

We would like to congratulate you on your desire for baptism. We are glad that you are considering this step of obedience in following Christ's command of baptism. Baptism not only looks back at the historic truth of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection but also identifies the believer's salvation in the finished work of Christ.

Since baptism serves as the most visual testimony of one's faith in Christ, Arlington Chinese Church grants those baptized full privileges and responsibilities of membership. As a member, you are allowed greater ministry opportunities as well as more opportunity in shaping the direction of the church body. You are also accountable to our local body of Christ in spiritual disciplines such as:

- 1) Commitment to regular quiet times, prayer, and scripture reading;
- 2) Commitment to worship God corporately with this body on Sundays, to grow in the knowledge of the Word through serious Bible Study, and to belong to a fellowship/small group for mutual support and edification;
- 3) Concern for other believers and encouraging others to good deeds;
- 4) Developing spiritual gifts and abilities through participation in various ministries;
- 5) Submitting oneself to church leadership and upholding biblical truth;
- 6) Participating in offering as an expression of love and faith to God;
- 7) Seeking opportunities to witness and testify of one's faith in Christ; and
- 8) Participation in congregational meetings

Procedures for Baptism Applicants*

- A. Attend "Baptismal Class" or is equivalent.
- B. Read baptism material entitled The Believer's Baptism and the "Church Position on Social Issues", and complete application form with a one-page personal testimony and a photo attached.
 1. The one-page personal testimony must explain one's personal salvation experience- what was one's life before coming to know Christ, how one became a believer (time, place, persons, etc.), and what has changed after becoming a believer (in contrast to life before coming to know Christ).
 2. Only completed forms will be processed (including the Member's covenant).
- C. Submit forms to designated person.
 1. The designated person will pass on the application to the pastors and staff for approval for interview by a pastor and an elder or a deacon.
 2. The pastors and staff reserve the right to delay one's baptism if he determines the candidate is not ready for baptism.
- D. Upon passing the interview, candidates will meet with the presiding pastor on an agreed date with all the candidates to discuss the order and expectations of the baptism service:
 1. Participants will meet prior to the service for last-minute details.
 2. Participants will be handed a baptismal gown.
 3. One or more participants will be asked to share their personal testimony during the service
 4. In the service, each candidate will be asked why the candidate desires to be baptized. The candidate will respond in two aspects: personal profession of faith and obedience to Christ's command.

Example of faith response:

'I want to be baptized today to publicly proclaim my faith in Christ and to obey Christ's command.'

5. Items needed for baptism:
 - a. One extra set of clothes (underwear and outerwear).
 - b. Comb, blow dryer, and personal items.
 - c. Towel, thongs.

*It is the candidate's responsibility to alert the pastor if there are any changes.

With Great Joy and Anticipation,

Pastoral Staff



We are glad that you are considering joining us as a member of our ACC family.

In order to become a member of ACC, you must be a born again Christian and have been baptized. As a member, you are allowed greater ministry opportunities as well as more opportunity in shaping the direction of the church body. You are also accountable to our local body of Christ in spiritual disciplines such as:

- 1) Commitment to regular quiet times, prayer, and Scripture reading;
- 2) Commitment to worship God corporately with this body on Sundays, to grow in the knowledge of the Word through serious Bible Study, and to belong to a fellowship/small group for mutual support and edification;
- 3) Concern for other believers and encouraging others to good deeds;
- 4) Developing spiritual gifts and abilities through participation in various ministries;
- 5) Submitting oneself to church leadership and upholding biblical truth;
- 6) Participating in offering as an expression of love and faith to God;
- 7) Seeking opportunities to witness and testify of one's faith in Christ; and
- 8) Participation in congregational meetings.

As an applicant, we ask that you read through the material enclosed, and then respond by filling out the membership application with a one-page personal testimony and a passport-size picture of yourself. Please sign the member's covenant and return them to designated persons soon as possible. Once they have approved the application, an interview regarding your understanding of membership, and to answer any question you may have will be arranged. If you have any questions please contact the pastors or elders immediately.

Procedures for Membership applicants*

- A. Read material entitled "The Church Position on Social Issues", and complete application form with a one-page personal testimony and a photo attached.
 1. The one-page personal testimony must explain one's personal salvation experience- what was one's life before coming to know Christ, how one became a believer (time, place, persons, etc.), what has changed after becoming a believer (in contrast to life before coming to know Christ). Please do explain the reason you want to join ACC.
 2. Only completed forms will be processed (including the Member's covenant).
- B. Submit forms to designated person.
 1. The designated person will pass on the application to the pastors and staff for approval for interview by a pastor and an elder or a deacon.
 2. The pastors and staff reserve the right to delay one's membership application if he determines the candidate is not ready for it. The applicant will be informed as such.
- C. Attend membership class as scheduled.

*It is the candidate's responsibility to alert the pastor if there are any changes.
With Great Joy and Anticipation,

Pastoral Staff

THE BELIEVER'S BAPTISM

I. Understanding Baptism

There are two ordinances in the Christian church- baptism and the Lord's Table. Both are instituted in the Gospels, celebrated by the early church (Acts), and explained in the Epistles.

A. Why Baptize?

1. Obedience to the Lord's Command

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." Matthew 28:19

The words of our Lord Jesus Christ are sufficient warrant for the baptism of believers.

2. Public Profession of Faith in Jesus Christ

The practice of the early church gives us the interpretation put upon the Lord's words by those who heard him speak. We read that the converts on the day of Pentecost: 'those who accepted the message were baptized.' In Acts 8 we read of the Ethiopian eunuch who asks to be baptized after believing in Christ. Further examples of this apostolic practice may be found in Acts 10:44-48; 16:31-33, 18:8.

B. What Does Baptism Mean?

The answer to this question is concisely stated by the Apostle Paul: '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 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).

1. Water Baptism Symbolizes the Believer's Identification with the Work of Christ. Baptism, first of all, is a declaration of the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. The act of water baptism symbolizes the spiritual truth of new life in Christ. That is, immersion into the water symbolizes his dependence on Christ's death to pay for sin, submersion under the water symbolizes the believer's death or burial of the old self (before he believed in Christ), and emergence from the water symbolizes his new identity in Christ and the hope of the resurrection he now possesses.

2. Hence, Baptism means....

- a. Symbolic proclamation of what happens to a believer at salvation.
- b. Obedience to Christ's command.
- c. Testifying to one's dependence on the atoning work of Christ for salvation.

3. Baptism also does not mean membership to a church or organization, salvation (which is a free gift from God), nor receiving the Holy Spirit (which occurs at salvation).

C. Who Should Be Baptized?

We conclude from the Scriptures that baptism is limited to believers those who have personally received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

D. How Shall We Baptize?

There are generally three modes of baptism used in church history: sprinkle, pouring, and total immersion. The term used in the New Testament for baptism means 'to dip' or 'to fully wet.' In an attempt to avoid controversy, translators of the English Bible opted to transliterate ('to baptize') rather than translate ('to dip') the term. Hence, providing various denominations the liberty to translate the term according to their traditions or practices rather than the literal



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meaning. While ACC acknowledges other traditions, we believe that total immersion best pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Moreover, the examples recorded in Scripture imply immersion rather than sprinkling or pouring. Jesus' baptism took place in the Jordan River: "As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water." (Matthew 3:16). If sprinkling was the normal mode of baptism then John would not need to find 'plenty of water:' "Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water.." (John 3:23). Philip and the eunuch stopped to be baptized when they came to 'some water' which would not make any sense if baptism could be accomplished with mere sprinkling or pouring of water.

ACC recognizes and respects the practices of other traditions.



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BAPTISMAL/MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

雅靈頓華人教會洗禮 / 轉會申請表

File Number 編號: _____

Personal 個人資料

Baptism 洗禮

Membership 轉會

Name 姓名:

English 英文:

Last

First

M.I.

Chinese 中文: _____

Address 地址: _____

Home Phone 家中電話: _____

Office Phone 公司電話: _____

Cell 手機: _____

Email 電郵: _____

Birth date 出生日期: (M/D/Y) _____ / _____ / _____

Birth Place 出生地: _____

Citizenship 國籍: _____

Occupation 職業: _____

Marital Status 婚姻狀況: (Single /Married /Widowed /Other _____)
(單身 /已婚 /寡居 /其它 _____)

Status in U.S.A. 身份: (Citizen /Permanent Resident /Student /Other _____)
(公民 /永久居留 /學生 /其它 _____)

Date & Place of Conversion 信主日期/地點: _____ / _____ / _____

Former Church 以前所屬教會: _____

Who led you to Christ 何人帶領信主? _____

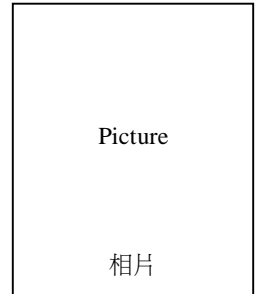
Date & Place of Baptism 受洗日期及地點: (For Membership Only 給申請轉會者)

_____/_____/_____

Native Tongue 母語: _____ Dialect(s) Use 方言: _____

Spouse Name 配偶姓名: English _____ 中文 _____

Christian? (Y /N) 是否基督徒? (是 /否)





Children

#	Name	姓名	Age 年齡	Sex 性別	Christian 已信主	Baptized 已受洗
1						
2						
3						
4						

Spiritual Ministry History 事奉經歷

Past/Current Ministry Involvement 過去/現在事奉崗位

Signature 申請人簽名: _____ Date 日期: _____

For Office Use 辦公室專用

Interviewed by 面談者簽名: _____ Date 日期: _____

Interviewed by 面談者簽名: _____ Date 日期: _____

Baptized by 施洗者: _____ Date 日期: _____

Date of membership 接納為會友日期: _____



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COMMITMENT COVENANT

I am a born-again believer in Christ. I believe that God's purpose in establishing the church is for believers to worship Him regularly, to study His Word systematically, to enjoy the Body-life in His love, to share in the ministry by serving and financial support, and to preach the gospel so that unbelievers may be reached. I will faithfully carry out my responsibilities as a member of the Arlington Chinese Church in order that together we may fulfill our call and His name be glorified.

I also agree and adhere to the tenets of the church constitution. I willfully submit to and support the "Church Position on Social Issues" in my endeavor to live a moral and holy life that faithfully reflects the teachings of God's Word and God's character.

Name (please print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____