

Faith, Membership, and Discipleship: What We Believe

A systematic, interactive study of our membership standards
Community Presbyterian Church, Ventura

I. Introduction: Participation and Membership

- A. Who is welcome to participate in the life of the church?

- B. What is the difference between participation and active membership in the church?

- C. Why is there a need to define what we mean by *faith*, *membership*, and *discipleship*?

II. Faith and Active Church Membership

- A. One becomes an active member through:
 - 1.
 - 2.

B. What is the church?

C. What is faith?

What is faith *not*?

D. The “essential tenets” of the Christian faith.

1. Which two or three of the fourteen doctrines (listed below) do you think are “most essential”, according to your understanding of Scripture? (i.e. if removed, would most severely affect the nature of the Christian faith) Explain.

2. Which of the doctrines (listed below) are most difficult for you to understand? What do you find difficult?

For those interested in further study of these doctrines: 1) note selected Scripture passages listed, 2) use the attached “Index to *The Book of Confessions*” to find where they are addressed in *The Book of Confessions* (This collection of creeds and confessions is available through the church office).

- The Trinity: Deut 6.4; Jn 8.58-59; Acts 5.1-4; 2 Cor 13.14 (Index: “Trinity”)
- Lordship of Jesus Christ: Is 9.6-7; Philippians 2.9-11 (Index: “Jesus Christ”)
- Jesus Christ’s dual nature: John 1.1, 14; Philippians 2.6-8 (Index “Jesus Christ”)
- Jesus crucified, dead, buried: Mk 15.21-47; I Cor 15.1-4 (Index “Cross/Atonement”)
- Forgiveness through Christ: Is 53.4-6, 10; Lk 24.46-48 (Index: “Cross/Atonement”)
- Jesus’ resurrection: Lk 24.1-53; I Cor 15.12-20 (Index: “Resurrection”)
- Salvation through Christ alone: Acts 4.10-12; Jn 14.5-7 (Index: “Cross/Atonement”)
- Salvation by grace alone: Rom 3.21-26; Eph 2.8-10 (Index: “Cross/Atonement”)
- The Person & work of the Holy Spirit: Jn 15.26-27; 16.12-15 (Index: “Holy Spirit”)
- The Bible: Ps 19.1-14; 2 Tim 3.14-16 (Index: “Scripture”)
- The church: Gen 12.1-3; Eph 2.19-22; 3.10 (Index: “Church”)
- The call to holy living: Lev 11.44-45; Rom 12.1-2 (Index: “Christian Life”)
- The call to make disciples of all nations: Is 49.6; Mt 28.18-20 (Index: “Mission”)
- The return of Christ: Zech 8.1-8; 9.14-17; Rev 21.1-6, 22-27 (Index: “Future”)

II. Faith as Response

A. What is active church membership?

B. What are the practical commitments of membership?

C. How does faith inform and transform our lives?

D. What are the two sides of Christian discipleship?

Why is it impossible to have one without the other?

F. According to Scripture, what are the six ways the old (sinful) nature is expressed?

What are five ways the new nature is expressed?

Ask the Holy Spirit to examine your life and reveal what he desires to put off and put on:

Put off...	Put on...
------------	-----------

How will you yield these areas to God?

Because none of us is free from sin, what do we constantly need

1. from God?

2. from the church?

III. The “Statement of Faith and Intent”:

A. What am I affirming that I believe?

B. By faith in the grace and power of God,

1. *I commit to...*

2. *I endeavor to...*

3. *I am requesting my church family to...*

4. *I am rejecting...*

5. *I make it my desire and desire and intention to...*

- C. In light of my study of the membership covenant, I would like an opportunity to discuss further the following before signing the Reaffirmation of Faith and Intent:

**Lay Leader's Reaffirmation of Faith and Intent
Community Presbyterian Church, Ventura**

I understand CPC's membership covenant articulated in *Faith, Membership, and Discipleship: What We Believe*, and reaffirm the biblical Faith they proclaim and my intent to live and serve in keeping with these standards, by the grace and power of God.

(sign name)

(print name)

(date)

**The Mission of Community Presbyterian Church:
*To make disciples who know, worship, and proclaim Jesus as Lord***

APPENDIX B ~ INDEX TO THE BOOK OF CONFESSIONS

TOPIC	NICENE APOSTLES' CREED	SCOTS CONFESSION	HEIDELBERG CATECHISM	SECOND HELVETIC CONFESSION	WESTMINSTER CONFESSION	WESTMINSTER SHORTER CATECHISM	WESTMINSTER LARGER CATECHISM	BARMEN DECLARATION	CONFESSION OF 1967	A BRIEF STATEMENT OF FAITH
Nature of God		3.010		5.015	6.011-0.12	7.004	7.117			II. 5-6, 28-32, 40-71, 79-80
Creator of God	1.1; 2.1		4.026	5.032	6.022-0.23	7.009	7.125		9.160	II. 29-32
Providence			4.027-.028	5.029-.031	6.014-.015 6.024-0.30	7.008-.011, 0.12	7.128-.130			II. 40-51
Trinity		3.010	4.025	5.015-.019	6.013	7.006	7.119-.121			II. 2-5, 7-8, 27-28, 52-53, 72-73, 80
Evil				5.041-.044	6.027					II. 33-39
Human Nature		3.02-03	4.006	5.034, .045	6.023	7.010	7.127		9.170	II. 8, 29-40, 55-57
Sin			4.005-.008	5.036-.039	6.031-.036	7.013-.019	7.131-.139		9.12-14	II. 33-39, 65, 69-71
Covenant		3.04-.05			6.037-.042	7.020	7.140-.146		9.18-19	II. 40-51
Jesus Christ	1.2; 2.2	3.06-.08	4.029-.036	5.062-.079	6.043-.050	7.021-.026	7.146-.155	8.10-.15	9.08-.11	II. 7-28
Cross, Atonement	1.2; 2.2	3.090	4.037-.044	5.071-.076	6.047	7.027	7.156-.16			II. 19-22
Resurrection	1.2; 2.2	3.100	4.045-.057	5.073-.076		7.028	7.161-.162			II. 23-26
Election		3.080	4.052-.054	5.052-.061	6.016-.021 (cf. 6.055-.058)	7.020	7.123			II. 41-51
Holy Spirit	1.3; 2.3	3.120	4.053	5.018	6.051-.054	7.029	7.168		9.200	II. 52-79
Justification			4.060	5.106-.111	6.068-.073	7.033	7.18-.181, .187			II. 54
Faith			4.061-.064	5.112-.123	6.078-.080		7.182-.183			II. 5, 7, 27, 52, 77-79
Repentance			4.088-.090	5.093-.094	6.081-.086	7.087	7.186			II. 33-40
Scripture		3.190		5.001-.014	6.001-0.010	7.002-.003	7.113-.115	8.11-.12	9.27-.30	II. 58-61
Prayer			4.116-.129	5.218-.222	6.114-.115, .117	7.098-.107	7.288-.306		9.500	II. 66-67, 76
Sacraments		3.21-.23	4.065-.068	5.169-.184	6.149-.153	7.091-.093	7.271-.274			II. 62-63
Baptism			4.069-.074	5.185-.192	6.154-.160	7.094-.095	7.275-.277		9.510	II. 62
Lord's Supper			4.075-.085	5.193-.210	6.161-.168	7.096-.097	7.28-.285		9.520	II. 63
Christian Life		3.12-.14	4.001-.002	5.112-.123	6.075-.077	7.030-.036 7.039-0.81 7.001	7.175-.193 7.201-.258, 7.111	8.13-.15	9.21-.26	II. 54-79
Worship			4.096-.098 4.103	5.020-.028 5.211-.231, 0.240-0.242	(cf. 6.191-.193)	7.045-.062	7.213-.231			II. 54-64, 80
Church	1.3; 2.3	3.05, .16, .18	4.054	5.124-.141	6.140-.145		7.171-.175	8.16-.21		II. 54-76
Mission					6.187-.190			8.25-.27	9.31-.47	II. 54-76
Church & Civil Government		3.240		5.252-.258	6.127-.130			8.22-.24	9.17, .25	II. 69-71
Future		3.17, .25	4.057-.058		6.180-.182	7.037-.038	7.192-0.200		9.11, .26	II. 72-80

Developed by M. McCoy Franklin, Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Auburn, Alabama