

# MEMBERSHIP/BAPTISM | WEEK 1

*written by Bob Martin*

In this Ordinary Challenge, we will be engaging our hearts and minds in what it means to be a member of the local church. These next four weeks are not just for those who are already members of College Park, but they are for anyone interested in figuring out what this very “ordinary” role has to do with their life.

**If you are not a member of the church**, by the end of this Ordinary Challenge, we would love to see you 1) understand more about what it means to be a member, and 2) take steps on your way to making this commitment (especially responding to Weeks 1 & 2).

**If you are a member**, we would love to see you 1) understand more about what your role in the church really means, and 2) take 1-2 identifiable steps of living out what it means to be a member (especially responding to Weeks 3 & 4).

It may seem that membership is just a threshold—either you’re in or you’re not—but it is much more than that. Membership is the demonstration that you’re a Christian who has decided to live out your commitment to the universal Church through one particular local church. There is a way of getting into this role and a way to live out this role. That’s why we have divided up our Ordinary Challenge into sections that deal with how to healthfully enter into this position as well as how to live out this role once you have entered into it.

## Joining membership: Baptism

How does someone demonstrate to the world that he is a Christian—that he has entered into a whole new life and a whole new community? Well, when we see people come to believe in Jesus for salvation in the New Testament, their inward belief is quickly followed by an outward act, what we call baptism.

**Read/Think** | **Read Acts 2:37-41** to find out what happened after Peter preached on Pentecost.

- What two instructions does Peter give for conversion in v.38?
- What did the disciples do to the 3,000 people who accepted salvation that day?

Not only was baptism the standard for early Christians, it was the standard for a reason. Jesus commanded His disciples to exercise baptism as a critical part of their world-wide efforts to spread the good news of Christian faith.

**Read/Think** | **Read Matthew 28:18-20** to find out what Jesus told his disciples when he commissioned them after his resurrection.

- What two things does Jesus command his followers to do when they “go and make disciples” in v.19-20?
- In whose name are disciples to be baptized (v.19)?
- Is baptism optional for those who are disciples of Christ?

**Do** | Sometimes people put off baptism, figuring that it’s something they’ll get around to when they find the right church or right timing. But baptism was meant to quickly accompany our conversion.

If you are a Christian who believes in Jesus but haven’t yet been baptized, pray for God to help you understand the importance of baptism as a step of obedience to Jesus (Matt. 28:18-20) and take the next steps for being baptized: Visit [yourchurch.com/baptism](http://yourchurch.com/baptism) for more information and consider getting baptized at the special Sept. 27 Fresh Encounter/30th Anniversary service.

**Pray** |

- Pray that God would help you to give baptism the weight that God gives it.
- Pray that God would help you to understand what baptism means and why He has commanded all those who follow your Son to engage in it for His glory.
- If you haven’t been baptized, pray that God would help you to joyfully take whatever next steps are needed to be baptized.