

# BACKGROUND CHECK PROTECTION

THE ONE THING EVERY  
CHURCH MUST DO...AND DO RIGHT.

# Our Goal Is To Help You Have Real Ministry Impact



With nearly four decades of experience in providing services and software to churches of all sizes throughout the world, ACS Technologies has learned a lot. We've collected data, gained vital information, and received thousands of first hand testimonials on best practices and methods that effectively help ministries the most.

This knowledge is the basis for our free ministry guides like the one you're reading right now. We also offer a whole lot of other services, making us the world's largest provider of ministry solutions to churches.

We know everyone needs a little help sometimes. That's why we are providing advice, examples, tips, and information to help you turn your ideas into real ministry impact — that's what we mean when we say "Ideas to Impact."

It is our aim to assist in strengthening how you're currently doing church in providing an alternative to your current efforts. Whichever the case may be, it's our goal to be a trusted resource for how you're serving God.

There are a bunch of ways we can help, and the visual aid on this page outlines ways we can connect with you and help strengthen your ministry.

Thank you for downloading this ministry guide. It is our hope that the knowledge included can help empower you and grow your ministry the right way.

If you're interested in learning more or taking the next step for your ministry, you'll find our contact information at end of this guide.

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This guide is brought to you by the partnership and combined efforts of Verified First and ACS Technologies. ACS Technologies is your one source for all your whole church management needs. Verified First is the leading comprehensive background screening processor. Together, they lead the market in knowing how best to help churches manage, grow and protect their church with easy-to-use, integrated solutions.

# ***BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR YOUR CHURCH***

The Church shines as a light in a world where darkness lurks in the most unseemly places. People trust church leadership to maintain the integrity of that light so their spiritual formation, community relationships, and ministry pursuits can be conducted in a safe and secure environment. To be blunt...

## **YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO HAVE CHURCH WITHOUT COMPREHENSIVE BACKGROUND CHECKS.**

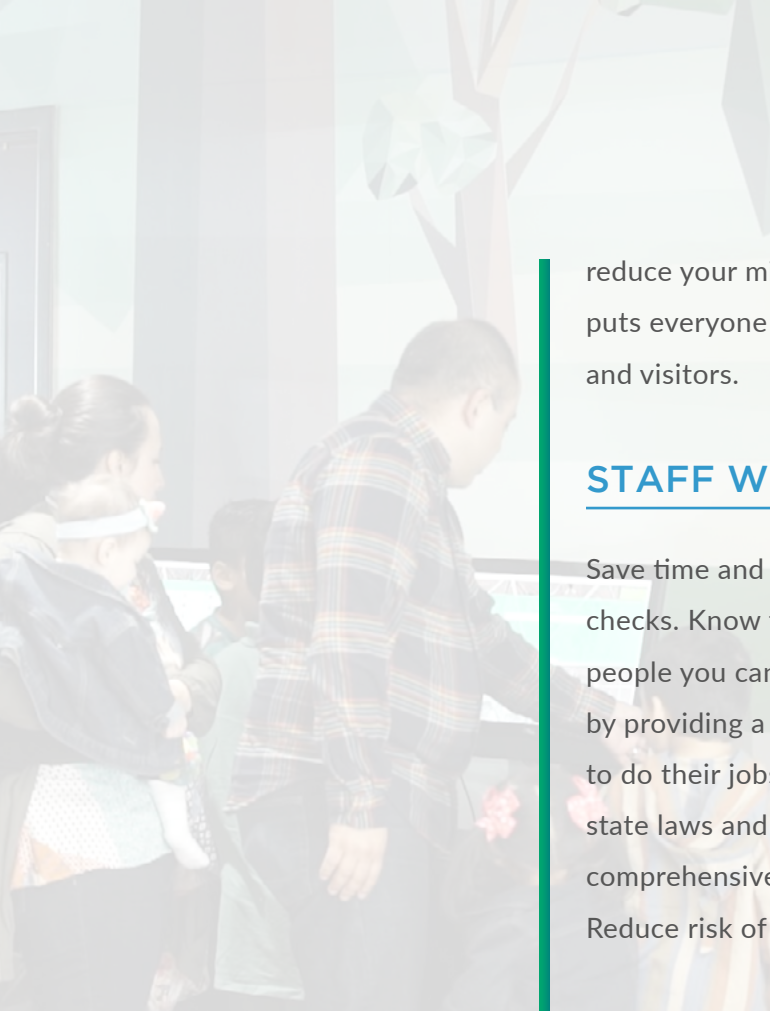
We've put together this guide to help you understand the ins and outs of background checks, where they impact, why they matter, and how you can be assured that your church is cutting no corner as it relates to the safety of your people.

## **BETTER BACKGROUND CHECKS MATTER BECAUSE...**

### **PASTORS WANT EVERYONE TO BE SAFE.**

As a leader, your ultimate responsibility is to protect your attendees and give them a safe and secure environment for worship. Protect your people, finances, and records. Trust those with access to sensitive information. Your church can be held responsible for the actions of an employee or volunteer found unfit for their position. Comprehensive background checks can





reduce your ministry's liability. The lack of better background checks puts everyone at risk. Reduce the risk to children, youth, members, and visitors.

## **STAFF WANT IT DONE RIGHT.**

Save time and effort with cost-effective, integrated background checks. Know the work you are in charge of is being done right by people you can really trust. Reduce hiring mistakes before it's too late by providing a safe work environment for your staff and volunteers to do their jobs and care for others. Comply with all federal and state laws and insurance requirements by running better and more comprehensive background checks on employees and volunteers. Reduce risk of allegations of disparate treatment under Title VII laws.

## **CONGREGANTS WANT TO BE PROTECTED.**

Feel comfortable and secure every time you come to church knowing the people serving in your church have been thoroughly screened by the most complete background checking system. Have peace of mind when children are with staff and volunteers. Trust that your tithes, offerings, and gifts are being managed properly and for the good of the church. Know your church takes seriously its responsibility to protect you with the most comprehensive background check research available.

Don't compromise where it matters most. No one ever wants bad things to happen, especially within the church. So please make sure you're doing all you can to complete the most comprehensive and thorough background checks possible. We feel the weight of your responsibility to significantly reduce all the risk you can in today's troublesome world.

# ***PROTECTING YOUR CORE ASSETS***

Background checks are a critical way to evaluate candidates as you seek the best people to fill open positions. A poor hire could cost your church time, money, and irreversible damage to its reputation in the community. A properly conducted background screening protects your core assets.

## **BACKGROUND SCREENING PROTECTS YOUR REPUTATION**

### **EMPLOYEES**

Being aware of employee's criminal history can reduce the chances of workplace violence. According to the Bureau of Labor, almost 2 million Americans report being victims of workplace violence annually. According to the last Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), out of the 4,836 fatal U.S. workplace injuries in 2015, 417 were workplace homicides.



## PEOPLE

People entrust personal and highly sensitive information to the churches they are part of. If your team frequently interacts with members, there's an even greater need to ensure that your staff is trustworthy.

## PHYSICAL PROPERTY

Each year, billions of dollars worth of inventory is lost due to employee theft. Background screening will allow you to reduce the possibility of theft in the workplace.

## REPUTATION

Because churchgoers have many options available to them, your reputation provides an essential way for them to immediately connect with your church. If your brand is damaged by an avoidable mishap, it will affect your reputation, which will ultimately affect your effectiveness.

## IS YOUR CHURCH VULNERABLE?

Because these assets could be negatively impacted by a poor hire or an errant volunteer, the importance of integrated background checks are universally recognized. However, many organizations are still vulnerable because they are not conducting background screening in a way that safeguards their core assets.

**TO ENSURE A THOROUGH VETTING OF A  
CANDIDATE, A BACKGROUND SCREENING SHOULD  
INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING TOOLS:**

**SOCIAL SECURITY ADDRESS TRACE:** This screening tool will report names and addresses associated with the Social Security number. Applicants often do not disclose all of the names they have used or give a complete address history. Verifying this information provides an important starting point for running other type of background screenings.

**COUNTY CRIMINAL RECORDS:** The majority of crimes are prosecuted and stored at county courts. Because courts usually do not share records with other jurisdictions, it is crucial to implement a county criminal search on job applicants. The address history from a Social Security address trace will reveal which counties to search.

**NATIONWIDE SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY:** Because most criminal searches only extend up to seven years, they may not reveal if an applicant has this type of criminal history. Screening for sex offenders is especially important if the candidate will work with vulnerable members of society (children, infirm, and the elderly) or will have access to people's homes.

**NATIONWIDE CRIMINAL DATABASE:** Although the majority of crimes occur in a person's county of residence, a nationwide search can report if an applicant committed a crime elsewhere, such as a nearby county. A nationwide search examines millions of records, pulling information from counties, department of corrections, and administrative courts.

**FEDERAL CRIMINAL RECORDS:** Because some types of crimes are prosecuted at the federal level, they will not be revealed through searching county or state records. Federal cases include crimes that violate federal law, crimes across state boundaries, and crimes committed on federal property. Examples of federal cases include fraud, embezzlement, tax evasion, kidnapping, child pornography, illegal sale of firearms, and drug trafficking. About 5% of criminal records in the U.S. are for federal offenses and running this check will act as an extra layer of defense against negligent hiring claims.



**MOTOR VEHICLE RECORDS:** Because your church has staff and/or volunteers who are responsible for operating vehicles (church owned or not) to conduct business on behalf of your church, it's important to screen applicants' motor vehicle records. Not only is this information important to protect your congregants, it's also crucial for insurance and liability purposes. This service contains a summary of the applicant's state motor vehicle record, which ensures that the applicant possesses a valid license, and if he or she has had any questionable driving history, such as license suspensions, DUIs, moving vehicle violations, and more.

**CREDIT HISTORY REPORT:** Unfortunately, fraud and embezzlement do happen, even within the walls of the church. If an applicant is going to be authorized to handle your church's finances and assets, it's key that your background screening solution offers a Credit History Report. This service will provide the applicant's credit history, including monthly payments, bankruptcies, collection accounts, and more.

## **DOES YOUR CURRENT SCREENING PROTECT YOUR ASSETS?**

A skilled background screening company recognizes how the quality of their efforts protects your church's employees, volunteers, members, physical assets, and reputation. If you're uncertain if your current provider provides the right tools to protect your church, we can help with an integrated background screening solution.

# ***MITIGATING RISK TO YOUR REPUTATION***

Background checks are a critical way to evaluate candidates as you seek the best people to fill open positions. However, because of strict federal and state regulations, conducting background checks can become a legal minefield. Failing to comply with these regulations can bring hefty penalties and many companies have been fined millions of dollars for non-compliance. Although these penalties are serious, improperly conducted background screening goes beyond the costs of hefty legal penalties or lawsuits. The risks associated with non-compliant background screening affect the core of your ministry—your church’s reputation.

## **PROTECTING YOUR BRAND WITH COMPLIANT BACKGROUND SCREENING**

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The most valuable asset your church owns is your brand. Because churchgoers have many options available to them, your brand provides an essential way for them to immediately connect with your church. That’s why corporations spend millions of dollars annually on reputation management, as they keenly understand how their brand affects their relationship with stakeholders. Regardless of the size of your church, failing to maintain compliance with background checks sends the wrong message to volunteers, members, and prospective employees. Improperly conducted background checks affect your church’s reputation, which ultimately decreases the potential of your ministry effectiveness.



## **RISK EXTENDS BEYOND THE COURTROOM**

There have been several high-profile cases in which prominent companies have suffered a financial and reputation loss because of improperly conducted background screening. For example, consider the following cases from the last two years:

- Uber reached a \$7.5 million settlement for background checks that violated the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA). Uber made adverse employment decisions based on background checks that applicants never had a chance to contest, opening themselves up to a class action lawsuit.
- Kelly Services settled a class action lawsuit for \$6.7 million. Their company violated the FCRA's standalone disclosure requirement when they packaged a FCRA disclosure form with a liability release.
- Lowe's settled for \$2.2 million after being taken to court for ordering background checks without providing candidates a copy of their reports or summary of their rights under the FCRA.

## MITIGATE RISK WITH THE RIGHT BACKGROUND SCREENING PROVIDER

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Although these consequences can be daunting, there are several ways to effectively mitigate the risks related to background screening. When choosing a company to conduct your screenings, you are best served through finding a provider that understands and applies the following best practices. Confirm that your Disclosure and Authorization form is FCRA compliant. The disclosure needs to be a clearly labeled, stand-alone document without any extraneous information.

Confirm that your electronic signature form meets FCRA and the E-SIGN Act. Many companies use electronic signatures as “written” consent from applicants. If these forms are not properly implemented, it can put a company at risk for a class action lawsuit.

## IS YOUR SCREENING PROVIDER INVESTED IN YOUR CHURCH?

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A skilled background screening company recognizes how the quality of their efforts directly impacts your church’s brand, reputation, and future growth. If you’re uncertain if your current provider is up to date with complex and constantly evolving FCRA and state regulations, we can help. Contact us today for a free consultation of your background screening compliance efforts.

## ***REDUCING TIME TO HIRE***

In the business world, time is often equated with money. This is literally the case when it comes to the time it takes companies to fill open positions. According to the 2016 Human Capital Report published by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), it takes an average of 42 days to fill an open position, which costs a company lost revenue and lost productivity for each day a position is unfilled.

The corporate to church comparison might not be apples to apples, but still, imagine the ministry you’re missing out on, imagine the gaps in care, and imagine the lost opportunities left vacant by a dreadfully long hiring process.





## THE IMPACT

When calculating the impact this makes in the American workforce, a study from the Center for American Progress (CAP) revealed the average costs to fill an open position, which varies by salary:

- 16% of annual salary for jobs earning under \$30,000 a year
- 20% of annual salary for midrange positions earning between \$30,000 to \$50,000 annually
- Up to 213% of annual salary for advanced executive positions.

## THE VALUE

Because the cost of unfilled positions is substantial, it's valuable for churches to focus on improving the speed of their hiring process. Although churches have many factors that influence their time to hire, one factor is universal—the speed that a candidate can be vetted for an open position. An efficient background screening process can reduce hiring bottlenecks, freeing up time and resources for other initiatives.

## FAST FORWARD

If you would like to explore how improving the speed of your background screening could save your company money, we can help. Contact us today for a free consultation of your background screening program.

# ***SCREENING FOR CHURCHES & VOLUNTEERS***

Churches and nonprofits are faced with a multitude of challenges, especially when it comes to recruiting both paid staff and volunteers. Budgets are often so tight that hiring, even part-time, can seem out-of-reach. Furthermore, finding and retaining passionate, reliable volunteers is a difficult task. With all these barriers, why add background screening to the mix? Volunteers are the face of your organization, just as much as paid staff. When it comes to representing your mission and values to the community, you want the added trust and security of knowing your volunteers have been screened.

## **REDUCE RISK & LEGAL LIABILITY**

Although they have many benefits under the law, nonprofit organizations can be held legally accountable for actions taken by volunteers and workers. If any representative of the nonprofit, paid or unpaid, turns out to be unfit for their position, the organization could be liable for any consequences. Performing background screening, such as criminal history and drug testing, can reduce liability and mitigate risk.

**WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR STAFF**

**AND VOLUNTEERS, AS THE SAYING GOES:**

**TRUST, BUT VERIFY!**

## SAFETY IS CRITICAL

Consider the roles and tasks that staff and volunteers take at your organization. Are they making deliveries? Interacting with children or the elderly? Handling cash or collecting donations? For all these reasons and more, knowing the background and history of volunteers and staff is critical. Requesting motor vehicle reports, sex offender status reports, and even credit history for volunteers will provide you security in knowing your volunteers are fit to perform their duties and interact with your community.

## THE TRUST OF YOUR COMMUNITY

Organizations that background screen send a strong message to their community—we care about protecting you. Improper screening of volunteers can lead to:

- Damage to your brand.
- Decrease in donations.
- A loss of trust from the community.

Trying to regain trust and rebuild the brand after an incident is a difficult task. Background screening is a powerful tool that will help you mitigate risk and increase confidence in your organization.

## PARENTS' PEACE OF MIND

One of the most important factors parents face when choosing a church is the safety and happiness of their children. Saying that all your volunteers have been background checked is nice. It provides some peace of mind. But, if you know in the back of your mind that the background check was weak and didn't cover all the possible indicators of risk, you're setting your church up for a potentially disastrous liability.

Be assured that your background checks are doing more than providing parents with peace of mind. Guarantee that they are as strong as can be to protect the families in your church.

## MOVING FORWARD

When you're ready to take the next steps in adding the security and safety of background screening, let us know. A background screening consultant can discuss best practices for screening, the types of reports available, and concepts to consider when selecting screens for different roles in your organization. Our specialists will assist you every step of the way in implementing screening so you can recruit with confidence.

## ***THE BEST PARTNER***

Protect the people you care about with comprehensive background checks using advanced technology. ACS Technologies® and Verified First are partnering to bring you this new and improved solution because in today's world, it's never been this important to know exactly who is volunteering, serving, working, and caring for everyone in your church family.

### ***By using this better background check service, you'll now be able to:***

- Track the date background checks were processed.
- Send background check requests to volunteers and applicants to complete so you never need to ask for a Social Security Number.
- Easily identify flagged reports to make the reviewing and hiring process faster.
- Receive reminders to process renewals on your own schedule.
- Enter your own preferences so the background checks due will be shown for renewal.

### ***Consequences of improperly screening staff and volunteers with average background checks:***

- Missing data leaves holes for criminals to go unnoticed.
- You put children, staff, congregants, and finances at greater risk.
- People could lose trust in your ministry if something happens.
- Legal action may be taken against you if someone abuses their position.
- The integrity of the entire ministry may be compromised.



***The key advantages of unlocking the most comprehensive background check service:***

- Peace of mind knowing you can easily process robust background checks when needed.
- Confidence that you've taken steps to protect churchgoers.
- Significantly reduce the risk of potential offenders causing people harm.

But it's not enough to just have a robust background screening solution in place. You need the ability to easily manage the entire background screening process from within your Church Management Software (ChMS). ACS Technologies and Verified First have worked hard to create the best possible integration, providing churches and organizations an easy-to-understand, quick way to manage background checks. Here are just a few things you can do with this integrated solution:

- Process screenings in bulk, based on a search. You can handle all of your staff and volunteers at once.
- Search for cases where follow-up is needed, or when it's time for a renewal.
- Maintain history of background checks when ACS user transitions to Realm.
- Add reference codes to make it easier to connect individual screens to relevant departments.

Plus, it's secure. You won't have to worry about asking for or keeping sensitive information, like Social Security numbers.

We're partnering with Verified First to provide your church with the most comprehensive background checks available. You need to know the screening for key roles in your church is done right and that the results are compliant with federal and local background screening laws.

Shortcuts in research or missing data is no longer acceptable. Your staff and volunteers need to be Verified First. Then you can be confident that you're making the best decision in protecting your ministry. This leading background check process verifies information in worldwide screening databases, including:

- Criminal records
- Sex offender registries
- Interpol, terrorist, & FBI watch lists
- Alias searches if requested
- Valid issuance of Social Security Numbers
- Death index
- Driving records
- Education verifications
- County-level records

Don't wait until something bad happens to start protecting the people you care about the right way. Make a choice for better background checks today.

***For more information and updates on our new and improved background checks, email [backgroundchecks@acst.com](mailto:backgroundchecks@acst.com)***

**ACS TECHNOLOGIES AND VERIFIED FIRST, THE BEST  
CHOICE TO PROTECT YOUR CHURCH COMMUNITY.**

A photograph of four people in a meeting. A man in a blue blazer is sitting on a patterned armchair, gesturing with his hands while talking to a woman with long dark hair who is sitting on the floor. To the left, a man with glasses and a woman are also sitting on the floor, looking towards the man in the blazer. There are two laptops on the floor in front of them, one of which has the 'VerifiedFirst' logo on its lid. A potted plant is in the background.

**GET TO KNOW  
VERIFIED FIRST**

**VerifiedFirst**



# HELPING YOU TRANSFORM FROM GOOD TO GREAT

When our founders, Devon Dickinson and Tommy Cheng, started Verified First in 2012, they found inspiration from legendary business consultant Jim Collins. In his famous book, *From Good to Great*, Collins argues that companies make transformations through making human capital their first priority.

Collins compares a business to a bus and the leader as a bus driver. For a company to get to its destination, it's critical to get the right people on the bus and keep the wrong people off

the bus. Starting with “who” instead of “what” helps businesses adapt to a changing world and change direction to be successful.

Even if you have great vision, a lack of great people can still create a mediocre company. Our founders took this advice to heart not only when building the team for Verified First, but also when determining our company's purpose: *To make companies great by helping them make effective hiring decisions.*



*The leadership team at Verified First, after taking a Strengths Finders workshop. We know great leaders can identify and grow great employees. We are committed to growing the skills and abilities of our staff, from entry-level to our top leadership.*

## CULTURE IS KEY

We know that our customer service is only as good as the employees that provide it. In a service-driven industry like ours, it's critical that we find, train and nurture the best employees we can. We take extra care in making sure they love where they work. Because of our focus on employee satisfaction and growing a positive culture, we were named one of the Best Places to Work in Idaho in 2016 and 2017, and we won culture awards from *Outside* magazine in 2016 and *Entrepreneur* magazine in 2017. Happy employees make happy clients—who better to help you find the best possible employees for your business?



# OUR UNIQUE APPROACH...

Although background screening has been helping companies make hiring decisions for decades, our founders saw the process could be improved. To better serve you, we've designed our company around making background screenings quick, intuitive, compliant.

We built our own software platform to make screening faster, improving your time-to-hire. It's also designed to assist you with Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) laws.

We also pioneered a way to easily integrate our screening tools into any human resource software. A typical

integration usually takes between 4–6 weeks, costs hundreds of dollars and causes delays in recruiting. However, through our patent-pending process, our background screening tools can be integrated in minutes! We also created the leading Salesforce AppExchange app for background screening.

Unlike many companies who outsource overseas, all of our staff is based in the U.S. We are committed to customer service and it shows! Our Client Care team consistently holds a 97% satisfaction rating. We are here to assist with everything from compliance to reporting so you can screen with ease.

## ...HAS EARNED ACCOLADES

Our rapid growth, amazing culture, and cutting-edge technology has garnered some attention! Here's just a few of our accomplishments.



# ROBUST SCREENING SOLUTIONS

- County, State, and Federal Criminal Searches
- International Criminal Searches
- Nationwide Criminal Database Search
- Nationwide Sex Offender Registry
- Social Security Address Trace
- Civil Records
- Employment and Education Verifications
- Professional and Personal References
- License Verifications
- Healthcare Compliance and Exclusions
- Pre-Employment, Tenant, and Business Credit Reports
- Eviction Reports
- Residence Verification
- Bankruptcy Filings
- Motor Vehicle Reports
- DOT Verifications
- PSP Crash and Inspection History
- CDLIS
- Adverse Action Tools
- Adjudication Tools

## DRUG SCREENING OPTIONS



**Quest**  
Diagnostics™

- 1300+ locations plus add'l 1600+ 'Preferred' sites (\$12 fee)
- Test from 4 to 14 different drugs of abuse.
- Every panel includes testing for adulterants and confirmations at no cost. All results are returned inside our portal.
- DOT Tests with available Electronic Chain of Custody.

### ON-SITE TESTING

Cost-effective and available when you need it, on-site testing products make in-office screening easy.



## FROM OUR FOUNDER AND CEO

“On behalf of all the Verified First employees who work so hard to earn the praise of our clients, I would like to personally thank you for trusting us with one of the most important phases of your hiring process. We’re grateful for the opportunity and will continue to dedicate ourselves to exceeding your expectations in everything we do.” — Devon Dickinson, Founder and CEO

**VerifiedFirst**

# Real ideas for real ministry impact.

This guide is brought to you courtesy of ACS Technologies. We're excited to share more information with you about our new ministry tool, Realm.

Realm offers something for everyone in your church. It is a totally new type of church ministry software that combines administration, accounting, and community into one system. It also connects your entire church and personalizes each person's involvement in your ministry.

People in your church and on staff will love Realm. They can access it online or from their phones whenever they want. It's quick, user-friendly, and simple to get started. Plus, we've got a dedicated team to make it a smooth transition and guide you the rest of the way.



## Administration

- Track what impacts your ministry
- Modernize church giving
- Host organized events
- Know who's coming and going
- Generate insightful reports



## Accounting

- Organize your finances
- Maintain vendor relationships
- Pay bills and write checks
- Reconcile your accounts
- Plan and monitor budgets



## Community

- Put names to faces
- Connect people in smaller groups
- Facilitate communication
- Shepherd people through life
- Grow your outreach potential

Three easy ways to learn how Realm can help your church:

- 1 Attend: You're invited to attend a live Realm demo. Just pick the day and time that's best for you  
[realmchurch.com/demo](https://realmchurch.com/demo)
- 2 Watch: Take a quick look into Realm. Visit [realmchurch.com](https://realmchurch.com)
- 3 Talk: Ask us anything. We're here to help.  
Call 1(800)736-7425 or email [solutions@acstechnologies.com](mailto:solutions@acstechnologies.com)

Powered by the people of **ACS Technologies.**



Family owned  
for 40 years



#1 rated  
in service



Nearly 50,000  
churches served



Over 400 staff  
ready to serve



Best place  
to work

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