

CHAMBERSBURG FIRST Church of God

Prospective Membership Class



AN INTRODUCTION TO MEMBERSHIP

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PREFACE

CHAMBERSBURG FIRST Church of God exists to serve as a tool that God uses for *changing lives*. Growing crowds, expanding facilities, and a recognizable name are meaningless unless people are truly encountering God and being changed by that encounter.

At CFCOG our regular attendance is greater than our “membership” but that’s okay. In fact, we like it that way and expect it to stay that way. There are people that come who are exploring their faith and checking out what church is all about. These people are always welcome to attend and participate at whatever level they feel comfortable, but in general, the ministry of life transformation is usually accomplished by those who are fully committed to knowing and growing their relationship in Christ.

In the following pages we will examine the philosophies and procedures of CFCOG. It is our hope that some will read these pages, catch the vision, and fully commit themselves to the ministry of this body. It is also our expectation that others will read these pages, realize this is not the place for them, and continue their search elsewhere. We realize that not everyone will have the same philosophy of ministry, theological belief, or desire to influence our local community and the world. That’s okay. This “Introduction to Membership” is designed to let people know what we’re all about before they make the commitment of becoming a member.

While we value every attendee we choose to distinguish between members and non-members for several reasons.

First, we believe it is biblical. While the Bible never specifically mentions the word membership, it does show that people were committed to one another in deep spiritual relationships at the local level. Many New Testament books first addressed specific congregations of people who dealt with many of the same issues we face today.

Second, we believe it is valuable to the individual. Committing to one group of people creates accountability. It protects the individual from deviating into improper theology and gives a sense of connection and ownership. It also assists the process of transformation by submitting to the spiritual authority of others.

It is our hope that some will read these pages, catch the vision, and fully commit themselves to the ministry of this body.

Third, we believe it is beneficial to the body. Formal membership is one tool by which the church can evaluate the process of transformation. As people grow in their faith they show deeper levels of commitment and service. Membership is one way to measure that process.

Finally, we believe it is practical to the organization. While voting is rare at CFCOG, there are limited decisions that need to be carried out by those who form the core of the body. Membership provides a standard by which this can be done.

While becoming a member is not difficult, it does require attendance at one of the membership classes and the satisfactory completion of a short questionnaire to be filled out with some biographical information and a testimony explaining your faith journey.

The only requirement that we require for membership at CFCOG is evidence of your personal commitment to faith in Jesus Christ. Of course, if this commitment is an uncertainty in your life our desire is to help you understand what that means and how to make that commitment. Our main desire is for you to know Jesus Christ.

As for the growing part, we are all in that process. Whether we have been members for 50 years or 5 months, we are all in the growing stages – growing in our knowledge of God, his Word, and his purposes for our lives.

Thank you for your interest in CFCOG and the contribution you have already made to this church. If you have any questions that are not answered in this “Introduction” the pastoral staff is always ready to help you in any way.

SECTION ONE

Why Do We Exist?

CHAMBERSBURG FIRST Church of God exists to serve as a tool that God uses for *changing lives*.

Our service includes:

- Creating the places and environments for meaningful worship experiences
- By applying Biblical Truth to life and relationships
- By participating in fellowship with other believers
- By serving others in the body of Christ
- Engaging the culture with the life-changing gospel message

Our Mission is to provide the leadership, the environment, and the resources for every member to effectively participate in fulfilling the purposes of ministry.

SECTION TWO

What Do We Believe?

CFCOG Doctrinal Statement

THE BIBLE

We believe the Word of God is enclosed in both the Old and New Testaments. They are inspired of God, in whole and in part. They are error-free in the original writings and are the supreme authority of faith and practice for the believer in Jesus Christ. We further believe that there is but one true interpretation of any biblical passage with different practical applications. (Psalm 119:160; II Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Hebrews 1:1-2, 4:12)

GOD

We believe there is but one living and true God who is infinite, eternal and unchangeable. We further believe that God is one in essence while existing in three distinct persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Though each person of the Godhead possesses precisely the same nature and attributes, each functions differently in respect to God's purposes and dealings with man. (Deuteronomy 4:39, 6:4; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)

THE FATHER

The first person of the Trinity orders and directs all things according to his own purpose, pleasure and grace. The Father is sovereign in creation, providence and redemption. He has decreed all things that come to pass for his own glory. He graciously involves himself in the affairs of men, hears and answers prayer, and saves from sin and death all who come to him through Jesus Christ. (I Chronicles 29:11; Psalm 103:19; Matthew 6:9; John 5:19-24; Ephesians 1:3-6)

THE SON

The second person of the Trinity is both the eternal Son of God and virgin-born Son of man. Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, surrendered nothing of his deity during his earthly life. Having led a sinless life, he satisfied the Father's justice concerning sin by his substitutionary death. We believe in his bodily resurrection, his physical ascension and his visible return to earth to establish his earthly kingdom. (John 1:14-18; Acts 1:11; Romans 3:24-26; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 2:16-18; Revelation 20:11-15)

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The third person of the Trinity executes the will of God in the world of men. It is the Holy Spirit who applies the salvation that Jesus Christ secured through his death on the cross. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. It is the Holy Spirit who empowers the church

to live a lifestyle pleasing to God, endowing it with special gifts that equip believers to accomplish distinct ministries, planned beforehand by God the Father. (John 3:1-8 & 15-16, 15:4-15; 1 Corinthians 12; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 1:13-14, 5:18-21)

HUMANKIND

We believe that humankind was directly created in the image of God to enjoy his fellowship and to fulfill God's will on earth. Through the first humans, Adam and Eve, humanity sinned by a voluntary act of personal disobedience to the will of God; as a result, all people are spiritually dead and subject to the certainty of physical death. The fall of humanity was a non-repeatable historical fact, the effects of which are transmitted to all persons, each of whom is born with a sinful nature and sins habitually in thought, word and deed. (Genesis 1:26-27, 2:7, 3:3-4; Romans 1:18-32, 3:10-23; Ephesians 2:1-3)

SALVATION

We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins as the only sufficient, substitutionary sacrifice. All who believe in him are declared justified by the Father on the grounds of Jesus' death and resurrection. All who receive the Lord Jesus Christ by grace through faith have been regenerated by and baptized in the Holy Spirit. They become, thereby, the children of God forever and members of the one true church, the universal Body of Christ. This salvation will result in righteous living and good works as the believer submits his or her life to the control of the Holy Spirit who directs the life of the believer in harmony with the Word of God. (John 1:12, 3:16, 5:24, 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:21-26, 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 1:7, 2:8-10; Titus 3:4-7; Hebrews 10:10-12; 1 John 5:11-13)

THE CHURCH

We believe that all who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit belong to the one true universal church and are directed by the Scriptures to associate themselves in local, visible churches. The local church is the only scriptural representation of Christ's invisible church and consists only of regenerated believers. The local church is autonomous in its government and recognizes its own members for biblical offices and leadership positions. We observe the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper and the practice of feet washing during the Holy Week Service. The purpose of the church is to fulfill the mandate of Jesus Christ to "go and make disciples of all nations." (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:41-47, 4:1-16; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29; Ephesians 2:19-22, 4:11-13; Hebrews 10:23-25; 1 Peter 5:1-3)

FUTURE

We believe that God in his own time and in his own way will bring an appropriate end to the earth. This will include Jesus Christ's bodily and visible return to earth. In which the righteous will receive an eternal relationship in his presence and the unrighteous will be condemned to an eternity of judgment. (Matthew 24-25; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; Revelation 20:1-4)

What Do We Believe?

CFCOG Core Values

1. We **VALUE** obedience to Jesus Christ in all situations.
2. We **VALUE** each individual as one who matters to God.
3. We **VALUE** dependence on and confidence in God's ability to do more than we can ask or imagine; therefore, we are willing to take risks and expect that God will surprise us.
4. We **VALUE** Christ honoring, culturally relevant worship.
5. We **VALUE** evangelistic outreach ministry to those who do not yet belong to Christ and the church.
6. We **VALUE** each believer growing in Christ likeness and serving in ministry based on their spiritual gifts.
7. We **VALUE** vital reproducing congregations.
8. We **VALUE** trained, committed, and competent leaders (pastors and lay persons).
9. We **VALUE** Christian unity within a diverse body of faith.
10. We **VALUE** accountability among believers and congregations.

SECTION THREE

Who Are We?

National

CFCOG is a member of The Churches of God, General Conference (www.cggc.org).

The Churches of God, General Conference began in 1825 as a result of the labors, revivals and ideas of John Winebrenner, a German Reformed pastor who ministered in and around Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

During the late 1820's, Winebrenner came to new theological conclusions about the nature and government of the Church, the importance of the regenerating experience of the new birth and the ordinances (Believer's Baptism by immersion, Lord's Supper and Feet Washing). He reaffirmed the belief that the Bible was the "only authoritative rule of faith and practice."

In 1830 he joined five other "teaching elders," or ministers, in central Pennsylvania in forming an "eldership" for the purpose of adopting a system of cooperation. As Churches of God settlers moved west, they established new churches and elderships in western Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa and Michigan. By 1900 the denomination had spread to Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma. Separate elderships had also been formed for churches in Maryland and West Virginia. The California Eldership began in 1948. Congregations from the Church of God chartered in Mississippi became the Mid-South Conference in 1983. Churches of God once existing in Maine, Washington, Oregon, Colorado and other states have ceased to function. A General Eldership was formed in 1845 to provide for cooperation between local elderships. Since the 1960's, the trend has been to call judicatories "conferences" rather than "elderships" in recognition that representation is no longer limited to "elders."

Churches of God periodicals, *The Gospel Publisher* (1835-1845) and *The Church Advocate* (1846-present), have played a key role in distributing information about and for the Churches of God and have provided forum for the discussion of important issues. Two other publications have had a long and distinguished history, *The Gem*, a Sunday school paper, began in 1867. The *Workman* was first published as a monthly lesson booklet in 1879 and became a quarterly in 1890. The denomination maintained its own printing establishment, Central Publishing House, in Harrisburg from 1901 to 1979.

Foreign mission work was established at Uluberia, India, in 1898 and at Bogra (now Bangladesh) in 1905. Project HELP was begun in Haiti in 1967 and a ministry to Navajos began in New Mexico in 1976. Today the CGGC missions work is active in Bangladesh, Brazil, Haiti, Kenya, Moldova, Sweden, Thailand, Venezuela, and USA-Haitian, Asian Pacific, Southwest, Hispanic.

Findlay College was incorporated in 1882 and opened for classes as a Churches of God college in 1886. Today the college known as University of Findlay is an independent, private liberal arts university. Winebrenner Seminary began as a graduate department of theology in 1942 and was chartered as a separate institution in 1960. Winebrenner exists today as the denominational theological seminary. Barkeyville Academy (1881-1906) in Pennsylvania and Fort Scott Collegiate Institute (1902-1917) in Kansas are other educational institutions once supported by the denomination.

Church camping had its start in 1931 with the first of three annual General Eldership camps. Within a few years several local elderships began to hold their own summer camping programs. Today most local elderships or conferences have camping programs. Many of them own and operate their own facilities, some on a year-round basis.

Three lay organizations have played an important part in the recent history of the denomination. The Churches of God Youth Advance (CGYA) was formed in 1947, the Women's Christian Service Council (WCSC) in 1953 and the Churches of God Winebrenner Brotherhood (CGWB) in 1967.

The name of the denomination has changed several times. It was first known as the *Church of God*, in keeping with Winebrenner's view that "there is but one true Church, namely: the Church of God." The phrase *In North America* was added by the first General Eldership in 1845. In 1896 the name was made plural and became *Churches of God in North America*. In 1974 two changes were made. The phrase "In North America" was eliminated in recognition of the Churches of God members in India, Bangladesh and Haiti. "General Eldership" was changed to "General Conference" in recognition that delegates were no longer limited to "elders." Thus, the correct name of the denomination today is *Churches of God, General Conference*.

Today the Churches of God, General Conference is made up of eight regional conferences: Allegheny Region Conference, California Eldership, Eastern Regional Conference, Great Lakes Conference, Haiti Conference, Mid-South Conference, Midwest Region Conference and Western Region Conference.

The Churches of God, General Conference is a Pennsylvania corporation organized and existing under the act of April 18, 1867, P.L. 1295 and subsequent charter amendments.

The Administrative Office and operational headquarters of the Churches of God, General Conference is located at 700 East Melrose Avenue in Findlay, Ohio, in the Center for Christian Ministries, constructed by the Churches of God in 1981.

Who Are We?

Regional

The Churches of God, General Conference is made up of eight regional conferences: Allegheny Region Conference, California Eldership, Eastern Regional Conference, Great Lakes Conference, Haiti Conference, Mid-South Conference, Midwest Region Conference and Western Region.

CFCOG is a member of the Eastern Regional Conference, Churches of God (www.ercog.org) involving 140 churches in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York and Virginia. The ERC membership exceeds 14,000 and we have nearly 300 pastors who are committed to serving Christ and His Church.

The ERC serves the churches in the Eastern Region through the ministry of 9 commissions:

- Church and Pastor - The Church and Pastor Commission exists for the purpose of caring for all pastors and congregations of the Eastern Regional Conference of the Churches of God.
- Church Planting – This Commission works with existing churches and pioneers in the start up of new churches. A current initiative is for the starting of 20 new churches by 2020 (See our 20/20 initiative).
- Church Renewal - The Commission on Church Renewal is charged with the mission of helping the churches and pastors of the Eastern Regional Conference find and maintain spiritual vitality that will motivate and empower them for effective ministry.
- Church Vocations - The Commission on Church Vocations exists to encourage persons to respond to God's call to church vocations, to counsel persons sensing God's call and guide them through appropriate educational programs, evaluate persons for readiness for ministry, recommend person for credentials, provide financial aid to persons under its care, and encourage the lifelong learning of all persons in vocational ministry.
- Discipleship - The Commission on Discipleship for the ERC desires to both inspire and challenge every church in the ERC to provide intentional ministry that will lead its members further and deeper in their walk with Christ and to be better disciples. All of the other goals and visions of our conference, (be it to plant churches, win others for Christ, build better churches, etc;) begin to bear fruit only when we, as individuals are rooted and established in God, in His love, His word, and His mercy.
- Leadership - The mission of the ERC Leadership Commission is to facilitate leadership development across the conference and in the local church among pastors and people.
- Missions – This Commission exists to help districts organize events to emphasize missions and lift up the global outreach ministries of the CGGC through prayer and financial assistance.
- Evangelism – it's primary purpose to equip and encourage the local church in doing the vital work of evangelism.

Who Are We?

Local

CHAMBERSBURG FIRST Church of God (www.cfcog.cc) was first established in 1850 by the fellowship of several families who met together to worship and serve God. After meeting in homes for several years, the first church building was purchased in 1858 on the northwest corner of Queen and Water Streets. On July 30, 1864, this building was burned during the Burning of Chambersburg by the confederate troops. The church was rebuilt but then as it grew, new property was purchased on the corner of Second and McKinley Streets in 1894. The “new” church continued to be blessed with growth and in 1964 purchased the property at 339 Lincoln Way East. The continual growth at this location resulted in several building projects and eventually the relocation to the current location at Grand Point Road.

CFCOG is a member of the denomination known as *Churches of God, General Conference*. This is a solid, evangelical denomination with its ministry base in Findlay, Ohio. Approximately 400 congregations are located throughout the United States and Global communities.

Each Church of God values the cooperative ministry of the denomination but seeks to maintain its own personality as it reflects its communities culture and history. At CFCOG we are proud to be a part of the growing community in Franklin County, PA. We are a “neighborhood” church committed to a ministry that provides a place for all people, regardless of age, race, gender, status to discover the life change that comes from a personal relationship with Christ.

Our past reflects a rich heritage. Our present reflects a vital health. Our future reflects an open slate in our journey of helping others discover the path to a changed life through Christ. Currently we offer multiple Sunday services in multiple venues to accommodate our growth while keeping the smaller and intimate gatherings in place. The ministry of CFCOG is nothing less than a great adventure! We believe God is currently adding to our membership those who he has planned to be a significant part of this adventure.

CFCOG Leadership Structure

Our leadership structure consists of an Administrative Council that meets on a monthly basis for fellowship, prayer, development, and business.

The Administrative Council is made up of five elders, six deacons, three deaconesses, five trustees. each serving with term limitations of three years.

The Elders serve with the pastor as the spiritual leaders of the church and are responsible for spiritual caregiving and counsel. They also serve as the team responsible for staff relations.

The deacons serve to oversee the financial operations, church and community benevolent needs, and certain staff benefits.

The deaconesses serve to fulfill some of the practical ministries in order to free the pastoral staff for other focused ministry.

The trustees serve as the property management team. They see that all church property and facility are kept in proper repair.

CFCOG employs a ministry staff to lead the pastoral and administrative functions of the ministry. The current staff includes:

- Lawrence Metzler - Senior Pastor
- Kevin Elworth – United Worship Pastor
- Gene Reineman – Student Pastor
- Cindy Magners – Assistant to Student Pastor
- Kristy Bowers – Children’s Pastor
- Jodi Zeis – Children’s Ministry Assistant
- Chad Chute – Discipleship Pastor
- Chris Clugh – Worship Arts Director
- Brian Miller – Worship Arts Production Manager
- Andrea Swisher – Worship Arts Associate
- Lester Swope - Pastor of Congregational Care
- Jenny Plum – Office Administrator
- Tony Diehl - Church Administrator
- Dina Hammond – Custodial Services
- Rick Lindamuth – Facilities Services

SECTION THREE

Where do we go from here?

Salvation

The church is intended to be a body of believers that submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The centerpiece of anyone who desires to join with other believers is the fact that they believe. A person who is not sure about faith, who has not yet made a decision regarding Jesus, or who is still uncommitted in regard to the teachings of the Bible is more than welcome to attend CFCOG. They are welcome to search for understanding in our services and in our home groups. They are also welcome to involve themselves in meaningful relationships throughout the ministry of our church. However, the church is comprised of committed believers, those who have decided to follow Jesus and to live in obedience to his teachings. For this reason it is necessary to explore the faith of those who desire to join the church. It is not our intention to offend anyone by asking questions regarding what they believe, their experiences from the past, and their current understanding of the gospel. However, we must gain a basic knowledge of someone's story before they can be acknowledged as a member of CFCOG. We think of salvation in two ways—as a point and as a process, neither can be excluded from the life of a true believer and both are expected in those who desire membership.

The Point of Salvation

Every process must have a beginning and salvation is no different. This beginning is what some may call a born again experience, conversion, or accepting Christ. Whatever we call it there must be a time in each individual's life in which they come to grips with Jesus Christ on a personal level. For many this event is a memorable experience that is never forgotten in time, date, or location. For others this event is less specific but just as much real. Especially for some who grew up hearing the message of Jesus, faith did not emerge in a sudden moment; instead, as they grew, so did their faith. However dramatic or meek a person's story, the issue is not how one came to believe, but rather that someone can say that they do currently believe.

From our understanding of the Bible, as explained in our doctrinal statement, we conclude that the following is true for every individual.

- A meaningful and intimate relationship with God is the highest purpose for humanity. Only in that relationship can meaning, purpose, and lasting happiness be found.
- Each one of us is a sinner and because of that sin we are separated from God.
- That separation cannot be bridged by any human effort or ability.
- Humanity is therefore without hope.
- However, because of God's love, he has made a way in which humanity can be in a right

relationship with him.

- Through the gift of Jesus and because of his death, burial, and resurrection, humanity can come into a relationship with God through faith.
- Faith is then expressed by an inward dependence and outward devotion to God.

HAS THERE BEEN A POINT IN YOUR LIFE IN WHICH YOU HAVE PRIVATELY ACCEPTED GOD'S GIFT OF SALVATION AND PUBLICLY ACKNOWLEDGED YOUR FAITH? IF NOT, HERE'S HOW:

- Confess your need as a sinner.
- Believe that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross and rose from the grave.
- Commit to live your life in grateful response to what God has done.

The Process of Salvation

From a human perspective, the point of salvation is the beginning of the salvation process. Any person who is in this process is guaranteed an eternity with God. However, no one who truly believes in God's gift of salvation would stop at one single decision. The true result of a point of salvation is a changed life- one that desires to become more like Jesus every day.

If salvation were simply a point, there would be no need for a church. Our only focus would be convincing people to make a one-time decision, coaxing them into praying a prayer, or kneeling at an altar. However, salvation is more than a single event. It is a lifelong process, a process that does not conclude until a person is ultimately transformed in the eternal presence of Jesus. For that reason our concern is not only that someone prays the right prayer, but also that they begin to allow God's grace to enact authentic change in them. We want them to start with a prayer and a public proclamation, but it cannot stop there.

The process of salvation is not an easy one. Old habits are overcome. New habits are formed. Attitudes are changed. And a different perspective is formed. Without exception people fail. Yet the intent remains the same, to participate with the Holy Spirit in the process of forming a new heart and living a new life.

Throughout history these two aspects of salvation have, at times, been separated from each other. Some focus so much on the point of salvation that people confuse it as simply a past event, like an item to be checked off a list. Others focus so much on the process, that they almost forget about the beginning point. Our hope is to live in a healthy balance between the two, assisting people in beginning a relationship with Christ and continuing to aid them as they follow him the rest of their lives. These beliefs lead us to a key question: Have you experienced a point of salvation, and are you experiencing the process of salvation? If the answer is "No" to either of these questions we encourage you to set an appointment with one of the pastors.

Commitment

Financial Support

Giving is a vital part of our walk with Christ. In the New Testament, Jesus spent more time teaching about money than about any other thing because it is the one thing that competes for our hearts more than anything else. The bible says that Jesus wants to be the owner of your heart and that's just part of the reason that he teaches us to be generous and give.

Our goal for you is to take that challenge that God offers: test him and see if he doesn't bless you. You'll be amazed at the things that God begins to do in your life because you are honoring Him and not holding this part of your heart back.

Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this, says the Lord Almighty and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. – Malachi 3:10

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. – Matthew 6:21

If you consider Chambersburg First Church of God your home church or you'd like to financially support the work of this ministry, we want to make it as easy as possible for you to contribute to what God is doing here.

Giving Options are as follows:

- Cash contributions in the weekly offerings
- Cash contributions in the weekly offerings using the "issued envelope" system. The envelope system allows you to receive an annual giving statement for charitable contributions. The envelopes can be received by checking the connection tab box in the weekly bulletin or by calling the church office to request them.
- Cash contributions in the weekly offerings using the "pew envelope" system. These envelopes are available in the sanctuary pews

General Fund: Monies given for general operations and ministry expenses

Building Fund: Monies given for building debt reduction future building projects

Missions Fund: Monies given for the support of local and global missionaries

Deacon's Fund: Monies given for the support of hardship cases for members of the congregation and community

- Online giving (credit card/pay pal)
 - Give
 - Give Now

Application for Membership

To confirm that the requirements for membership have been met we ask each prospective member to fill out a “prospective membership information” form. This paper will serve as an official application to membership at CHAMBERSBURG FIRST Church of God. No person is considered a member until these papers are completed and approved.

Beside personal information, the membership papers ask for a description of three different aspects of a person’s faith, the point of your salvation, the process of salvation, and your understanding of the essentials of salvation.

1. Describe the circumstances and events regarding your point of salvation: This description may be of a specific time or place for some people while it may cover several years for others. The issue is that a person can confirm that they do in fact believe in the saving grace of Jesus Christ and it’s application to their lives.
2. Describe how God has changed you through the process of salvation: God’s presence in our lives produces fruit. No one can accept the salvation of Jesus Christ and then remain the same. Evidence of his presence is found in every aspect of life. Acknowledging the process of salvation admits that one is not currently perfect, but is being changed by the Holy Spirit. A description of this process is not a list of sins that have been overcome; it is a story of one’s life since they have accepted Christ describing success and failures.
3. Finally, this description should include a short explanation of the gospel as understood at the point of salvation and any circumstances or events that led to their making a decision to become a follower of Jesus.

In the inquiry about baptism, please indicate your experience of baptism (infant, child, believer’s, etc.) If you have not been baptized please indicate “No.” Baptism is not required for membership. However, if a member has not been baptized we hope that in time they will understand the biblical teaching on baptism and take that step as a public profession of their faith in Christ.

Another part of the “application” permits you to share briefly about your “church experience.” If you have not previously attended a church or were not previously active in a church please leave these lines blank. Again, prior church experience is not a requirement for membership.

You will also be asked to share what you believe are your gifts and abilities that you could use in the local church. You may already know what these are or you may discover those as you participate and grow with us.

Finally we ask for you to indicate your agreement with the CFCOG doctrinal statement and membership covenant. Please give an indication of your agreement followed by your signature and the date.

We greatly value your interest in the membership of CFCOG and will gladly answer any questions you have that are not addressed in this introduction. Thank you for considering membership with us.

The Membership Process

1. Attend the membership class
2. Complete the Prospective Membership Information form and drop it off at the Welcome Center. Your completed form will be reviewed by one of the Elders and the Senior Pastor. Upon satisfactory completion you will be recommended for membership at the Administrative Council Meeting.
3. Attend and participate in the New Members Reception during a worship service. Notification of the date and time of the service will be given at least three weeks in advance. This reception will include the following:
 - Introduction by the Pastor
 - Charge and Membership Covenant led by the Senior Pastor

As a member of the Chambersburg First Church of God, I accept the Bible as the inspired Word of God and I promise to follow it faithfully and make it my guide for faith and conduct. I affirm that I have received Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. I also affirm that I will live a godly lifestyle in conduct and attitude. I promise to patiently submit to the order and unity of the church. I promise as a member of the Chambersburg First Church of God to support the church faithfully by my presence, my gifts and talents, and by giving regularly to the ministry of the church.

- Acknowledgment by the congregation in a corporate prayer
- Declaration of Membership
- Celebration by the congregation!

Please note: You will be received into the membership in the service that you normally attend.

