

THE ORDER FOR RECEIVING MEMBERS INTO FULL MEMBERSHIP

On the day appointed, all who are to be received shall be called forward, the minister (or class leader) shall call their name aloud: [.....]

The minister, addressing the congregation, shall say:

Dear Beloved Members: The Scriptures teach us that the Church is the household of God, the body of which Christ is the Head; that it is the design of the Gospel to bring together in one all who are Christ's. The fellowship of the Church is the communion that its members enjoy one with another. The end of this fellowship, the maintenance of sound doctrine and of the ordinances of that power, Godly admonition and discipline which Christ has committed to His Church is for the promotion of holiness. It is the duty of all persons to unite in this fellowship; for it is only those, "the planted in the house of the LORD," that will "flourish in the courts of our God." (Psalm 92:13). Its more particular duties are to promote peace and unity; to bear one another's burdens; to prevent each other's stumbling; to seek the intimacy of a friendly society among themselves; to continue steadfast in the faith and worship of the Gospel, and to pray and sympathize with one another. Among its privileges are: peculiar incitements to holiness from the hearing of God's Word; sharing Christ's ordinances; placing persons under the watchful care of pastors, and the enjoyment of the blessings which are promised only "to those who are of the household of faith." (Galatians 6:10). Into this holy fellowship the persons before you, having already received the sacraments of Baptism, come seeking admission.

We now propose, in the fear of God, to question them as to their faith and purposes, that you may know that they are proper persons to be admitted into the Church.

Then addressing the applicants for admission, the minister shall say:

Dearly Beloved: You are coming here seeking the great privilege of union with the Church which our Savior has purchased with his own blood. We rejoice in the grace of God, given unto you, in that He called you to be His followers and that thus far you have run well. You have heard how blessed are the privileges and how solemn are the duties of membership in Christ's Church, and before you are fully admitted, it is proper that you do here publicly renew your vows, confess your faith, and declare your purpose by answering the following questions:

QUESTION 1

Minister: Do you here in the presence of God and of this congregation renew the solemn promise contained in the Baptismal Covenant, ratifying and confirming the same

and acknowledging yourselves bound faithfully to observe and keep that covenant and all things contained therein?

Candidate: I Do.

QUESTION 2

Minister: Have you saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?

Candidate: I Have.

QUESTION 3

Minister: Do you entertain friendly feelings toward all the members of this Church?

Candidate: I Do.

QUESTION 4

Minister: Do you believe in the Doctrine of Holy Scriptures as set forth in the Articles of Religion of the African Methodist Episcopal Church?

Candidate: I Do.

QUESTION 5

Minister: Will you *cheerfully* be governed by the Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, hold sacred the ordinances of God, and endeavor as much as in you lies to promote the welfare of fellow members and the advancement of the Kingdom of God?

Candidate: I Will.

QUESTION 6

Minister: Will you give of your time, talents and treasure, according to your ability, for the support of the Gospel, Church, poor, and the various ministries of the Church?

Candidate: I Will.

Then the minister, addressing the church, shall say:

Beloved Members: You have heard the responses given to our inquiries. Is there any reason why these persons should not be received into full membership?

If no objection is alleged, the minister shall give the name of the candidates and say:

We cordially welcome you into fellowship of the Church of God; and in light of our Christian love, I extend to you the right hand of fellowship, and may God grant that you may be a faithful and useful member of the Church militant till you are called to the fellowship of the Church triumphant, which is faultless before the presence of God.

Following prayer, the congregation shall receive the new full members with greetings and the right hand of fellowship.