



Church Membership at The Bridge Fellowship, Tokyo.

To be a member of a church is to make a promise to live according to the Word and to support the work of the congregation. In the Bible this is called a covenant. Every believer is part of the church when we think about it as an organism (the Spiritual Body of Christ), but only by a promise can someone be part of the church as an organization. A promise, or covenant, is the basis for all society according to the Bible: marriage, employment, citizenship and church membership are all relationships of *accountability*.

Membership in a church is not like membership in a social club or other organization. Most organization members are consumers — the organization exists to serve them. The church of Christ is a completely different community — membership means ministry and service, going from being a consumer to becoming a provider of God's love and care to others. At The Bridge Fellowship, we take seriously that *we are a church not for ourselves, but for others in our city.* (partly adapted from RedeemerNYC)

- a) Membership at *The Bridge Fellowship* is open to all persons of the Christian faith who are in agreement with the church's statement of faith, mission, and core values and who have been baptized into the Christian church with a local church that professes a faith consistent with historic, Biblical Christianity. If applicable, please notify your previous church when you decide you would like to become a member at The Bridge Fellowship.
- b) Members commit to regular attendance, using their gifts to the glory of God, and joyfully and sacrificially contribute offering *out of their own compulsion*.
- c) Members also commit to an active, healthy, and personal Christian life that is centered *on the Gospel of grace as opposed to moralism on the one hand and licentiousness on the other hand*.
- d) Membership is also available to those who plan to live in Tokyo temporarily without conflict with one's home church in his/her country of origin.
- e) Prospective members shall be examined by a pastor and admitted if they meet the criteria stated in this document. Members will then be added to the church directory that is viewable.
- f) Membership may be forfeited or transferred at anytime by notifying a pastor of the reason for doing so.
- g) If you believe in the Gospel, and have not been baptized, this will be your first step to becoming a member. Please notify a pastor or one of the staff members if you wish to do so. You will be sent our *Baptism Guide* to prepare you for your *Baptism Class*, and you will be notified of the time.
- h) Church membership may be lost through excommunication if the member refuses to put reasonable effort towards repentance of any certain known sin. The pastors/elders must unanimously agree to excommunicate a church member and will only do so after multiple attempts to counsel the member to live in line with God's Word, the Bible. The pastors must not only instruct the member to put a stop to the sin in question but must also take steps to provide the church member with adequate assistance and support needed to make effort towards overcoming the sin in question (Matthew 18:15-20). Church discipline, therefore, is aimed at restoration (Gal. 6:1, 2)

Our Statement of Faith: <http://thebridgejapan.com/what-we-believe/>

Our Mission and Core Values: <http://thebridgejapan.com/mission-vision-core-values/>