

The Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada (CBAC) was formed in 1905-06 with the union of the Regular Baptists and the Free Baptists. Sharing many of the same concerns, the two bodies were brought together by their common interests.

The basis of union was a statement of agreed doctrine and church polity. Each church within the two bodies voted on the statement. All supported it with the exception of six churches, and none of the six voted negatively.

Thus the CBAC was brought into being upon an agreed statement of faith, which was approved by the churches themselves. Today, it remains the basis upon which we work together.

### **Doctrinal Statement**

**The Scriptures** — The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments have their authority from God alone, and are given to us by divine inspiration. They are the only perfect, supreme, infallible and sufficient standard of faith and practice.

**God** — There is one true and living God; He is an infinite Spirit; self-existent, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, good, wise, just and merciful. He is the creator, preserver, and sovereign of the universe; He is inexpressively glorious in holiness, and worthy of all honour, confidence and love. In the Godhead there are three persons in one: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, who are equal in every divine perfection, and who execute distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

**Jesus Christ** — Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the person of the trinity who, by virtue of His sacrificial work, is the world's redeemer and the savior of all who believe. He is at present the intercessor of all His people at the right hand of the Father, and is to be the judge of all men.

**The Holy Spirit** — The Holy Spirit is the third person of the trinity, by whom all saving, comforting and sanctifying power is exerted upon human hearts.

**State and Fall of Man** — Man was created sinless. By his own disobedience he fell into sin. Through his fall into sin, an evil nature was transmitted to the whole race, revealing itself in actual transgression, and bringing all under the reign of condemnation and death.

**Atonement** — The perfect life, vicarious death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, have removed the obstacles in the way of the Holy Spirit's regenerating power and of the Father's forgiving grace being extended to the sinner, and constitute for every believing soul an all prevailing plea and sufficient ground for righteousness before God.

**Regeneration** — In regeneration a new life principle is begotten in the soul of man by the Holy Spirit through the word of truth, producing a disposition to joyful obedience to Christ and to holy conduct in life.

**Repentance** — In repentance the sinner, having seen his sin, being moved by the energy of the Holy Spirit, is led to grieve for and hate it as an offence against God, and apprehending the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, he lovingly returns to God to walk in the way of His commandments.

**Faith** — Faith is a conviction of the intellect that God will perform all that He has promised and an implicit trust of the heart in Christ as a personal savior. It includes a hearty concurrence of the will and affections with the whole plan of salvation as revealed in the gospel, and is a condition of justification and of cleansing from the pollution of sin and of all subsequent gospel blessings.

**Justification** — Justification is an act of God wherein He accepts as righteous the sinner, to whom is imputed the perfect righteousness of Christ, on the condition of faith alone.

**Sanctification** — The Scriptures teach that sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, Christians are made partakers of His holiness; that it has its beginning in regeneration, and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, in the continual use of the appointed means: the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness and prayer.

**The Christian Sabbath** — We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's day or Christian Sabbath and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes by abstaining from all secular labour and sinful recreations, by the devout observance of all means of grace, both private and public, and by preparation of that rest that remaineth for the people of God.

**A Gospel Church** — We believe that a church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word. In the more general sense, the word church is used to designate all whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. The only scriptural officers are bishops (pastors), and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the epistles of Timothy and Titus.

**Baptism** — This is the immersion of believers in water into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in which are represented their death to the world, the washing of their souls from the pollution of sin, their resurrection to newness of life, the

burial and resurrection of Christ, their resurrection at the last day, and their engagement to serve God.

**The Lord's Supper** — The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of Christ, to be observed by the churches in the manner indicated by Him in Matt. 26:26-30.

**Death** — At death our bodies return to dust, our souls to God who gave them. The righteous being then perfected in happiness are received to dwell with God, awaiting the full redemption of their bodies. The wicked are cast into Hades reserved unto the judgement of the great day.

**Resurrection** — There will be a general resurrection of the bodies of the just and of the unjust; the righteous in the likeness of Christ, but the wicked to shame and everlasting contempt.

**General Judgement** — There will be a judgement of quick and dead, of the just and unjust, on the principles of righteousness, by the Lord Jesus Christ, at His second coming. The wicked will be condemned to eternal punishment, and the righteous received into fullness of eternal life and joy.

### Church Polity

**Article I** — The voluntary principle underlies the whole church polity of the New Testament. Each church is independent, but the churches are interdependent. All the power the more general bodies have over the less general and the individual churches, is to advise and to enforce advice with the strongest moral motives. In case a church, or the churches composing a less general body, depart from the belief and practice of the denomination, it shall be the right of the more general body to withdraw fellowship.

**Article II** — Each church, as occasion may require, shall have the right to appeal to the more

general body for the help of their advice and moral influence, or to call a council from other churches. If a church, torn by dissensions and heresy, declines to seek assistance of this kind, it is the right of the more general body to send a delegation to assist the church as far as this may be possible.

**Article III** — Any church should be careful in granting a license to preach. Every license, to be valid, must be signed by the pastor and clerk of the church granting it, and countersigned by at least two neighbouring pastors after an examination of the candidate's qualifications.

**Note with regard to Article III** — The local church license to preach has been replaced with the *License to Minister*. Also, neighbouring pastors are no longer required to countersign and examine candidates. This process has been replaced by the association *License to Minister*.

**Article IV** — When a church desires the ordination of a brother, a council from as many of the nearest churches as will secure the attendance of at least five ordained pastors, with a suitable number of laymen may be called; or the more general body may be requested to attend to the matter.

**Note with regard to Article IV** — In 1922, this policy was replaced by the current practice of having a convention examining council consisting predominately of association representatives. Nevertheless, ordination still continues to be the responsibility of the local church.

---

#### *Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada*

1655 Manawagonish Road, Saint John, NB E2M 3Y2

Phone: 506-635-1922 Fax: 506-635-0366

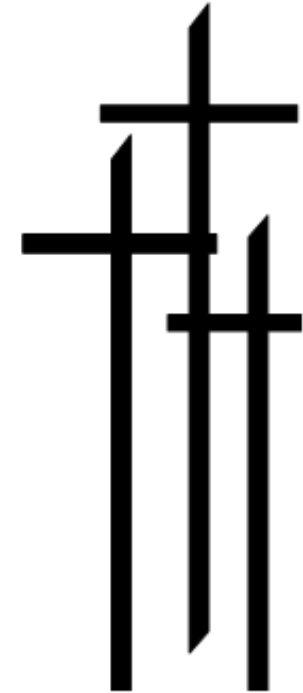
cbac@baptist-atlantic.ca

www.baptist-atlantic.ca

---

# The Basis of Union

## A Statement of Agreed Doctrine and Church Polity



Principles Upon Which  
Canadian Baptists of Atlantic  
Canada (formerly known as the  
Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches)