minister(s), to determine if such a re-affirmation is warranted.
- (h) Any person who is a member of another United Church may request a Transfer of that membership to Central. Alternatively, any person who is a member of Central may request a transfer of their membership to another United Church or to any denomination that will accept the Transfer. A public worship service recognizing acceptance into membership is appropriate, but not required.
- (i) Members are removed from the Historic Roll (Membership Roll) by death; transfer to another church, resignation or by the action of the Board (*Section B.3.6, The Manual, 2019*). In the case of the removal of a name from the Historic Roll by the action of the Board, an effort must be made by the Board or its appointed representatives to contact absent members to rekindle their relationship with the church before any such action is taken. If contact is not made, for whatever reason, or the member, of their own volition, revokes their membership, the name of that individual must be brought forward at a formally called meeting of the Board for removal.
- (j) Membership can be revoked by the Board due to:
  - absence from public worship for three or more years.
  - sexual harassment or other inappropriate behaviours that are not corrected.
  - exhibited violence towards another member of the congregation.
  - theft or embezzlement of church funds.
  - other actions deemed unacceptable by the Board.
- (k) Members have the right to vote at all meetings of the congregation on all matters that come before the church. Adherents are also permitted to vote on all matters that come before the church but only when given permission to do so by members of the church.
- (l) The status of a person's membership is confidential information and is subject to privacy legislation. Such information must only be used for matters related to Central and the UCC (e.g., mailing lists, voting at Congregational Meetings). Membership information must not be shared with any outside agency without the express written permission of both the member and the Board.



## **ADMINISTRATION**

This policy is administered by the Worship Team, working in collaboration with the Christian Development Team.

This policy document is a living document that can be changed at any time with the approval of the Board.

The Board must inform the congregation about the policies that have been established by the Board and will seek ratification of each policy change at a duly called Annual Congregational Meeting.

*Final Draft approved by the Board, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018  
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