



## *Why Membership?*

As pastor, I am occasionally asked why we maintain an official membership. As you probably know by now, we do not pressure people to take this step. We consider everyone who attends here a part of our church family and minister to all with equal concern and commitment. Nevertheless, we believe there are valid reasons for a membership process. Let me share a few with you.

**COMMITMENT:** The concept of commitment has fallen on hard times in our current culture. People avoid commitments at all costs and often at great penalty to themselves and others. Marriages are failing at an epidemic rate due to lack of commitment. Many feel no loyalty to employers, employees, neighbors, friends, communities, etc. One sociologist has described us as “**a nation of leavers.**” This spirit has found its way into the church as well. Many float from church to church as if each assembly was merely another stop on a spiritual smorgasbord! As soon as they find something they don’t appreciate, or encounter someone who offends them, they leave and set up their tent elsewhere, being careful not to drive the pegs too deep. We believe it’s important to find a fellowship where the Word is preached and practiced, put down roots, and work and pray to the end that your church will bring glory and honor to Christ. That’s not always easy or painless, but it’s mature and fruitful.

**PROTECTING THE TRUTH:** A second reason why we believe in membership is that it helps to preserve the doctrinal stand of a fellowship against gradual erosion and drift. Each applicant is required to read the statement of faith and state his or her agreement with it. Questions are gladly answered by the pastors and elders. We want you to know where we stand. You need to know what we believe if you are going to be a participant in this ministry. This process of membership helps explain why this church has been in existence for over 100 years without any change in its doctrinal stand. The Gospel has not been compromised by unscriptural fads, and our people are not confused by competing teachings.

**LEADERSHIP:** Finally, in order to protect the doctrinal stand of Allegheny Center Alliance Church, it is essential that those who hold leadership positions be in harmony with the church’s convictions. It is likewise critical that those who recognize and affirm leadership in our annual elections be persuaded of the same beliefs and motivated by the same commitment. That is why the privileges of voting and holding church office are open only to official members.

There are other very practical reasons why we practice membership, but these examples will help you understand our mindset. God is a God of order, and the church does not need to be spontaneous and unorganized in order to be spiritual. In fact, the Word teaches us that true liberty is only found within prescribed boundaries.

If this explanation doesn’t fully address your questions or concerns, I invite you to express these matters to our elders or to me personally. My e-mail address is [rock.dillaman@acac.net](mailto:rock.dillaman@acac.net).

Grace & truth,

Rockwell Dillaman  
Senior Pastor

## *Membership Process and Requirements.*

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are delighted to hear of your interest in membership in our church family. We consider each new member to be a wonderful gift from God, as well as a sacred responsibility. The unique blend of personality, experience, and spiritual gifts that make you who you are will enrich our fellowship in many ways. We are continually blessed as we watch God weave a diverse group of people into a unified expression of His kingdom.

The following information will familiarize you with the membership process and requirements. Should you decide to follow through with the process, we will look forward to a growing relationship, as well as your unique contributions to God's work in this fellowship.

1. **ATTENDANCE:** At least 6 consecutive months of regular attendance is required for membership. You may begin and even complete the membership class before the 6 months have elapsed, but you will not be eligible to be received into membership until that time. You are not on any form of "trial" during the 6-month period. We simply want to ensure that you have had ample time to familiarize yourself with ACAC and to discern God's leading. We have defined regular attendance as a minimum of two worship services a month. However, we would hope that you would make consistent weekly attendance your goal. Consistent corporate worship and fellowship are vital aspects of personal growth and local ministry.
2. **"UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHURCH" MEMBERSHIP CLASS:** You must attend our membership class called "*Understanding Your Church*". This class is designed to familiarize you with ACAC's mission, vision, values, history, and beliefs. The "*UYC*" classes are offered at least 5 times a year.
3. **MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION:** After completing the *UYC* membership class and you feel certain that God wants you at ACAC, fill out and return the *Membership Application* you have received in the "*Understanding Your Church*" membership class. You may send it to the church, attn. Membership.
4. **ELDER INTERVIEW:** Upon completion of the *Membership Application* and the "*Understanding Your Church*" class, an elder will call to schedule a time for an interview with one or two elders. This is not an examination, so relax! This time will simply give you opportunity to share your testimony and ask any questions you may have. The elders will answer those questions and pray for you. That's all there is to it.
5. **FAMILY CELEBRATION SERVICE (RECEPTION):** Upon elder approval following your interview, membership becomes official. We will welcome you publically into the ACAC fellowship during one of the "Family Celebration Services" which take place several times during the year. We will inquire concerning your attendance, so Pastor Rock can welcome and pray for you along with other new members.

It is our goal to make the membership process a pleasant and purposeful experience. If you have any questions or concerns during the process please feel free to talk with someone at the Connection Hubs or contact Adult and Family Ministry at (412) 321-4333. May the Lord bless you as you become involved with other believers at ACAC.