



How to Find a Church

– Free Guide for New Christians PDF

A gentle, practical guide to finding a church where you can hear the Bible taught, grow in faith, and meet people who follow Jesus.

A place to worship, learn and belong

A church is a community of people who gather to worship God, learn from Scripture, pray, share life, and serve their neighbours. In the New Testament, the word describes both local gatherings and the wider family of people who belong to Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12–27; Hebrews 10:24–25).

You do not need to know all the customs or have every question answered before you visit. Come as you are, listen, and take time to notice whether the church helps you grow in faith and love. Finding a church is a process, not an exam you have to pass.

Free resource from Jesus Light Studio – jesuslightstudio.com

01 | WHAT TO LOOK FOR

A healthy church points you to Jesus

Churches may differ in style, music, leadership, and tradition. Look beyond the details that are simply unfamiliar to you and consider the deeper signs of faithfulness, humility, care, and safety.

The Bible is taught faithfully

Listen for teaching that takes the Bible seriously, explains its meaning in context, and encourages people to live it out. Christians do not agree on every interpretation, so healthy teaching welcomes careful reading and honest questions rather than using verses to control or shame people (Acts 17:11; 2 Timothy 3:16–17).

Jesus is at the centre

The message should turn attention to Jesus: his life, death, resurrection, grace, and call to follow him. Christian faith is not about impressing people or earning God's love. Look for a community that encourages trust in Christ and a life shaped by his teaching (Colossians 1:15–20; John 13:34–35).

Welcome, humility and room for questions

Notice whether people treat newcomers with kindness without pressuring them to join, give, or share personal details. Leaders should be willing to explain what the church believes and how decisions are made. You should be able to ask sincere questions and take time to consider the answers.

A loving and accountable community

Look for practical care, mutual respect, service, and concern for people who are vulnerable (Galatians 6:2; James 1:27). Healthy leaders are not above correction. A church should have clear safeguarding practices, transparent finances and leadership, and appropriate ways to raise concerns. No community is perfect, but secrecy, intimidation, or unchecked power are serious warning signs.

Free resource from Jesus Light Studio – jesuslightstudio.com

02 | QUESTIONS TO ASK

Curiosity is welcome

You can ask a pastor, welcome team member, or trusted church member. You do not need to ask everything at once. Choose the questions that matter most to you and notice whether people respond with patience and clarity.

Before you visit

- What does a typical Sunday gathering include, and how long does it last?
- Is there anything I should know about parking, accessibility, children, or what to wear?
- What does the church believe about Jesus, the Bible, and following Christ?
- Are there small groups, Bible studies, or newcomer opportunities, and are they optional?
- How are safeguarding, pastoral care, and concerns handled?

After you visit

- Was the teaching centred on Scripture and Jesus? What did I learn or want to explore further?
- Did people respect my boundaries and treat one another with kindness?
- Could I ask questions without being rushed, shamed, or pressured?
- What would I like to understand before deciding whether to return?

You are allowed to take notes, speak with more than one person, and visit more than once before making a decision.

Free resource from Jesus Light Studio – jesuslightstudio.com

03 | FIND, VISIT, FOLLOW UP

Take one thoughtful step at a time

Find local options

Ask a Christian you trust where they worship, or search online for churches near your home, work, or study. Check each church's own website for its statement of faith, service times, accessibility information, safeguarding policies, and details about children or youth activities.

You could also contact a local church network or denomination for a directory. Make a short list of a few possibilities and compare what they say they believe with Scripture. Online descriptions can help you prepare, but a visit and a conversation will give you a fuller picture.

Make your first visit manageable

Choose a service time that works for you and, if it helps, ask someone you trust to come along. Arrive a little early so you can find the entrance and ask a practical question. You can sit where you feel comfortable, join in as much or as little as you wish, and leave afterwards without committing to anything.

Church gatherings may include singing, prayer, Bible reading, a sermon, communion, or time for conversation. The order and style vary. If you are unsure what to do, you can observe quietly and ask someone to explain afterwards.

Follow up in your own time

If you would like to know more, send a brief message, return for another service, or ask about a newcomer gathering or Bible study. You can say, 'I am new to church and would like to understand more about what you believe.' A good follow-up gives you information and a welcome, not pressure.

Free resource from Jesus Light Studio – jesuslightstudio.com

04 | GROW AT A HEALTHY PACE

Belonging grows with trust

Get involved at a comfortable pace

As you become more comfortable, you might try a small group, a newcomers' course, a prayer meeting, or a practical serving opportunity. Begin with what is manageable and ask what is expected before you commit. It is wise to take time to understand the church and build trust before accepting responsibility.

Christian growth is shared life, not a race to become busy. The New Testament describes believers encouraging one another and using their gifts to serve (Romans 12:4–8; Hebrews 10:24–25). You can ask for help, say no when something does not feel right, and keep learning as you go.

Traditions differ, so use discernment

Churches may be Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Pentecostal, Presbyterian, independent, or part of another tradition. They may differ on worship, church structure, baptism, communion, and other beliefs. Learn what a congregation teaches, compare it thoughtfully with the Bible, and speak with mature Christians you trust. Ask God for wisdom as you seek (James 1:5).

Safety matters

No church should demand secrecy, isolate you from trusted friends or family, threaten you for asking questions, or pressure you for money, private information, or immediate commitment. Be especially careful where leaders discourage outside advice, claim they cannot be challenged, or ignore reports of harm.

If you feel unsafe, you may leave, pause contact, and speak with someone you trust. If a child or vulnerable person may be at risk, contact the appropriate safeguarding authority or emergency service in your area. Seeking help is not a failure of faith.

A simple next step

Choose one nearby church, check its public information, and plan a visit if it feels right. Take your time, keep asking honest questions, and look for a community where truth and love belong together. May God guide you as you find people with whom you can worship, learn, and grow.

Free resource from Jesus Light Studio – jesuslightstudio.com