

Church Membership: A Feeling of Belonging

*“For every living soul belongs to me...”
Ezekiel 18:4*

Dear Friends,

Someone asked me why I was always inviting new folks ... and some who have been around for a while... to join the church. There are two reasons: The first is pastoral care. When you are a member of the church you are a member of my flock and as the pastor, I have a responsibility to watch over you...not in a “big brother” intrusive way but in a manner that shows you are a valued member of our church family. I want to be there to have a prayer with you before surgery, I want to reach out to you if I haven’t seen you in worship for a while, I want to encourage you to use your talents and gifts for service, I want to celebrate the milestones in your life and be there for the challenging times in your life. As your pastor, I can and should do those things. If you are not a member, not in our flock, I can do those things, but I might be over-stepping my role. If you were absent from worship for a while, who am I to question it? So, the first reason for church membership is accountability.

The second has to do with the sense of “belonging.” Isn’t it a blessing to have a community of like-minded folks you can experience the highs and lows of life with? As trite as it sounds, I have always wanted my congregations to be like the popular sitcom Cheers....“a place where everybody knows your name.”

Of course I want people to have a vital faith experience, and to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, and I believe we do that best when we are in the church! So...to join New Wappetaw, we don't require “classes.” I prefer to meet with folks individually. I have a nice information packet that explains everything one needs to know about being a Presbyterian and being a member of the local church. Church is relational, so a personal meeting here at the church or at your home is important.

When you feel the spirit leading you to join New Wappetaw, you will meet with the session in my study before worship. One third of the elders, in our case three, would be present to receive you into the church. Folks come by transfer of letter, reaffirmation of faith or by profession of faith and baptism. The day you join, we introduce you to the congregation during the announcements, and we take your picture for the on-line directory. All you have to do is give me a call to set up a meeting. The invitation is always there; it’s up to you to initiate the meeting.

Have a blessed week,
Mike

Upcoming Events

Mar 16...Church workday for building and grounds
Mar 23...Water Missions “Walk for Water”
Mar 28...Maundy Thursday Service, Communion
Mar 30...Wisteria Parade