

Appendix A. Confessional Subscription for Full Membership

Christ's church is by definition a confessing church (Jude 3), and the common confession of our churches is the Second London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689. This document has a rich history, not simply of theological precision, but as the doctrinal foundation from which great missionary efforts have been launched. The convictions it expresses are key to partnership in evangelism, discipleship, church polity, and other Great Commission objectives. The churches of the Reformed Baptist Network already possess a common expression of these convictions in the document to which we all already subscribe.

However, the methodology of our subscription is paramount. Confessional subscription is no guarantee of true unity. Nor can unity within RBNet be guaranteed by minimizing or multiplying confessions. Unity within RBNet is not established upon common subscription alone; but also involves the cultivation of healthy relationships, mutual trust, and laboring together in love for common kingdom objectives.

Full membership in RBNet requires substantial subscription to the system of doctrine expressed in the Confession, which is a good and faithful summary of the Scripture. Since the infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself (LBCF 1.9) when there is a reservation about the true and full sense of the wording of the Confession, RBNet encourages transparency in a humble and charitable spirit. Recognizing that terms may be defined differently, what RBNet means by substantial subscription is confession of the doctrines expressed in each chapter of the LBCF, yet with liberty and charity over minor matters of wording, application and nuance not essential to those doctrines as a whole to the LBCF.

Any reservations or exceptions must be expressed in the RBNet membership application and approved by churches meeting in general assembly.