

Report on updating The Historical Roll of Membership

Regulations concerning Membership:

5.8.2 The members of a local church who are entitled to vote at all meetings are persons in full membership, whose names are on the roll of that church. With the consent of these, adherents who contribute regularly to the support of the church may vote on temporal matters.

5.10.1 It shall be the duty of the Session to have the oversight of:

- (1) the admission of persons into full membership, their removal, and the granting of certificates of transfer;
- (2) the conduct of members, with power to exercise discipline (Manual 2016, Polity)

Manual 2016, Bylaws:

3.1 General

The congregation consists of

- (a) members;
- (b) full members;
- (c) adherents; and
- (d) members of the order of ministry whose names have been added to the congregation's membership roll.

The process for adding the name of a member of the order of ministry to the congregation's membership roll is set out in section B.3.5.2 below.

3.2 Members

The members of a congregation are

- (a) children of full members; and
- (b) children who have been baptized but have not yet become full members.

3.2.1 Baptism of Children

Children may be baptized

- (a) with the advance approval of the governing body or a chaplain in the Canadian Forces; and
- (b) if one or both of their parents are full members in good standing.

The governing body may make exceptions to these requirements.

3.2.2 Emergency Baptism

In an emergency where there is no time to get advance approval of a baptism, the person who baptizes must inform the governing body at its next meeting, and ask the governing body to confirm the decision to baptize.

3.3 Full Members

3.3.1 Approval

A person becomes a full member of the congregation with the approval of

- (a) the governing body;
- (b) the congregation, if the congregation decides to take on this responsibility; or
- (c) a chaplain in the Canadian Forces and two full members of the United Church, if the person is under the chaplain's pastoral care.

3.3.2 Readiness

In order to become a full member, a person must have enough knowledge about the Christian faith and the United Church to make their commitment with understanding.

3.3.3 Process

A person becomes a full member through one of the following ways:

- (a) adult baptism and profession of faith;
- (b) confirmation, if the person was baptized as a child and has now reached the age of understanding;
- (c) reaffirmation of Christian faith, if the person has already been baptized and made a profession of faith at an earlier time;
- (d) through a certificate of transfer of membership in good standing from another congregation or church; or
 - (e) if the person cannot get a certificate of transfer of membership from another church, they may transfer their membership if the governing body is satisfied that they
 - (i) have been baptized;
 - (ii) became full members of their church after they made a profession of Christian faith;
 - (iii) are of good Christian character; and
 - (iv) have valid reasons for transferring to the United Church.

Certificates of Transfer: If a certificate of transfer of membership is presented (see paragraph (d) above) that is more than one year old, the governing body must check that the person is still in good standing with their congregation. If the certificate is more than three years old, the governing body must be satisfied with the person's explanation for the time lapse.

3.6 Membership Records

3.6.1 Keeping Records

The governing body is responsible for

- (a) keeping a record of all baptisms in the congregation;
- (b) keeping the membership roll of the congregation;
- (c) keeping the historic membership roll of the congregation; and
- (d) recording, in its minutes, all decisions to admit people as full members.

3.6.2 Revising the Roll

The governing body is responsible for revising the membership roll at least annually by

- (a) removing the names of members who have died;
- (b) removing the names of members who have transferred to other congregations;
- (c) removing the names of members who have resigned;
- (d) removing the names of members who, in the governing body's opinion, have been absent for too long without a reasonable excuse;
- (e) recording, in its minutes, all decisions to remove a name from the roll; and
- (f) encouraging members who have moved away from the area to become members of congregations closer to their new homes.

3.6.3 Restoring Names to the Roll

A person whose name has been removed from the membership roll or who is under discipline may ask to become a full member in good standing again. The governing body is responsible for making a decision on the request.

3.6.4 Historic Roll

The governing body is responsible for keeping the historic roll, which includes the membership roll and the names of members removed under section B.3.6.2 above.

Proposed Membership Revision Policy.

Notes:

- The Church Board holds the authority and responsibilities of Session, as described in the United Church Bylaws.
- The reason and date of Removal from Membership is recorded in the Historical Roll, (no names are ever crossed out or erased)

There are several reasons why a person might be marked as removed on the Roll of Membership.

Death: in which case the removal is automatic.

Transfer: when a transfer certificate is requested the person should be removed automatically. Reason: Transfer

Request: when a person requests removal from the roll, if they are remaining in the community, a pastoral conversation should take place to see if any issues need to be resolved. If the person still wants to be removed after such a conversation, the Board should authorize removal from Membership. Reason: Resigned.

Moved:

1. When a member moves out of the community due to age or disability into Long Term Care, but will not be attending another church they should be maintained on the Roll for as long as the situation continues.
2. When a member moves out of the community and will no longer attend St. Andrew's Rockland, but does not request a transfer within one year, the Board should authorize removal from the Roll of Membership. (Exception: if they are only temporarily moving- such as for seasonal or term employment or an education program.) Reason: Moved.

Inactive: Membership includes a commitment to regularly attend and participate in the church life.

Regular attendance shall mean: attending Worship Services, on average, 3 times per month.

If a member is absent from worship services for 4 Months, or if their frequency falls below the requirement for a period of one year, the Board should shall notify the member that their absence is a concern, enquire whether there is a valid reason for this absence, and outline the attendance expectation. (Note: presumably pastoral conversations will have already taken place. If the Board is satisfied with a report from the pastoral visitor, a letter of encouragement and prayer might be sent in place of a letter of concern, and maintain the membership of the person.)

Valid reasons for absence may include: sickness, caregiving, shift work (in which cases, attendance at a mid-week discipleship group may substitute for attendance at worship services) or extended travel (eg. Snow Birds).

If the Board is not satisfied with the reasons given for non-attendance, they should notify the Member that their name will be removed from membership. Such notice should assure the person that they will be welcomed back at the church, and can renew their membership when they are ready to renew their commitment.

In the event that these communications from the Board are not answered to the satisfaction of the Board within one month, the name shall be marked as removed from Membership. Reason: Inactive.

Sample Membership Status Letters:

MOVED

<<Date>>

Dear <<Member>>,

Grace and Peace to you from St. Andrew's Christian Church Rockland.

We've been missing you! It's been <<xx months/years>> since you moved out of Rockland, and we sincerely hope that you've found a good home church in your new community. As you have been a member of St. Andrew's since <<Date of Membership>> we'd be happy to issue a certificate of transfer to your new church home if that would help you to establish yourself there. Just send a note, or have your church send us a request for transfer with the address of the new church.

We have the responsibility to keep our membership rolls up to date, so if we do not hear back from you by <<two months>>, we'll move your name from the membership roll to our adherent's list.

As an Adherent, we'd still like you to receive our e-mails with news and encouragement from St Andrew's, unless you request otherwise.

- If you are expecting to soon return to Rockland and resume your participation in the St. Andrew's family, please let us know so we can keep you on our membership roll.
- If we have sent this letter in error, and you are away in a long term care facility, we apologize- our policy is to retain you on our membership list as long as you wish.

Whatever your circumstances, we hope you are able to return and visit us from time to time, and if God should lead you live in this area again, we'll be delighted to receive you back into membership by the usual means.

God bless you!

St. Andrew's Christian Church

info@rocklandchurch.ca

613-446-5576

INACTIVE

<<Date>>

Dear <<Member>>,

Grace and Peace to you from St. Andrew's Christian Church Rockland.

We've been missing you! We know life can get busy, and we hope you are planning to come worship and learn with us again.

You have been a member of St. Andrew's since <<Date of Membership>> when you professed your faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and expressed your intention to participate in the life of the church family. It looks like circumstances have changed for you. Perhaps you've found another church home, or you've decided to part ways with us for some other reason. If that is the case, we wish God's blessing on you as you take your path. We do have the responsibility to keep our membership rolls up to date, so if we do not hear back from you otherwise by <<two months>>, we'll move your name from the membership roll to our adherent's list.

As an Adherent, we will still send you our e-mails with news and encouragement from St Andrew's, unless you request otherwise.

Please note:

- Our Pastoral Care Team is always ready to respond if you have any special needs for support or prayer.
- If we have sent this letter in error, and you are simply away for a season of travel, are ill, caught in an inconvenient work schedule, or busy in a care- giving role that keeps you away, please forgive us- we should have noticed before – call us and let us know how we can support you better.

Whatever your circumstances, we hope you are able to return and visit us from time to time, and if God should lead rejoin our church, we'll be delighted to receive you back into membership by the usual means.

God bless you!

St. Andrew's Christian Church

care@rocklandchurch.ca

613-446-5576

Removed:

<<Date>>

Dear <<Member>>,

Grace and Peace to you from St. Andrew's Christian Church Rockland.

<<thanks for your response to our previous letter. As per your information>>

<<We're sorry we haven't heard from you, As per our previous letter>>

we have moved your name from the membership roll to our adherent's list.

<<As an Adherent, we'll continue to send you our e-mails with news and encouragement from St Andrew's, >>

<< As you requested we will take you off our mailing and email list>>

Please note that our Pastoral Care Team is still ready to respond if you have any special needs for support or prayer.

Whatever your circumstances, we hope you are able to return and visit us from time to time, and if God should lead rejoin our church, we'll be delighted to receive you back into membership by the usual means.

God bless you!

St. Andrew's Christian Church

care@rocklandchurch.ca

613-446-5576

Retained

<<Date>>

Dear <<Member>>,

Grace and Peace to you from St. Andrew's Christian Church Rockland.

Thanks for your response to our previous letter. As per your information we've retained your name on our membership rolls, and hope that your circumstances allow you to return to full participation in our church soon. Tell us how we can help!

God bless you!

St. Andrew's Christian Church

care@rocklandchurch.ca

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