

BELONGING MATTERS

Whether to a club, team or any other organization everyone wants to be part of something. Here at the AFOC we believe you were created to belong to a family. A family made up of different people from different backgrounds united in the Spirit for one common goal. We also believe that it takes all of us working together for that common goal to see God's will accomplished both locally and globally that begins in each of you belonging to the local church. You have taken a step to belonging here at AFOC. We hope that you learn more about what we do and how we do it and that in return we can get to know you better as well. Thank you for trusting us thus far in your spiritual journey of belonging to the family of God.

19 So then, you Gentiles are not foreigners or strangers any longer; you are now fellow-citizens with God's people and members of the family of God. 20 You, too, are built upon the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets, the cornerstone being Christ Jesus himself. 21 He is the one who holds the whole building together and makes it grow into a sacred temple dedicated to the Lord. 22 In union with him you too are being built together with all the others into a place where God lives through his Spirit.
Ephesians 2:19

THE ALL IN COMMITMENT TO THE LOCAL CHURCH

Being All in at AFO provides you with a number of benefits, such as providing spiritual accountability, connecting you more intimately with the body of Christ, and opening up greater opportunities to serve and to be served.

But joining a church is not only about what you will gain. As in any relationship, joining a local body of believers also brings with it a number of important responsibilities and expectations.

Attend Regularly

The expectation is not that church members will never miss a Sunday or that they will be a part of every single church function. In fact we encourage and celebrate time away when occasion calls for it. However, it should be expected that members will prioritize corporate worship including small group interaction with their church family (Hebrews 10:24-25; Acts 2:42).

Pray Consistently

It is essential that the church be united in prayer, seeking God's blessing on the work of the church and the Gospel's impact in our congregation, our community, and World. (1 Thessalonians 5:17; Romans 12:12; Colossians 4:2).

Live Communally

There are many ways to develop relationships with others in the church. Whether you are involved in a ministry team, small group or other group we are called to develop close relationships with others so that you may encourage one another, pray for one another, build one another up, and hold one another accountable as followers of Christ. Don't run the Christian race alone! Even simply hanging out with others from AFO and enjoying each others company are all ways we see to live communally.

Submit Humbly

Church members are called to submit to the church's leadership and teaching. Hebrews 13:17 says "Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you."

Does this mean that we give blind allegiance even when pastors and elders fail to lead and teach biblically? Of course not. What it does mean is that we are called to support, pray for, and adhere to the spiritual authority of those appointed to positions of church leadership. There will always be decisions made that you may not agree with. By submitting to the AFO leadership you agree and trust that decisions are sought after by wise counsel and prayerful considerations and made in light of what is believed to be in the best interest of the church as a whole and that most honors Christ.

Preserve Unity

Jesus said "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35). All believers are tasked with preserving the peace and unity of the body, overlooking offenses when appropriate (Proverbs 19:11), bearing with and forgiving one another (Colossians 3:12-14), and pursue biblical and God-honoring peacemaking when conflicts arise. Quarreling, gossip, and divisiveness should not mark the life of the believer.

Give Generously

Our love for the Lord should manifest itself in every area of our lives, including how we make use of the finances He has entrusted to us. To be all in means you contribute, as the Lord directs, to the financial support of the church and its ministries (1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:7). AFO members give generously and regularly to help the church fulfill her Gospel mission. In addition, we do not teach that New Testament believers are under the law of Moses when it

comes to tithing. We believe giving 10% of ones income is a good starting place but teach what the New Testament puts forth when it shows us grace giving. Grace giving is faithful giving to the local church to help her carry out her mission but is motivated from the grace we have received in Jesus' life , death and resurrection.

Serve Faithfully

Each of us has been given the ability and the command to serve the Lord in some capacity. Members should eagerly find a place where they can serve and make use of their spiritual gifts for the good of others (Romans 12:1; Ephesians 4:11-13). We are not simply consumers but contributors to meeting the needs present at AFO and our local community and greater world at large. I commit to this as an indicator that I am all in at AFO.

Pursue Holiness

The life of the Christian should be marked by an increase in Christlikeness and victory over sin. While we will never be free from sin on this side of eternity, we

are called to fight sin and pursue Christ wholeheartedly in this life (Romans 12:2). Regular Bible reading, prayer, and worship should be made an ultimate priority.

Being All In Allows For:

- 1.The Lord's Supper. If someone has not visibly, publicly identified with the body of Christ they should not be admitted to the family meal. Visiting Christians who are members of other faithful evangelical churches would be an exception to this, for the sake of charitably recognizing the body of Christ at large.
2. Any activity that publicly represents the church. This would include things like short-term mission trips, speaking at or hosting evangelistic events, leading music and leading from the stage are some examples but not limited to these.
3. Any teaching or leadership role. This would include things like leading a small group, teaching children or holding any church office.
- 4.All in Voting - To be all in means to vote on budget, staff and other important happenings in the life of the church when leadership brings certain matters before the church.
5. individual Counsel from Pastors (Marriage, personal etc) are all free for members of AFO
6. Wedding Ceremonies are free of charge to all AFO Members.