

## MEMBERSHIP COVENANT RENEWAL |

1. Membership is open to everyone who affirms the **church's statement of faith, mission, and core values** and has been baptised into the church consistent with historic, Biblical Christianity.
2. If a person believes in the Gospel and has not been baptised, baptism will be the first step to becoming a member. He/she will be sent a Baptism Guide in preparation for Baptism Class, and will be notified of the time and place of Baptism.
3. Prospective members shall be examined by a pastor and admitted if they meet the criteria stated in this document. Members will be added to the directory for pastoral care. **The elder(s) and Bridge Community Groups** to which the member belongs will also give care.
5. **Members will commit to an active, healthy, and personal Christian life centred on the Gospel of grace** (as opposed to moralism or licentiousness). Membership may be forfeited anytime by notifying a pastor.
6. **Members will commit to growth by regular attendance**, using their gifts, time and resources **to build up one another in love**, and contribute *tithes and offerings* out of their own compulsion. 12 % of our offerings is given to church planting movements each year, while 88 % is used for The Bridge Fellowship Tokyo operational cost.
7. **Members will participate in Gospel Formation Trainings, Bridge Community Groups and Prayer Immersions for their spiritual growth.** Members will seek to cultivate a Gospel culture where niceness is replaced by the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5). Members will cultivate a gentle environment of *grace and truth* so that the church community is beautified by the gospel.
8. **The church is a safe place for honest confessions and heart repentance**, because Jesus has taken our guilt, shame and condemnation. If a member is unrepentant of any certain known sin, the final step of corrective discipleship is exclusion from church fellowship— for the health and witness of the church (Matt. 18:15-20, 1 Cor. 5: 1-13). This is done only after multiple attempts to provide pastoral care and counsel the member to live in line with the biblical Gospel. While the pastor/elder(s) cannot guarantee a perfect process and outcomes, our posture is “love covers a multitude of sins” (1 Peter 4:8). Corrective discipleship, therefore, is first and foremost, aimed at restoration (Gal. 6:1, 2).

**By signing below, I indicate that I have, as a member, agreed to commit to the statements above,**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Ratified and submitted to members on June 1, 2023.*

## MEMBERSHIP PROCESS:

**Membership Interview** — A prospective member meets with an elder/pastor to briefly share their background and stories of God’s converting work in their lives. The prospective member would then sign the statement of faith and membership covenant, and the application would be reviewed by the elder(s)/pastor(s).

- **Elder Recommendation** — The elder(s)/pastor(s) will review the applicant’s testimony. Once the prospective member has received the approval of the elder (s), the candidate’s application proceeds to the next step.
- **Congregational Affirmation** - During a members' meetings, or a church worship gathering, the applicants who desire to be admitted to membership briefly describe how they have come to know the Lord. Votes are not taken from the congregation, but candidates are admitted into membership in the presence of the congregation.

## What does membership look like at The Bridge Fellowship Tokyo?

- **The members of a church should be Christians.** In Acts those who believed the gospel were added to the church (Acts 2:41, 47). Paul letters to churches are letters to Christians (Rom. 1:7, 1 Cor. 1:2). While no church will be able to perfectly discern who is and is not a Christian, our church membership is open only to those who profess credible faith in Christ.

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- **The members of a church should be regular attenders.** Church membership helps churches to know their members well. If someone doesn't regularly attend, the church has no way of knowing how the person is doing spiritually or otherwise.
- **Members view the church as their primary context for fellowship and ministry.** The New Testament is full of "one anothers" that were written to the members of local churches. This is not to say Christians cannot meet Christians from other churches as occasion arises. Still, the New Testament envisions Christians fulfilling these "one another" commands primarily among a concrete group to whom they are accountable (e.g. 1 Cor. 12).
- **The members of a church should have certain biblical privileges and responsibilities.** The members of a local church have the privilege of being admitted to *the Lord's Supper*, while this gracious invitation is extended to visiting believers.

### **They also have the responsibility to:-**

1. Pray for the church.
2. Be in transparent relationships with other church members in which they care for, encourage, rebuke, teach, and learn from each other (Eph. 4:15-16).
3. Submit to the church's leadership and teaching (Heb. 13:17).
4. Promote unity in the body (Eph. 4:3).
5. Financially support the church's ministry (Gal. 6:6).
6. Use the spiritual gifts God has given them to build up the body however they can (1 Cor. 12:7).
7. Seek to contribute to the ongoing mission of TBF in obedience to make disciples of the nations to God's glory (Matt. 28:18-20).