



## Realm Connect FAQs

### HOW DOES REALM WORK?

Realm is a private online environment for our church where we can share a directory and stay in touch with groups and events throughout the week. GI Free users can log in with an email address and password, but only after an email invitation from someone on staff.

In Realm, you can manage your personal and contact information, donate, see your giving history, and connect easily with others in the congregation from your phone, tablet, or computer.

- **Profiles:** Your profile is your starting point. It contains your contact information, household members, email preferences, giving history, groups you belong to, and more.
- **Giving:** You can pledge, contribute, and see your giving history through your profile.
- **Groups:** Realm's "Groups" feature simplifies interacting with others in the church, including small groups, ministries, and volunteer teams. (When you activate your profile, you are automatically part of a group church called Grand Island Free Church.)

### HOW DO I GET STARTED WITH REALM?

*If we already have your name and email address on file*, you will fall into one of three categories:

1. You have a profile waiting to be activated. Open an email invitation from "Grand Island Free Church" and follow the steps to create an account and set your password. You will then be sent a verification email with a link to verify your account. Your profile is activated!
- or 2. Your profile may have already been activated by staff because you're a volunteer or because you registered for something recently. If that's the case, you'll get an email invitation to recover/reset your password instead. Humor us and follow the steps to set a "new" password then you'll be IN!
- or 3. Perhaps you've already used Realm in the course of working with staff; no need to change your password – just keep logging in as you have!

### I DIDN'T RECEIVE AN EMAIL INVITATION. WHAT DO I DO?

Check your spam/junk folder to see if you received your email invitation and did not realize it. If the email invitation isn't there, contact [tonyb@gifree.org](mailto:tonyb@gifree.org) or [lori@gifree.org](mailto:lori@gifree.org) and we will send you another invitation. We may be trying to use an old email address.

If you did not receive an email invitation and we don't have an email address on file for you, talk to Lori at church, at 308-382-1898, or at [lori@gifree.org](mailto:lori@gifree.org).

## HOW DO I ACCESS REALM?

- **Smart phone or tablet:** download the Realm Connect app by ACS Technologies



- **Computer:** click REALM LOGIN button at bottom of our website, [gifree.org](http://gifree.org)

## UPDATE YOUR PERSONAL INFO

### Android:

- Touch “hamburger” menu, upper left
- Choose Profile
- Touch edit “pencil” upper right for all items

### iPhone:

- Touch “more” ... three dots, lower right, then Profile (iPad just choose Profile)
- Touch edit “pencil” for each item

### Computer:

- Click your name, upper right
- Choose Profile or Privacy to edit

### ***Really Important First-Time Checklist:***

1. Personal and contact info complete?
2. Include your complete birthdate! Your age and birth year will *never* be displayed 😊 but it will help us find you for specific purposes
3. Upload profile photo!
4. Manage privacy for email, phone, and address  
We urge everyone over 18 to choose *Anyone in the Church*  
For children, please keep privacy setting *Staff and Leaders Only*

## **MORE ABOUT PRIVACY - Who can see my personal and contact information? Who can see my children's personal information?**

Realm is a private, password-protected system for members of our church community only.

To check your privacy settings, access your profile using one of the methods (Android/iPhone/Computer) described above.

**Over 18:** We urge everyone over 18 to choose *Anyone in the Church* so other Realm users can see your email, address, phone number, birthday (month and day, **not** year), marital status, and the names of your household members. If you prefer to keep certain information private, you can choose one of the other options.

**Children:** Privacy settings for children and youth under 18 are set to *Staff and Leaders Only*. Parents, please do not change these settings for your children. Children are given the parents email address so that emails about children's groups will go to a parent.

## **SHOULD I UPLOAD A PHOTO TO MY PROFILE?**

**Yes, please!** In a church as large as ours, it's helpful to connect names and faces. Headshots are best! To upload a photo from your computer, click on the circle containing your initials. If you are having trouble, send a picture to [tonyb@gifree.org](mailto:tonyb@gifree.org) or [lori@gifree.org](mailto:lori@gifree.org) and we will add it for you.

## **CAN I GIVE TO THE CHURCH ONLINE? CAN I SEE WHAT I'VE GIVEN?**

Yes. You can give your offering through Realm – one time or recurring on a regular schedule.

**iPhone** – your giving history appears first; touch *Make a Gift* to schedule a one-time or recurring offering

**Android** – giving a one-time or recurring offering appears first; swipe left to see your giving history

**Computer** – log in from the REALM LOGIN button at the bottom of our website, [gifree.org](http://gifree.org).

Click *Giving* on the left menu panel to see your giving history

Click the *+Give* tab to schedule a one-time or recurring offering

You can also view future scheduled giving and previous year contribution statements on this page

## **DOES REALM REPLACE THE CHURCH WEBSITE?**

No. Realm is an online community for those who call GI Free their church home.

[gifree.org](http://gifree.org), will always be an at-your-fingertips resource with everything you'd want to know about GI Free. Most importantly, our website is the church's public and welcoming online presence to people who are not yet connected or committed.

## How will Groups and Serving Teams use Realm?

Groups and volunteer teams are encouraged to use Realm for their communication. Contact [jeffm@gifree.org](mailto:jeffm@gifree.org) create your group, then you can populate it from our directory.

Leaders and members within the group can post files and photos. Posting is as simple as clicking on the pen icon, writing a message, and clicking "Post." You can also create a photo post by clicking on the camera.

### Group leaders have these additional privileges:

- **Creating events:** Leaders can create a date-specific meeting, gathering, or event by clicking on the calendar. These are automatically added to the Realm church calendar.  
(They are not added to the Facility Calendar so you will still need to contact the church to reserve a room or space for your group).
- **Adding and removing group members:** Leaders keep their group rosters up to date. To add and remove group members, go to "Participants" and "Manage Roster."
- Remember to add a photo of yourself and encourage others in your group to do so.

## I'm a small group leader, and I communicate with my group via email. Why would I want to use Realm instead of email?

Realm offers several advantages for small group leaders:

- Realm has a dedicated space for your group, so all the messages, responses, and uploaded files are stored together. No more searching your email inbox for past communication!
- Every message and all replies go to everyone in the group. No more out-of-date email mailing lists or "Reply All" requirements.

## Help! I'm not getting any email from the church and my groups!

You may need to change your email settings for Realm. Find your Settings (see UPDATE YOUR PERSONAL INFO section above) then select a specific setting for each of your groups.