

# Hawkwood Baptist Church CONSTITUTION

This Constitution supersedes and replaces all prior constitutions of the Hawkwood Baptist Church, including the Constitution dated January 26, 2014.

## Article 1. Name and Affiliation

- 1.1. The name of this church is Hawkwood Baptist Church (hereinafter referred to as the “**Church**”), 20 Hawkwood Drive NW, Calgary, Alberta, Canada.
- 1.2. The church is affiliated with North American Baptist Canada Inc. (NAB) and Alberta Baptist Association (ABA), 11525-23 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

## Article 2. Charitable Purpose

The primary purpose for which the Church is organized is the advancement of religion (i.e., specifically the Christian Faith).

## Article 3. Beliefs

In continuity with affiliate organizations, the Church adopted the Statement of the NAB Conference as approved by conference delegates at the NAB Triennial Conference in 1982 and revised by the delegates to the NAB Triennial Conference in 2009. (Appendix #1)

## Article 4. Membership

### 4.1. Membership Qualifications

- 4.1.1. A spiritual conversion experience
- 4.1.2. Baptism as a believer by immersion
- 4.1.3. Evidence of exemplary Christian lifestyle
- 4.1.4. Acceptance of the Statement of Beliefs and Church Covenant

### 4.2. Membership Procedure

All applications for Church membership must be made through the Board as outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual (the “**Policy**”), section 1.3. Approved candidates are received into membership:

- 4.2.1. By baptism through immersion upon evidence of repentance and confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.
- 4.2.2. By letter of recommendation or statement of faith, if previously baptized by immersion.

4.2.3. By restoration after satisfactorily clearing cause for termination of membership.

### **4.3. Membership Termination**

Except in the case of death, all recommendations for membership, requests for transfer or termination of membership shall be considered by the Board. Members being considered for membership termination will be notified by the Board at least two weeks prior to a decision in order to allow for any representations to be made to the Board.

Membership may be terminated by:

- 4.3.1. Transfer, by request of the member, to another evangelical church that adheres to the Bible as its rule for faith and practice;
- 4.3.2. Release upon the member's request;
- 4.3.3. Dismissal in the event that the member demonstrates a lifestyle contrary to the Statement of Beliefs and Church Covenant, and when efforts at correction and restoration, pursuant to Policy (section 1.5.4 and 1.6), have been refused;
- 4.3.4. Termination because of persistent absence from the church without valid reasons as defined by Policy, section 1.5.1 and section 6; or
- 4.3.5. Death.

### **4.4. Membership Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of all members to live according to the Holy Bible, the Statement of Beliefs (Appendix #1) and the Church Covenant (Appendix #2) of this Constitution.

## **Article 5. Governance**

The Board of Elders (the "**Board**") and the Ministry Council (the "**Council**") together with the pastoral staff shall function as partners dedicated to achieving a common vision, yet each having unique roles and distinct responsibilities within the church. Any decisions of the Board and the Council shall be made by a simple majority of the total number of Elders or members of Council.

### **5.1. The Board of Elders:**

- 5.1.1. The Board shall be composed of the senior pastor and no less than 3 Elders as determined by Policy, section 7. They shall appoint a chairman from among themselves.
- 5.1.2. While the final authority of the church rests with the membership, the authority for governance is entrusted to the Board. The Elders shall be elected by the members at the annual congregational election as defined by Policy, section 3.

- 5.1.3. The Board is responsible for spiritual leadership and oversight of the church, defining (beliefs, values and mission), directing (vision and strategy) and monitoring spiritual health.
- 5.1.4. The Board shall protect the church against errant teachings, divisive or destructive behaviors, and influences that would move the congregation in a direction contrary to the stated charitable purpose, beliefs, values and mission of the church as defined in Policy. See Appendix #3
- 5.1.5. The Board shall operate under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the authority of Scripture and the direction of the Holy Spirit, holding itself accountable to the final authority of the membership.
- 5.1.6. Detailed roles and responsibilities of the Board, along with description of subcommittees are defined in Policy.

## **5.2. The Ministry Council**

- 5.2.1. The Council shall be composed of the moderator, senior pastor, ministry staff, director of administration, director of finance, and directors of specific ministry portfolios.
- 5.2.2. The treasurer and clerk shall be ex officio members of Council, without vote.
- 5.2.3. The Council is responsible for directing day-to-day operations and ministries of the church with the power to make decisions and transact all manner of business on behalf of the church and within the limits of the annual budget. Although still accountable, they shall also be able to delegate those powers to individual ministry directors acting within their areas of responsibility.
- 5.2.4. The Council shall operate under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the direction of the Holy Spirit, holding itself accountable to the Board and the final authority of the membership.
- 5.2.5. Detailed roles and responsibilities of the Council along with the descriptions of ministry teams are defined in Policy.

## **5.3. Election**

- 5.3.1. Board and Council members shall be elected annually by the members at the annual congregational business meeting for the following fiscal year pursuant to Article 7.
- 5.3.2. Members who meet the qualifications defined in the Policy are eligible for election to the various leadership positions. Details of qualifications, eligibility and terms of office are defined in Policy.

## **5.4. Officers**

- 5.4.1. Subject to the requirements of the Religious Societies' Land Act the moderator, director of finance and director of administration shall be responsible for and shall have the power to deal with the property of the Church.

<b>Article 6. Pastoral and Support Staff</b>
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The individual who is primarily responsible for the implementation of the vision, for the oversight of the ministries, for the training of leaders, for the leadership of the staff and for the teaching and proclamation of the Word of God shall be designated as the senior pastor.

### **6.1. Qualifications**

The pastor and the pastoral staff shall meet all of the qualifications of an Elder as found in Scripture, and as identified in Policy, shall be appropriately trained, and shall evidence spiritual gifts and calling in keeping with the beliefs, values, mission and vision of the church.

### **6.2. Selection**

In the event of a pastoral vacancy, the Board, upon approval of the members, shall be responsible to initiate a search for candidates to fill the vacant position as defined in policy. In the event that a search process is successful, a 75% affirmative vote by a quorum of 33% of the members is required in order to extend a call.

### **6.3. Term**

The pastor and pastoral staff shall serve indefinitely and on the following terms:

- 6.3.1. The relationship may be terminated upon thirty (30) days written notice by either party or by mutual consent between the pastor and the Board.
- 6.3.2. The pastor or any pastoral staff member may be asked by the church, upon recommendation from the Board, to resign should the Board determine that the pastor or the relevant pastoral staff member fails to satisfy the requirements of section 6.1(termination for cause).
- 6.3.3. The pastor or any pastoral staff member may be removed without cause with a simple majority vote by a quorum of 33% of the active church membership at a duly called members' meeting pursuant to Article 7.
- 6.3.4. Other ministry or support staff shall be hired, as deemed necessary by the Council or upon the recommendation of the Board, and in consultation with the senior pastor.

## **Article 7. Congregational Business Meetings**

### **7.1. Annual Congregational Business Meeting**

The annual congregational business meeting shall be held during the final week in May unless otherwise directed by Council, and this meeting shall not be accelerated or delayed by more than thirty (30) days. At this time the budget for the next fiscal year shall be approved and the election held for Board and Council members (other than the Pastor and Pastoral Staff).

### **7.2. Annual Congregational Review Meeting**

The annual congregational review meeting shall be held during the final week of September unless otherwise directed by the Council, and this meeting shall not be accelerated or delayed by more than thirty (30) days. The annual report from each of the ministry areas, and financial statements shall be presented at the meeting.

### **7.3. Special Congregational Business Meetings**

Special congregational business meetings may be scheduled at any time by the Board, the Council, senior pastor, or written request of a quorum of the membership. Such requests shall be presented to the Moderator, and the time and place of such meetings and nature of the business to be acted upon shall be announced at the Sunday services and regularly scheduled meetings of the membership for two consecutive weeks. A meeting requested by a quorum of the members shall be announced by the Moderator within fourteen (14) days of such request, and the time and date of the meeting shall be within twenty one (21) days of the announcement.

#### **Notice of Meetings:**

All congregational business meetings shall be announced, in writing, at least fourteen (14) consecutive days prior to the meeting. In the event any special business is to be conducted, the notice shall also state

7.3.1. the nature of that business in sufficient detail to permit the member to form a reasoned judgment on that business, and

7.3.2. the text of any special resolution to be submitted to the meeting.

### **7.4. Quorum**

A quorum of fifteen (15%) percent of the Members who are eligible to vote shall be required to be present in person to conduct a vote at any duly called meeting of the members, except:

- 7.4.1. in the matter of calling or dismissing a member of the Pastoral Staff,
- 7.4.2. amending the Constitution or waiving the two-weeks-notice prior to a business meeting, in which case a quorum of thirty-three percent (33%) of the Membership shall be required. If the meeting fails to obtain the required quorum within fifteen (15) minutes after the time for which the meeting had been called, the meeting may be adjourned to a fixed time and date by the members present at the failed meeting. Notice of the adjourned meeting shall be given pursuant to clause 7.4. The members who meet at such adjourned meeting shall be deemed to constitute a quorum.

## **7.5. Voting**

Only members who have reached their 16th birthday shall be eligible to vote and to be considered in a determination as to whether a quorum has been obtained.

A quorum must be present before a vote may be taken, unless the meeting is an adjourned meeting pursuant to clause 7.4.

Approval by sixty-seven percent (67%) of the votes cast by the eligible voting members present shall be required for the passing of any resolution, unless:

- 7.5.1. the Alberta Religious Societies' Land Act applies, in which event the provisions of the Act shall apply and a quorum of fifty (50%) percent and the approval of seventy-five percent (75%) of votes cast by the eligible voting members present in person shall be required, or
- 7.5.2. the matter relates to the filling of a Pastor or Pastoral Staff position, when approval of seventy-five (75%) of the votes by the eligible voting members present shall be required. A ballot shall be considered spoiled if it is marked ABSTAIN; if it is unmarked; or if it is improperly marked; or if it is marked in such a way that the intent of the member casting the vote is not clear to the tellers.

## **7.6. Robert's Rules of Order and the Policy**

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the meetings of the members to the extent they are not inconsistent with this Constitution and any special rules of order the members may adopt.

The Policy in force from time to time shall apply to the extent it is not inconsistent with this Constitution.

## **7.7. Non-Members**

Unless stated otherwise by the Council, non-members may be present at congregational business meetings, but not vote. They may be given reasonable opportunity to speak to agenda items according to the discretion of the moderator.

## **7.8. Fiscal Year**

The church's fiscal year shall be July 1 to June 30.

## **Article 8. Records and Reports**

In keeping with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act the following records and reports will be maintained and made available to church members.

### **8.1. IFRS (International Financial Reporting Standards)**

Financial records and reports must be in accordance with the IFRS.

### **8.2. Written records**

Written minutes of resolutions, congregational business and council meetings must be maintained and provisional copies shall be posted within two weeks of the meeting.

### **8.3. Active Membership roll**

The membership roll of the church must be maintained by the Board.

## **Article 9. Amendments to the Constitution**

### **9.1. Biennial Review**

The Board must initiate a review of the constitution, including its appendices and the Policy, every 2 years and present any recommended revisions for the approval of the members at a duly called congregational business meeting.

### **9.2. Review by Members**

9.2.1. Any member may propose an amendment through written request to the Council.

9.2.2. The Council will review the proposed amendment and comment on it.

9.2.3. Proposed amendment(s) will be included on the agenda of the next congregational business meeting for voting purposes.

9.2.4. The approval of changes to the Constitution requires a 75% affirmative vote by a quorum of 50% of the members.

9.2.5. Any amended article will take effect immediately upon approval by the members unless stated otherwise in the motion.

## **Article 10. Church Property**

### **10.1. Acquisition and Disposition of Property**

Upon prior approval by the members, the officers of the church shall be empowered to acquire or dispose of church real estate.

### **10.2. Division**

In case of serious division, the assets of the church shall belong to those members who abide by this constitution. Any controversy over the question as to who is deemed to abide by this constitution shall be submitted to the elected leadership of the Alberta Baptist Association for a decision which shall be final and binding on all parties, and shall not be subject to review by any court.

### **10.3. Dissolution**

10.3.1. In the event that the Hawkwood Baptist Church votes to dissolve or ceases to function as a Baptist Church, the net assets of the church shall be automatically conveyed to the North American Baptist Conference, Canada, Inc., and the Alberta Baptist Association in equal portions. No assets may be distributed to members.

10.3.2. A vote for dissolution must be preceded by at least two weeks prior notice and can only occur at a duly called meeting of the members. The quorum for such a meeting will be at least 50% of the members, with a 75% majority vote required for approval.

# Statement of Beliefs of the North American Baptists

## Preface

Baptists, since their beginnings, repeatedly have composed confessions, which expressed the doctrinal consensus among related churches. In principle, however, Baptists always have insisted that no statement of faith can be considered creedally binding even upon concurring congregations. The purpose of their doctrinal summaries was to explain to other Christians and to the larger society what Baptists believed and practiced. Within and among Baptist churches, statements of faith also provided a standard for instruction, counsel and fellowship.

We, as the North American Baptist Conference, presently feel the need to state more fully our Baptist understanding of the Christian faith. The purpose that guided us in writing and the use that we intend for this declaration are to:

1. further the sense of identity and the spirit of unity within our North American Baptist Conference by declaring our common doctrinal understanding
2. provide a basis for doctrinal instruction within our conference
3. provide a basis for doctrinal discussions in the hiring of conference personnel
4. serve as a reference point when opinions differ
5. provide a basis for doctrinal discussion in admitting new churches and new pastors into our various associations
6. provide a doctrinal guide for new churches
7. give a doctrinal witness beyond our conference

In continuity with our immediate forefathers and the larger fellowship of Baptists throughout history, we seek to practice and propagate by God's grace the following convictions:

**1. We believe the Bible is God's Word given by divine inspiration, the record of God's revelation of Himself to humanity** (II Timothy 3:16). It is trustworthy, sufficient, without error—the supreme authority and guide for all doctrine and conduct (I Peter 1:23-25; John 17:17; II Timothy 3:16-17.) It is the truth by which God brings people into a saving relationship with Himself and leads them to Christian maturity (John 20:31, I John 5:9-12; Matthew 4:4; I Peter 2:2).

**2. We believe in the one living and true God, perfect in wisdom, sovereignty, holiness, justice, mercy and love** (I Timothy 1:17; Psalm 86:15; Deuteronomy 32:3-4). He exists eternally in three coequal persons who act together in creation, providence and redemption (Genesis 1:26; I Peter 1:2; Hebrews 1:1-3).

**a. The Father** reigns with providential care over all life and history in the created universe. He hears and answers prayer (I Chronicles 29:11-13; Matthew 7:11). He initiated salvation by sending His Son, and He is Father to those who by faith accept His Son as Lord and Savior (I John 4:9-10; John 3:16; John 1:12; Acts 16:31)

**b. The Son** became man, Jesus Christ, who was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary (John 1:14; Matthew 1:18). Being fully God and fully man, He revealed God through His sinless life, miracles and teaching (John 14:9; Hebrews 4:15; Matthew 4:23-24). He provided salvation through His atoning death in our place and by His bodily resurrection (I Corinthians 15:3-4; II Corinthians 5:21; Romans 4:23-25). He ascended into heaven where He rules over all creation (Philippians 2:5-11). He intercedes for all believers and dwells in them as their ever-present Lord (Romans 8:34; John 14:23).

**c. The Holy Spirit** inspired men to write the Scriptures (II Peter 1:21). Through this Word, He convicts individuals of their sinfulness and of the righteousness of Christ, draws them to the Savior, and bears witness to their new birth (James 1:18; John 16:7-11; I Thessalonians 1:5-6; Romans 8:16). At regeneration and conversion, the believer is baptized in the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 12:13). The Spirit indwells, seals and gives spiritual gifts to all believers for ministry in the church and society (Romans 8:9-11; Ephesians 1:13-14; Romans 12:5-8; I Peter 4:10). He empowers, guides, teaches, fills, sanctifies and produces the fruit of Christlikeness in all who yield to Him (Acts 4:31; Romans 8:14; I Corinthians 2:10-13; Ephesians 5:18; II Thessalonians 2:13; Galatians 5:16; 22-23).

**3. We believe God created an order of spiritual beings called angels to serve Him and do His will** (Psalm 148:1-5; Colossians 1:16). The holy angels are obedient spirits ministering to the heirs of salvation and glorifying God (Hebrews 1:6-7; 13-14). Certain angels, called demons, Satan being their chief, through deliberate choice revolted and fell from their exalted position (Revelation 12:7-9). They now tempt individuals to rebel against God (I Timothy 4:1; I Peter 5:8). Their destiny in hell has been sealed by Christ's victory over sin and death (Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 20:10).

**4. We believe God created man in His own image to have fellowship with Himself and to be steward over His creation** (Genesis 1:26-28). As a result, each person is unique, possesses dignity and is worthy of respect (Psalm 139:13-17). Through the temptation of Satan, Adam chose to disobey God; this brought sin and death to the human race and suffering to all creation (Genesis 3; Romans 5:12-21; 8-22). Therefore, everyone is born with a sinful nature and needs to be reconciled to God (Romans 3:9-18, 23). Satan tempts people to rebel against God, even those who love Him (Ephesians 4:27; II Corinthians 2:11; Matthew 16:23). Nonetheless, everyone is personally responsible to God for thoughts, actions and beliefs and has the right to approach Him directly through Jesus Christ, the only mediator (Romans 14:12; I Timothy 2:5).

**5. We believe salvation is redemption by Christ of the whole person from sin and death** (II Timothy 1:9-10; I Thessalonians 5:23). It is offered as a free gift by God to all and must be received personally through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ (I Timothy 2:4; Ephesians 2:8-9; Acts 20:21). An individual is united to Christ by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 2:20; Colossians 1:27). As a child of God, the believer is acquitted of all guilt and brought into a new relationship of peace (Romans 5:1). Christians grow as the Holy Spirit enables them to understand and obey the Word of God (II Peter 3:18; Ephesians 4:15; I Thessalonians 3:12).

**6. We believe the Church is the body of which Christ is the head and all who believe in Him are members** (Ephesians 1:22-23; Romans 12:4-5). Christians are commanded to be baptized upon profession of faith and to unite with a local church for mutual encouragement and growth in discipleship through worship, nurture, service and the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world (Acts 2:41-42, 47; Luke 24:45-48). Each church is a self-governing body under the lordship of Christ with all members sharing responsibility (Acts 13:1-3; 14:26-28). The form of government is understood to be congregational (Matthew 18:17; Acts 6:3-6; 15:22-23).

The ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:18-20). It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's identification with the death, burial and resurrection of the Savior Jesus Christ (Romans 6:3-5). The Lord's Supper is the partaking of the bread and of the cup by believers together as a continuing memorial of the broken body and shed blood of Christ. It is an act of thankful dedication to Him and serves to unite His people until He returns (I Corinthians 11:23-26).

To express unity in Christ, local churches form associations and a conference for mutual counsel, fellowship and a more effective fulfillment of Christ's commission (Acts 15; I Corinthians 6:1-3).

**7. We believe religious liberty, rooted in Scripture, is the inalienable right of all individuals to freedom of conscience with ultimate accountability to God** (Genesis 1:27; John 8:32;

II Corinthians 3:17; Romans 8:21; Acts 5:29). Church and state exist by the will of God. Each has distinctive concerns and responsibilities, free from control by the other (Matthew 22:21). Christians should pray for civil leaders, and obey and support government in matters not contrary to Scripture (I Timothy 2:1-4; Romans 13:1-7; I Peter 2:13-16). The state should guarantee religious liberty to all persons and groups regardless of their religious preferences, consistent with the common good.

**8. We believe Christians, individually and collectively, are salt and light in society** (Matthew 5:13-16). In a Christlike spirit, they oppose greed, selfishness and vice; they promote truth, justice and peace; they aid the needy and preserve the dignity of people of all races and conditions (Hebrews 13:5; Luke 9:23; Titus 2:12; Philippians 4:8-9; I John 3:16-17; James 2:1-4).

We affirm the family as the basic unit of society and seek to preserve its integrity and stability (Genesis 2:21-25; Ephesians 6:1-4).

We believe the Bible teaches that marriage refers to the covenant relationship exclusively between one man and one woman, as instituted by God in the beginning (Genesis 2:20b-24; I Corinthians 7:2; Hebrews 13:4).

**9. We believe God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring all things to their appropriate end and establish the new heaven and the new earth** (Ephesians 1:9-10, Revelation 21:1). The certain hope of the Christian is that Jesus Christ will return to the earth suddenly, personally and visibly in glory according to His promise (Titus 2:13; Revelation 1:7; 3:11; John 14:1-3). The dead will be raised, and Christ will judge mankind in righteousness (John 5:28-29). The unrighteous will be consigned to the everlasting punishment prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41, 46; Revelation 20:10). The righteous, in their resurrected and glorified bodies, will receive their reward and dwell forever with the Lord (Philippians 3:20-21; II Corinthians 5:10; I Thessalonians 4:13-18).

*Adopted by the North American Baptist Conference delegates, August 10-15, 1982, Niagara Falls, NY. Section 8 amended by the delegates, July 15-19, 2009, Winnipeg, MB.*

**North American Baptists • 1219 Pleasant Grove Blvd • Roseville, CA 95678  
Ph: (916) 797-NABC (6222) • E-mail: [serve@nabconf.org](mailto:serve@nabconf.org) • [www.nabconference.org](http://www.nabconference.org)**

# Christian Affirmation of Marriage North American Baptists

The ministers of our North American Baptist Conference welcome the privilege that our respective civil governments give to solemnize marriages as part of their Christian ministry. However, the same Biblical authority that informs all our teaching and ministry governs our convictions about the nature of marriage. Therefore, our ministers will in good conscience only perform weddings consistent with the view of marriage expressed in the following “Christian Affirmation of Marriage.”

## **From the Bible we believe . . .**

### **That God’s intention for marriage is established throughout the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments**

This is expressed in creation and the creation story,<sup>1</sup> the Law of Moses,<sup>2</sup> the wisdom literature,<sup>3</sup> and in the prophetic tradition.<sup>4</sup> The Divine establishment of marriage is confirmed by the words of Jesus<sup>5</sup> and the New Testament authors.<sup>6</sup> They provide guidance for perfecting marriage, and affirm its spiritual significance. Chaste singleness and marriage are both honored as faithful and holy lifestyles ordained by God.<sup>7</sup>

### **That God ordained marriage as a voluntary union for life of one man and one woman**

Our creation as man and woman, who are complementary to one another,<sup>8</sup> has significance in revealing aspects of the image of God<sup>9</sup> and His relationship to humanity.<sup>10</sup> The permanence of the marital bond<sup>11</sup> mirrors God’s faithfulness, just as its monogamy reflects God’s singular devotion to His people<sup>12</sup> and His people’s singular devotion to Him<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Genesis 1-2

<sup>2</sup> Exodus 20:14, 17; Leviticus 18; Deuteronomy 5:18, 21

<sup>3</sup> Proverbs 5; Proverbs 12:4; Proverbs 13:22; Proverbs 14:1; Proverbs 17:6; Proverbs 19:13-14; Proverbs 31:10-31; Song of Solomon

<sup>4</sup> Malachi 2:14-15

<sup>5</sup> Matthew 19:1-9; Mark 10:6-9

<sup>6</sup> Ephesians 5:22-33; Hebrews 13: 4; 1 Peter 3:1-7

<sup>7</sup> Matthew 19:10-13; 1 Corinthians 7

<sup>8</sup> Genesis 2:7, 18-23

<sup>9</sup> Genesis 1:27

<sup>10</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:11-12

<sup>11</sup> Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6; Mark 10: 7-9

<sup>12</sup> Ephesians 5: 25

<sup>13</sup> Deuteronomy 6:13; Joshua 24:24; Matthew 4:10;

**That sexual intimacy is legitimate only within the bounds of marriage**

The commands of God are clear.<sup>14</sup> Sexual activity profoundly affects people emotionally and spiritually.<sup>15</sup> Sexual intercourse outside of marriage, promiscuity, common law relationships, adultery, homosexual acts, exploitation, incest and sexual perversion contradict God's purpose for human sexuality.<sup>16</sup>

**That marriage is more than a contract between two persons: It is a covenant before God**

God is committed to every marriage between a man and a woman.<sup>17</sup> In the covenant of marriage, God joins a man and a woman together "in one flesh," and forbids anyone to break it.<sup>18</sup> This covenant is unique among human relationships.<sup>19</sup> God intends the married couple to recognize and celebrate His call to an irrevocable commitment to love, to cherish and remain faithful which transcends the quid pro quo of contracts.<sup>20</sup>

**That in Christian marriage, the Church acts as an agent of God's blessing, as a primary witness and as a supportive community**

The church declares the blessing of God but does not create that benefit.<sup>21</sup> Therefore the church cannot confer the spiritual blessing of marriage on other relationships.<sup>22</sup>

**That a healthy marriage is the best foundation for families and the raising of children**

The practical benefits of marriage are inherent to its form. A healthy marriage is a unique source of benefits for children including the stability of the family and the access of children to a mother and a father.<sup>23</sup> God intended that children should receive nurture from male and female parents, and in turn learn to honor both.<sup>24</sup> Neither the church nor anyone else can confer the innate benefits of marriage on other forms of relationships or unions.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 7-8

<sup>15</sup> Proverbs 6:32; 1 Corinthians 6:18-20; Ephesians 4:19-24

<sup>16</sup> Leviticus 18:6-18; Matthew 5:27-32; Mark 7:21-23; Romans 1:24-27; 1 Corinthians 5:1, 7:1-2, 9; Colossians 3:5; 1 Timothy 1:8-11

<sup>17</sup> Malachi 2: 14-15

<sup>18</sup> Matthew 19: 4-6; Mark 10: 6-9

<sup>19</sup> 1 Corinthians 11: 12

<sup>20</sup> 1 Corinthians 7: 10-11; Ephesians 5: 21-33

<sup>21</sup> Ephesians 1: 22-23

<sup>22</sup> 1 Corinthians 5: 9-13; 1 Timothy 1: 6-11

<sup>23</sup> Proverbs 6: 20-23; Colossians 3: 18-21

<sup>24</sup> Deuteronomy 5: 16; Ephesians 6: 1-3

<sup>25</sup> Matthew 19: 4-6; Mark 10: 6-9

## **Therefore we conclude . . .**

**That the Bible teaches that marriage is between one man and one woman only, and to recognize other unions as legitimate marriages would be contrary to our understanding of scripture within the North American Baptist Conference.**

We affirm, in accordance to the North American Baptist Conference Statement of Faith, that each person is unique, possesses dignity, and is worthy of respect.

We also affirm that we are called to introduce each person to the loving, reconciling ministry of Jesus Christ and the life changing transformation described in scripture.

As Christians we seek to demonstrate God's love to all people, but we will not compromise our convictions on marriage as defined by scripture.

Therefore, be it resolved that:

1. As a matter of belief, doctrine and religious practice, the North American Baptist Conference reserves the term "marriage" for the covenant relationship between one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

2. And that the North American Baptist Conference establishes the standard that all individuals, who are licensed to perform marriages, will not officiate, co-officiate or participate as a pastor at any marriage outside of the previously stated definition of marriage.

3. And that in the event that an individual licensed to perform marriages, officiates, co-officiates or participates as a pastor at a marriage that is outside of the previously stated definition of marriage, will be subject to disciplinary review and loss of license.

4. And we recommend that all North American Baptist Conference churches adopt the above as a policy of their individual, local church, and review their "church use policies" to reflect the resolution as stated.

5. And that the facilities of North American Baptist Conference churches will not be used for weddings or receptions where the marriage union is contrary to the provisions of this resolution.

*Adopted by the North American Baptists delegates, July 5-9, 2006, Estes Park, CO. Revision approved by the General Council, May 14, 2011, Orlando, FL.*

*Adopted with Scripture References by the North American Baptists delegates, July 5, 2012, Orlando, FL*

**North American Baptists • 1219 Pleasant Grove Blvd • Roseville, CA 95678  
Ph: (916) 797-NABC (6222) • E-mail: [serve@nabconf.org](mailto:serve@nabconf.org) • [www.nabconference.org](http://www.nabconference.org)**



## Hawkwood Baptist Church's Membership Covenant

Having received Christ as my Lord and Saviour, having been baptized by immersion, and being in agreement with HBC's mission and vision, strategy and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Hawkwood Baptist Church family. With God's help, I commit myself to Him and to the other members, to strive to do the following:

- **To live in God's grace**
- **To grow as a believer**
- **To share in group life**
- **To serve with my gifts**
- **And to be a good steward**

### **1. I will protect the unity of the church**

- **By acting in love toward other members** - "Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification" (Romans 14:19 NIV). "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs" (Eph. 4:29 NIV).
- **By refusing to gossip** - "Have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart" (1 Pet. 1:22 NIV).
- **By following the leaders** - "Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you" (Hebrews 13:17 NIV).

### **2. I will share the responsibility of the church**

- **By praying for its growth** - "To the church ... We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers" (1 Thess. 1:1-2 NIV).
- **By intentionally involving myself in Christ's mission to the world** - "... As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." (John 20:21 NIV).
- **By warmly welcoming those who visit** - "Therefore, accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory." (Romans 15:7 NLT).

### **3. I will serve the ministry of my church**

- **By discovering and using my gifts and talents** - "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms" (1 Peter 4:10 NIV).
- **By being equipped to serve** - "[God] gave ... some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up" (Ephesians 4:11-12 NIV).
- **By developing a servant's heart** - "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who ... [took on] the very nature of a servant" (Philippians 2:3-4,7 NIV)

### **4. I will support the testimony of my church**

- **By attending faithfully** - "Let us not give up meeting together... but let us encourage one another" (Heb. 10:25 NIV).
- **By living a godly life** - "Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ" (Philippians 1:27 NIV).
- **By giving regularly** - "On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made" (1 Corinthians 16:2). "For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to

## **Hawkwood Baptist Church's Mission, Vision, Purpose and Core Values**

**HBC Mission:** To introduce people to Jesus and together become His fully devoted followers.

**HBC Vision:** To glorify God, by living the Great Commandment (Luke 10:27) and the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20).

**HBC Purpose:** To glorify God through Christ-centered ministry based upon Biblical worship, preaching, teaching, witnessing, serving and fellowship.

### **HBC Core Values:**

1. We value God's Word, the Bible, as the foundation and touchstone for all of life.
2. We value people because every person is made in the image of God.
3. We value the gospel and call upon every person to begin a growing relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ.
4. We value public, corporate worship as a foretaste of heaven and our supreme witness to the world.
5. We value prayer as conversation with God and the foundation for effective ministry.
6. We value love between members of Christ's body as the necessary ingredient for lasting and beneficial community life.
7. We value small groups as the primary means by which we make disciples and minister to the body of Christ.
8. We value empowering all Christians to do the work of ministry according to their passion and God-given Spiritual gifts.
9. We value Spirit-filled servant-leadership.
10. We value a life of stewardship with regard to every blessing from God, including time, talents and treasure.