



Introduction to Membership

Who? What? Why? How?



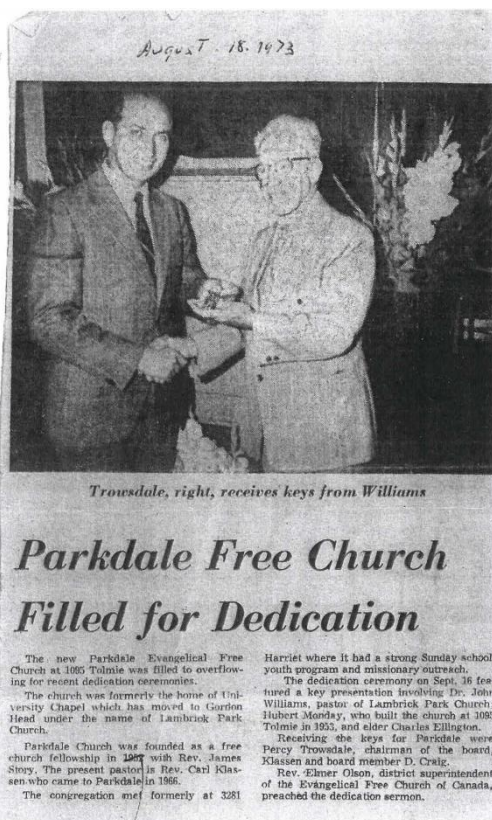
Prepared by Tim Stewart, D. Min

September 2025

Parkdale Evangelical Free Church was founded in 1957, first meeting on Harriet Rd. In 1973, it moved to its current location on Tolmie Avenue, where it expanded the building and operates a busy Daycare downstairs.

The congregation also gladly shares its facility with church plants and other community groups, while offering its own various ministries to the ever-changing population of the Greater Victoria.

Sunday services are held at 10:00am and are attended regularly by people a mixture of generations and nations.



What does Parkdale Do?

Every church is different and has its own role to play in God's Kingdom. Nevertheless, every church and individual believer shares a common **Mission**, laid out clearly by Jesus in **Matthew 28:19-20**:

- Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.
- At **Parkdale Church**, we recognize our calling to this mission. In addition, many years ago, the church developed its own **mission statement** to express *how* this mission would be expressed: "*Passion for God, Compassion for People.*"
- This statement reflects the Greatest Commands, according to Jesus: to love God and our neighbour (**Matthew 22:37-39**).

Yet, this mission and these commands will be applied differently in different contexts, according to the giftings, opportunities, and unique composition of each church. At Parkdale, our shared mission is shaped and expressed by certain **Values** that we hold dear:

- **Biblical Instruction:**
 - We recognize the authority of Scripture in all things. Therefore, as we select leaders, preach, worship and serve, we consult God's Word (**2 Timothy 3:16-17**), trusting Him to guide us by His Spirit (**John 16:13-14**).
- **The Family of God:**
 - We recognize the unity, not uniformity, of all believers through our common faith (**Ephesians 2:19-22, 4:4-7**). Therefore, rather than dividing by age, class & culture, we celebrate the diversity of God's people as we gather.
- **Congregational Participation:**
 - We recognize the calling of each believer to ministry, (**1 Peter 2:5-12, 4:11-12**) as we all have access to God (**Hebrews 10:19-22**). Therefore, in all we do together, we strive to include various parts (**Ephesians 4:11-16**).

How does Parkdale Work?

Parkdale Church has a **congregational** leadership structure. This means that certain people who attend its gatherings and participate in its ministry also take the extra step of becoming **members** (see description below).

Moreover, while serving in their own unique ways as part of the body, members also nominate individuals from among their group to hold **positions of authority** (**Acts 6:3-6, 11:1-3**). While our **bylaws** outline the job descriptions of church leaders and their selection process, this is a basic summary:

- **Church board positions:**
 - Certain positions are legally required for any non-profit society to function (chair, vice-chair, treasurer, secretary). Ideally, other positions are also be added to ensure the proper oversight of the church's essential functions. These include elders, who work closely with the pastor, and other deacons who oversee specific ministries.
 - All voting members of the board must be elected by the congregation at the annual fall meeting, and all must abide by the standards of church membership.
 - Board members must also demonstrate godly character (**Galatians 5:19-23**) and appropriate qualities for deacons in the church (**Acts 6:3; Romans 12:1-8; 1 Timothy 3:8-13**).
 - At a spring congregational meeting, church leaders will submit reports to the congregation for approval.
- **Pastor and Staff**
 - A pastor may be nominated by the church leaders to assist the church's ministry (**Ephesians 4:11-12**). In such cases, or when hiring other ministry staff, a congregational vote of approval is needed. The board may hire administrative staff on its own.

What is a Church Member?

- The Bible uses various metaphors to describe an individual believer's relationship with God and the Church.
- We are citizens of the heavenly kingdom who gather in local assemblies (*Philippians 3:20, Colossians 1:13-14, Matt 16:18*).
- We are also children in God's household and stones in the temple where the Holy Spirit dwells (*Ephesians 2:20-22*).
- And we are also "parts," or "members" of the Body of Christ, which is the Church – as each believer receives direction from the Head and serves a unique function for the common good (*1 Corinthians 12:27; Romans 12:4-5; Ephesians 4:16*).

Who can be a Church Member?

- To become a member of this particular church family, one should first be part God's family (*Galatians 3:26-28*)
- ***We ask this to be expressed through a personal confession of faith (testimony) to the congregation or leaders, baptism, and agreement with our EFCC Statement of Faith.***

What does a Church Member do?

- As disciples of Christ, we are committed to follow His teaching and participate in His mission (*Mark 1:14-17; Matt 28:19-20*)
- This involves a commitment to love one another (*John 13:35*), to regularly meet for encouragement (*Hebrews 10:24-25*), and to live lives that reflect the gospel (*Philippians 1:27*) – such unity also serves as a witness to others (*John 17:21*)
- As a part of Christ's Body, members are called to serve one another with the gifts given to them through the Holy Spirit (*1 Cor 12:7; Rom 12:6-8, Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Peter 4:10-11*)
- In order to support the collective ministry and mission of the local church, members joyfully contribute financially from what God has provided them (*Numbers 18:21; Malachi 3:10; Romans 15:26; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7*)

How does a Member function in the local church?

- As parts who are equally under One Head (*Colossians 1:18*), members participate in major collective decisions such as leadership selection, finances, and general agreements/laws (*Acts 6:3-6; 11:29-30, 15:2-4, 12, 22; 21:4*)
- ***Parkdale holds two Congregational Meetings each year: for leadership selection (Nov) and budget approval (Feb)***
- Qualified Members can serve in leadership positions in the church (*Mark 10:42-45; 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1:6-9 1 Peter 5:1-4*)
- When leaders are recognized and appointed in the church, members should support & be accountable to them (*1 Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:7, 17*)
- Members are also called to keep one another accountable, participating in collective discipline & reconciliation (*Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, 2 Corinthians 2:6*)
- Because all believers are recognized as priests and ambassadors of Christ, members represent Christ and His Church to the world as they serve in their various ministries (*1 Peter 2:5-12, 2 Corinthians 5:17-20*)

How do I become a Church Member?

- Talk to the pastor or a church leader to express your interest and to become familiar with the church and EFCC SoF
- Ensure that you've been baptized in a meaningful way as an expression of repentance & faith among God's people
- Prepare a testimony to share with the leaders and/or the congregation. A 5-minute Testimony can include:
 - *Some background of your life (perhaps a story)*
 - *How you became a Christian & the difference it made*
 - *How you came to Parkdale & would like to be involved*
 - *A key verse to share!*
- New members are celebrated and welcomed in a Sunday service, and officially recognized at a congregational meeting

Key Verses:

- **1 Corinthians 12:27** – *Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.*
- **Galatians 3:26-28** – *So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ...for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*
- **John 13:35** – *By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*
- **Hebrews 10:24-25** – *And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*
- **Philippians 1:27** – *Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.*
- **John 17:21** – *that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me, and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.*
- **1 Peter 4:10** – *Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.*
- **2 Corinthians 9:7** – *Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*
- **Acts 6:3** – *Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them*
- **Hebrews 13:17** – *Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.*
- **2 Corinthians 5:20** – *We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God.*

PEFC Membership Covenant

Having been brought by Divine grace to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ and to give up ourselves wholly to Him; we do now solemnly and joyfully covenant with each other to live together in Him with brotherly love, to His glory as our Lord. We do, therefore, in His strength commit:

That we will exercise a mutual care, as members one of another, to promote the growth of the whole body – in Christian knowledge, holiness and comfort – to the end that we may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God;

That to promote and secure this purpose, we will endeavor to uphold the public worship of God, and the ordinances of His house; and to fellowship with each other therein, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together; that we will cheerfully contribute of our property for the support of the poor, for the support of missions and for the maintenance of a faithful ministry of the Gospel among us;

That we will take seriously the great duty of training our children and those under our care, with a view to the service of Christ and the enjoyment of everlasting life;

That we will walk cautiously in the world, to the end that we may win souls for the Lord Jesus Christ. We will endeavor to be a Christian example in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity of life. We will remember that God has not given us the spirit of fear but of power of love and of a sound mind; that we are the light of the world and the salt of the earth, and that a city on a hill cannot be hid;

That we will be thoughtful and courteous to another, slow to take offense, quick to forgive and to seek forgiveness;

That we will frequently encourage, and if occasion shall require, admonish one another according to Matthew 18, in the spirit of meekness lest we also be tempted. As in baptism we have been buried in Christ and raised again, so there is on us a special obligation to walk in newness of life;

And may the God of peace, who brought again the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of His everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.