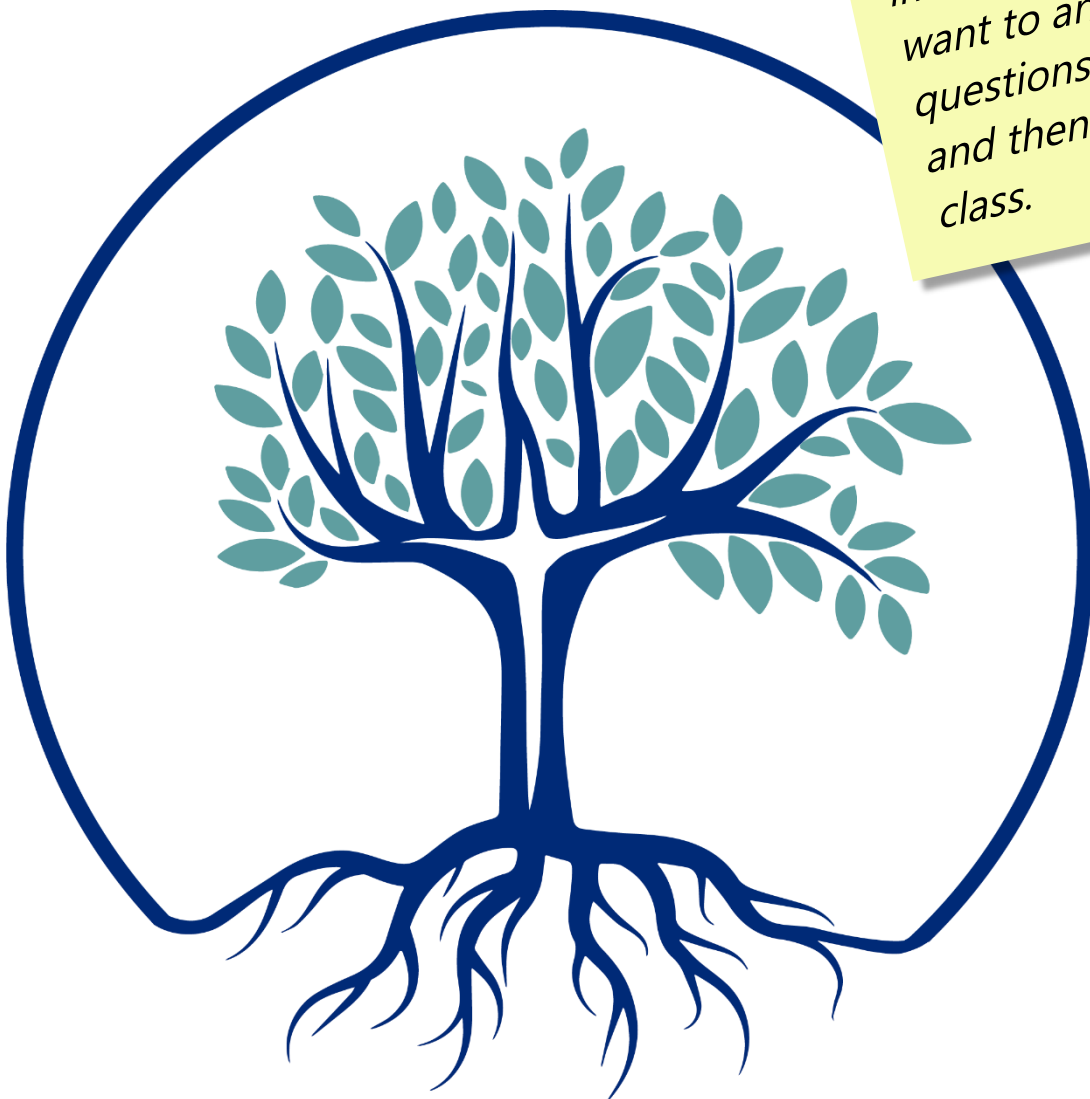


# Alto Reformed Church

## Covenant Partnership

*Yes, this a lot of information, but we do want to answer your questions well. Read it over and then join us for the class.*



# Contents

## **Introduction**

### **About You**

1. Your History & Current Reality
2. Your Faith Story
3. Your Beliefs, Reasons to Join, What You Like About Alto

### **About Covenant Partnership**

4. What is a Covenant Partner?
5. Why become a Covenant Partner?
6. What is the process of becoming a Covenant Partner?
7. What are covenants for?
8. What are Alto's Covenant Partner Vows?
9. What must a Covenant Partner confess and believe?
10. What must a Covenant Partner commit to do?

### **About Alto Reformed Church**

11. Our History & Mission
12. Our Beliefs

### **About Your Next Steps**

## INTRODUCTION

We are thrilled you are interested in learning more about following Jesus and connecting with Alto Reformed Church. This is one of the most important decisions of your life. It is transformational to turn and follow Jesus. Partnering with other believers in following Jesus is also an important and valuable step of faith. You will be encouraged by the support of godly friends and find significance in the world as you serve others according to your strengths. We hope that as you reflect on this material, you will choose to become a Covenant Partner with us.

We'd like to begin by getting to know you. Then we will share about what we mean by Covenant Partners and who we are.

It truly is our hope and prayer  
*“that your partnership with us  
in the faith may be effective in  
deepening your understanding  
of every good thing we share  
for the sake of Christ.”*  
(Philemon 1:6)

# ABOUT YOU

The Discovering Covenant Partnership Class is not just about you learning about the church, but about us getting to know you. So, we want to spend some time hearing about you.

## 1. Your History & Current Reality

What is one of the most impactful events from your past?

What three things should we know about your life right now?

## 2. Your Faith Story

Circle where are you on the graphic below? (If you have not “humbly accepted” Jesus as your Lord and Savior, we are excited that you are on the journey. The next three questions may not apply to you, but listen to others, share where you are at, and let us walk with you.)

### Where are you on the discipleship journey?



We are to “*always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect...*” (1 Peter 3:15 NIV) Luke tells the faith story of the Apostle Paul three times in the book of Acts (Acts 9, 22, 26) in order to share the gospel. So, we ask that you write and share your faith story with us. The following three questions should be answered on the Partnership Request Form at the end of this packet.

- I. What was your life like before knowing Jesus? If you accepted Jesus as your Savior early in life, what was life like when you strayed from your relationship with Jesus?
- II. How and when did you decide to trust Jesus? What happened that you have returned to Jesus? Who helped you make that decision?
- III. How has this decision made a difference in your life? What is it like now to follow Jesus? Who has helped you grow in faith?

## 3. Your Beliefs, Reasons to Join, What You Like About Alto...

What else would you say is important for us to know about you and why you are wanting to partner with us?

# ABOUT COVENANT PARTNERSHIP

## 4. What is a Covenant Partner?

The Bible teaches that we are members of the body (Eph. 4:25), but our culture tends to use the word *member* very differently. Look in your wallet for a moment. To how many organizations are you a member? I am a Staples Rewards Card Member, a Panera Bread Member, a Pizza Ranch Rewards Member, and a Family Christian Stores Pastor Perks Member. My health insurer calls me a member, my car insurance company calls me a member, my credit card companies even call me a member. Get the picture? The word *membership* is so over-used that the definition has become vague and confusing. Generally, it means we get something for less than we would if we were not members, but you had better read the fine print first. Membership could mean many things today, and thus we are now using Covenant Partner to explain the relationship and commitment we have to one another. This means we covenant, or make vows to one another, and we partner, or work side by side. That's our understanding of belonging to a church.

**The Bible describes two kinds of belonging or membership.**

**Positional Membership/Professing Christian:** Scripture clearly teaches that when one chooses to follow Jesus Christ, he/she becomes a member of the one body (1 Cor. 12:12-13; Eph. 2:13-22; 3:6; 4:3-6; Col. 1:13-22). When this occurs, you become a "positional member" in the universal Church. Positional membership is eternal and unchanging. It comes by grace through faith.

### Ephesians 3:6

*This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus*

**Participating Membership/Covenant Partnership:** The Bible also urges positional members to continue growing by becoming participating members or Covenant Partners in a specific local church (Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:25-31; 14:12, 26; 16:15-16; Heb. 10:24-25; 1 Tim. 3:14-15). Obviously, a person may be a member/partner of several different local bodies during the course of his or her lifetime while maintaining an invisible bond of positional membership.

### 1 Cor. 16:15-16

*You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the Lord's people. I urge you, brothers and sisters, to submit to such people and to everyone who joins in the work and labors at it.*

God longs for all people to be saved and join his family, becoming "positional members," but he also longs for us to partner with other believers and become participating members/Covenant Partners in a local church. (See "Covenant Partners" message from 1/3/21 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lai9YkSCGTg>)

## 5. Why become a Covenant Partner?

Many people assume that because they profess Christ, further identification or involvement with a local church is an optional tack-on. It is kind of like the service plan you can get on a new TV. You can take it or leave it. It might be helpful, but probably not necessary. It's up to you. However, partnering with other believers should not be viewed as optional. We believe there are two major reasons for becoming a Covenant Partner.

**1. We believe Covenant Partnership in a local church is a biblical mandate for every believer.** As noted above, "membership" sometimes reflects positional membership. While at other times, it clearly calls us to participation in a local church. Paul's instructions clearly call us to work together as partners in sharing the Good News (Phm. 1:6), to serve in the "body" (Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12), to care for the "flock" (Acts 20:28), to judge the "insiders" (1 Cor. 5:12-13), and to submit to elders (Heb. 13:17). Church is not optional. As a follower of Christ, we are instructed to live and serve alongside other believers.

### Philippians 3:17

*Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you.*

Jesus also longed for His followers to be deeply committed to one another. The night before his crucifixion he taught that his disciples would be defined by their love for each other. Later Jesus prayed that they would be completely united and thus be a witness of God's love to the world. Uniting together is foundational to New Testament teaching.

### John 13:34

*"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

### John 17:23

*"...May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."*

**2. We believe Covenant Partnership is beneficial and essential to your spiritual health.** In a culture where commitment is not highly valued, recognizable partnership is an important step that moves each of us out of the vague clouds of our good intentions and into the clear light of committed participation. It presents a challenge to "step out of the stands" and publicly affirm a commitment to Christ and to a specific local body. In this sense, membership or Covenant Partnership can be a significant "defining moment" in one's lifelong discipleship journey. This step is essential to our spiritual health for two basic reasons.

First, we need support. We were not designed to walk alone. Beyond the imminent fall, there was one thing wrong with creation; Adam was alone. God gave him Eve. So too, we need others to walk with us through life. So, Paul instructed the believers to "carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." (Gal. 6:2)

**Genesis 2:18**

*The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."*

Second, we need guidance. We read in the letter to Hebrews that we must continually spur one another on in living our faith. The author of Hebrews shared a command to , "...encourage one another daily, as long as it is called today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness." (Heb. 3:13) Later the author calls us to "...let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching."(Heb. 10:24-25) In both of these verses the word "encourage" means to entreat, admonish, or instruct. We need people around us who urge us to live holy lives, who keep us accountable, and who guide us through life's temptations.

**1 Thessalonians 5:11-14**

*"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone."*

R.C. Sproul explains it well in his book "Can I have Joy in Life?"

*While the minister listened to the man's explanations, he noticed that the charcoal on the grill was glowing white hot. Without saying anything, the minister picked up a set of tongs and moved one of the glowing coals apart from the others. He then continued his conversation with the parishioner. However, after a few minutes, he reached into the grill and picked up the coal with his bare hand. He then looked at the man and said: "Did you see what just happened here? Only a few minutes ago, I wouldn't have dared to touch this coal because it was so hot. But once I separated it from the rest of the coals, it stopped burning and became cold. It no longer could help cook the steaks on the grill. That is what is going to happen to you. You need the body of Christ. You need the church of Christ. You need the fellowship of the saints and the assembly of the people of God. We are not rugged individualists who are called to live in isolation from others."*

*That minister was right. The company of other believers keeps our faith lively and active. But if we cool off when we are removed from connection with other Christians, how much more will we wither if we remove ourselves from the real source of power, which is Christ Himself?<sup>1</sup>*

## 6. What is the process to become a Covenant Partner?

We have broken the process up into three steps and ask that you prayerfully consider what God would like you to do.

1. **Consider** – Prospective Covenant Partners should attend the "Covenant Partnership Class" to learn about our congregation and to understand the vows involved in Covenant Partnership. Attending does not obligate you to join, but allows the opportunity to make an informed commitment.
2. **Commit** – Prospective members may decide to partner with our congregation and meet with our elders to request to covenant with us in ministry. Just fill out the Partnership Request Form which is attached to this document and turn it into the office.
3. **Celebrate & Covenant** – During a worship service, new Covenant Partners affirm the vows and are received into the congregation.

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<sup>1</sup> R.C. Sproul, [Can I Have Joy in My Life?](#) (First edition, Vol. 12, pp. 47–48, Orlando, FL: Reformation Trust, 2012)

## 7. What are covenants for?

A covenant is a relationship based on a commitment between two or more parties. In this case, it is a commitment between three parties: you, the other Covenant Partners of the congregation, and God. When a couple gets married, they make a covenant with each other to work together. They each state vows or promises to the other. The intent is to bring stability and to clarify the level of commitment in the relationship. The same is true for church membership.

We see the practice of covenanting over and over in Scripture. Some of the major covenants occur with Noah (Gen. 9:8-17), Abraham (Gen. 12:1-7; 15), Moses (Exod. 3:7-15), and multiple times with the nation of Israel (Exod. 24:7-8; Deut. 26:17; Josh. 9:15-16; & Neh. 9:38). Jesus established a new covenant (Jer. 31; Luke 22:20; Heb. 9:15, 12:24; 2 Cor. 3:6).

### Deuteronomy 26:17 ERV

*You have declared today that the Lord is your God, and that you will walk in his ways, and keep his statutes and his commandments and his rules, and will obey his voice.*

Without a commitment to a covenant, relationships often fall into unhealthy ruts and never develop true intimacy. Our Covenant Partner Vows, summarize the commitments of the members. These commitments can seem overwhelming, but they are helpful in articulating God's best for us. They give us a target and help us to know what it means to live like Jesus. Perfection is obviously impossible here on earth, but perfection is our goal. Jesus said, "*Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*" (Mat. 5:48) To shoot for less is inadequate.

### Nehemiah 9:38

*Because of all this we make a firm covenant in writing; on the sealed document are the names of our princes, our Levites, and our priests.*

You will fall short. You will mess up. But Jesus did not come to condemn you. Just like the woman caught in adultery, he offers forgiveness to you and then says, "*go and sin no more.*" (John 8:11) We only ask that you be real with us so that we might grow in humility and love together.

## 8. What are Alto's Covenant Partner Vows?

Our Covenant Partner Vows include confessions (core beliefs we affirm) and commitments (things we promise to do). Specifically, they are...

### Confession:

I believe in one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; confess Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord; and accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the supreme authority for faith and life. I accept the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed as ecumenical expressions of the Christian faith.

### Commitments:

I will trust Jesus as the only Savior and Lord, connect deeply with Jesus' followers, grow to be like Jesus, serve sacrificially as Jesus did, reach out to the world with the love and truth of Jesus, and worship Jesus as the ruler of all.

I will maintain a life of prayer, study God's Word, participate in the Lord's supper, gather with believers regularly, use my spiritual gifts and financial resources to further the mission of Jesus through the local church, live a life pleasing to God and accept the spiritual guidance of the church leadership.

I will walk in a spirit of Christian love seeking unity, purity and peace within this congregation.

## 9. What must a Covenant Partner confess and believe?

You can read more about what our church believes under "Our Beliefs" later in this packet. The first three confessions in our Covenant Partner Vows emphasize the importance of the trinity, personal faith in Jesus, and the authority of the Bible. The fourth confession emphasizes the historic creeds of the Christian Church.

The Apostles' Creed is certainly the best known and most widely accepted statement of foundational truths of the Christian Church. Having its roots in the second century, it developed over the next 300 years into the traditional form many use yet today. The contemporary version seeks to bring clarity by changing "maker" to "creator," "Holy Ghost" to "Holy Spirit," "sitteth" to "is seated," and "quick" to "living." Interestingly, most maintain the use of "catholic church" despite it being confused with the Roman Catholic Church. The meaning is clarified in a footnote. One controversial issue is the phrase... "descended

### The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to Hell.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic\* Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*\*meaning the universal Christian church--all believers in Jesus Christ*

to hell.” We understand this to mean that Jesus suffered the wrath of God on the cross in our place. Even with the debate on this line, we believe it is valuable to continue to affirm the creed as an ecumenical expression of core doctrines of the Christian faith.

The Nicene Creed came out of two gatherings of church leaders, one in Nicaea (now Iznik, Turkey) in AD 325 and the other in Constantinople (now Istanbul, Turkey) in AD 381. It was written to confront the false teaching of Arius, who denied that Jesus was divine. Thus, the creed follows in line with the Apostles’ Creed and explains more clearly the persons of the Trinity; The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Note the clear Gospel message in the middle section about Jesus.

The Athanasian Creed comes from the teaching of Athanasius, who died in AD 373, but the creed does not appear in historical documents until AD 633. It reaffirms the views of the Nicene Creed and further confronts the heresies of the time. Monophysitism taught that Jesus was neither fully human nor fully God. Nestorianism taught that Jesus was two persons, divine and human.

These creeds lay a solid foundation of the Christian faith and thus are part of what we call Covenant Partners to confess.

### The Nicene Creed

I We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father [and the Son], who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

### The Athanasian Creed

Whoever wants to be saved should above all cling to the catholic faith. Whoever does not guard it whole and inviolable will doubtless perish eternally.

Now this is the catholic faith: We worship one God in trinity and the Trinity in unity, neither confusing the persons nor dividing the divine being. For the Father is one person, the Son is another, and the Spirit is still another. But the deity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one, equal in glory, coeternal in majesty. What the Father is, the Son is, and so is the Holy Spirit. Uncreated is the Father; uncreated is the Son; uncreated is the Spirit. The Father is infinite; the Son is infinite; the Holy Spirit is infinite. Eternal is the Father; eternal is the Son; eternal is the Spirit: And yet there are not three eternal beings, but one who is eternal; as there are not three uncreated and unlimited beings, but one who is uncreated and unlimited. Almighty is the Father; almighty is the Son; almighty is the Spirit: And yet there are not three almighty beings, but one who is almighty. Thus the Father is God; the Son is God; the Holy Spirit is God: And yet there are not three gods, but one God. Thus the Father is Lord; the Son is Lord; the Holy Spirit is Lord: And yet there are not three lords, but one Lord. As Christian truth compels us to acknowledge each distinct person as God and Lord, so catholic religion forbids us to say that there are three gods or lords.

The Father was neither made nor created nor begotten; the Son was neither made nor created, but was alone begotten of the Father; the Spirit was neither made nor created, but is proceeding from the Father and the Son. Thus there is one Father, not three fathers; one Son, not three sons; one Holy Spirit, not three spirits. And in this Trinity, no one is before or after, greater or less than the other; but all three persons are in themselves, coeternal and coequal; and so we must worship the Trinity in unity and the one God in three persons. Whoever wants to be saved should think thus about the Trinity.

It is necessary for eternal salvation that one also faithfully believe that our Lord Jesus Christ became flesh. For this is the true faith that we believe and confess: That our Lord Jesus Christ, God’s Son, is both God and man. He is God, begotten before all worlds from the being of the Father, and he is man, born in the world from the being of his mother — existing fully as God, and fully as man with a rational soul and a human body; equal to the Father in divinity, subordinate to the Father in humanity. Although he is God and man, he is not divided, but is one Christ. He is united because God has taken humanity into himself; he does not transform deity into humanity. He is completely one in the unity of his person, without confusing his natures. For as the rational soul and body are one person, so the one Christ is God and man. He suffered death for our salvation. He descended into hell and rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. At his coming all people shall rise bodily to give an account of their own deeds. Those who have done good will enter eternal life, those who have done evil will enter eternal fire.

This is the catholic faith. One cannot be saved without believing this firmly and faithfully.



## 10. What must a Covenant Partner commit to do?

Our commitments could be consolidated and connected with our logo in the following way....

**Trusting: (Cross)** I will trust Jesus as the only Savior and Lord and maintain a life of prayer. (See John 14)

**Growing: (Roots)** I will grow to be like Jesus by studying God's Word. (See Psalm 1 & 119)

**Worshipping: (Branches)** I will worship Jesus as the ruler of all by participating in the Lord's supper and living a life pleasing to God. (See John 15)

**Connecting: (Circle)** I will connect deeply with Jesus' followers, gather with believers regularly, accept the spiritual guidance of the church leadership, and walk in a spirit of Christian love seeking unity, purity and peace within this congregation. (See John 17)

**Serving & Reaching: (Leaves)** I will serve sacrificially as Jesus did and reach out to the world with the love and truth of Jesus, using my spiritual gifts and financial resources to further the mission of Jesus through the local church. (See John 13 & 21)



Alto hosts many opportunities for you to gather with others for prayer, Bible study, worship, fellowship, service, and outreach. See our bulletin and website for current options. You are also encouraged to use the following resources...

### Spiritual Growth Assessment

If you genuinely want to live out the Covenant Partner commitments, you'll need to regularly evaluate and reflect on your current life. Are you truly abiding in Christ, living in the Word, praying in faith, fellowshiping with believers, witnessing to the world, and ministering to others? This short survey will give you insight into how you are doing and what steps you can take to move toward spiritual maturity and be more like Jesus. Download it at [www.altoreformedchurch.org/resources](http://www.altoreformedchurch.org/resources).

## Alto Reformed Church Spiritual Growth Assessment

### Christian Video Steaming

We're excited to give you free access to RightNow Media, a Christian streaming service, with a wonderful library of video resources for all ages from churches and pastors all across the country. It will help you develop and grow as both a disciple of Jesus and disciple-maker. Streaming directly to your device, you'll find the online library includes relevant content for every age group and spiritual season. You can search by category, topic, or speaker. Additionally, many of the series have direct links to workbooks and leader guides. Parents, you'll find that RightNow has a multitude of videos and resources for your kids. Follow the link below to start using this resource today. [www.rightnowmedia.org/Account/Invite/ALTO](http://www.rightnowmedia.org/Account/Invite/ALTO)

rightnow MEDIA

### Spiritual Gift Assessment

God uniquely created you to serve his purposes. AssessMe is designed to help you understand your gifts for serving others. Understanding your personality, spiritual gifting, leadership style, and skills will help you know what God wants you to be doing with your life. This website provides a variety of assessments to help you better understand who you are and what you are uniquely created to be doing for the Kingdom. It also gives our staff access to your information so they can better mobilize the church. The assessments are free for you, other than your time. (The church has purchased these assessments for our congregation at a discount.) It does take about 45 minutes to complete all four, but you can exit and login later if needed.

ASSESSme.ORG

How to discover your strengths:

1. Go to [www.assessme.org/8274.aspx](http://www.assessme.org/8274.aspx).
2. Click "Register Now".
3. Input your profile information.
4. Complete the assessments and print the results.
5. Schedule a meeting with a staff member to discuss your ministry involvement. Be assured we want you in a ministry you love. It may be hard at times, but, in general, it should feed your soul.

**Opportunities to Give:**

Your tithes and offerings can be designated in two ways: General Fund and Benevolent Fund.

1. General Fund: This fund is used for general operating expenses of the church, such as staff salaries, utilities, and general maintenance of the buildings and grounds.
2. Benevolent Fund: This fund is used to pay missionary salaries, fund special mission projects, as well as help those in need within our church and community.

**What are my options for giving offerings?**

You may give offerings either by using cash/check or auto pay.

- Cash/check - At the beginning of each year, the church provides offering envelopes, along with a benevolent offering schedule. If you would like to give offerings using cash or check, you may place your offering inside the offering envelope and place it in one of the white offering boxes. On the front of the offering envelope, you may specify how much money to allocate to the general fund and to the benevolent fund. If you do not specify, 100% goes to the general fund.
- Auto Pay - When using the auto pay option for your offering, 80% goes to the general fund and 20% goes to the benevolent fund as regular benevolence. If you wish to give this way, please contact the Office Administrator.

The deacons count and deposit offerings on the Monday following the last Sunday of the month.

Your gifts to the Alto Reformed Church can be used in many ways to keep the work of Jesus Christ alive and well! Please be assured that your deacons take this work very seriously. We welcome your input and suggestions and would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

\* If you would like to be able to have record of all contributions as a tax deduction (checks under \$250 or cash offerings), it is recommended that the individual record this information.

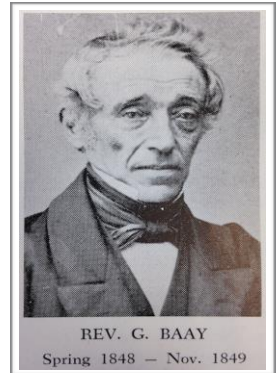
# ABOUT ALTO REFORMED CHURCH

## 11. Our History & Mission

### The Beginning

The Alto Reformed Church began in **1846** when ten families moved to the area and began to gather in various homes for worship. Seven more families arrived in **1847**. These families had come to a point where they could no longer remain in the Netherlands where the state was dictating to the church which doctrines should be taught and which songs were to be sung. Persecution had escalated over the years and they could not resist the opportunity to start new lives across the Atlantic Ocean.

In **1847**, after outgrowing the home of D.A. Van Eck, a 20 x 28 ft. log church was built about a half mile west of our current location on Van Eck's property. In **1848**, they added two rooms for the church's first pastor, Rev. Baay. He arrived from the Netherlands to lead the pioneers in worship. For his services, Rev. Baay received potatoes, wheat, and other products of the field, as well as free-will offerings placed in a tin box at the entrance. Rev. Baay painted "Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches (Gal. 6:6)" on the box.



### The Denominational Affiliation

The Domestic Mission Board of the Reformed Church in America did provide some financial support in these early years even though the church was not officially affiliated. It's believed the church associated with the Presbyterian Church in the early **1850's** when Rev. Zonne came, but this is not certain. It is clear it was a time of anxiety, despair, and discord. In **1855**, the Rev. Bolks ushered in a time of harmony as they officially organized under the Reformed Church in America. The church faithfully supported the RCA and their missions for 166 years until it became clear that the RCA would not return to its theologically conservative roots. In **2021**, the congregation voted 149 to 3 to leave the RCA and join the Alliance of Reformed Churches along with the Waupun and Brandon RCA churches.

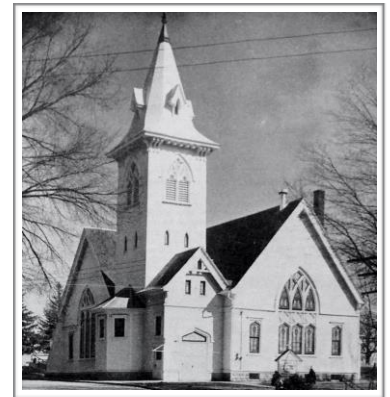
### The Building

A new church was dedicated in May of **1857** on five acres of land donated by a few members of the congregation. This "wooden church" was about thirty by fifty feet. D.A. Van Eck then gave the old building to the church to be used as a "poor house" where the poor and feeble could live and work. A separate parsonage was built later that year to house the new pastor.



The current church was built in the English style architecture, with its octagonal auditorium and rolling partitions, and was erected in **1898** at a cost of about \$8,000. It was described as "certainly one of the most attractive rural church buildings in the whole state." This building is still our primary space for worship.

Additions and renovations to the original church building have been made to accommodate the growth of the church. In **1923**, the basement was excavated by hand. In **1930**, the balcony was finished off. In **1940**, the basement was dug deeper and plumbing was added. In **1954**, (though a commemorative mug says **1950**) the East addition was built, including the overflow room, the Green (old consistory) room, the Yellow (old Pastor's Study) room, and a kitchen and classroom in the basement. In **1968**, the north wing of church was added to seat 225 more people. It included room in the basement for 10 Sunday School rooms. In **1993**, the Red Room was converted from attic to a youth room. In **1997**, an elevator was installed to make the basement handicap accessible. In **2004**, an addition to the North added a larger lobby, bathrooms, offices in the front, and a larger youth room to accommodate our growing youth ministry. This cost nearly \$700,000. The addition of the nursery, prayer room, and 2 classrooms was completed in **2010**.



### The Legacy

The legacy of Alto Reformed church is not only in its building, but its faithful pursuit of supporting the mission and standing on the truth.

Alto has supported and sent multiple leaders into ministry and missions. It started with an offering for the son of their first pastor in order to help fund his education. A policy to support seminary students continues, but as new ways of preparing young people for ministry arise the church is supporting those paths as well. For many years the church celebrated that over 50% of their income went to missions. As the need for mission work here at home rose, the budget shifted to Youth For Christ workers and other local mission efforts. We continue to [support several missionaries](#).

Alto planted four churches over the years, including Ebenezer (1879) in Alto which merged back after a few years, First Reformed (1888) in Waupun, First Reformed (1893) in Friesland, and Bethel Reformed (1936) in Brandon. These churches in turn planted Trinity (1955) and Emmanuel in Waupun and First Reformed (1908) in Randolph.

The support of mission work to youth in our community is evident in building projects, staff hires, and vibrant programs for children and youth that exist today. The church also lives out this missional value in supporting multiple missionaries around the world; sending groups on short-term missions multiple times a year; and blessing local ministries with funds, donations and volunteers.

The legacy of standing on truth has solidified as the church faced difficult issues in the culture and sought to do what is right in the sight of God.

From the beginning the church has stood on truth as they faced difficult challenges to Scripture. It started with the government in the Netherlands denying the church freedom to worship as they believed they should. This desire for freedom tied over to their concern with slavery in America. The first discussion of the consistory after joining the RCA was to address slavery as they “would under no circumstances tolerate any bondage or suppression.” A few years later, in **1860**, while the community was conflicted over the Civil War, seven men joined the north, one of which gave his life for freedom.

While the church has historically supported the public school system, back in **1865**, there was a time when the pastor “could not condone the evils connected with the system” and established a Christian school where the Word of God would be central to the education of the children. A building was erected, and a teacher hired. After several years the school and church greatly influenced the community. Eventually the community began to manifest a true practicing of Christian faith, so much so that the separate Christian school was not necessary. Since then, the congregation has faced many other issues; like transitioning to English, the Pentecostal movement, moral failure, and division; with a passion to uphold the Bible.

In **2021**, after several years of speaking into the RCA regarding the lack of discipline over churches teaching universalism, performing same-sex marriages, and ordaining LGBTQ+ pastors, the church voted overwhelmingly to leave the RCA and join like-minded RCA churches to form the Alliance of Reformed Churches (ARC). The classis approved the request on Nov. 2, 2021 and the official release took place on Dec. 31, 2021. While departure was heartbreaking it was also unifying to again take a stand on the truth. More information on ARC can be found at [www.arc21.org](http://www.arc21.org).

### The Mission Today

It was written, *“God has blessed the efforts of our forefathers and pastors, who gave us a rich foundation built on Jesus Christ. We have a rich history, but we cannot live in the past. We must move ahead, confident that God will continue to bless our efforts to promote the Kingdom of Christ in this community.”* And so, the church has continued to pursue its mission.

In 2016, the Consistory adopted the following statement to help the congregation better communicate why we exist and what is important to us. **“Our Mission is to know Jesus and make Jesus known.”** This Statement comes from two passages of Scripture: *“I want to know Christ...” (Philippians 3:10)* and *“It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known.” (Romans 15:20)*



Late in 2017, we adopted a vision statement and three strategic priorities. These statements guide us in decision making and help us focus on doing what's most important for growing God's kingdom.

### The Leadership

Our congregation is lead by the Consistory, which is made up of nine elders and nine deacons. The Lead Pastor serves as the President of the Consistory. [Our bylaws](#) explain the election process and the qualifications, responsibilities, and authority of our leaders. Information about our [current staff and Consistory](#) can be found on our website.

## 12. Our Beliefs

Our beliefs are rooted in being Christian, Reformed, and Confessional. While we understand there are many different views on Scripture, and we welcome discussion and debate, there are many essential truths which are very clear in God's Word. Paul urged Timothy to "*watch your life and doctrine closely*" (1 Tim. 4:16 NIV) so do not take this section on beliefs lightly. Know that it is expected that you will wrestle with difficult issues throughout your life. Note that Covenant Partners only affirm foundational Christian beliefs. Leaders are required to affirm the Reformed views as articulated in our [Statement of Faith](#) and confessions.

### A. We are Christian.

This simply means that we align ourselves with Jesus Christ, submitting to him as our Lord and Savior. We believe what he taught is true and that how he lived sets an example for us to follow. His Word, the Bible, is our guide and hope. Our Covenant Partner Vows express these core confessions and commitments. See the sections on "What must Covenant Partners confess and believe?" and "What must Covenant Partners commit to do?" for more information.

### B. We are Reformed.

We are a part of a branch of churches that come out of the 1500's when there was a great renewal and re-formation in the churches in Europe. That period was called the Reformation – a time when a lot of Christians reformed their spiritual lives in order to reconnect with God through the scriptures. The Five Solas, a Latin phrase from the Reformation, summarize Reformed beliefs. TULIP is equally important as it outlines core beliefs on God's sovereign grace in salvation. The confessions listed below expound upon these core truths.

#### The Five Solas

1. *Sola Scriptura* ("Scripture alone"): The Bible alone is our highest authority.
2. *Sola Fide* ("faith alone"): We are saved through faith alone in Jesus Christ.
3. *Sola Gratia* ("grace alone"): We are saved by the grace of God alone.
4. *Solus Christus* ("Christ alone"): Jesus Christ alone is our Lord, Savior, and King.
5. *Soli Deo Gloria* ("to the glory of God alone"): We live for the glory of God alone.

#### TULIP (the Five Points of Calvinism):

- T - Total Depravity.** Man is completely helpless in his sinful state, is under the wrath of God, and can in no way please God. Total depravity also means that man will not naturally seek to know God, until God graciously prompts him to do so ([Genesis 6:5](#); [Jeremiah 17:9](#); [Romans 3:10-18](#)).
- U - Unconditional Election.** God, from eternity past, has chosen to save a great multitude of sinners, which no man can number ([Romans 8:29-30](#); [9:11](#); [Ephesians 1:4-6,11-12](#)).
- L - Limited Atonement.** Also called a "particular redemption." Christ took the judgment for the sin of the elect upon Himself and thereby paid for their lives with His death. In other words, He did not simply make salvation "possible," He actually obtained it for those whom He had chosen ([Matthew 1:21](#); [John 10:11](#); [17:9](#); [Acts 20:28](#); [Romans 8:32](#); [Ephesians 5:25](#)).
- I - Irresistible Grace.** In his fallen state, man resists God's love, but the grace of God working in his heart makes him desire what he had previously resisted. That is, God's grace will not fail to accomplish its saving work in the elect ([John 6:37,44](#); [10:16](#)).
- P - Perseverance of the Saints.** God protects His saints from falling away; thus, salvation is eternal ([John 10:27-29](#); [Romans 8:29-30](#); [Ephesians 1:3-14](#)).

### C. We are Confessionnal.

This means that together we have statements of belief, called creeds and confessions. These statements guide our understanding of faith and shape its practice. Our leaders are required to affirm our Statement of Faith which includes the Belgic Confession and its appendix, the Belhar Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and its appendix, the Great Lakes Catechism on Human Sexuality, and the Canons of Dort as Reformed expressions of the Christian faith.

### D. We Celebrate Two Sacraments.

The word sacrament is based on the Latin word sacramentum, which means "something sacred." In the early church sacramentum came to stand for many things sacred, including rites that had a hidden meaning. During the Reformation, using Scripture as a guide, the reformers limited the number of sacraments to two: baptism and the Lord's Supper. These sacraments, instituted by Christ, are a means of grace within the covenant community. They are visible signs and seals of something internal and invisible and the means by which God works in us through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Heidelberg Catechism puts it this way; "Sacraments [baptism and the Lord's Supper] are holy signs and seals for us to see. They were instituted by God, so that by our use of them he might make us understand more clearly the promise of the gospel, and might put his seal on that promise. And this is God's gospel promise: to forgive our sins and give us eternal life by grace alone because of Christ's one sacrifice finished on the cross."

## E. We Celebrate Baptism of Adults and Children.

### What Is Baptism?

A sign is a promise, a signal, a visible representation of a reality that is yet to be seen. Baptism, a sacrament (ordinance) of the church, is a sign of what God has already done for and continues to do within His people; a sign that points us to a deeper reality; a visible sign of an invisible grace. Theologian John Calvin noted that baptism is *“An outward sign by which the Lord seals on our consciences the promises of his good will toward us in order to sustain the weakness of our faith.”* (Institutes, IV.xiv.1)

### What Is Baptism a Sign Of?

Water is the key ingredient in cleansing. It is the water that takes the dirt and grime from our body, removes it, and makes us clean. Likewise, the water of baptism is a sign that, just as water washes away dirt from the body, so the blood and Spirit of Jesus Christ wash-away all my sins. *“To be washed with Christ’s blood means that God, by grace, has forgiven my sins because of Christ’s blood poured out for me in his sacrifice on the cross. To be washed with Christ’s Spirit means that the Holy Spirit has renewed me and set me apart to be a member of Christ so that more and more I become dead to sin and increasingly live a holy and blameless life.”* (Heidelberg Catechism #70)

Peter explains, *“For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body[world] but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolized baptism that now saves you also – not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saved you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand – with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.”* (1 Peter 3:18-22)

Paul explains this washing away as death, *“Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”* (Romans 6:3-4)

### Why Do We Baptize?

We baptize because God’s Word instructs us to do so. Jesus said, *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”* (Matthew 28:18-20) Paul said, *“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.”* (Acts 2:38)

### Does Baptism Save?

The answer is a resounding “no”! The bible is very clear that only Jesus saves. Jesus said, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the father except through me”* (John 14:6). He did not say “Baptism is the way, the truth, and the life”. Baptism is a sign to us of what God has already done and made available to us through Jesus. But in and of itself, baptism has no saving value. God professes His love for us and promises to cleanse us from sin by grace through faith in Jesus. The offer of God’s grace is on the table, but each person must make a personal response and receive it. How? It’s done by accepting Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross as payment for your sins and by choosing to follow Him as the leader of your life.

### How Should Baptism Be Done? Immersion Sprinkling, or Pouring?

Immersion powerfully symbolizes the death of our old self and resurrection to new life. (See Rom. 6:1-11, Col. 2:11-12) Sprinkling or pouring symbolizes the washing or cleansing from sin. (See Titus 3:5, Acts 22:16) It seems most likely that all three methods or modes were used in the early church. *“A study of scripture, however, shows that the words ‘baptize’ and ‘baptism’ have a meaning wider than immersion only, and baptism is not restricted to any one mode... we cannot be certain how persons were baptized in the early church. The earliest statement comes from the Didache, probably written between 120 and 160, in which baptism is normally said to be by immersion, with pouring equally valid if there is not enough water available. Baptisms in Rome in the latter half of the second century were by pouring with the subject standing in water.”*<sup>2</sup> Therefore, we use whichever method is preferred.

### Should You Be Baptized?

If you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior and have never been baptized, then the answer is “yes”. Jesus said in *Mark 16:16 “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved”*. Baptism does not save you, only faith in Jesus Christ does that. Baptism does not make you a believer, but it does show that you already believe. Baptism is the outward sign of the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing you to a place of repentance and faith. On the other hand, *“Because baptism is the sign of God’s promise, it is not to be administered to a person more than once. To be baptized more than once is to cast a shadow of doubt on the integrity and sincerity of*

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<sup>2</sup> M. Eugene Osterhaven, *The Faith of the Church* (p.150, 154, Wm. B. Eerdmans-Lightning Source, 1982.)

God's promise. Surely those who have been baptized two or more times do not intend to cast doubt on God's integrity, but the action, if properly understood, would communicate such doubt."<sup>3</sup>

If you wish to be baptized, just check the box on the "Partnership Request Form" which is attached.

### What About Baptizing Children?

Nearly every Christian church affirms the Biblical origin of baptism. In the Old Testament God chose to bless Abraham saying, "I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you" (Genesis 17:7). The "covenant" is God's promise to be our God and our descendant's God, now and always.

God then asked Abraham and his descendants to recognize this covenant by establishing a sign...circumcision. "This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised" (Genesis 17:10-12a). The sign designated by God for those who followed Him was the circumcision of all baby boys on the eighth day. For over 4,000 years the blood of baby boys marked the entrance of the covenant relationship with God.

When Jesus came to earth, he not only shed blood through his own circumcision, but more significantly through His death on the cross. Colossians 2:11-12 states, "In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him for the dead". The sign of the covenant was changed from circumcision to baptism because the sign of blood was fulfilled through Jesus. Baptism is now the bloodless sign of the covenant with God.

### What About Infant Dedication?

There are several passages which are used to support dedicating children such as Exodus 13:2, 11-12, 15; 1 Samuel 1:11, Luke 2:22-35 and Matthew 19:13-15, but they do not validate a normative practice of dedication.

We recognize and respect parents who hold different convictions. Yet, we affirm the practice of infant baptism based on the reasons stated in this section and do not practice dedications.

Up to this point, there is an agreement regarding baptism. The church affirms that the sign of the covenant changed from circumcision to baptism. The question that remains is if the time of the sign changed, do we baptize infants or are we now to baptize adults only? We believe that God calls his church to include children of believers in the covenant family. The sign of the covenant has changed from circumcision to baptism (Colossians 2:11-12), but the time of the covenant sign has not changed. The reasons for this belief are fourfold.

### What Support Is There for Baptizing Children?

1. Biblical examples of infants in the early church being baptized.

"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved – you and your household...At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized" (Act 16:31-33). As one would expect, the entire family (adults, children, and infants) were all included in the act of being baptized.

In 1 Corinthians the Bible equates the crossing of the Red Sea with the baptism of Israel. "I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor 10:1-2). The baptismal event included infants and children, who were carried across the sea in the tender arms of their parents.

2. Infant baptism is meant to be a tangible expression of the grace of God.

"When the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit...so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life" (Titus 2:4-5).

In infant baptism, only three out of the four parties make promises: the congregation, the parents, and God all express promises. The fragile infant is able to do nothing... nothing except receive the gift of God. Infant baptism is meant to capture the essence of how each person enters into the Kingdom of God—by grace alone.

<sup>3</sup> R. C. Sproul, [\*Essential Truths of the Christian Faith\*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1992).

*“For it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith-and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).*

3. It is true that the New Testament does not explicitly state, “Thou shall baptize infants”.

The lack of a New Testament command regarding the age of baptism is not proof against infant baptism, but support for it. Remember the background of baptism regarding circumcision on the eighth day. For 4,000 years the people of God had been carrying out the sign of the covenant with their children. If this practice were to change, we would most certainly expect the Bible to speak to this change. In general, a standing procedure stands unless we are notified to the contrary. In the case of infant baptism, the Bible does not notify us of such a dramatic change.

4. The history of the church confirms the baptism of children.

For 1,550 of the church’s 2,000 years of existence, infant baptism was the universally accepted practice...handed down from the disciples of Jesus themselves. It was not until 1550 that one branch of the church decided to discontinue baptizing infants in response to abuses of the practice in the church. Specifically, some in the church were abusing infant baptism by considering it to be the means of salvation rather than the sign of grace.

When baptizing infants, it is essential to focus on the meaning of the baptism. Baptism is a visible sign of God’s invisible grace. Baptism itself does not give salvation to any child. We acknowledge the need for each person to receive Jesus Christ as their own personal Lord and Savior. Romans 10:9 states, *“If you confess with your mouth ‘Jesus is Lord’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”* When we baptize infants, we recognize God’s grace in the present and look forward to its fulfillment in the future. Each person must respond to God’s grace in a personal way by receiving the gift of grace, Jesus Christ, and publicly professing faith in him.

We do not require all children to be baptized... but we do encourage it because of the biblical teachings mentioned above.

#### **What Does God Desire of the Church and the Parents in the Baptism of Children?**

During the service, both the church and the parents share vows/promises to raise the children in a manner that points them to faith in Jesus.

#### **What Do I Do Next to Baptize My Child?**

1. If you are not a Covenant Partner, attend “Covenant Partnership Class” as at least one parent needs to be a member of the church.
2. Call the office to set a time to meet with the pastor.
3. Meet with the pastor and fill out the “Request for Baptism Form.”
4. Meet with the elders at 7PM on the first Tuesday of the month. They will want to get to know you, assure that you understand what baptism is about, answer your questions, approve or deny your request, designate an elder to assist, and set a date.
5. On the date of the baptism, please sit towards the front of the sanctuary and bring family and friends. After the baptism, you will receive a Baptismal Certificate.

### **F. We Celebrate Communion.**

#### **What Is Communion?**

Communion, also known as the Lord's Supper or Eucharist, is a celebration of Christ's gift of grace to the church. On the night in which he was betrayed, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and shared it with his disciples. *“This is my body that is for you,”* he said. *“Do this in remembrance of me.”* He also took a cup of wine and said, *“This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.”* (Matthew 26, Mark 14, and Luke 22)

As baptism is the sign and seal of our engrafting into Christ, so the Lord's Supper is a means by which Christ continually nourishes, strengthens, comforts and spiritually feed us.

#### **Baptismal Vows for Covenant Children**

**Parental Vows:** Do you commit to instructing your child in the way of salvation through Jesus Christ; to pray for him/her, to teach him/her to pray; and to train him/her up in Christ?  
“I DO”

**Promises of the Church:** Do you promise to love, encourage, and support these brothers and sisters by teaching the gospel of God’s love, by being an example of Christian faith and character, and by giving the strong support of God’s family in fellowship, prayer, and service?  
“I DO”



### **What Happens During Communion?**

Through our prayers and the sharing of bread and wine, we are joined to Christ and through Christ to each other. At the table, we remember what God has done for us. The past event of our Lord's death, resurrection, and ascension comes into the present so that its power once again touches us, changes us, and heals us. We gather at the table with joy. Our eating and drinking is a celebration of our risen Lord. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ is present with us at the table, and so we give joyful thanks for what God has done and is doing in our lives and in the world. We come to the table in hope. We look forward with joyful anticipation to the coming reign of God when *"steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other"* (Psalm 85:10).

### **How Do Reformed Churches Celebrate Communion?**

Within the Reformed tradition, there is great diversity in the practice of communion. Some churches serve communion once a month, some do more or less frequently. The practice of the early church and the teaching of the Reformers of the 16th century was to celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly. More often, today churches celebrate communion once every three months, if possible. Some churches use a common cup for the wine or juice, and some use individual cups. Some churches practice intinction (dipping the bread in the wine), and some serve the elements separately. Sometimes people are served in the pew. At other times, they may be invited to come forward to the table. These practical decisions are largely left to the leaders of the congregation. At Alto Reformed Church, we currently celebrate the Lord's supper 5-6 times a year. Sometimes we pass plates of individual servings, and sometimes we come forward using intinction. So as to not exclude any believers, the bread is now gluten free.

### **Who May/Should Participate in Communion?**

"We welcome all those who are displeased with themselves because of their sins, but who nevertheless trust that their sins are pardoned and that their remaining weakness is covered by the suffering and death of Christ, and who also desire more and more to strengthen their faith and to lead a better life. Hypocrites and those who are unrepentant, however, eat and drink judgment on themselves." (Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 81; 1 Cor. 10:19-22; 11:26-32)

Paul challenges believers to participate in communion in a manner that is sincere and authentic. He writes to the church in Corinth...

*"Eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in the right way. Don't do it in a way that isn't worthy of him. If you do, you will be guilty. You'll be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. Everyone should take a careful look at themselves before they eat the bread and drink from the cup."* (1 Cor. 11:27-28 NIRV)

So, we welcome any who are trusting in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins to participate in the Lord's supper. If your child understands the above statement, they too are welcome to the table. As well, we want to urge those who trust Jesus to join with us in ministry as Covenant Partners.

## ABOUT YOUR NEXT STEPS

### The ball is now in your court...

#### 1. You are encouraged to ask questions.

We hope this has answered many of your questions, but it has probably raised a host of new questions. You are encouraged to ask the pastor or elders about any of these. Feel free to call the office to set a time to meet.

#### 2. You are encouraged to complete the Partnership Request Form and meet with the elders.

Simply fill out the attached form and return it to the church office before meeting with the elders. Please call the office to let us know you are planning to meet with the elders.

# WELCOME

We are excited to have  
you join the family!



# PARTNERSHIP REQUEST FORM

*Please complete this form and return it to the church office before meeting with the elders.*

**Profile Information**

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Baptismal Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Public Profession of Faith Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Wedding Anniversary Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Children's Names	Date of Birth	Baptism Date	Grade	Male/Female
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Would you like to receive the prayer chain via e-mail and text? YES NO *(circle one)*

Please list any of the groups/committees you or your family members participate in here at the ARC. Please specify which family members participate in which group. *(This can include any way you are serving/participating in the church. Ex. Greeter, small group, Acts 2 Crew, H.S. Youth Group, etc.)*

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**(Continued on back)**

**Your Faith Story**

Circle where are you on the graphic to the right?

# Where are you on the discipleship journey?



I. What was your life like before knowing Jesus? If you accepted Jesus as your Savior early in life, what was life like when you strayed from your relationship with Jesus?

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II. How and when did you decide to trust Jesus? What happened that you have returned to Jesus? Who helped you make that decision?

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III. How has this decision made a difference in your life? What is it like now to follow Jesus? Who has helped you grow in faith?

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**Partnership Request**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ am requesting to partner with Alto Reformed Church and

Profess my faith for the first time

Reaffirm my faith

Be baptized by immersion , pouring , or sprinkling .

For Alto to inform the church where I currently hold membership: \_\_\_\_\_  
(church name & location)

What month will you meet with the elders (on first Tuesday of the month): \_\_\_\_\_

Please list some dates when you would like to covenant before the congregation: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_