

The Responsibilities of Membership

A “canon” is a “rule” or “instrument for measuring.” The Anglican Church in North America, like every church, has a Constitution which outlines the polity and organizational life of the church. But we also have *Canons* that flesh out in more detail the teachings of the church on various topics. Below you will find a simple outline for what the Province considers *the minimal standard for membership*, leaving particulars to the Diocese and local church. In a spirit of prayer, please review and reflect on the duties of the laity and what it means for you and your family.

Canon 10 *Of the Laity*

Section 1 - *Concerning Ministry*

The people of God are the chief agents of the Mission of the Church to extend the Kingdom of God by so presenting Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit that people everywhere will come to put their trust in God through Him, know Him as Savior and serve Him as Lord in the fellowship of the Church. The effective ministry of the Church is the responsibility of the laity no less than it is the responsibility of Bishops and other Clergy. It is incumbent for every lay member of the Church to become an effective minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, one who is spiritually qualified, gifted, called, and mature in the faith. Each diocese may establish standards for the ministry of the laity.

Section 2 - *Concerning Duties of the Laity*

It shall be the duty of every member of the Church:

1. To worship God, the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit, every Lord’s Day in a Church unless reasonably prevented;
2. To engage regularly in the reading and study of Holy Scripture and the Doctrine of the Church as found in Article I of the Constitution of this Church;
3. To pray regularly for their needs and those of others, for the Church and its mission, and for the concerns of the world;
4. To observe their baptismal vows, to lead an upright and sober life, and not give scandal to the Church;
5. To present their children and those they have led to the Lord for baptism and confirmation;
6. To give regular financial support to the Church, with the biblical tithe as the minimum standard of giving;
7. To practice forgiveness daily according to our Lord’s teaching;
8. To receive worthily the Sacrament of Holy Communion as often as reasonable;
9. To observe the feasts and fasts of the Church set forth in the Anglican formularies;
10. To affirm and follow the biblical standards of sexual morality and ethics in Canon II.8;
11. To continue his or her instruction in the Faith so as to remain an effective minister for the Lord Jesus;
12. To devote themselves to the ministry of Christ among those who do not know Him, utilizing the gifts that the Holy Spirit gives them, for the effective extension of Christ’s Kingdom.

(The Constitution and Canons in their entirety: www.anglicanchurch.net)