

# Partnership Information & FAQs

## WHAT IS PARTNERSHIP?

Partnership is an annual, formal commitment to the life and ministry of Arlington Countryside Church (ACC). The purposes of partnership are:

- To lead people in their spiritual growth through a more meaningful relationship with the church.
- To increase the spiritual health and effectiveness of ACC through a deepening commitment of its participants.
- To clearly communicate the responsibilities of each believer and the expectations of the church leadership (elders).

## HOW DO I BECOME A PARTNER?

Becoming a partner involves 4 steps:

- Profession of faith in Christ.
  - This involves writing a brief explanation telling about your faith in Christ.
- Agreeing with and signing the ACC Partnership Commitment.
- Agreeing with the ACC Statement of Faith.
- Attending the ACC Next Step class.

## WHY SHOULD I BECOME A PARTNER? (BENEFITS)

- The Bible makes clear that involvement in the church is NOT optional for the follower of Christ. Partnership allows you to formally commit to the local body of Christ. We are all called to be part of a community where we can develop the missional marks of:

**Lifestyle of worship**

**Doer of the Word**

**Others-focused**

**Sharer of faith**

**Investor in ACC**

- You will provide encouragement to the leaders and fellow partners of ACC by your commitment.
- You will advance your spiritual growth as you clarify and fulfill your commitment to the church.

## WHAT IF I CHOOSE TO NOT BECOME A PARTNER?

- Though we would strongly encourage each person to partner up, it is your prerogative to choose not to. Not much, if anything, will change – you will be able to continue on in your involvement in our various ministries and be an integral part of the ACC family.
- The elders have determined that ACC Partnership will be required for elders, staff, and members of the following teams: Operations Task Force (OTF), Financial Processing and Accountability (FPA) and Trustees, as well as key volunteer ministry coaches (as deemed appropriate by the elders).

## ISN'T THIS JUST THE SAME AS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP?

- While there are some similarities, we see the primary differences being:
  - Membership tends to emphasize privileges (eg. voting privileges, etc.); partnership emphasizes responsibility and commitment to the work of Christ.
  - Unlike in membership where the church membership roll must constantly be maintained and updated, in partnership, there will be an annual renewal in January that each partner must make in order to remain a partner.

## **WHY IS PARTNERSHIP NECESSARY?**

- Almost all churches have something like this – and yes, most call it membership. Typically church membership regulates who gets to vote in church business meetings. This isn't applicable to us since we are elder led rather than congregation led.
- Here are a few reasons why ACC leadership believes this is a good move for the health and growth of our church:
  - It specifically spells out some next steps for growing as a follower of Christ; this is especially important to communicate as we continue to reach previously unchurched people. They have no previous experience or frame of reference - they need to be taught the proper relationship between a Christ-follower and the church. This will make for a great teaching tool.
  - Churches that set the bar high in their expectations for their people in turn get a lot out of their people! When expectations are clear – most people rise up to the challenge. That's a good thing for ACC and for them!
  - We want to establish a basic level of commitment necessary for key leaders within the church (elders, staff, etc.).

## **WHY IS THERE AN ANNUAL RENEWAL?**

- This way, partnership will serve as an excellent teaching tool for our congregation as we consistently review the role of the church and the responsibilities of each believer.
- Each partner will need to regularly reevaluate his/her commitment to Christ and His work.
- It is a fact of life that people change and sometimes there is a decrease in their commitment to Christ and His church. Partnership involves a formal commitment to our responsibilities as members of the body of Christ.

## **CAN MY CHILD / TEENAGER BECOME A PARTNER?**

- Partnership is limited to those 18 years and older. It is a commitment that is best made by an adult, though youth will be encouraged to move toward this commitment as they reach that age.

## **WHAT IF I DO NOT FULLY AGREE WITH THE STATEMENT OF FAITH?**

- These biblical positions are the basis of our teaching and practice. Any disagreements or questions will gladly be handled on a case by case basis.