

Dear Prospective Member,

We are deeply grateful for your interest in becoming a member of First Church of Christ, Scientist San Juan Capistrano.

Here are the basic steps to completing the “Affirmation Form” and becoming a fully engaged active member.

1. INFORMATION FORM- turn contact info into the church (Hub)

2. ASK TWO CHURCH MEMBERS TO BE YOUR SPONSORS. They will talk to you about church, explain some of our unique characteristics, and sign the Affirmation page. (As a member you are on the Board of Directors)

READING FOR MORE INFORMATION: Found in this packet

- a. Church By-laws
- b. Introduction of the church (History)
- c. The Team Lists (committees) and what you might be interested in joining. (Turn that into the “Hub” – at your convenience.)

**AN INTRODUCTION TO
FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST,
SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, CALIFORNIA**

In January 1994, a group of local Christian Scientists felt the need to establish a voice for Christian Science in San Juan Capistrano, a community of 34,000, one third of whom are Hispanic. Some in this group were interested in reaching out to the community. Others were impelled by a desire to restudy and rethink how best to express church. Still others felt it was time San Juan Capistrano had its own Christian Science Congregation.

For six months individuals gathered at Bob Hansen's photography studio every Monday evening from 7 to 9, to pray, listen, and share unfoldment on church. From the beginning there was great freedom of thought and respect for other's ideas, no matter how different or unconventional they were. A desire to serve the community, along with a desire to reach out to the contemporary newcomer, were two of the themes that developed. A statement of purpose evolved: to demonstrate spiritual growth, unconditional love, and healing, based on the teachings of Christian Science found in the Bible and Mary Baker Eddy's writings, and in accordance with the Church Manual. The group's desire was to evolve progressively the highest spiritual sense of church. It was expected that the demonstration of church would always be a continuing work in progress.

A single room was rented in an office building at 31591-C Camino Capistrano, San Juan Capistrano, with Sunday and Wednesday services and Sunday school beginning July 31st of that year. Reaching out to the community by providing lunches to the homeless at Main Beach in Laguna on Thursdays, we fed as many as seventy people and shared Christian Science with them. This activity continued for three years.

At this time the church was called the Christian Science Activity Center to expand ideas of what church could be. The group was not as yet recognized by The Mother Church, a process that takes some time. The name was chosen to convey to the community that here was a place where people would find interesting activities related to spirituality. Early on at members' meetings, which continued weekly for the first year or so, community leaders were invited to share their challenges with us so that we could understand community needs and find ways, metaphysically and otherwise, to help. These leaders included the Mayor, the Police Chief's representative, the Director of Gang Prevention, the Director of the Women's and Children's Shelter (Laura's House), the Founders of Mainstream (a group of seven drug rehab houses), the Manager of the Public Library, and the President of the Chamber of Commerce. These meetings were followed by metaphysical work on the problems shared by the speakers, and often Wednesday readings, financial contributions, and follow up.

Much thought continued regarding how to make our services comfortable and welcoming, as well as inspiring, for the newcomer. Everyone attending the Sunday Service was given a program so that the newcomer will know what to expect throughout the service. Dress was very informal. A search for contemporary hymns, solos, and music is still ongoing. Friendliness was characteristic, and our guest book was well-used. In addition, we invited people to write down a problem they would like prayerful support for and these needs would be announced to the congregation prior to silent prayer.

These practices continued, and as a result some wonderful healings have taken place, in partial fulfillment of Mrs. Eddy's definition of church as an entity that "affords proof of its utility." (S&H 583:12-19) From the beginning, there has been a conviction that the most important business of church is spiritual. As a result, members meetings explore how to demonstrate church spiritually,

and reports or money issues, for example, are given a very minor part of the meetings. Similarly, Mrs. Eddy's emphasis on self-knowledge has resulted in open and trusting sharing in meetings as well as much soul-searching and self-evaluation of how we can fulfil the church's purpose. The goal of all members to love each other as well as the world unconditionally reduces criticism and encourages openness. Rather than focusing on the shortcomings of a member, the question demanded of love is "How can I support this person in his or her spiritual growth?"

In an effort to recognize that everyone is equally loved of God, every effort is made to avoid hierarchy. For example, the church board consists of every member. We elect a 5-member "Facilitating Team" to ensure that the operations and business of the church are carried out smoothly. However, this team does not make decisions that affect the members or impact the direction of the church. All decisions and issues are discussed openly among members and friends in our monthly workshops.

We believe that while the concept of "membership" has a certain administrative value, we wanted to avoid any sense of exclusivity. From the beginning, it was our intent to minimize any sense of who is "in" versus who is "outside" of our church. Hence all of our meetings and workshops are open to anyone interested in helping to further our mission, or simply learn more about being an effective church. Also, most of our church positions are open to both members and non-members. The primary qualification is a simple desire to help carry out our purpose. A related value has been the desire that everyone learn each of the jobs in church. This has been demonstrated most to date in the readership. The readers only need to be members of The Mother Church. While elected by the entire membership, the readers change weekly or monthly. Many who have never read before now have this privilege and can develop these skills.

Finally, an effort is regularly made to keep the big picture. We are engaged in sharing ultimate truths with the world, truths which can literally save the world from sin, disease, and death, war, poverty, and the various ills of mortal belief. It is both a great privilege to know these truths as well as a responsibility to share them. Commitment to this task is the nature of membership in this church. It is a demanding, joyous, and rewarding role.

In late 2004, we secured a new location at 31897 Del Obispo, Suite 120, and our first service was held March 20, 2005. The move was necessitated by our need for more adequate space for our Sunday school. A teleconference line and an internet connection were added so that those at home or who do not live in the area can listen live to our Sunday and Wednesday services. Our Sunday school classes are available on Zoom video conferencing. In 2017, we became First Church of Christ, Scientist, San Juan Capistrano; however, you will find that you are joining more than a church. You are becoming part of a family that will love, support, and, yes, sometimes challenge you to go up higher.

Welcome - we're so happy you are interested in us!

Sincerely,
The Members of First Church of Christ, Scientist, San Juan Capistrano

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST, SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO

MEMBERSHIP AFFIRMATION

OUR PURPOSE is to heal through prayer, spiritual growth, and unconditional love based on the teachings of Christian Science as found in the Bible and Mary Baker Eddy's writings. The activities of this Church shall be governed by the Manual of The Mother Church, The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston Massachusetts.

Joining First Church of Christ, Scientist, San Juan Capistrano, is an affirmation of one's love for Christian Science and a commitment to work actively in the community to "...reinstate primitive Christianity and its lost element of healing." (Manual of The Mother Church, page 17)

I affirm that:

- ❖ I love Christian Science, study the Bible and the works of Mary Baker Eddy and embrace the Tenets of Christian Science.
- ❖ I will stay informed of community needs and will work actively for spiritual solutions.
- ❖ I will help provide Christian Science church services and activities in an atmosphere of unconditional love.
- ❖ I will strive to obey the Bylaws of this branch church.

I am not an official church member of any other denomination nor any other Christian Science Branch Church or Society.

I am a member of The Mother Church. NO _____ YES _____
Date of Admission _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Address _____
Street City Zip Code

Home # _____ Cell # _____

Email _____

Sponsor Signature _____ Date _____

Sponsor Signature _____ Date _____

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST, SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO
GENERAL INTEREST QUESTIONNAIRE

We welcome and encourage each member to be a part of our church family. There are many ways in which to participate and serve our church community, and that is why we invite you to fill out this General Interest Questionnaire.

YOUR NAME _____ DATE _____

1. How would you like to contribute to our church and what talents would you like to share?

2. You are familiar with our vision of Church. How can we work together so that this ever- evolving concept of church continues to grow?

3. Check off the following activities that interest you:

- Reading Room
- Reader
- Sunday School
- Child Care
- Care
- Audio Visual
- Outreach/Lecture
- Website
- Host On-site
- Hosts Wednesday Night
- Music Team
- Tithing

Joint Committees:

- Orange County Institutional Com.
- Joint Media Work
- Interfaith Work

APPROVED BYLAWS

Updated August 9, 2022

TITLE: First Church of Christ, Scientist San Juan Capistrano (FCCSSJC)

RELATIONSHIP: This Church is organized in accordance with the Manual of The Mother Church, The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Massachusetts, and is incorporated as a religious non-profit corporation in the State of California.

PURPOSE: To promote spiritual growth, unconditional love, and healing based on the teachings of the Bible and Mary Baker Eddy's writings.

PASTOR: The Bible and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy.

ACTIVITIES: Sunday services, Wednesday meetings, Sunday school, Reading Room, public lectures, Church workshops, website, mutual support, and other activities (including those on teleconference and the internet) that fulfill our purpose of promoting spiritual growth, love, and healing.

MEMBERSHIP:

Qualifications: A love for Christian Science, active work as a Christian Scientist (in the San Juan Capistrano community and beyond) to "reinstat[e] primitive Christianity and its lost element of healing"¹; an understanding of the responsibilities of membership; freedom from membership in other branches or denominations.

Application Procedure: Upon deciding to join, the applicant secures from the administrator or website a membership packet, which includes a copy of the Bylaws and an Affirmation form. After reviewing the packet and completing the form, the applicant seeks the sponsorship of two active members. The sponsors are responsible for verifying the applicant's readiness and willingness to assume the duties of membership, and to participate in the work of the Church. The completed affirmation form is returned to the administrator who then informs the Mentoring Team and all members of the date that the new member will be signing the membership register.

Member's Duties:

1. Unconditional love
2. Dedication to healing
by spiritual means
3. Spiritual growth
4. Non-judgmental, non-critical support
5. Active participation
6. Financial contributions
7. Abide by the Bylaws

Withdrawal: A letter of withdrawal is available from the administrator on request.

Inactivity: Members will have non-voting status after one year of non-participation.

Rights: All members shall have the same voting and other rights.² Church records are available to all members, including Bylaws, meeting minutes, financial reports, and a Directory of Members.³

Discipline: Failure to maintain duties or qualifications for membership may lead to discipline based on the Matthew Code (Matthew 18:15-17).

MEETINGS: Membership and Facilitating Team meetings will be held as needed but not less than six times a year. Members shall be notified of membership meetings in advance. Meetings may be called by five members or 10% of the membership, whichever is greater. A quorum consists of 20% of the members. Decisions are by majority vote of the members present, unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws.

ELECTIONS: Elections for Readers and Facilitating Team members will take place the month before the start of their terms.

CHURCH GOVERNANCE: The leadership of this church is vested in the membership. The Facilitating Team executes the directions of the membership in the practical administrative means necessary. Their term is one year.

DIRECTORS: (a) The number of directors shall not be less than five nor more than the entire membership.⁵ (b) Meetings: see meetings above. (c) All corporate powers shall be exercised by the membership.⁶

CORPORATE OFFICERS: For purposes of California non-profit corporation law, the corporate officers are President, Secretary, and Treasurer and are elected each December by the members for terms of one year beginning January 1. Each shall be held by different people.⁴ These officers are also the Church's financial signatories.

President: The duty of the President is to preside during business meetings and to sign pertinent documents.

Treasurer: The duties of the Treasurer are to keep the Church's financial records, make reports, and guide the compilation of, and present to the membership, the annual budget.

Secretary: The duties of the Secretary are to insure that minutes are kept and to keep a record of Church membership.

READERS: All readers shall be members of The Mother Church. Readers shall be elected by the membership, as needed.

REMOVAL FROM OFFICE OR MEMBERSHIP: An officer may be removed from office or a member may be removed from membership by a 3/5 vote of members present at a membership meeting.

AMENDING BYLAWS: Bylaws may be amended by a 2/3 vote of members present at a membership meeting. The text of the proposed Bylaw changes must be in all members' hands two weeks prior to voting.

DISSOLVING: The Church is dissolved by 2/3 vote of members present at a special meeting requiring one month's prior written notice.

DISPOSITION OF ASSETS: If this Church is dissolved, the assets shall be distributed to other non-profit organizations for the benefit of Christian Science as the members shall determine.

ENDNOTES:

1. Eddy, Mary Baker, *Church Manual*, 17:12

The following endnotes refer to the California Nonprofit Religious Corporation Law Title I, Division 2, Part 4

2. Section 9331

3. Section 9160

4. Section 9213a

5. Section 9151

6. Section 9210