

Explanations on the Application for Membership:

1. **Filling out the form:** Please write clearly and complete each section. Readability of your handwriting and correct data are of utmost importance to avoid confusion. You can also get the form as a PDF-File that can be filled out on your computer to be printed out and signed – which is our preferred method.
2. **FKÖ** (Free Churches in Austria) is the state recognised denomination and umbrella association of the five different sub-associations which are: Baptists, Association of Evangelical Churches (BEG), Mennonites, Free Christian (Pentecostal) Churches (FCG) and Elaia. Grace Church is part of BEG and therefore membership in Grace Church automatically includes membership in the BEG and in the FKÖ.
3. **Notice about the legal situation of religious organisations in Austria:** In Austria, you can only be a member of one religious denomination. Since FKÖ is such a denomination, you can only join if you do not belong to another officially recognised church, registered faith community or religious organisation in Austria, such as the Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church, the Methodist Church, the Muslim faith, etc. If you belong to such an Austrian denomination, you would have to first cancel your membership there. This rule applies only within Austria. If you are part of a denomination outside of Austria, you can remain a member of that denomination as well. If you are a member of one of the associations outside of Austria that are included in FKÖ, you would still have to apply for membership in Austria - e.g. If you are Baptist in your home country, you do not automatically belong to the Baptists in Austria but must register with your local home church here – for example Grace Church.
4. **Differences between regular and associate membership:** Regular membership is for those who have committed their life to Christ, been baptised and presently see Grace Church as their home church. Associate membership is for those who do not meet the requirements of a full membership but want to be a part of Grace Church. This mainly concerns those who haven't been baptised as a believer or who are below the age of religious accountability in Austria (see next point). Associate members can take part in church meetings but are only allowed to vote if they are given voting rights by the church leadership. The moment you meet all the requirements to be a regular member, you are encouraged to change from associate to regular membership.
5. **Age restrictions:** Regular membership is only possible if children are at least 14 years old and, after making a personal decision for Jesus, have been baptised. If they haven't been baptised yet, they may apply for associate membership by themselves. Children below the age of 14 can only be associate members and their form must be signed by their parents/guardians (best by both).
6. **Parents:** Make sure to pick up the extra application form for associate membership for your children. In case you want to apply for more than 4 children, please, use a second form and replace the numbers 1-4 with the additional number of children.
7. **Baptism:** If you have been baptised, state the date of your baptism or at least the year closest to your baptism, whichever is applicable. If you haven't been baptised yet, just leave it blank.
8. **Contact Data:** Please provide the correct contact data since this is important for proper communication! It is your responsibility to inform the church administration of any changes in your contact data and also your responsibility to be kept updated about Grace Church affairs and news through provided sources, like e-mails, church newsletter, webpage, etc.
9. **Resigning:** If you should decide to leave Grace Church, it is important that you let the church administration know in writing, concerning your resignation. A lack of a written official resignation means that you would still be officially registered as a member of Grace Church, BEG and FKÖ and therefore liable for all the responsibilities that go with being a member! Furthermore, your absence in church meetings can adversely affect the quorum during vote counts and other matters.
10. **Final notice:** The submission of the application form does not automatically entitle you to membership but membership must be approved by the church leadership and also might require a time of preparation!

Questions? Write to gracechurch.vie@gmail.com