



CHAPTER HANDBOOK

The mission of ARPA Canada is to educate, equip, and encourage Reformed Christians to political action and to bring a biblical perspective to our civil authorities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01. WHAT IS AN ARPA CHAPTER?

HOW DO I START AN ARPA CHAPTER?

02. CHAPTERS REQUIREMENTS

03. WHAT DO ARPA CHAPTERS DO?

04. AVAILABLE RESOURCES

05. CONTACT INFORMATION

06. APPENDIX 1: LOCAL ARPA CHAPTER AFFILIATION AGREEMENT

09. APPENDIX 2: ARPA CANADA'S CORE PRINCIPLES

14. APPENDIX 3: FAQ'S ON NON-PARTISAN PARTICIPATION IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

15. APPENDIX 4: LOCAL ARPA CHAPTER – DRAFT CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

WHAT IS AN ARPA CHAPTER?

ARPA chapters are local political advocacy groups made up of people from Reformed churches who work together to engage with political issues from a Christian perspective and who work to get their church community more politically engaged.

Although these ARPA chapters are independent, they benefit from the coordination and resources provided by the national Association for Reformed Political Action (ARPA) Canada. This guide was developed to help interested people start a new ARPA chapter, assume leadership of a current chapter, or reignite a chapter that has gone dormant. To help you get started, please contact your local provincial manager. Contact information for each province is available at the end of this handbook.

HOW DO I START AN ARPA CHAPTER?

GATHER PEOPLE! Depending on the size of your church and the number of other Reformed churches in your area, you may already know people who would be interested in an ARPA chapter! If you are a member of a larger congregation or if you are working with several congregations in your area, you may want to plan an initial chapter meeting and announce it in the church bulletin, inviting all interested people to attend. One strategy that seems to work well is to host an event in your area and then build on the interest and enthusiasm that comes from those who attend that event. If the broader community is made aware of your interest to start an ARPA chapter, it is important to advertise it in a way that people feel they can attend an initial meeting without committing to something much bigger. If people show interest, it is important to harness it. We have found that an effective approach is to ask that a core group be formed in which 3-5 people agree to try to turn this interest into something long-term.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE: Over the years we have seen ARPA chapters of as little as two people and as many as two dozen people. The most important ingredient is to have someone who sees what can be done and then puts in some time to make it happen. Churches are full of people who have a heart for being a salt and light in the world and are just waiting for a plan of action or specific activity they can do to help.

TYPE OF PEOPLE: ARPA chapters are not just for people who like politics. All it takes is one or two people who have a heart to apply their faith to the society around them. ARPA chapters include teens, young adults, and seniors. It makes a big difference to have at least one person who is willing to lead by calling the next meeting or initiating contact with local government officials.



TIME COMMITMENT: For an ARPA chapter to be effective it should count on at least one meeting every three or four months. A realistic average time commitment would be about two hours every month. Some ARPA chapters meet over pancakes or beers. Others set up a calendar that lays out the meetings and activities for the year. The more organized a chapter is, the more effective it tends to be.

GROUP ORGANIZATION: Local chapters should be based on geographic areas rather than particular groups (e.g. churches, ages, interests). If someone wants to form a chapter in an area where there is already one established, they would be asked to work with the existing chapter. If there are several Reformed churches in the area, it works well to aim to have a representative from each church be part of the ARPA chapter. For example, if a decision is made to carry out a petition campaign, having a member collect signatures from every church maximizes the reach and effectiveness of the chapter.

CHAPTER REQUIREMENTS

REFORMED: Our Reformed foundation and focus has been an intentional, missional decision for ARPA Canada, and our national Board of Directors remains committed to maintaining this long term. To read more about the 'R' in ARPA, visit arpacanada.ca/R-in-ARPA. Although we allow local chapters to determine their own membership criteria, new chapters must allow any members of confessional Reformed churches to join.

NON-PARTISAN: Local ARPA chapters operate informally and are not registered as charities. ARPA Canada is non-partisan and we require ARPA chapters to remain non-partisan (that is, not supporting or opposing a particular political party or candidate; see Appendix 3). Of course, members of ARPA chapters can be partisan in their own personal lives.

CORE PRINCIPLES: ARPA Canada has developed a series of core principles (see Appendix 2 or arpacanada.ca/core-principles) which articulate what we believe to be a faithful explanation of a biblical perspective on a number of political matters. To be a recognized chapter of ARPA Canada, a local chapter must subscribe to these core principles (see Appendix 1). We expect local chapters and their members to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with the Bible, Reformed confessions, and ARPA's core principles. ARPA Canada reserves the right to remove a local ARPA chapter's affiliation with the national group.

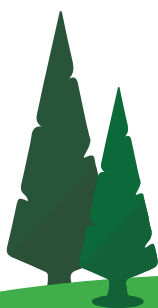


WHAT DO ARPA CHAPTERS DO?

Local ARPA chapters can decide what they think are important and worthy activities to take on in their context. We have a fantastic resource to help you get started with some specific ideas – ARPA’s Speak Up booklet (available at arpacanada.ca/publication/speak-up)!

There are some activities that seem to be common to almost all chapters:

- **EDUCATING AND EQUIPPING LOCAL REFORMED CHURCHES:** Through emails, social media posts, church newsletters, notices in bulletins, petitions, and more, local ARPA chapters call their brothers and sisters to be aware of what is going on in society so that they can pray about it and take action
- **ORGANIZING EVENTS:** ARPA chapters have hosted a wide variety of speakers. Organizing these events is a very effective way to get a church community to understand an issue and learn how they can take action. It is also a good way to increase the size of a chapter.
- **WORKING WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS:** ARPA chapters often meet with their member of Parliament, provincial representative (MLA or MPP), and local government officials. Chapters also attend local functions organized by these officials, send cards for their birthday or Christmas, and invite them to church functions (picnics, etc.)
- **ELECTION AWARENESS:** Most ARPA chapters make election questionnaires so that their church community is informed on where candidates stand on issues that are important to them. Questionnaires are non-partisan but make it clear what informs or shapes each candidate’s worldview.
- **BUILD POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH LOCAL MEDIA AND COMMUNITY:** ARPA chapters can develop long-term relationships with the local media by staying in touch with them through press releases, interviews, letters to the editor, and even guest editorials.
- **WITNESS TO THE COMMUNITY:** Through lawn signs, bus ads, distribution of flyers, and more, there are numerous ways that ARPA chapters can bring their message to the community at large.



AVAILABLE RESOURCES

The goal of ARPA Canada is to assist local ARPA chapters as much as we are able. We focus on support in these ways:

- **DEDICATED FULL-TIME GRASSROOTS MANAGERS:** ARPA Canada has dedicated staff whose responsibilities include assisting with new chapters, helping revive struggling chapters, keeping chapters aware of action items and news, and coordinating local groups and activities with other ARPA chapters when possible.
- **LEGAL ASSISTANCE:** ARPA Canada has lawyers on staff who may be able to provide complimentary legal advice and assistance to ARPA chapters on relevant matters.
- **EVENTS:** To date, ARPA Canada has organized hundreds of events across Canada. Many of these have been in partnership with local ARPA chapters. If local chapters are interested, ARPA Canada can often provide a speaker and resources free of charge.
- **PUBLICATIONS:** We have various books, policy reports, and other publications which provide a wealth of information. You can view all these publications at arpacanada.ca/publications.
- **REGULAR EMAIL NEWSLETTERS:** Our national and provincial newsletters are free (sign up at arpacanada.ca/subscribe) and usually come once per week. These newsletters provide the most pressing action items, news, and articles that ARPA Canada is following.



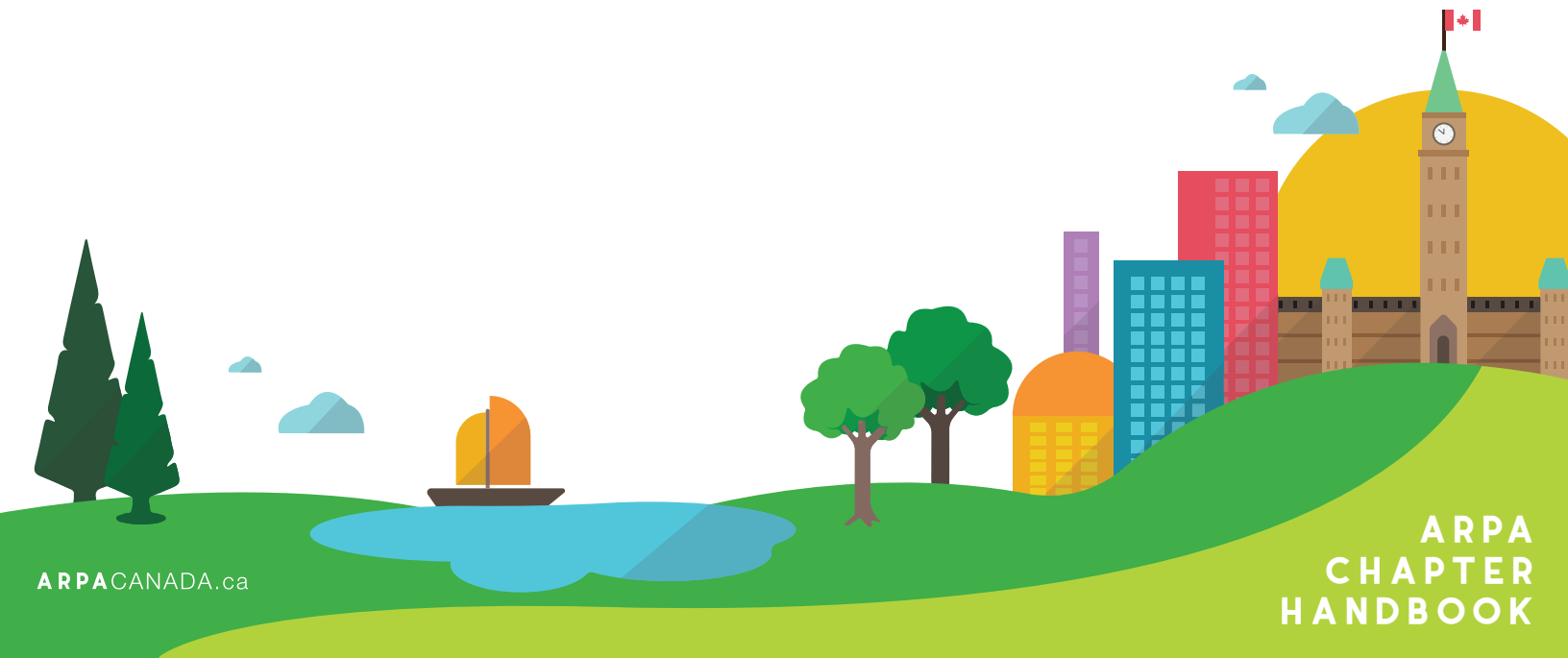
CONTACT INFORMATION

Although a guide of this nature can be helpful, you will undoubtedly have questions that are unique to you and your community. Feel free to contact us anytime at the options below and we will direct you to the person who can help you best.

Ultimately, all this work is part of our weak efforts to serve in God's kingdom. We can do nothing without His blessing. As you search to understand His will for you regarding political action, we encourage you to bring all these things before Him in prayer. May God's kingdom come, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Phone: 1-866-691-2772

Email: info@arpacanada.ca



APPENDIX 1: LOCAL ARPA CHAPTER AFFILIATION AGREEMENT

To be affiliated with ARPA Canada, members of the ARPA chapter must bind themselves to this local ARPA chapter affiliation agreement.

NAME

The name of the chapter is *INSERT AREA NAME ARPA* (Association for Reformed Political Action).

BASIS

INSERT AREA NAME ARPA shall be based in all its actions and dealing on the Bible as the infallible and all sufficient Word of God, as it is faithfully confessed in the Three Forms of Unity or the Westminster Standards. *INSERT AREA NAME ARPA* also subscribes to the Core Principles of ARPA Canada, available at arpacanada.ca/core-principles.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership for *INSERT AREA NAME* ARPA is open to members of any confessional Reformed church. While *INSERT AREA NAME* ARPA may allow membership from outside confessional Reformed churches at their discretion, the chapter collectively must be grounded in the Bible and the Reformed Confessions.

NON-PARTISAN

INSERT AREA NAME ARPA is non-partisan, which means it will not promote or oppose any political party or candidate, but rather work to further biblical principles and policies.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of *INSERT AREA NAME* ARPA is to educate, equip, and encourage political action among members of local Reformed churches and to bring a biblical perspective to our civil authorities. This objective shall be carried out by:

- holding events about current political and legal issues;
- meeting with local government officials;
- equipping people to vote and respond to current legislation;
- acting as a salt and light in the community through campaigns, displays, media efforts, and other means.

EXPECTATIONS

INSERT AREA NAME ARPA is also expected to:

- Conduct itself as an ambassador of Jesus Christ, exemplifying both grace and truth;
- Ensure ARPA Canada is made aware of events and demonstrations being held at the local level;
- Ensure that before any ARPA Canada promotional or campaign material is modified for local use, proper approval is obtained from ARPA Canada;
- Work in coordination with provincial managers when opportunities arise;
- Be located within Canada;
- Indicate working agreement with ARPA Canada by reviewing and signing this document once every three years.

RELATIONSHIP WITH ARPA CANADA

INSERT AREA NAME is a self-governing chapter of ARPA Canada but is affiliated with ARPA Canada. As such:

- ARPA Canada will provide *INSERT AREA NAME* with resources, research, advice, promotion, conferences, etc. all at no cost to *INSERT AREA NAME*;
- ARPA Canada will provide timely and encouraging assistance through its staff, including legal assistance if possible;
- *INSERT AREA NAME* will assist ARPA Canada by helping host events, distributing newsletters, and supporting current initiatives.

On behalf of the *INSERT AREA NAME* ARPA, we hereby acknowledge that we understand and agree to ARPA Canada's Core Principles document, as well as the general expectations, conduct agreements, and responsibilities of formalizing our relationship with ARPA Canada. We understand that, should these be violated, we may lose our affiliation with ARPA Canada and no longer be recognized by them as an ARPA chapter:



Name (printed): _____ Signature: _____
Date: _____

Name (printed): _____ Signature: _____
Date: _____

Name (printed): _____ Signature: _____
Date: _____

Name (printed): _____ Signature: _____
Date: _____

Name (printed): _____ Signature: _____
Date: _____

Name (printed): _____ Signature: _____
Date: _____

Name (printed): _____ Signature: _____
Date: _____

Name (printed): _____ Signature: _____
Date: _____

Name (printed): _____ Signature: _____
Date: _____



APPENDIX 2: ARPA CANADA'S CORE PRINCIPLES

In harmony with our Reformed theological tradition, ARPA Canada is bound by the Bible, also as it is summarized in the Belgic Confession, Heidelberg Catechism, and Canons of Dort. From this foundation flows ARPA Canada's core principles:

SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD: God alone is sovereign, ruling perfectly over heaven, earth, and all creatures so that without His will they cannot so much as move (LD 10 Heidelberg Catechism). Our chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever (Question 1, Westminster Shorter Catechism). Politics and law are also under the Lordship of Christ. ARPA Canada seeks to do all its work to the glory of our sovereign Lord.

HUMAN DIGNITY & DEPRAVITY: God created humanity good and, in His image (Gen. 1:26-27) with the ability and responsibility to care for and rule over creation (Gen. 1:28). Our first parents rebelled against God (Gen 3) and corrupted our whole nature (Eph. 2:3). Depravity is total – it touches all parts of our lives, including our bodies, intellect, and will. Depravity must be restrained, also by means of the civil government. No human effort, including political efforts, can eradicate evil. Yet even after the fall into sin, a remnant of God's image still exists in all humanity (Jam. 3:9). Although it is greatly obscured by sin and is used to serve the creature rather than the Creator, this image of God still exists. As such humanity possesses an inherent and inalienable dignity and worth, which separates us from all other creatures. This dignity is given to all humans, regardless of age (including preborn), ability, sex, race, or any other objective characteristic.

DIVINE & NATURAL LAW: “We know God by two means: First, by the creation, preservation, and government of the universe which lead us to perceive God's invisible qualities and are sufficient to convict men and leave them without excuse. Second, He makes Himself more clearly and fully known to us by His holy and divine Word.” (Belgic Confession Article 2) All humanity will ultimately be judged according to God's revealed and natural law.

ROLE OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT: “Because of the depravity of mankind, our gracious God has ordained kings, princes, and civil officers. He wants the world to be governed by laws and statutes, in order that the lawlessness of men be restrained and that everything be conducted among them in good order. For that purpose, He has placed the sword in the hand of the government to punish wrongdoers and to protect those who do what is good (Rom. 13:4). Their task of restraining and sustaining is not limited to the public order but includes the protection of the church and its ministry....” (Belgic Confession, Article 36). Psalm 82:2-4 gives clarification about what is meant by restraining



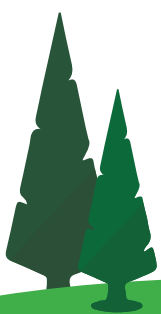
lawlessness. Speaking to civil government, God says “How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? ...Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.”

RESPONSIBILITY TO SUBMIT TO CIVIL GOVERNMENT: Submission to civil government by all is clearly outlined in scripture. “Be subject for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to the governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good” (1 Pet. 2:12-14). “Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore, whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment” (Rom. 13: 1-2).

OBEDIENCE TO GOD TRUMPS OBEDIENCE TO CIVIL GOVERNMENT: If civil government demands from us what God forbids, we need to obey God rather than man. This is affirmed by the New Testament church. When commanded not to preach Peter and John answered, “We must obey God rather than man” (Acts 5:29). Likewise, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to bow to an idol and God rescued them from the civil punishment they received for their disobedience (Dan. 3). Other examples of civil disobedience include the Hebrew midwives in Egypt, Esther and Daniel.

CIVIL GOVERNMENT’S TOLERATION OF SIN: “When a democratically elected government is unable, due to political realities, to pass laws that are consistent with God’s expectation for his creation, then the unavoidable result is that such a government is forced to tolerate what should not be tolerated” (VanDam, God & Government, p. 89). A Biblical example of this is regulations concerning divorce in theocratic Israel. It is important to note that toleration does not infer approval. For example, if a government deems it is not feasible to regulate drunkenness in private residences, that does not mean that it approves of drunkenness, nor should it refrain from restricting drunkenness in public places.

SEPARATION BETWEEN THE INSTITUTIONS OF CHURCH AND STATE: Jesus said that we are to “render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s” (Matt. 22:21). The implication is that the church, as an institution, should not direct the affairs of the civil government and vice versa. But this does not mean that faith or religion has no role in the state. It is impossible to make public policy without a moral foundation and direction. The state should protect the place of the church in society so that the church can do its calling which includes equipping its members to honour the state and to function constructively to God’s glory within our democracy.



OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO INFLUENCE GOVERNMENT: “Christians should seek to influence civil government according to God’s moral standards and God’s purposes for government as revealed in the Bible (and rightly understood). But while Christians exercise this influence, they must simultaneously insist on protecting freedom of religion for all citizens. In addition, ‘significant influence’ does not mean angry, belligerent, intolerant, judgmental, red-faced, and hate-filled influence but rather winsome, kind, thoughtful, loving, persuasive influence that is suitable to each circumstance and that always protects the other person’s right to disagree, but that is also uncompromising about the truthfulness and moral goodness of the teaching of God’s Word.” (Grudem, *Politics According to the Bible*, p. 55).

THE CHURCH’S RESPONSIBILITY TO ADDRESS POLITICAL ISSUES: Although some individuals will have the gifts, experience, and interest to devote more time to political engagement, all Christians, including leaders in the church, have some responsibility to apply their faith to public life. The fact that some political issues are controversial does not excuse Christians from addressing them. As Paul explained in Acts 20:26-27 “I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all of you, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.”

Article 28 of the Church Order of Dort also notes that “all office-bearers are in duty bound to impress diligently and sincerely upon the whole congregation the obedience, love and respect they owe the civil authorities; they shall set a good example to the whole congregation in this matter, and endeavour by due respect and communication to secure and retain the favour of the authorities towards the church, so that the church of Christ may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way.”

“There can be unusual circumstances when the church needs to speak up by means of the pulpit or otherwise in order to protect its God-given mission to preach the gospel and condemn sin where sin needs to be condemned” (Van Dam, 75).

HUMAN LIBERTY: God created humanity with the freedom and responsibility to make choices. The civil government has an obligation to uphold this liberty. Loss of freedom is equated with judgment. “Throughout the Bible, from the beginning of Genesis to the last chapter of Revelation, God honors and protects human freedom and human choice. Liberty is an essential component of our humanity. Any government that significantly denies people’s liberty exerts a terribly dehumanizing influence on its people” (Grudem, 92). As the civil government expands its role in the various spheres of life, human liberty is decreased. In particular, freedom of religion, freedom of expression and freedom of association are fundamental and God-given freedoms and must be vigorously defended by the State.

RULE OF LAW & EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW: No one person and no human authority, including civil government, is above the law. The Bible teaches that even the king is to be submissive to the law. Deuteronomy 17:18-20 describes how new kings were to write a copy of the law and read it all the days of their life “that his heart may not be lifted above his brothers.”

Furthermore, because every human being is made in the image of God, they all are to be judged equally before the law. The government should not favour the poor (Ex. 23:3; Lev. 19:15; Deut. 1:16; Prov. 17:26); the government should not favour the rich (Ex. 23:6, 8; Deut. 1:16-17; 2 Chron. 19:5-7; Psa. 82:2-4); and the government should not favour one race over another (Deut. 1:16 – “You must hear the cases of your fellow Israelites and the foreigners living among you. Be perfectly fair in your decisions.”).

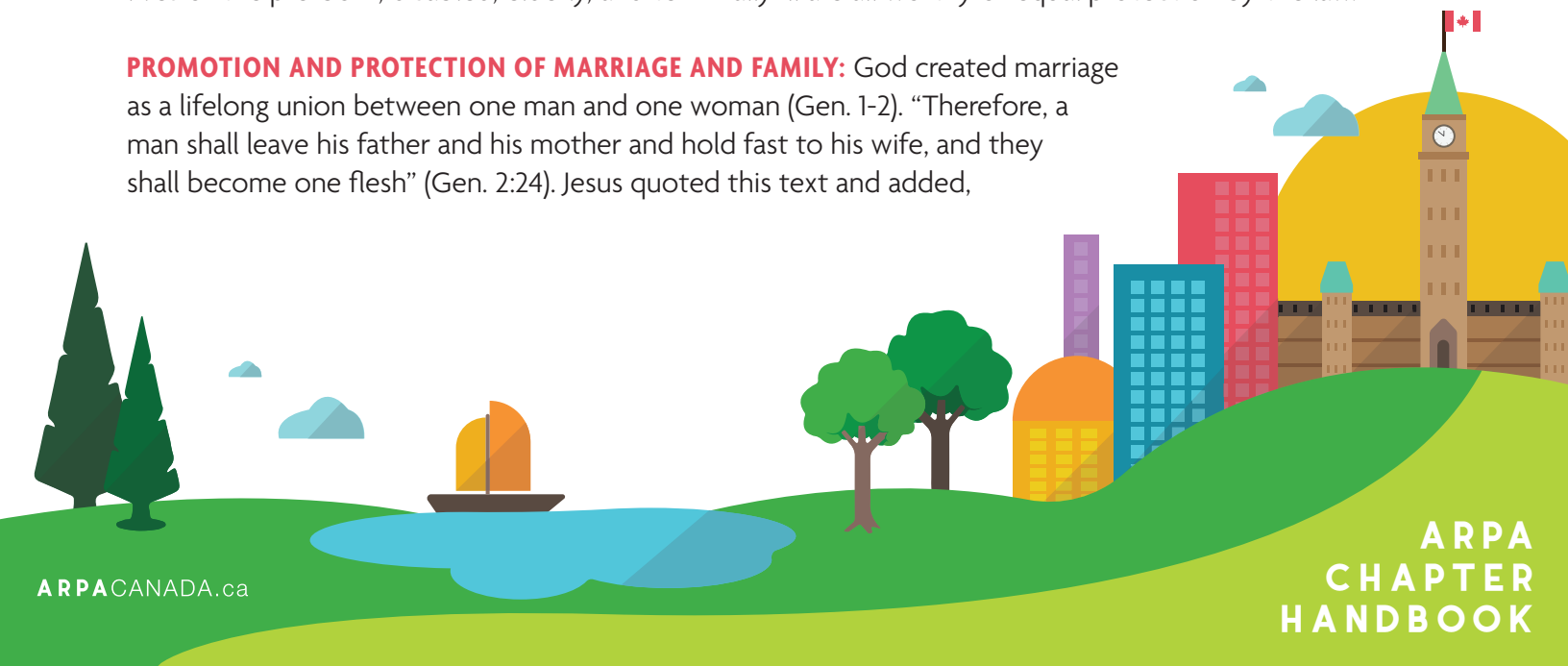
Equality before the law should not be misinterpreted as an egalitarian principle in which the government tries to make all people equal in outcome (through affirmative action programs, redistributive tax systems, etc.). Such policies violate the principles outlined above.

STEWARDSHIP OVER CREATION: God’s first commandment to humanity was “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth” (Gen. 1:28). Humanity has authority to develop natural resources for our benefit. But we do so as stewards, not owners. Our authority is balanced with numerous commands to care for both plants (Deut. 20:19-20) and animals (Prov. 12:10). We also have a responsibility for future generations.

The principles of stewardship also apply to the fiscal realm. Governments that run excessive deficits break two commandments: they feed the covetous desires of those who elected them to power by providing services that society could not otherwise afford and they steal from children and future generations by forcing those future taxpayers to finance the increased debt without their consent.

PROTECTION OF HUMAN LIFE: Even after the fall into sin, God affirmed the inviolability of human life: “And for each man, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of his fellow man. ‘Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man’” (Gen. 9:5-6). The inviolability of human life extends to the pre-born, from the moment of conception to natural death. The lives of the pre-born, disabled, elderly, and terminally ill are all worthy of equal protection by the law.

PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY: God created marriage as a lifelong union between one man and one woman (Gen. 1-2). “Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Gen. 2:24). Jesus quoted this text and added,



“What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate” (Matt. 19:6). God specifically excluded incest (Lev. 18), adultery (Ex. 20:14), and homosexuality (Lev. 18:22, Rom. 1:26-27) as valid marriages. Marriage is the first institution made by God and “the future of the nation’s children depends in large measure on how we define marriage and whether we continue to encourage and protect it” (Grudem, 244). The Bible shows that the responsibility for raising and training children lies with parents, not the civil government. “And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house....” (Deut. 6:6-7). “Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord” (Col. 3:20).

PLACE OF SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS: God has established norms for society’s institutions, including the family, church, state, and marketplace. Each institution has its own authority structure and is subservient to the supremacy of God (see Rom. 13, Belgic Confession Article 36). These societal spheres are not created by the state, nor are they subservient to the state. Each has its own integrity and functions with its own responsibility and authority. No institution should assume responsibility over the roles that God has given to the other institutions. For example, parents, not the state, are entrusted with providing moral direction to their children (Deut. 6, Eph. 4). When the state interferes with this, it intrudes into a domain which it has not been given authority to enter.

PRIVATE PROPERTY: “According to the teachings of the Bible, government should both document and protect the ownership of private property in a nation. The Bible regularly assumes and reinforces a system in which property belongs to individuals, not to the government or to society as a whole” (Grudem, 262). Examples included the eighth commandment to not steal (Ex. 20:15) and the tenth commandment to not covet (Ex. 20:17). Examples can also be found in multiple other places (Deut. 14; 19; Prov. 22:28).

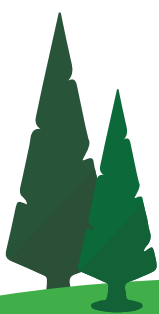
However, private property is not absolute, as all things belong ultimately to God (Psa. 24:1). A civil government is duty bound to respect private property.

FURTHER READING: ARPA Canada recommends the following two books for excellent analysis of how these principles apply to specific issues:

Cornelis Van Dam, *God and Government: Biblical Principles for Today* (Wipf & Stock, 2011).

Wayne Grudem, *Politics According to the Bible* (Zondervan, 2010).

André Schutten & Michael Wagner, *A Christian Citizenship Guide* (ARPA Canada, 2022).



APPENDIX 3: FAQs ON NON-PARTISAN PARTICIPATION IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

Non-partisan = not supporting or opposing any specific political parties, party leadership candidates, nominees in local candidate selection processes, MPs, MLAs/MPPs, mayors, local councillors, school trustees, or other local politicians.

Q: Can a candidate serve on an ARPA chapter while running in a nomination race or election themselves?

A: No. Chapter members should step off the local ARPA chapter during their campaign. If they are unsuccessful in being elected, they are free to rejoin the chapter.

Q: Can individual ARPA chapter members support particular candidates?

A: Yes.

Q: Can individual ARPA chapter members share their activities on their own social media?

A: Yes.

Q: Can individual ARPA chapter members have a candidate's lawn signs in their yards?

A: Yes.

Q: Can individual ARPA chapter members work for MPs, MLAs, etc.?

A: Yes.

Q: Can individual ARPA chapter members serve on constituency associations?

A: Yes.

Q: Can an ARPA chapter collectively share support for a candidate on social media (e.g. pictures of chapter members door knocking, putting up signs, making phone calls, and volunteering in other ways)?

A: No.

Q: What is the best way for an ARPA chapter to “support” a candidate in a non-partisan way?

A: Find ways to challenge your supporters to get involved in the democratic and electoral process. For example, ask your supporters to choose candidates that they would vote for and volunteer to help. Provide an election guide with answers from various candidates to specific questions to help others discern who to vote for.

Q: How can an ARPA Chapter provide opportunities for a good candidate to share their platform?

A: Host all-candidates forums/town halls/special events; you then provide an opportunity for the good candidate to share his/her views and answer questions.

Q: Can we criticize or thank politicians while still being non-partisan?

A: Yes. This is especially the case when you hone in on an issue instead of focusing on the individual. For example, share ARPA Canada's policy reports with candidates. Send occasional notes of gratitude and appreciation for votes that aligned with biblical principles. If you think that they took the wrong position on an issue, ask for clarification and gently admonish them to do better next time.

APPENDIX 4: LOCAL ARPA CHAPTER DRAFT CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Local ARPA chapters are welcome to adapt any part of this draft constitution and bylaws for their own purposes, **except for** the basis, membership, non-partisanship, objective, and relationship with ARPA Canada sections that are found in the local ARPA chapter affiliation agreement.

NAME

The name of the chapter is *INSERT AREA NAME ARPA* (Association for Reformed Political Action).

BASIS

INSERT AREA NAME ARPA shall be based in all its actions and dealing on the Bible as the infallible and all sufficient Word of God, as it is faithfully confessed in the Three Forms of Unity or the Westminster Standards. *INSERT AREA NAME ARPA* also subscribes to the Core Principles of ARPA Canada, available at arpacanada.ca/core-principles.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership for *INSERT AREA NAME ARPA* is open to members of any confessional Reformed church. While *INSERT AREA NAME ARPA* may allow membership from outside confessional Reformed churches at their discretion, the chapter collectively must be grounded in the Bible and the Reformed Confessions.

NON-PARTISAN

INSERT AREA NAME ARPA is non-partisan, which means it will not promote or oppose any political party or candidate, but rather work to further biblical principles and policies.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of *INSERT AREA NAME ARPA* is to educate, equip, and encourage political action among members of local Reformed churches and to bring a biblical perspective to our civil authorities. This objective shall be carried out by:

- holding events about current political and legal issues;
- meeting with local government officials;
- equipping people to vote and respond to current legislation;
- acting as a salt and light in the community through campaigns, displays, media efforts, and other means.

RELATIONSHIP WITH ARPA CANADA

INSERT AREA NAME is a self-governing chapter of ARPA Canada but is affiliated with ARPA Canada. As such:

- ARPA Canada will provide *INSERT AREA NAME* with resources, research, advice, promotion, conferences, etc. all at no cost to *INSERT AREA NAME*;
- ARPA Canada will provide timely and encouraging assistance through its staff, including legal assistance if possible;
- *INSERT AREA NAME* will assist ARPA Canada by helping host events, distributing newsletters, and supporting current initiatives.

AMENDMENTS

The constitution may be amended at any board meeting under the following conditions:

- The board must vote on any proposed change;
- 75% board support is required for the changes to pass;
- Any suggested changes must be presented to all board members two weeks prior to a vote;
- The basis, membership, non-partisanship, objective, and relationship with ARPA Canada of the chapter as stated above may not be amended;
- Any suggested changes must be presented to all board members two weeks prior to a vote;
- *INSERT AREA NAME* does not wish to abide by ARPA Canada's Core Principles, ARPA Canada will no longer permit them to hold to the name of ARPA.

BOARD MEMBERS

The affairs of *INSERT AREA NAME* shall be managed and directed by the board, subject to the provisions of the constitution and the by-laws.

The board shall consist of no less than three and no more than twelve members.

If a board member becomes ineffective or does not advance the cause of *INSERT AREA NAME* for other reasons, the board can vote to remove the ineffective board member with 75% board support required for removal.

A board member who wants to step down must first try to find a suitable person to stand as a replacement.

BOARD MEETINGS

- The board must meet together at least once per year.
- Notification of any meeting shall be provided at least one week before any such meeting.
- The agenda for any meeting shall be provided at least one week before any such meeting.

SUB-COMMITTEES

- The board and individual board members are free to have other church members assist them in various tasks.
- The board may appoint committees as deemed necessary.
- All assistance and sub-committee members are answerable to the board.

DUTIES OF OFFICES

- Chair to preside at all meetings and supervise board members.
- Vice-Chair to assist the chairman as requested.
- Secretary to take minutes of board meetings and print up material like ARPA Alerts.
- Treasurer to keep financial records and report finances to the board.

OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE/POSITIONS

- Board members may speak, write, or appear on behalf of *INSERT AREA NAME* as long as they do so in accordance with the principles articulated in the constitution, including in accordance with ARPA Canada's Core Principles.
- Newsletters, press releases, and other information updates published by *INSERT AREA NAME* must be shared with the entire board with time for responses prior to distribution.

FUNDS

Collection of funds may be necessary for expenses incurred and can be done by requesting:

- Donations from individuals (making people aware of the financial needs and specific costs or projects);
- Businesses to sponsor material distributed by *INSERT AREA NAME*.

Charities may not donate to *INSERT AREA NAME*, because *INSERT AREA NAME* is not a charity. Money collected is only to be used for the expenses of *INSERT AREA NAME*. The treasurer will give an accounting of income and expenditures annually.



info@arpacanada.ca | 1866.691.2772
130 Albert Street, Suite 1705,
Ottawa Ontario K1P 5G4

Follow us on:



Visit our website:
ARPACANADA.ca