



**The General Conference
of the New Church**

Youth Membership



For many years, adults have been able to become members of The General Conference of the New Church. Some of you may be members of your local church. Not all young people associated with the New Church have church buildings near to them, but they would also like to belong to the organisation.

This year at Conference (the Annual Meeting of the New Church) there will be an opportunity for adults to vote to allow young people aged between 14-17 to become Youth Members. We hope that this vote will be passed. If it is, those in this age range will be able to apply to be members, and this can happen either at Conference or at a residential event at another time.



What does Youth Membership mean?



To be a Youth Member of The General Conference of the New Church, you will have the opportunity to influence the future of the church. You will be allowed to speak during business meetings and your voice will be heard. You can make a change. You can help to shape the church.



Youth Members cannot vote – voting becomes a right if you move on to become an adult member at 18. Many of the items that are voted on are to do with legal matters. However, as you can speak in the meeting, you would have the ability to influence the way the adult members vote.

Why become a Youth Member?

When we become a member of other organisations, we might expect to have “benefits”. Youth Members will receive a membership card but the spiritual benefits are far greater.



Membership is a **visible commitment** to our Lord Jesus and to those around us. Our Lord Jesus taught us that we are to love Him and our neighbours in Matthew 22:37-40, and by making this commitment, people acknowledge that this is going to be an important part of their lives, going forward.



Having made this commitment, we become accountable to the Lord and to those around us. We can demonstrate obedience to the commandments and to the Lord’s teachings. We can show a willingness to learn more about the teachings of the church.

By showing this commitment, we are also asking the leaders of the church to be more faithful shepherds of those who are members.

Other benefits that we may experience are:

- A sense of community
- Personal growth
- Deeper connection both with the Lord and other members
- A spiritual family
- Strength to live out our faith in our lives



Why be a Youth Member of the New Church?

Through the deeper truths revealed in the Word and explained by the Heavenly Doctrines of Emanuel Swedenborg, we begin on a journey to truly know the Lord.

We become part of a spiritual community tasked with living out these teachings in our everyday lives.



What happens next?

If the vote is accepted, those who wish to become Youth Members need to fill in a form. This form includes the following promise:



As a Youth Member I will endeavour to support and serve the General Conference, to develop my knowledge of the heavenly teachings of the New Church, and to honour the Lord Jesus Christ in all my thoughts, words, and actions.

The form asks for the signature of your parent or guardian, and for two members of Conference. The completed form needs to be handed or posted to Natalie, the Company Secretary.

Space has been kept for a ceremony on Friday 25th July at Conference for any young people aged between 14–17 who would like to become Youth Members. If you are not attending Conference, and the vote is passed, please speak to a Minister or Youth Leader who will be able to arrange a ceremony at another event you are attending.





Since Youth Membership can only be agreed on by vote by adult members at Conference in 2025, if you would like this to happen, please speak to adults who will be there! If you have a local church, ask representatives who attend on your behalf. If not, contact the Ministers or Youth Leaders that you know and ask them to speak on your behalf.



Jack Dunion



jack.dunion@generalconference.org.uk

Becky Jarratt



becky.jarratt@generalconference.org.uk

Brian Talbot



brian.talbot@generalconference.org.uk

Belonging

"But as for you, the Lord took you and brought you out of the iron-smelting furnace, out of Egypt, to be the people of his inheritance, as you now are." *Deuteronomy 4:20*

The Two Great Commandments

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment." *Matthew 22:36-40*

Community

"This being the nature of heaven, no angel or spirit can possibly have any life unless he lives in some community, and in so doing in a harmonious relationship of many people. A community is nothing else than the harmonious relationship of many, for one person's life in no sense exists in isolation from the life of others." *Arcana Caelestia 687*

Spiritual Benefits

"You will continue to be encouraged to find the Lord moving you from within to change and to be more angelic: may the Lord "turn our hearts to him, to walk in obedience to him and keep the commands, decrees and laws he gave our ancestors." *1 Kings 8:58*

"You will also have help to identify the voice of the Lord: "Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it." *Isaiah 30:21*