



Community of Christ

CHRIST'S MISSION, OUR MISSION

Survey Results on WCR 1324, Baptism and Membership

June 2026

Introduction to Survey Results

On 24 April 2023, Community of Christ adopted WCR 1324, *Resolution on Baptism and Membership*, which stated:

That the World Conference request the president of the church to give additional prayer and study seeking divine guidance on persons who were baptized before the age of eight becoming members of Community of Christ via confirmation after having attained the age of eight.

In June 2025, the newly ordained First Presidency invited Community of Christ members and friends into a discernment process on the question of allowing membership in Community of Christ through confirmation only for persons baptized in another denomination before age eight. The six lenses of Discovering God's Will (scripture, tradition, knowledge and reason, personal and communal experience, continuing revelation, and common consent) continue to guide the entire discernment process. People were asked to prayerfully consider the brief history, Theology Formation Team report, and reflection questions provided on the church's website: <https://CofChrist.org/baptism-and-membership/>. Then they were asked to complete a two-question survey sharing their discerned perspective by 31 December 2025.

Participant Overview

A total of 477 (459)¹ people responded to the survey.

Language Breakdown

English: 460 (442)¹

Español: 6

Français: 11

Statistical Confidence

Results are based on a self-selected sample of 459 individuals from a larger population of 250,000. Because the sample was opt-in rather than randomly selected, a traditional margin of error cannot be

strictly applied, but for context, a random sample of this size would yield a margin of error of $\pm 4.57\%$ at a 95% confidence level

Why does this matter?

We've provided this information to clarify that if everyone in the church were randomly surveyed, the actual results would likely be within $\pm 4.57\%$ of these reported figures.

Question One Responses

The first question was, "What is your level of support for allowing persons who were baptized before the age of eight becoming members of Community of Christ via confirmation after having attained the age of eight? (1 = No support and 5 = Full Support)."

Numerical Level	Descriptor	People Responding	% of 477 Responses
5	Full Support	201	42.1
4	Moderate Support	41	8.6
3	Tentative Support	50 (43) ¹	10.5
2	Low Support	31	6.5
1	No Support	154 (143) ¹	32.3

The total number of people responding:

- Levels 3, 4, and 5 were 292 (285*) indicating 61.2% (62.1%*) supporting.
- Levels 1 and 2 were 185 (174*) indicating 38.8% (37.9%*) not supporting.

While nearly two-thirds of respondents—comprised of those indicating Level 5, 4, or 3 support—discerned a desire for the proposed change, the results do not yet reflect the significant support defined by the church as a threshold of 80% or more. The data further reveals a community holding deeply polarized convictions, with approximately 75% of all responses situated at the extreme poles of Level 1 and Level 5. This concentration highlights the widely varying perspectives that remain, calling us to continued patience and careful discernment as we navigate these differing theological and pastoral commitments together.

¹ Parenthetical data points reflect identification of repeat entries from single survey participants reducing total number of participant entries indicating a numerical level of support. All narrative feedback is intact.

Question Two Responses

Overall Summary of Written Responses

The second question was, “Using the five lenses of discovering God’s will used in the report (scripture, experience, reason, tradition, and continuing revelation), why do you hold this level of support?” The survey written responses reveal a deeply faithful community engaging a complex question with sincerity and a shared love for the church. While perspectives on policy varied, several core convictions were nearly universal across all levels of support:

- **Shared Values:** Participants consistently affirmed the central importance of baptism, intentional discipleship, and the sacred nature of covenant commitment to Jesus Christ.
- **The Primary Tension:** The fundamental difference between respondents lies not in the value of the covenant commitment itself, but in the theological understanding of *how* and *when* that covenant commitment is officially recognized by the church.
- **Key Discussion Points:**
 - **Grace vs. Form:** Many explored the relationship between "believer baptism" (the Christian practice of baptizing individuals who have consciously committed to follow Christ) and the lived reality of committed Christians baptized in other traditions.
 - **Agency and Accountability:** Concerns were raised regarding the "age of accountability" (referring to baptism at or after the age of eight) and the necessity of personal agency in making a sacramental commitment.
 - **Ecumenical & Pastoral Impact:** Respondents weighed the desire for institutional consistency with the pastoral need to remove barriers to belonging.
- **A Commitment to Discernment:** Regardless of their personal stance, contributors expressed a broad agreement that confirmation and robust education are essential to membership. This process reflects a collective commitment to using the six lenses of scripture, tradition, knowledge and reason, personal and communal experience, continuing revelation, and common consent to listen for the Spirit’s guidance.

Summary of Responses by Level of Support

Across All Levels of Support

Across all levels, contributors consistently affirmed:

- Discipleship matters more than sacrament particulars about age.
- Agency, grace, and integrity of covenant are central concerns.
- The decision carries pastoral, theological, and ecumenical implications.

Level 5 (Full Support): Key Themes

Primary posture: Affirming inclusion through Confirmation without rebaptism.

- Conversion does not always coincide with baptism, including believer baptism at or after age eight.
- Lived discipleship and confirmation are viewed as the clearest expressions of covenant commitment.

- Requiring rebaptism can unintentionally deny Christ's work already present in a person's life.
- Strong concern for coherence between open Communion and restrictive membership practices.
- Emphasis on Continuing Revelation, humility, and ecumenical respect.
- Scripture and Doctrine & Covenants (such as sections 162, 164, 165) cited to support form serving grace, not limiting it.

Level 4 (Moderate Support): Key Themes

Primary posture: Support with conditions and safeguards.

- Broad agreement that age eight is not necessarily the age when a person is accountable and understands the covenant of committing to Christ.
- Strong insistence on:
 - Robust preparation and education.
 - Meaningful Confirmation as covenantal commitment.
- Desire to retain believer baptism as normative practice, while allowing pastoral flexibility.
- Preference for case-by-case discernment rather than automatic acceptance.

Level 3 (Tentative Support): Key Themes

Primary posture: Tension held in faith.

- Deep respect for agency and tradition, paired with discomfort about exclusion.
- Recognition that:
 - Infant baptism plus later confirmation can represent authentic faith
 - Many baptisms at age eight lacked true understanding
- Strong willingness to accept prophetic direction, regardless of outcome.
- Repeated calls for clarity on what Confirmation signifies (membership only vs. covenantal discipleship).

Level 2 (Limited Support): Key Themes

Primary posture: Preserve believer baptism as prerequisite.

- Baptism understood as requiring conscious choice, repentance, and understanding.
- Concern that accepting infant baptism:
 - Weakens church distinctives.
 - Risks casualizing commitment.
- Strong emphasis on education prior to Confirmation, even if policy changes.

Level 1 (No Support): Key Themes

Primary posture: Maintain current policy without change.

- Deep theological grounding in:
 - Scripture (Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine & Covenants).
 - Age of accountability.
 - Rejection of Original Sin.
- Fear that accepting infant baptism:
 - Undermines agency.

- Dilutes sacramental meaning.
- Erodes church identity and authority.
- Significant grief, anger, and fear of loss—spiritual and institutional—are present. These feelings are a testament to how deeply people value our sacramental traditions.
- Strong desire for doctrinal stability and clarity, even at the cost of growth.

Conclusion from the Survey Responses

People responding at all levels of support upheld the importance of baptism and confirmation — the differing perspectives were about *how grace and agency are honored*.

Many respondents across all levels affirmed:

- Confirmation as the actual point of membership.
- Baptism as covenant with God, not primarily with an institution.

While the strongest convictions were expressed by those at Levels 1 and 5, the majority of these responses implied a desire for faithful balance.

Next Steps

The First Presidency expresses its profound gratitude for the prophetic voice of the people shared through this discernment and survey process. Your responses reveal a deeply faithful community engaging a complex question with sincerity, conviction, and a shared love for the church. We are moved by the honesty and vulnerability expressed across all perspectives.

We also wish to express our deep appreciation for the Theology Formation Team, whose dedicated efforts in working through the expansive survey results and meticulously developing the summaries of the responses have been invaluable to our collective understanding as we move into the next steps.

It is vital for the church to remain willing to explore these difficult questions regarding sacraments and church policy. This survey demonstrates our collective commitment to prophetic imagination, as we look beyond established boundaries to discern how God is moving in our midst. By listening carefully for the Spirit’s guidance in the present moment, we cultivate the prophetic agility necessary to respond faithfully and adapt our journey as a clear direction emerges.

As stewards of the church’s sacraments, the First Presidency takes this responsibility with the utmost seriousness. We recognize that while the church’s perspectives on the pathway to membership may differ, we sense we are united in our belief that baptism, confirmation, and intentional discipleship are essential to our life in Christ.

We humbly request your continued prayers for the First Presidency and specifically for the ongoing discernment of the president. As we continue to seek a faithful response to WCR 1324, we trust in the Holy Spirit to lead us toward a path that honors both our sacred traditions and the expansive nature of God’s grace.