



Central Avenue Christian Reformed Church

## **STATEMENT OF CONVICTION**

adopted by Council August 22, 2011; November 28, 2011;  
and April 23, 2012

We believe it to be God's will for our local church to be an instrument of Biblical and confessional leadership, as well as preserving sound doctrine and life (1 Timothy 4:16; Romans 16:17).

We seek to affirm our belief in the Word of God and the historic Reformed faith as expressed in the Three-Forms of Unity – *Belgic Confession*, *Heidelberg Catechism*, and the *Canons of Dort*. This "Statement of Conviction" gives indication to the congregation and the broader Christian community how Central Avenue Christian Reformed Church will be lead. We affirm and commit our convictions in light of this belief as follows:

## The Sacraments

### WE AFFIRM:

1. That Christ has instituted two sacraments for His church: baptism and the Lord's Supper so that by our faithful use of them He might make us understand more clearly the promise of the gospel, and put His seal on that promise.
2. That Baptism should be given to believers and their children as a sign and seal of their initiation into the covenant community in keeping with God's gracious and covenantal dealings with sinners saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ (**Genesis 17; Romans 4:9-11; Galatians 3:26-29; Isaiah 44:1-3; Acts 2:38, 39; Acts 10:47; Acts 16:31; Colossians 2: 11; I Corinthians 10:1, 2; I Corinthians 7:14; Matthew 28:18-21**).
3. That the Lord's Supper should be observed repeatedly by all those who have publicly professed their faith in Jesus Christ as the only One who can save them from their sins; showing that they are truly sorry for their sins and earnestly desire to lead a godly, holy life in Christ and having properly examined themselves, their faith, hope, and love for God and neighbor as revealed in **I Corinthians 11:23-29**.

### WE COMMIT OURSELVES:

1. To faithfully administer the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
2. To doing all that we can with the help of the Holy Spirit to teach covenant children, and others, the meaning of their baptism, the privileges and responsibilities of covenant life with God, and the necessity of giving their lives to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.
3. To discern age- and ability-appropriate faith through the process of public profession of faith under the direction and encouragement of the elders. (*Church Order, art. 59a*)
4. To encourage repentant sinners who trust in Jesus Christ alone for forgiveness and righteousness, to come gladly to the table of our Lord.
5. To warn any unrepentant sinner and those who willfully continue in sin, and/or unbelief, to keep themselves from the table of the Lord until they are first reconciled to God through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

## Language for God

### WE AFFIRM:

1. That God alone has the sole right and authority to tell us how He ought to be addressed by His church.
2. That persons of the Trinity receive masculine reference in the Scriptures not as a result of a cultural bias of a previous age, but because this is how God chooses to reveal and characterize Himself. *Matthew 6:9; Luke 1:34,35; John 4:23,24; Matthew 3:16-17.*

### WE COMMIT OURSELVES:

1. To uphold the full revelation of God, and to seek to understand carefully all that He has revealed about Himself in the Scriptures, including His character, His attributes, and His names and not changing them to reflect gender neutral title in reference to God... In the manner He has revealed Himself.
2. To be mindful, honoring, and respectful of the way God has characterized Himself in His Word in our prayers, writings, speech, teaching, preaching, and educational material. To this end, we will use the English translation of the *Belgic Confession* from 1985, the *Canons of Dordt* from 1986, and the *Heidelberg Catechism* from 1975 (updated 1988) in our preaching and teaching.

## The Offices of the Church

### WE AFFIRM:

1. That men and women equally bear the image of God and are to serve Him with all their complementary gifts according to His calling in their lives.
2. That from creation men were given authority for headship in the family and in the church.
3. That Christ honored and respected women while on this earth and continues to equip them for high calling in His church today.
4. That Christ, as He makes clear in His Word, does not call women to the authoritative offices in the church, and therefore the church may not ordain them to these offices.
5. That the high calling for women in the church must be guided solely by the Word of God and never by mere social factors; such as feminism, bigotry, male-chauvinism, or sheer tradition.
6. That the purpose of the spiritual gifts given to men and women in Christ is never self-fulfillment but service to others; to the end that God receives all the glory.
7. That Christ rules His church through the officers He calls to govern it according to the regulations of His Word. *1 Timothy 2&3; Titus 1; 1 Corinthians 14; Belgic Confession Articles 30, 31; Acts of Synod 1997 pp. 505-508, 513-516, Acts of Synod 2000, 2005*

### WE COMMIT OURSELVES:

1. To identify, nurture and use the gifts and abilities of all of God's people—men, women, and our youth—in complementary ways according to the Word of God and for the good of God's kingdom and His people.
2. To preserve the holiness and authority of the offices of the church in accord with the Word of God.

## **THE SPIRIT OF THIS STATEMENT**

1. Our aim is to embrace and teach the whole counsel of God and to encourage an adherence to Biblical truth. We believe Biblical truth stabilizes the church against every wind of doctrine and promotes God's glory.
2. We believe that the cause of unity in the church is best served not by finding the lowest common denominator of doctrine, around which all can gather, but by elevating the value of truth, seeking the unity of that comes from the truth, and then demonstrating to the world how Christians can love each other across boundaries rather than by removing boundaries.
3. We hold firmly to these truths as we see in them and call on others to search the Scriptures to see if these things are so and are open to refinement and correction from Scripture.

**This Statement of Conviction is to be re-affirmed by each subsequent Council at its first meeting following the installation of newly selected office-bearers.**