

GETTING STARTED IN REALM

Realm® connects our church administration, accounting, ministry and community in one place.

OVERVIEW

Realm, in its simplest form, is our church database. Realm is a product of ACS Technologies (ACS) and we have been a client of ACS for OVER 20 years. The member information that the church office had in our ACS database has been converted into Realm, i.e. your address, your phone, your email, etc.

You should have received an email invitation to join Realm. To get started in Realm, we want to share some basics about your account profile and how to update and manage it.

Realm now empowers you to keep your information up-to-date. Maybe your address has changed and you forgot to update the church, now you will be able to log into Realm and change that yourself.

Each person has their own unique record in Realm. Each person, therefore, will need their own unique email address to access Realm. If you share an email address with a spouse/partner, only one of you will be able to access Realm. We encourage you to reach out to the church office at 301-423-8264 and provide separate email addresses.

Each person/record is assigned a Family Position (head, spouse, child). By default, ACS Technologies/Realm assigns the head of household position to the male record of household accounts. This is out of VCMI's control. You can update/change as needed.

Each member of the church will have a record in Realm regardless of age. At the age of 21 child records convert to their own household account. Please DO NOT add a member to your family in Realm. You risk making a duplicate record for you or your family members. Please contact the church office if you feel you need to add a family member and we will make sure they do not already have a record first.

STEP 1: TIPS FOR SUCCESS

BROWSER:

Desktop/Laptop

For best results, keep your browser updated to the latest version. Are you using the latest version? Go to whatsmybrowser.org/ to find out. We recommend using the latest version of any of the following internet browsers:

- Chrome
- Firefox
- Microsoft Edge
- Safari

Need assistance? Call the church office at 301-423-8264 or email realm@vcmi.org

NOTE: Realm will NOT work on Internet Explorer.

Operating Systems:

Some older operating systems cannot use the latest browser versions. If your operating system cannot use the latest version of your browser, update the operating system first. This will not only give you access to the best features in Realm, but will help ensure your security on the Internet. Out-of-date operating systems and browsers are far more vulnerable to attacks.

Realm/ACS Technologies no longer support IE (Internet Explorer).

Mobile

Some of Realm's larger features require the workspace of a full monitor and will not work on a mobile device. Others are well-suited to smaller devices. But, to get the best experience, you need the latest version of your mobile browser. Older devices, whose operating systems can't support it, might not work. iOS 9.3.5 and earlier, for instance, are too outdated to work reliably with Realm.

Realm's best mobile experience comes from using their app, REALM Connect. You can download it in the iTunes app store or on Google Play.

STEP 2: ACCEPT THE INVITATION

You will receive an email with an invitation to join Realm. This will come to the email account that is currently in VCMI's database. You will need to click on the link in the email. This is the only way to log into Realm for the first time. The link will take you to a sign-in page. Enter the email address that you received your invitation at in the Email Address field. Next, choose a password. Again, Realm accounts are set up for each individual, therefore, each individual needs a unique email address to have and create a Realm log-in. If you share an email address with a spouse/partner and each of you have provided that email address to VCMI, only one of you will be able to access Realm. We encourage you to reach out to the church office at

301-423-8264 and provide separate email addresses.

Your Realm password must:

- Be 8 or more characters long. There is no maximum limit on length. The longer a password, the more secure it is.

Each additional character makes it exponentially harder to crack.

- Meet 3 of the following additional requirements:
- Contain at least 1 uppercase character.

- Contain at least 1 lowercase character.
- Contain at least 1 symbol (!,@,#,\$,%^, etc.).
- Contain at least 1 number.
- Contain 15 or more characters.

Your password cannot:

- Contain any 3-or-more-character sequence from your username or email. If, for instance, your username (email address) is JeffAnderson@jeffsemail.com, your password could not contain "jeff", "ander", etc.
- Include 3 or more repeating characters (222, etc.)
- Include 3 or more characters in sequence (123, 321, abc, etc.)

Forgotten Passwords

If you enter the wrong password 5 times in a row, you cannot try again for 5 minutes.

Need assistance? Call the church office at 301-423-8064 or email realm@vcmi.org

STEP 3: UPDATE YOUR PROFILE

PROFILE OVERVIEW: Your profile in Realm will consist of Contact Information and Personal Information.

- Privacy Setting and Your Online Security
 - Don't be afraid to include all of the information asked for on your profile. You can decide later what data you want to hide online by setting your privacy preferences.
 - By default, the viewing of your personal and contact information is limited to members of groups you are in, group leaders, and staff members.
 - If you choose to, however, you can make your information visible to all registered users of Faith's online community as part of the Member Directory.

Update Contact Information

- Full Name.
 - Note that this field contains a clickable icon. You can either:
 - Enter a name, such as "Mrs. Krista Shandy" or "Mr. Amos Jackson, Jr." into the field directly. The name will be "parsed" automatically for the database. In other words, the software will attempt to break the entry into its component parts. Then complete the page.

What is the Online Directory?

Being in the online directory just means that your privacy settings are such that other Realm users at VCMI can see your profile listed when they click Directory in the main menu. Think of it like being in the printed directory booklet that many churches used to--and some still do--publish.

The Directory is a list of individuals associated with our church.

1. Log into Realm.
2. In the left side navigation menu, click Directory

Don't See Contact Information? It's possible that someone can be in the directory, but their contact information is hidden by the privacy settings they've chosen. Individuals without a login will not appear here either.