

## **Appendix B. Reformed Baptist Network Associate Membership Statement of Faith**

(This document is based on an updated and modified version of the 1858 “Abstract of Principles”.)

### **I. The Scriptures**

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God, and being inerrant, are the only sufficient, certain and authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith and obedience.

### **II. God**

There is but one God, the Creator, Preserver and Ruler of all things, having in and of himself, all perfections, and being infinite in them all; and all creatures owe to Him the highest love, reverence and obedience.

### **III. The Trinity**

In the unity of the Godhead, there are three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; each fully God, and yet the Godhead is one and indivisible; each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

### **IV. Providence**

God from eternity, decrees or permits all things that come to pass, and perpetually upholds, directs and governs all creatures and all events; but not in any manner to be the author or approver of sin, nor to violate the free agency or responsibility of created beings.

### **V. Election**

Election is God’s eternal choice of some persons to everlasting life—not because of anything foreseen in them, but by his mercy alone in Christ. As a result of God’s choice, the elect are called, justified and glorified.

### **VI. The Fall of Man**

God originally created man in His own image, and free from sin; but, through the temptation of Satan, he transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original holiness and righteousness; by which his descendants inherit a corrupt nature, wholly opposed to God and His law, are under condemnation, and, in bondage to sin and Satan, have lost all moral ability to convert themselves, prepare themselves, or do any spiritual good acceptable to God.

### **VII. Christ, the Mediator**

Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is the divinely appointed mediator between God and man. Being eternal God, the second person of the Trinity, He took upon Himself human nature, yet without sin. He perfectly fulfilled the Law, suffered, and died upon the cross for the salvation of sinners. He was buried, and rose again on the third day, and ascended to His Father to sit at His right hand and make intercession for His people. He is the only Mediator, Prophet, Priest and King of the Church, and Sovereign of the Universe.

#### VIII. Regeneration

Regeneration is a work of the Holy Spirit by which the hearts of those dead in trespasses and sins are brought to life, and their minds are enlightened to spiritually understand, savor, and savingly embrace by faith the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to love and practice holiness. It is a work of God's free and special grace alone. It is the duty of all who hear the gospel to instantly believe on Christ without looking for any qualification from within. However, none will do so apart from regenerating grace.

#### IX. Repentance

Repentance is a gracious gift of God by which a person being, by the Holy Spirit, made aware of the evil of his sin against God and of the mercy of God freely offered to him in Christ, does with godly sorrow and hatred of his sin turn from it to God seeking to walk before him in unqualified obedience.

#### X. Faith

Saving faith is the belief, on God's authority, of whatsoever is revealed in His Word concerning Christ; accepting and resting upon Him alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life. It is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and is accompanied by all other saving graces, and leads to a life of holiness.

#### XI. Justification

Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal of sinners, who believe in Christ, from all sin, through the satisfaction that Christ has made; not for anything wrought in them or done by them; but on account of the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, they receiving and resting on Him and His righteousness by faith.

#### XII. Sanctification

Those who have been regenerated are also sanctified, by God's word and Spirit dwelling in them. This sanctification, having begun in conversion, is progressive through the continuing supply of divine strength by which the children of God are enabled to grow in grace and pursue holiness in the fear of God.

#### XIII. Perseverance of the Saints

Those whom God has elected in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never totally nor finally fall away from the saving grace of God, but will persevere to the end; and though they may fall, through neglect and temptation, into sin, whereby they grieve the Holy Spirit, bring reproach on the Church, and temporal judgments on themselves, they shall yet be renewed again unto repentance, and be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

#### XIV. The Church

The Lord Jesus is the Head of the Church and in Him is invested supremely all power for its government. According to his commandment, Christians are to join themselves with local churches in which the duties of preaching the word, the administration of the ordinances, and discipline are carried out.

#### XV. Ordinances

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of positive and sovereign institution, appointed by the Lord Jesus, the only lawgiver, to be continued in His church to the end of the world.

#### XVI. Liberty of Conscience

God alone is Lord of the conscience; and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in anything contrary to His word, or not contained in it. However, liberty of conscience must at all times be governed by an earnest desire to walk in the fear of God, a loving regard for the conscience of fellow brothers in Christ, a sensitivity for the unregenerate and regard for the health of one's own soul.

#### XVII. The Resurrection

The bodies of mankind after death will return to dust, but their spirits return immediately to God — the righteous to rest with Him; the wicked to be reserved under darkness to the judgment. At the last day, the bodies of all the dead, both just and unjust, will be raised.

#### XVIII. The Judgment

God has appointed a day, wherein he will judge the world by Jesus Christ, when everyone shall receive according to his deeds; the wicked shall go into everlasting punishment; the righteous, into everlasting life.