

Communicant Member

"A communicant of a congregation is a baptised person who associates regularly with the congregation in worship, and who, on profession of faith, has been admitted by the session to participation in the Lord's Supper and therefore into full communion with the Presbyterian Church of Australia, or whose name has been added to the roll by transference certificate or by resolution of session"

The Code 1.07

A communicant has the right to have his/her name on the roll of communicants and, if not less than sixteen years of age, to take full part, including voting in congregational meetings.

Only communicant members may elect elders and ministers.

Adherent Member

"An adherent to a congregation is a person who associates regularly with the congregation in worship and whose name appears on the adherents' roll by resolution of session."

The Code 1.09

An adherent has a vote in the election of managers and at all meetings affecting the temporal affairs of the congregation.

Obligations of Members

1. Faithful attendances at gospel ordinances.
2. To give ministers all due respect, encouragement and obedience in the Lord.
3. To submit to the Session as over them in the Lord.
4. To cherish a loving, caring spirit among themselves.
5. To promote the peace and prosperity of the congregation.
6. To take a lively interest in all that concern the welfare of the whole church.
7. To contribute heartily, as the Lord shall enable them, for the maintenance of the ministry and for the furtherance of the gospel at home and abroad.
8. To manifest a Christian spirit in all relationships of life.

Who is in Charge?

Our Presbyterian Church is governed at the local parish level by a session that consists of a minister and elders who have been elected by the congregation and formally inducted to their office of rule in the congregation.

The session has responsibility for the spiritual life of the congregation and the oversight of all the agencies within the congregation.

A Committee of Management is elected by the annual meeting of the congregation and has

responsibility for the financial and property affairs of the local church.

Where Care is Required:

In Australia people have very little official say in what happens at government level. They may press the government for action, they may speak out about what the government is doing, they may even carry banners in protest, but they have to put up with the government that they have elected.

The same applies in our Presbyterian Church except that, with the exception of the Committee of Management, there is no opportunity to change the government at the next election.

That is why members must be very careful about whom they elect as their minister or elders. Once they are there, it is almost impossible to change those who govern the church.

Dissatisfaction with a decision:

If you, as a communicant or adherent, are dissatisfied with a decision or resolution at a meeting of the congregation, it is important that you vote against it. If you feel keenly about it you should ask for your dissent to be recorded. You may then, if you desire, petition the presbytery to review the decision or resolution.

A Petition:

If you as a member, either alone or with other members of the congregation, desire the session to do something, you do not simply write a letter to the session clerk. You may petition the session asking specifically what you desire them to do. It is then your right to go to a meeting of the session

and present your petition by addressing the members of the session and answering any of their question.

The session will then make its decision on the matter and if you are dissatisfied when the session announces to you its decision, you may say "*I protest for leave to appeal*" and then seek advice from the clerk as to further procedures.



The Presbyterian Fellowship

Understanding
the
Presbyterian Church

Members' Rights and Obligations

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