

**Covenant Agreement Between _____ Church (“the Church”)
and The Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec (“the Convention”)**

Introduction

Understanding that each local church is an autonomous body of Christian believers which seeks to follow God’s leading in ministry and mission, this agreement is our covenant as an individual local church to work together with other churches and associations through the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec to develop common vision and values and to achieve common goals through mutually agreed upon means. This document describes the nature and details of the relationship between the Church and the Convention.

The Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec is the incorporated body which has been created by autonomous local churches working together to act on behalf of each member to assist each other in ministry and mission through co-operative and supportive ministry. In a sincere spirit of unity and co-operation, the churches join together in our interdependent work of local and global mission, development of leadership and of churches and supportive fellowship. **THIS WE BELIEVE: Resources for Faith** is the document that best describes the faith of the churches who are Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec.

Part I The commitment of the Convention to its member churches:

The Convention through its Board covenants to support the ministry of its member churches by:

- praying for the work and ministry of each member church throughout the year;
- developing and resourcing churches and ministries within the constituency, including pastors, administrators, youth ministry, camping, and community ministries;
- supporting the development of the local church including the fostering of church health, church planting, and ministry innovation;
- providing grants, loans, and mortgages to member churches and other ministries subject to the application process;
- developing financial resources through the BCOQ Foundation, and other investments;
- providing an accreditation process for the mutual benefit of churches and pastors including a discipline process for cases of moral and ethical failure;
- supporting the professional development of accredited ministry leaders within the constituency;
- providing placement mediation and recovery expertise to its member churches and ministry leaders;
- engaging with McMaster Divinity College as a key resource partner in developing leadership training;
- providing strategic leadership resources and stimulating intentional lifelong development (professional, personal, spiritual) for ministry leaders;
- developing a mentoring culture that supports leadership;
- supporting strategic partnerships with Canadian Baptist Ministries, Baptist Women of Ontario and Quebec, and l’Union d’Églises Baptistes Françaises Au Canada;
- enabling and developing relationships through Associations;
- co-operating and forming strategic partnerships interdenominationally to extend Christ’s Kingdom and to provide additional resources and benefits to our member churches and associations; and,
- encouraging our sense of shared relationship and identity as Canadian Baptists in Ontario and Quebec.

Part II The commitment of the Church to the Convention

The Church covenants that it will assume the following rights and responsibilities:

- actively working to further the Objects and Core Values of the Convention;
- respecting and upholding the provisions and procedures of the Convention as expressed in its Constitution, as amended from time to time;
- voluntarily contributing their time, talent and treasure to the work of the Convention, to the best of their ability;
- providing a written annual report to the Convention in a form provided to the Church by the Convention;
- receiving notice of, attending, and participating at all Meetings of Members through its Delegates;

- respecting the use of the name, Licensed Marks, copyrighted materials and other intellectual property of the Convention to further the Objects and Core Values of the Convention, as outlined in a separate agreement;
- agreeing to be a member in good standing of an Association that is also a member of the Convention;
- agreeing that all ministry leaders should seek and maintain accreditation with the Convention and will refer cases of moral and ethical failure of accredited ministry leaders to the Convention disciplinary process; and,
- enrolling eligible employees in the group benefit and pension plans provided through the Convention.

Part III The Relationship Between the Local Church and the BCOQ.

The Church and the Convention hold in common these historic Baptist distinctives:

- the Lordship of Jesus Christ;
- the Bible as the sole authority in matters of faith and practice;
- the Church as a voluntary fellowship of persons who have received by faith the new life of the Spirit and who give witness to this faith in believer's baptism and the fellowship of the Lord's Supper;
- the priesthood of all believers in Christ, by which all believers have equal access to God through the one mediator, Jesus Christ, and are responsible to offer themselves in grateful service to Christ and their neighbours;
- soul liberty and freedom of religious conscience;
- the autonomy of the local church under the headship of Jesus Christ; and,
- the separation of church and state.

As partners we will:

- pray for one another;
- encourage and support one another;
- respect and honour each other's freedom to determine its respective God given purpose, and mission;
- honour and respect each other's assemblies and the decisions that are made by those assemblies;
- share the responsibility and authority within our jurisdictions as defined by such formal agreements as our respective constitutions and by-laws;
- affirm our mutual responsibility to work together to further our Objects and Core Values;
- contribute our time, talent and treasures in support of our common goals and objectives.

Notwithstanding the above, in faithfulness to God, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and led by the Holy Spirit, the Church may define its own affirmations of faith and covenant; enjoy the freedom of doctrinal statements; organize and govern its structure under autonomous constitutions and by-laws; develop its own ministries, mission and service; call or dismiss its own pastor and other staff; choose its own officers; and own and control its property without the permission or approval of another body, including the Convention.

Part IV Termination of the Covenant Agreement

Either party may take action to terminate this Covenant Agreement. As partners, we commit to discerning together the terms and conditions that may be required by severing this Agreement (e.g. – accreditation of ministry leaders, provision of group benefits, mortgages and reversionary property issues).

But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body is joined and knit together by every ligament, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love. (Ephesians 4:15)