"Exactly What Must I Do to Join the Church?"

I. Where does the name "Presbyterian" come from?

It comes from the Bible, from a word that is used about sixty times in the New Testament. You may say, "But I've never found that word in the Bible!"

It is from a Greek word that sounds much like the word Presbyterian when pronounced, and which means "elder."

So, a Presbyterian church is one that is under the oversight of elders. It is a church with a representative form of government by elders who are elected by the congregation.

II. What is an Elder?

Elders (or "the Session) are responsible for the spiritual government and life of the church. The Session has oversight of all the organizations, work, and ministry of the congregation.

Their ministry is a shepherding ministry. Elected by the congregation, these men focus on the church's ministry of the Word. Three biblical pictures of an elder are: a father in his family (1 Timothy 3:4-5), a ruler in the assembly (Hebrews 13:7,17,24), and a shepherd among the sheep (1 Peter 5:2).

Our elders are: "Teaching Elder" Lane Stephenson; "Ruling Elders" Randy Martin, Stewart Robison, Gene Price, Benton Gibson, Rusty Marsalis, and Harry Young.

III. What is a Deacon?

According to Acts 6:3, deacons were appointed to serve the needs of the people, freeing the apostles to focus on their ministry of the Word.

Deacons further the spiritual life of the church by having responsibility for business and financial matters of the congregation.

Their ministry is one of loving in deed and in action.

Elected by the congregation, these men focus on the church's ministry of mercy.

Our deacons are: Richard Holmes, Pat Parker, Steve Blue, Jim Hales, Art Nelson, Bill Clemons, Jim Covington, and Mark Hollingsworth

IV. A History of New Covenant Presbyterian Church and of the Presbyterian Church in America

V. The Authority of the Church

Scripture as our final authority for all that we are to believe and to do

Christ as the only Head and King of the Church (Our prophet, priest, and king)

The Confessions (standards) of our Church

The Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms (What we believe)

The Book of Church Order (How we organize and govern ourselves)

VI. What do I do to join?

A. Meet with the Session (elders) to let them know you wish to join. We will meet after the Sunday morning worship service.

At this meeting, I will ask you to say "I do" to the five questions of membership (below).

B. If you are joining by profession of faith (If you have never been a member of a church before), you will stand with the pastor before the congregation on a Sunday morning and say "I do" to the five questions for membership (these are listed below).

C. If you haven't been baptized, I will baptize you at that time.

VII. What questions will you ask me? (These are very important!)

A. Do you acknowledge yourself to be a sinner in the sight of God, justly deserving His displeasure, and without hope except in His sovereign mercy to you? *(We must know what sin is and that we are sinners.)*

B. Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered in the Gospel? *(We must know who Jesus is, what He did for sinners, and what it means to trust in Him for our salvation.)*

C. Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becomes the followers of Christ? *(We must know that believing on Jesus makes a difference in our lives, that we will seek to obey Him in all things.)*

D. Do you promise the support the Church in its worship and work to the best of your ability? *(We are to be a faithful part of God's church.)*

E. Do you submit yourself to the government and discipline of the Church, and promise to seek its purity and peace? *(We are to respect those that God places over us, and we are to seek the good of the church.*

It's like getting married. Remember that the Church is the "bride" of Christ.
Just say "I do." Easy words to say, but a big commitment to make!

VIII. What do I do after I've joined?

Support the church in the things you can do: be in church when we meet, pray for the church, support it with your talents, support it financially, invite others to come. (And be especially nice to the pastor!)

Remember that the church is a family. We need to be *submissive* to those people God gives to lead us (just as we are to obey our parents) and to help the church be both *pure* (obedient to the Lord) and *peaceful* (forgiving, kind, and loving).

Love the Lord and His Church!

"For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness;
and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control;
and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness,
and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.

For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure,
they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive
in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."
2 Peter 1:5-8

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."
2 Peter 3:18