

The Gathering of Baptists

POLICY STATEMENTS as of April 24, 2021

Policy Statements are intended as operating guidelines for The Gathering, are not included as Bylaws, but are supportive to Bylaw prescriptions.

Dates noted lead the reader to the minutes if the meeting in which the policy was adopted.

MEMBERSHIP — April 24, 2021

Reference also ByLaw Article 2

1. Class A: A member is assigned Class A membership when membership dues have been paid in the current year or in any of two preceding years.

2. Class B : All other members not Class A plus organizations who are members.

3. Removal of Members:

- (a) A member is removed from membership at their request.
- (b) A member is removed from membership upon their death or upon dissolution in the case of a member organization.
- (c) A member may be removed from membership by The Steering Committee if no interest is demonstrated over a three year period.
- (d) A member may be removed from membership by The Steering Committee, if at its discretion, s/he demonstrates a lack of appreciation for, and practice of, the Purpose and Mission of The Gathering of Baptists (Bylaw Section 1). The member will be interviewed by two designated members of The Steering Committee before such termination is proposed.
- (e) In the event of (c) or (d) above reasonable effort will be made by the Secretary to advise the removed member of the termination of membership. In the event of a termination, the member shall have twenty-one (21) days following notification, or, in the case of (d) above, the said interview, to contest, in writing to the Secretary, his or her removal from membership.

4. Congregational Membership:

A congregation which is a member will benefit from:

- # a sense of family and/or belonging for the congregation which holds and demonstrates an appreciation for, and practice of, the Purpose and Mission of The Gathering of Baptists (Bylaw Section 1).
- # a group wherein credentials for ministers can be vetted, recognized, and challenged.
- # an incorporated not-for-profit body where ordinations by the congregation can be lodged and recognized by a broader community.
- # an agency for the facilitation and holding, and monitoring, of licenses to perform marriages in Ontario;
- # The congregation gains no voting member privileges with the exception that it may designate, with the Registrar, two of its members to be a Class A members with the rights and privileges thereof, for a specific Gathering meeting.

MEMBERSHIP FEES — April 24, 29021

Member fees are required to help with the Corporations operating and programming costs, and are a tangible show of support of our mission.

The Annual individual Membership fee is set at \$20 per member or family, payable annually.

The Congregational fee is set at \$100 per congregation, payable annually.

The fee may be waived by any GB officer in consideration of tangible support shown and perceived ability to pay.

PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP — 1997

Members benefit from reduced rates at meetings of The Gathering and receive special notices when appropriate. All Members and affiliates receive e-mailings and The Newsletter.

QUORUM FOR MEETINGS — 4/24/04

The quorum for a meeting of The Gathering is 25 members.

The quorum for a meeting of the Steering Committee is 6 members.

MAILING LIST — 1995

Those included on our mailing list are all members, affiliate members, plus persons who should be kept aware of our activities, such as staff and/or officers of similar organizations and our B.C.O.Q. Executive Minister, who may or may not be members.

CREATIVE CHILD CARE — 5/14/99

Creative child care/a children's programme will be provided at all Gatherings where children have been pre-registered. An honorarium, as negotiated with the providers for the number of children involved, will be paid to the care/programme providers out of Gathering general operating funds. No registration/care fee will be charged.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS 4/24/04

The Steering Committee is empowered to borrow up to \$1,000 for operations benefiting the membership without Gathering approval. It may also invest cash balances in low risk securities. Any other financial obligations, purchases of bonds or properties require direction from a duly constituted Gathering .

STATEMENT of AFFIRMATION and WELCOME SC 02/23/03

In keeping with the stated values and goals of The Gathering of Baptists, and as people of faith, we affirm the Following:

1. All human beings are created in the image of God, are loved by God, and owe their first allegiance to God.
2. All persons are called to commit to Christ as they encounter him.
As Baptists, we cherish our heritage of “soul liberty,” and believe that each person has the right to read and interpret scripture without imposed creeds or institutional coercion. However, we also believe that, as Christians, we have a responsibility to engage together in the community discipline of discerning God’s desire for our understanding of the text and its impact on our lives.
4. Christian community, as a simple matter of Christ-like justice and mercy, must welcome believers and seekers who come, without regard to social or physical status, gender, age, or sexual orientation. Nor can there be denial of leadership gifts on any such basis within the Body of Believers.

This resolution was presented by a sub-committee for the Pastoral Care of Gay and Lesbian Baptists consisting of Mimi Allan, Barbara Bishop, Linda Sparks and Michael Steeves. That committee established a “Table Fellowship” for concerned individuals, encouraged all Baptists to engage in close and contextual study of scripture, and to accept full and open dialogues in matters of inclusivity versus exclusivity.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST ---- March 17, 2014

General:

Circumstances may arise where a member a member of the Corporation may have business interests or business relationships relating to matters being transacted on behalf of the Corporation. An example might be where an item or service is to be purchased and the member might have such goods or service for sale. This policy statement outlines the disclosure and procedure to be followed when anyone recognizes a conflict of interest between the welfare of the Corporation and a possible beneficial interest for the individual(s).

Disclosure:

The conflict of interest must be declared verbally by the member in potential conflict and the declaration must be recognized by the Chair of the meeting. This holds true if the meeting is of the Board of Directors, or of the Corporation (a General Meeting), or of a sub-committee of the Corporation. It is also the responsibility of every member to identify a conflict of interest of another where it may not have been recognized or declared by the party with the conflict. In such case, the Chair of the meeting shall cause the declaration to be made by the affected member(s).

Procedure:

The member(s) in conflict shall participate fully in the exploration and discussion of the meeting but shall refrain from the decision-making process — shall refrain from voting on any motion made relative to the matter where conflict of interest is recognized. If the situation warrants, the conflicted member(s) may absent themselves from that portion of the meeting where the relative merits of the product/service are being deliberated.

CLERGY CREDENTIALS: April 13, 2015

1. Credentialing Policy

... Please see the policy file under “Credentialing of Clergy - Policy”

2. Transfer From Another Religious Body:

The Gathering will accept clergy who are ordained under other religious bodies via the process in paragraph 1 above. The Credentials Committee may significantly short-cut the process at its discretion based on the candidate’s previous credentials and reputation in ministry.

3. Member Status in The Gathering

Clergy ordained as Gathering Clergy must maintain Class A Membership Status. After a one year lapse in Class A Membership credentials will be removed automatically.

4. Removal of Credentials

Credentials shall be removed if the clergy member fails to maintain Class A Membership and/or as prescribed under The Gathering’s Membership Policy. A disciplinary removal, if appealed, will be heard by a three person Review Committee, named in cooperation with the Secretary, and consisting of two members not of the Steering Committee and one member of the Steering Committee. The Review Committee will present their findings to the disciplined person, then to a Gathering for a final decision if the clergy disciplined wishes to take the case beyond the Review Committee.

5. Retired Clergy

Retired Clergy may continue to hold their credentials within The Gathering and may continue to perform marriages so long as they are “credentialed” and Class A members.

6. License to Marry

By virtue of our application to serve as a religious body to process applications for marriage licenses, credentialed and licensed clergy must maintain Class A membership status and must notify, within 6 days, the Gathering’s licensing “Governing Official” of any changes in status or residence.

Event Registration Fees April 24, 2021

There are basically two concerns to be assessed when setting event fees:

1. that costs of the event be recouped;
2. that the “missionary” purpose of the event, that is our hope to cause folk to asses our point of view on issues and events, may suggest a deficit to be drawn from allowances from membership fees and other revenue.

Fees will assess costs of speakers, transportation, accommodation, advertisement, and any other costs incurred to host the event, as well as the costs of meeting accommodation and meals.

When an event is sponsored via both an on-line media and in person attendance, the costs of accommodation will be shared among all but any meal cost will be levied only on the in-person attendees.

Consideration will be given for a fee reduction for Class A members.