

Shaughnessy Heights United Church

Membership FAQs

(Frequently Asked Questions)

What is a member of the congregation?

A member is a person who is active in the life of the congregation and

- has been baptized
- has publicly professed their faith (*see our Creed*)
- has promised to practice their faith within this particular congregation

What is an adherent of the congregation?

An adherent is a person who is active in the life of the congregation but has not made a formal commitment to membership. *Adherents' names are included in the church directory. SHUC has approximately 250 adult adherents.*

How can I tell if I am a member of the congregation?

You are a member if your name is on the Membership Roll. *A member's name is written in the Historic Roll when they join and remains there unless they or the Church remove it. SHUC has 325 members on its roll as of January 2006.*

What's the difference between a member and an adherent?

A member has made a public commitment to the church and is accountable for that commitment to the congregation. An adherent has not made such a commitment. *The difference between members and adherents is like the difference between citizens and landed immigrants of a country.*

What are the commitments of a member?

Members make three promises when they join the church:

- to gather regularly with the members and adherents of the congregation for worship and study
- to join with the members and adherents of the congregation in living the mission of Jesus Christ in the world
- to support the ministry and mission of the congregation with their gifts (*time, talent and money*) as they are able.

What are the privileges of a member?

Only members may serve on committees or vote on anything to do with pastoral relations (*the call or appointment of ministers,*) the sale of church property (*such as the manse,*) or the future of the congregation (*such as an amalgamation or new mission.*) Members may give permission to adherents to serve on committees or vote on questions concerning any other matters.

Is it possible to be removed from the Membership Roll?

Yes. There are several circumstances which lead to a person's name being removed from the Historic Roll.

- they may ask that their membership be transferred to another United Church when they move.
- they may ask that their name be removed if they are no longer interested in being a member.
- their name will be removed if they die or if they move away and we do not hear from them for three years.
- their name may be removed by action of the Executive Council if we have not heard from them for more than three years without good reason.

Why should I become a member?

The United Church of Canada does not “make a big deal” of membership. Everyone is welcome to attend and participate; to take communion and to serve on most committees. Everyone is challenged to contribute their gifts of time, talent and money, and to give and receive the support and fellowship of the church family.

Not much difference—and the privileges of membership may sound more like extra work! Yet the church asks everyone to consider seriously whether they are ready for the commitment of membership and to join when they feel able. If you love this church and want to take a full share of responsibility for our community, you should join.

Can I become a member?

Yes, you will be welcome. Speak to the minister to find out what you need to do (*everyone's circumstances are different.*)