

Redeemer Church Youth Baptism & Membership Process

Introduction

You will notice that there are no specific time requirements for any of these steps. This is intentional, as we recognize that young believers mature at different rates. Our goal is to provide a flexible process that allows each youth to move forward at an appropriate pace based on their spiritual development and life stage.

At Redeemer Church, we rejoice in the work of God in the lives of our children and young people. It is our great desire to see them come to saving faith in Christ, grow in spiritual maturity, and eventually take on the responsibilities of church membership. Because baptism and membership are closely tied in Scripture, we believe it is essential to carefully evaluate a young person's profession of faith before administering the ordinances and welcoming them into the covenant community. This process ensures that baptism is not taken lightly and that those who enter into church membership are genuinely converted and prepared to walk in covenant with the body of Christ.

While this process provides a framework for evaluating young believers, it does not impose rigid timelines. Each child's spiritual journey is unique, and we desire to shepherd them with both wisdom and patience.

Step 1: Initial Conversation with Parents

Goal: To communicate Redeemer Church's biblical convictions regarding baptism and membership and to help parents discern whether their child is ready to move forward in the process.

Action Steps:

- When a young person or their parents express interest in baptism and membership, they will be encouraged to read Redeemer Church's Youth Baptism Statement and reflect on the questions provided in the statement.

- An elder will meet with the parents to discuss their child's spiritual condition, ensuring they understand the biblical responsibilities of both the church and the family in this process.
- This conversation will be shared with the other elders for wisdom and prayer, and a specific elder will be assigned to shepherd the family through the process.

Step 2: Parental Interview

Goal: To hear from the parents about their child's spiritual growth and to equip them in evaluating their child's faith.

Action Steps:

- Two elders will meet with the parents to discuss their child's profession of faith, character, and spiritual habits.
- Discussion questions may include:
 - a. How has your child's life changed since professing faith in Christ?
 - b. What evidence of repentance and growing love for Christ have you observed?
 - c. How does your child respond to sin, correction, and the Lord's discipline?
 - d. In what ways is your child demonstrating a personal pursuit of Christ apart from parental encouragement?
 - e. Who within the church can testify to your child's transformation and commitment to Christ?

Based on this discussion, the elders may either recommend moving forward or suggest further discipleship to deepen the child's understanding of the gospel.

Step 3: Discipleship & Church Involvement

Goal: To allow the church community to affirm the young person's faith and provide an opportunity for deeper discipleship.

Action Steps:

- The young person will be paired with a mature believer for intentional discipleship.
- Topics of discussion may include:

- a. What is the gospel?
 - b. Who is Jesus, and what does it mean to follow Him?
 - c. What is the church, and why does membership matter?
 - d. What is baptism, and why is it important?
 - e. How do believers grow in holiness?
- During this time, the young person is expected to actively participate in the life of the church, including attending corporate worship, engaging with their parents' small group, and serving where appropriate.
 - Once the discipler and parents discern readiness, the young person will be encouraged to attend a membership class.

Step 4: Membership Class

Goal: To provide a biblical foundation for church membership and ensure the young person understands the commitments involved.

Action Steps:

- The young person will attend a membership class alongside their parents and discipler.
- Discussion topics will reinforce:
 - The purpose of church membership
 - The responsibilities of church members
 - The meaning of baptism and the Lord's Supper
 - The importance of doctrinal unity and accountability within the church
- The discipler, parents, and assigned elder will continue observing the young person's engagement in church life.
- Once all parties affirm readiness, the young person will move forward to an elder interview.

Step 5: Elder Interview

Goal: To personally affirm the young person's credible profession of faith and readiness for baptism and membership. This follows the same process that any adult member candidate would undergo.

Action Steps:

- Two elders, including the assigned elder, will meet with the young person to discuss:
- Their understanding of the gospel and their personal testimony
- The meaning of baptism and the Lord's Supper
- Their readiness to commit to the church's covenant
- Their willingness to participate in church life, including receiving and offering spiritual accountability

If the elders affirm the child's readiness, the young person will move forward in the process.

Step 6: Elder Affirmation

Goal: For the elder body to corporately affirm the young person's profession of faith and readiness for membership. This follows the same process that any adult member candidate would undergo.

Action Steps:

- The elders will discuss the interview and formally affirm the young person's readiness for baptism and membership.
- Once approved, they will be presented to the congregation for final affirmation at a Faith Family Meeting.

Step 7: Congregational Affirmation

Goal: For the church body to affirm the young person's faith and welcome them into membership. This follows the same process that any adult member candidate would undergo.

Action Steps:

- The young person will be introduced to the congregation, and key individuals involved in their discipleship (parents, discipler, elder, small group members) will have the opportunity to affirm their profession of faith.
- The church will joyfully receive the young person into membership, committing to encourage and hold them accountable in their walk with Christ.

Step 8: Baptism & Lord's Supper Participation

Goal: To administer baptism as an act of obedience and public profession of faith and to welcome the young believer to the Lord's Table.

Action Steps:

- The young person will meet with an elder for a brief baptism study to reinforce its biblical meaning.
- Baptism will take place before the congregation as a testimony to God's saving work.
- Upon baptism, the young person will be welcomed to the Lord's Table, joining the church in this sacred act of worship.

Conclusion

We recognize that every child's spiritual journey is different, and we desire to walk patiently and faithfully with families in this process. Our goal is not to withhold baptism or membership but to ensure that young believers have a firm grasp of the gospel, are bearing the fruit of repentance, and are prepared to take on the responsibilities of church membership with maturity. We pray that through this process, God will strengthen the faith of our children, bless our families, and build up Redeemer Church for His glory.