



“Proclaiming the Risen Christ”



## Becoming a member of Stanmore Chapel

### What is membership?

**When God saves, He gathers. And when we trust in the Lord Jesus and become Christians we immediately become part of His new society of people, the Church, which is made up of all Christians everywhere and from every age.**

This new society, the Church, is described in various ways in the Bible – among other things it is called a temple, a body, a bride, a house and a family. All families have shared likenesses and one major purpose of the Church, as God’s family, is to reflect God’s character- e.g. love, goodness, mercy, etc- to the world as individual Christians live out lives together.

In 1 Corinthians 12 (and elsewhere) we see that every Christian has a role to play in the Church. And it is only when Christians use their individual gifts and talents for the benefit of others that the Church grows and is healthy (see also Ephesians 4).

To do this, every Christian needs to be committed to serving and being served by other Christians. The normal way a Christian does this is by committing to belong to a local fellowship of Christians- a local church.

Different Christian traditions have different ways of doing this but, in the Baptist tradition, and at Stanmore Chapel, a Christian shows their commitment to a local fellowship by becoming a Member.

Becoming a Member of Stanmore Chapel does not make you a Christian. It does not necessarily make you a stronger or better Christian. What it does is let everybody know that you are committed to serving and being served by your fellow Christians at Stanmore Chapel and sharing in each other's lives.

It is a public statement that you are committed to supporting the fellowship with your time, your money, your prayers and your energy. It allows you to play a fuller role in the life of the Chapel by participating in all its decisions and it is an acknowledgment that you recognise the role of those appointed leaders to serve you by faithfully applying the Bible to teach, rebuke, correct and train (1 Timothy 3.16).

It is always a great encouragement when someone wants to become a Member. There are three questions that the chapel officers and then the congregation consider:

- **Do you love and trust the Lord Jesus?** (and have you been baptised to obediently demonstrate that?)
- **Are you living as a Christian should**, as taught in the Bible, both publicly and privately?
- **Is Stanmore chapel your primary fellowship?** Do you regularly attend? Have you demonstrated a desire to serve others here? Do you agree with the chapel's statement of faith?

If the answer to these questions is "yes" then we would be love for you to become a Member of Stanmore Chapel.

## Frequently Asked Questions

- **Who can become a Member of Stanmore Chapel?**  
Anybody who is a born again believer in the Lord Jesus Christ (and who has been baptised), who is living a life that is publicly consistent with their faith, who sees Stanmore Chapel as their primary fellowship and is attending regularly should be considering membership. A person considering membership should also agree with the Chapel's statement of faith. (See below).
- **How do I become a Member?**  
We always want to welcome new members at Stanmore Chapel. Please speak to one of the church officers if you would like to be considered for membership. In keeping with Baptist tradition, new members are admitted by a congregational vote
- **Is there a cost to becoming a Member?**  
There is no specific cost to becoming a Member but by doing so you are making a public statement that you are committed to supporting Stanmore chapel with your time, your money and your energy. It is the duty of all Christians to use their resources, including financial resources, to support the teaching of the Bible (see 1 Corinthians 9). As an independent, Baptist congregation Stanmore Chapel has no outside funding. For details about how to give tax-efficiently please speak to Sheila Jarvis.

- **Can I stop being a Member?**

A person can resign their Membership at any time. They can do this by informing one of the officers in writing. Membership can also be withdrawn if a person no longer attends or no longer satisfies the other requirements for Membership. Such a step is rare and is done in love

- **In what ways can I serve at Stanmore Chapel?**

There are many ways to serve at Stanmore Chapel and we always want more help! Please speak to any of the officers to learn more.

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*Further reading.*

What do these Bible passages teach us about church?

Mark 3.31-35; John 17; Acts 2.42-47; Rom 12.3-8; 1 Corinthians 12. 12-31; Gal 6.10; Ephesians 4; Titus; Heb. 10.24-25; 1 Pet 2.9; Revelation 5; Revelation 7.9

*Recommended book:* Why bother with church? Sam Allberry. Published by The Good Book Company ([www.thegoodbook.co.uk](http://www.thegoodbook.co.uk))

## **Our BASIS OF FAITH**

### 1. GOD

There is one God, who exists eternally in three distinct but equal persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God is unchangeable in his holiness, justice, wisdom and love. He is the almighty Creator; Saviour and Judge who sustains and governs all things according to his sovereign will for his own glory.

### 2. THE BIBLE

God has revealed himself in the Bible, which consists of the Old and New Testaments alone. Every word was inspired by God through human authors, so that the Bible as originally given is in its entirety the Word of God, without error and fully reliable in fact and doctrine. The Bible alone speaks with final authority and is always sufficient for all matters of belief and practice.

### 3. THE HUMAN RACE

All men and women, being created in the image of God, have inherent and equal dignity and worth. Their greatest purpose is to obey, worship and love God. As a result of the fall of our first parents, every aspect of human nature has been corrupted and all men and women are without spiritual life, guilty sinners and hostile to God. Every person is therefore under the just condemnation of God and needs to be born again, forgiven and reconciled to God in order to know and please him.

### 4. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

The Lord Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, and lived a sinless life in obedience to the Father. He taught with authority and all his words are true. On the cross he died in the place of sinners, bearing God's punishment for their sin, redeeming them by his blood. He rose from the dead and in his resurrection body ascended into heaven where he is exalted as Lord of all. He intercedes for his people in the presence of the Father.

### 5. SALVATION

Salvation is entirely a work of God's grace and cannot be earned or deserved. It has been accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ and is offered to all in the gospel. God in his love forgives sinners whom he calls, granting them repentance and faith. All who believe in Christ are justified by faith alone, adopted into the family of God and receive eternal life.

## 6. THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit has been sent from heaven to glorify Christ and to apply his work of salvation. He convicts sinners, imparts spiritual life and gives a true understanding of the Scriptures. He indwells all believers, brings assurance of salvation and produces increasing likeness to Christ. He builds up the Church and empowers its members for worship, service and mission.

## 7. THE CHURCH

The universal Church is the body of which Christ is the head and to which all who are saved belong. It is made visible in local churches, which are congregations of believers who are committed to each other for the worship of God, the preaching of the Word, the administering of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; for pastoral care and discipline, and for evangelism. The unity of the body of Christ is expressed within and between churches by mutual love, care and encouragement. True fellowship between churches exists only where they are faithful to the gospel.

## 8. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

Baptism and the Lord's Supper have been given to the churches by Christ as visible signs of the gospel. Baptism is a symbol of union with Christ and entry into his Church but does not impart spiritual life. The Lord's Supper is a commemoration of Christ's sacrifice offered once for all and involves no change in the bread and wine. All its blessings are received by faith.

## 9. THE FUTURE

The Lord Jesus Christ will return in glory. He will raise the dead and judge the world in righteousness. The wicked will be sent to eternal punishment and the righteous will be welcomed into a life of eternal joy in fellowship with God. God will make all things new and will be glorified forever.

(The Basis of Faith of The Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches)