



THEALLIANCE

8595 Explorer Drive
Colorado Springs, CO
80920

(719) 599-5999
info@cmalliance.org
www.cmalliance.org

STAYING ON MISSION

A Guideline for How Alliance Churches Respond
to *Obergefell v. Hodges*

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The Christian and Missionary Alliance

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If you require legal advice, please contact an attorney licensed to practice law in your state.



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INTRODUCTION

The Supreme Court ruled on June 26, 2015, that states must license same-sex marriages and recognize such licenses issued by other states. Some Alliance churches have already taken steps to address this issue, while others are still in process. Wherever your church may be in addressing this ruling, this document will help your leadership respond effectively.

It is important that Alliance pastors and church leaders know what the *Obergefell* decision means for the ministry of the local church. Perhaps unlike any other legal decision in our generation, *Obergefell* has the potential to distract and derail a church.

A 5–4 majority of the Supreme Court justices found in the U.S. Constitution a brand new fundamental right for same-sex marriage. Their decision was written in such a way that legally it bears directly on the government and its officials only. Culturally, however, its impact is far more comprehensive. The majority decision affirmed the right of religious groups to hold and advocate for traditional morality. However, it did not directly affirm the right to “exercise” one’s religious beliefs. Leaders in business, government, education, entertainment, and other areas of society may use the decision as a basis for declining to engage or do business with traditional Christian groups.

Although the ruling is regrettable, it presents every Alliance church with two opportunities. The first is to learn more deeply what it means to love our neighbors with the love of Christ. For a broad look

THREE KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The decision does not require Alliance pastors to marry same-sex couples.
- The local church must have clear statements related to marriage, sexual orientation, and gender identity.
- Position statements on marriage, sexual orientation, and gender identity must be consistent with your church’s actions, ministries, and activities.

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at what love means within The Alliance, view President Stumbo's **presentation** at the 2015 General Council. In terms of how we show Christian love to our LGBT neighbors, we recommend a **sermon** delivered on May 24, 2015, by Rev. Mark E. Ashton, an Alliance pastor at Christ Community Church in Omaha, Nebraska.

The second opportunity is to be a clear witness for God's truth. The world doesn't need love at the expense of truth any more than it needs truth at the expense of love. As the Body of Christ and the embodiment of His Kingdom in our communities, we are called to be agents of the very truth that every person desperately needs. This combination of love and truth can be described as "humble orthodoxy." *We must offer the deeply held and long-believed truths of Scripture with humility and grace.*

Your legal team at the C&MA National Office will continue to work arm-in-arm with other like-minded denominations and groups to limit the legal impact of this decision on our churches.

Your local church will likely experience increased pressure to conform to cultural expectations in three areas:

- Restrictions on core religious practices and certain government benefits. While the decision does not require pastors to marry same-sex couples, there will be increased challenges to any restrictions on facility use and the refusal to employ people from the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual (LGBT)¹ community. This decision also will fuel the argument that charitable donation deductions, property tax exemptions, clergy housing allowances, and other government "benefits" for religious nonprofits should be eliminated.
- Character/repute. Evangelical Christianity will be increasingly viewed as out of step with culture. As a result, evangelical Christians and churches will be looked upon with increasing disfavor.
- Biblical values. Christians and the local church will be pressured to compromise on our long and deeply held biblical values. Some evangelical churches are now rethinking traditional views on marriage, sexuality, and gender issues. Alliance churches too will face this temptation. Dr. Brian G. Mattson, senior scholar of Public Theology for the Center for Cultural Leadership, offers insight on this temptation in his Web post, "**The Family's Fair-Weather Friends, Part 1.**"

The remainder of this document will be divided into three parts: Understanding the **context** of the court's decision, outlining **action items** every local Alliance church can take, and looking briefly at how this decision may impact our **related Alliance entities**, such as schools, retirement communities, and camps.

¹ In this document, the terms "gay and/or lesbian" are used to describe anyone who identifies as part of the LGBT community.

OUR CONTEXT

LGBT rights in general, and same-sex marriage in particular, are—to say the least—a very recent phenomenon. Justice Roberts noted in his dissent that, “For all millennia, across all those civilizations, ‘marriage’ referred to only one relationship: the union of a man and woman.” He added that the petitioners themselves admitted that they were not aware of any society that permitted same-sex marriage before 2001.²

Led by now retired Justice Anthony Kennedy, over the last few years the U.S. Supreme Court has issued a series of decisions that have reinforced the drastic changes in our long-established cultural norms for sexual and gender behavior. The views of the Supreme Court reflect our culture as a whole. This decision is the most recent, but not the last, in a line of decisions that consistently favor sexual and gender freedom.

In the United States, the church no longer represents the majority view regarding sexual conduct and gender issues. In sports terms, we are no longer the home team with a home-field advantage. We have joined the majority of cultures around the world and throughout history in which the voice of the Christian Church is a significant but minority view. The following chart illustrates and contrasts the divergence of social views between the traditional Christian view and that of the emerging culture.

DIVERGING SOCIAL VIEWS

ISSUE	TRADITIONAL CHRISTIAN VIEW	EMERGING CULTURAL VIEW
<i>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</i>	Distinguished from conduct	Inseparable from conduct
<i>SEXUAL CONDUCT</i>	Exclusively within marriage	Between consenting adults (and teens)
<i>MARRIAGE</i>	One man and one woman for life	Any two (or more) people until one person wants out
<i>GENDER IDENTITY</i>	Biological from conception	Fluid and chosen throughout life
<i>LIFE</i>	Always resolve doubt in favor of protecting life	Resolve doubt in favor of parental or societal interests
<i>RELIGION</i>	Public Moral right and wrong	Private Relativism; judging is arrogant

² *Obergefell v. Hodges*, Chief Justice C. J. Roberts Dissenting, 4.

As a church, we can anticipate that at least three trends will continue to develop:

- Only religious groups will impose restrictions based on beliefs about *sexual conduct*. Our culture as a whole will continue to move toward a “hands-off” approach to sexual activity of any sort (except in abuse and other non-consensual situations).
- Only religious groups will embrace a distinction, based on their beliefs, between *sexual conduct* and *sexual orientation*—and any legal argument outside of a religious context based on this distinction will likely lose.
- Alliance churches will be able to continue teaching and practicing Alliance doctrine. The Supreme Court has continued to strengthen religious liberties for deeply held religious beliefs—particularly as these beliefs are taught and practiced within the four walls of a local church. However, the First Amendment right to the free exercise of religion will increasingly be privatized (*what you believe is fine for you...*) and confined to the institutional church.
 - **The Obergefell decision does not require an Alliance pastor to marry same-sex couples.** Credible voices on all sides of this issue believe that no pastor will be required to marry a same-sex couple if doing so is against the pastor's deeply held religious beliefs. The Alliance statements on sexuality and marriage are strong articulations of what we believe.
 - Christian organizations that are not local churches, such as our colleges, retirement homes, camps, etc., will be increasingly vulnerable to claims of sexual orientation discrimination. This will be discussed at the end of this writing.

It is in this cultural context that our Alliance churches must have a strong legal foundation on which they not only can safeguard but also accelerate our Spirit-filled mission *to be my [Christ's] witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth* (Acts 1:8). The next section outlines detailed steps for the local church to do just that.

ACTION ITEMS FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH

To have a solid legal foundation for ministry in our rapidly changing culture, every Alliance church must know and document what The Alliance believes about marriage, sexuality, and gender issues and express those beliefs in the church's actual practice (how we do church).

- A. *Your church should clearly articulate and document what you believe about marriage, sexuality, and gender issues.***

First and foremost, this is a crucial time to be part of a denomination. Your church doesn't have to start from scratch or sift through materials from organizations outside The Alliance. **Our Statement of Faith** (see Attachment F) is

built on 2,000 years of deeply held scriptural beliefs extending back to the first century of the Church. As The Alliance has faced new questions and challenges through the years, it has applied those beliefs through a variety of statements, policies, and other documents, which can now be directly applied to issues faced by your church.

The following are a few of the beliefs expressed in our Alliance documents that address issues related to marriage, sexuality, and gender issues:

- *The entire Old and New Testaments are inerrant and are verbally inspired by God. (C&MA Statement of Faith)*
- *Sexuality is created by God and is good. (**Statement on Sexuality**, see Attachment A)*
- *Our created sex and sexuality are gifts from the Creator to be expressed with gratitude and worship. (Statement on Sexuality)*
- *There is one God who exists eternally in three persons. (C&MA Statement of Faith)*
- *Christian understanding of identity is grounded on God's Word. (Statement on Sexuality)*
- *God created humans male and female. (Statement on Sexuality)*
- *Marriage is rooted in Creation and is intended by God to be a lifelong union between one man and one woman. (**Statement on Marriage—Divorce—Remarriage**, see Attachment B)*
- *Marriage is the only context in which sexual intimacy may be expressed. (Statement on Sexuality)*
- *All of us have experienced sexual brokenness in some fashion. (Statement on Sexuality)*
- *God specifically prohibits homosexual conduct in Scripture. (Statement on Marriage—Divorce—Remarriage)*
- *Out of forgiveness rather than condemnation, we are empowered to pursue sexual wholeness and freedom. (Statement on Sexuality)*

If your church hasn't done so already, the following actions will strengthen the connection between your church and these core beliefs:

1. Make sure that your church's corporate Articles and Bylaws state clearly that your church is part of the C&MA and subject to the denomination's beliefs. You will need to review your articles of incorporation, bylaws, and policies, to determine what is required for amendment. In most cases, the articles of incorporation and policies can be amended by the church governance authority, typically the elder board, while bylaw amendments require a vote of the entire church membership.

This Supreme Court decision provides an excellent opportunity to review and update your church's corporate documents in general, but the following language is essential.

Below are excerpts from the Model Restated Articles of Incorporation and Model Bylaws.

Key model article language:

The Church is organized and shall be operated exclusively as a member church of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, a church denomination which operates legally as a Colorado nonprofit corporation (the "C&MA"). Accordingly, the Church shall operate under the sole ecclesiastical authority of, and be subject to the usages, doctrines and teachings of, the C&MA as set forth in The Manual of The Christian and Missionary Alliance; as such, the Manual may be amended from time to time by the C&MA (the "Manual").
(E14-1, Section 2.1, see Attachment G)

Key model bylaw language:

The Church is an integral part of the district, national, and worldwide fellowship of The Christian and Missionary Alliance and is united in governance, fellowship, and service in order to promote unity of faith in the fullness of Jesus Christ as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King, and to facilitate the spread of the gospel at home and abroad under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

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(E15-1, Preamble, see Attachment H)

2. As a church governance authority, formally affirm the C&MA Statements on **Marriage—Divorce—Remarriage** and **Sexuality**. Although the above Articles of Incorporation and Bylaw language will create an organizational connection between the Statements and your church, formally affirming the Statements will create a clear record in your church that this is what you believe about the issues you are likely to face. These Statements provide your church with the scriptural clarity necessary to respond to anyone who has questions about what we believe.

3. Finally, and importantly, as a church governance authority, formally adopt the model **Christian Community Policy**³ of the C&MA (see *Attachment C*). This means that the adoption of this policy is documented in the minutes of the meeting where adopted, with the text attached verbatim. This model policy is not part of the C&MA *Manual*, so to be effective it must be separately adopted by your church leadership team.

The policy was written because the local church is under increasing legal pressure not to discriminate in the use or availability of church facilities on the basis of sexual orientation, same sex marriage, gender identity, and other categories that are inconsistent with our sincerely held religious beliefs. This policy articulates the C&MA's sincerely held, long-standing beliefs and standards related to family, marriage, and gender roles; it provides guidelines to ensure that the use of church facilities is consistent with the expression of these beliefs. Connecting facility use guidelines to the C&MA's beliefs will help protect the local church from legal liability based upon claims of discrimination against legally protected classes.

The policy also highlights the doctrinal relationship between a local church's beliefs and standards and those of the denomination as a whole. If challenged, this policy will enhance the denomination's ability to support the local church.

By taking these three actions, your church will have the documentation in place to respond well to the legal challenges resulting from the cultural trend to redefine marriage, gender, and the family.

The church's sincerely held religious beliefs must not only be *documented* but *practiced* as well. The next section addresses the application of our Alliance beliefs to specific church practices.

B. *Your beliefs must be expressed in the life of your church.*

This section provides guidance for the way an Alliance church can apply our deeply held religious beliefs to specific church practices and activities. There are three important preliminary points.

- First, our beliefs *must* be expressed in our actions; otherwise, no court or government official will believe that our beliefs are credible. In other words, we will could lose our constitutionally granted protection to practice what we believe. The Supreme Court strongly reinforced this point in its *Masterpiece Cake Shop* decision.

³ The first version of this policy was titled *Faith Community and Mission Policy*. The *Christian Community Policy* updates this previous version. If your church previously adopted the *Faith Community and Mission Policy*, the policy may be replaced by the *Christian Community Policy* by your church leadership team.

- Second, it's important to remember that our response to a practicing gay or lesbian should be the same as our response to anyone who is in unrepentant sin: with love, grace, and truth. This is equally applicable to those who are engaged in any sexual activity outside of a biblical marriage.
- And third, the guidelines below relate to people who embrace a gay or lesbian lifestyle, not to people with a same-sex orientation. We are aware that there are Christians in our churches who have same-sex attractions but are responding to Scripture in godly submission, resisting the temptation. We serve our churches by teaching from the full breadth of biblical texts that highlight the significance of celibacy and self-discipline and the important role of the church family in the lives of those who are single and those who are married.

As a church we must be able to respond with “grace and truth” to questions about why we believe what we believe about gay and lesbian behavior. Attachment D in this document, **Answering LGBT Affirmations**, may be helpful as a membership discussion tool. Attachment E is a brief list of **recommended books** on these topics.⁴

The following are guidelines for your church leadership to consider as you prepare to address these issues:

1. *Should our church welcome practicing gays and lesbians to attend?*

The short answer is yes, absolutely. The church is a place where broken people (including each of us) can encounter the gospel of Jesus Christ. We welcome and love all people, because all people are in need of the Savior. In order to believe that he or she is created in the image of God, each person must be treated as an image bearer.

It is wise to discern, whenever possible, between those who are sincere seekers and those who may be agenda-driven activists. The church is private property, so if someone is disruptive, that person may be removed and asked not to return unless he or she is willing to participate appropriately.

2. *Should our church welcome a practicing gay or lesbian into church membership?*⁵

⁴ A more comprehensive bibliography of works related to a biblical view of homosexuality is **available here (see Attachment F)**.

⁵In the long term an emphasis on church membership will strengthen a church's response to outside cultural and legal challenges. Church membership provides a church the opportunity (1) to teach its core beliefs and practices in membership classes, (2) to identify those who formally identify with the church, for church family issues such as voting and the exercise of church discipline, and (3) to create mutual accountability. See **The Value of Formal Church Membership** by Peacemaker Ministries.

No. An Alliance church cannot welcome a practicing gay or lesbian into membership. In The Alliance we believe that it is inappropriate to add as a member anyone who is in any form of unrepentant sin. Unrepentant sin is

inconsistent with the membership qualifications outlined in the Uniform Constitution for Accredited Churches, Article III. However, the church should welcome the request for membership as an opportunity to engage the person in “truth and grace.”

3. *Should our church allow or participate in same-sex wedding ceremonies?*

No. In The Alliance we believe that marriage is between one man and one woman, and that Scripture specifically forbids same-sex unions (Statement on Marriage—Divorce—Remarriage, 2.b and e). Adopting the Faith Community and Mission Policy provides a legal safeguard in anticipation of a request to use your church facilities for a same-sex wedding ceremony or reception.⁶

4. *Should our church allow a practicing gay or lesbian to participate in communion or baptism?*

In The Alliance we believe that the ordinances of communion and baptism are not open to anyone who persists in unrepentant sin. If you see someone participating in communion whom you know embraces a gay or lesbian lifestyle, or if such a person requests baptism, take the opportunity to engage them about the role and privilege of communion and baptism in the Body of Christ.

5. *Should we dedicate the child of a same-sex couple?*

Probably not, but this answer requires a little more explanation. In our Alliance tradition, part of a child dedication ceremony consists of the pastor requesting and the parent(s) responding with a series of commitments to raise the child according to the Christian faith. *The Pastor's Handbook* states:

Minister: (Speaking to the parents)... (D)o you solemnly confess that it is your purpose to dedicate this child to the Lord and to His service? Will you pray with him and for him; instruct him faithfully in the doctrines of the Christian faith; teach him to read the Word of God, to pray and to lead a holy life; take him faithfully to the house

⁶ Although not an immediate need, your church should consider implementation of a separate wedding policy to strengthen your ability to communicate to prospective wedding couples what we in The Alliance believe about marriage. The Christian Legal Society has created a sample wedding policy on page 16 of its paper **Church Guidance for Same-Sex Issues**.

*of worship to attend its services; and do all that is in your power to bring him to the knowledge of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord?*⁷

Parents of a child who are involved in any form of unrepentant sin would not be able to credibly affirm such a statement.

6. *Should our church leaders provide counseling services to a practicing gay or lesbian?*

Absolutely! Pastor, author, and Christian counselor Tim Lane (president of the Institute for Pastoral Care) put it this way: "Biblical counseling involves walking patiently with someone, while wisely connecting them to Christ through the grace-centered message of the Bible. This one-on-one ministry is done in the community of the church, where both the normal and complex problems of daily life can be addressed." Making biblical counsel available is a wonderful way to offer both discipleship and evangelism to attendees facing all sorts of issues.

7. *Should our church employ practicing gays or lesbians or accept them as volunteers?*

It depends. The key question is: *What does the position require the person to know and believe?* Any position in which that person formally represents the church must require a faithful commitment to our Alliance theological beliefs and doctrines. At the very least, the list of such positions would include pastors, church officers, and teachers, whether paid or volunteer. The following are additional positions that each church needs to evaluate under this standard:

- Youth workers/volunteers: Every church should already have in place a robust youth worker recruiting and screening process that requires all who work with youth to be either church members or adherents who are in harmony with C&MA beliefs and doctrines. **Safe Place** is an excellent Alliance resource for our churches. All youth worker positions—nursery to high school, volunteer or paid—should have an appropriate level of screening and oversight.
- Platform/music ministry: The nature of leading worship is to worship. Therefore, leading worship through music is a worship issue, not a performance issue. In the Alliance, we require in our worship leaders a faithful commitment to our Alliance theological beliefs and doctrines.
- Service roles (custodial, kitchen, homeless ministries, and other humanitarian/relief ministries): For these roles, the decision depends on whether the position requires the person to represent the church. In many cases the position may not require a commitment

⁷ *The Pastor's Handbook*, Christian Publications, Inc., out of print. 167–168.

to Alliance theological beliefs and doctrines. In some of our churches, these types of positions offer an entry into church life and Christianity for those who are seeking to learn more about the Christian faith.

- Offsite church activities: What about accommodations at church camps and retreats? For instance, what if a legally married same-sex couple desires to share a room? It is consistent with Alliance beliefs and doctrines to require them to sleep separately. What if a legally married same-sex couple registers for a church marriage retreat? In relation to church activities, the courts do not yet require the church to recognize and accommodate same-sex marriage couples for this purpose. This is an instance in which it will be critical for the church to have in place clearly stated Articles and Bylaws, the affirmation of related Statements, and adoption of the **Christian Community Policy**.

In any of the above areas, our churches must be clearly and demonstrably driven by our love for all people as image bearers of our Creator. The second greatest commandment, "Love your neighbor as yourself," and 1 Corinthians 13 show us God's design for our relationships with those who don't share our traditional biblical view of marriage. Humble orthodoxy is our guide.

8. *Uncharted areas.*

As a result of the same-sex marriage ruling, evangelical churches like The Alliance that hold to a biblically traditional view of marriage will face new questions. For example, what if a married lesbian couple, who have been together for 20 years and are raising children, come to a traditional view of marriage through the ministry of your church? Should you require them to divorce? What about the children? Who will get custody? What if the couple commits to celibacy but desires to remain in the same household?

These types of questions are not easy and will require rigorous and thoughtful input from our best biblical thinkers. The legal team at the National Office will continue to track the legal aspects of these developing issues and work with our national leaders to provide our churches with timely counsel and direction.

RELATED ALLIANCE ENTITIES

As a result of the *Obergefell* decision, our related Alliance entities, including our schools, retirement centers, and camps, will face additional pressures because they do not always share the level of religious liberty protection experienced by a local church. The threat to these Alliance organizations is greater and more imminent. In

the case of our schools, there will be pressure that our government may withdraw grants, student scholarships, and other benefits unless schools fully accommodate same-sex marriage and other sexual and gender practices that are inconsistent with Alliance doctrine. The same is true for our retirement centers, which may be required to allow same-sex living arrangements or face the loss of their tax-exempt status and Medicare reimbursement. Likewise, our camps will experience similar pressures or risk losing their tax-exempt status and face substantial fines.

Because the circumstances of each related Alliance entity is unique, we cannot provide in this document a detailed response for each type of organization. However, every entity will need to carefully consider the following issues.

First and foremost, the relationship between the entity and The Alliance must be strengthened and clarified. The essential elements in the section, **Action Items for the Local Church**, apply with equal importance to our related Alliance entities. These actions will strengthen their legal position because there will be a solid, rather than dotted, line connecting them with The Alliance.

Second, the role of our related entities *as an essential part of our Alliance church function* must be continually reinforced. In other words, it's not just a good idea to have colleges, retirement communities, and camps; these entities are actually core and essential expressions of our worship and mission. The entities' policies, training, documents, and actions must all be aligned with this truth.

Third, our related Alliance entities must provide clear public notice of our Alliance practices and beliefs to prospective guests/customers/students. We want to avoid any indignity of someone being invited in and then excluded in some way. Again, the idea of humble orthodoxy is paramount.

The application of the above steps will be worked out differently in each Alliance organization, but the core principles remain the same.

A FINAL WORD

The legal and cultural issues faced by our churches are changing and developing rapidly. The National Office is committed to providing helpful and timely counsel as we continue to fulfill the mission Christ ordained for us. Please **contact your district office** with questions and concerns. The General Counsel's office will continue to work with Church Ministries and the district superintendents to address these concerns.

ATTACHMENT A

STATEMENT ON SEXUALITY

Section H7 from the
Manual of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, 2019 Edition

While this Statement on Sexuality seeks to express the truth of Scripture, this truth must always be expressed with the spirit of grace found in Jesus Christ who came to us full of grace and truth (John 1:16–17). Similarly, we ought to approach others with that same spirit of grace and truth.

God’s Intention: Creation

Sexuality is created by God and is good. We are created and embodied as male and female. In community we reflect God’s image and accomplish His purpose in the world (Genesis 1:26–28). We are created for committed intimate community, free from shame (Genesis 2:24–25). For a man and a woman, this intimacy may be expressed and consummated sexually when they are united as one flesh in marriage (Genesis 2:24). The pleasure of sexual union is intended to express not only a bodily intimacy but also an intimacy of heart, soul, and mind. The divine purpose for sexual union is to reproduce children who represent God and extend God’s rule to the ends of the earth (Genesis 1:26–28).⁸ Our created sex and sexuality are gifts from the Creator to be embraced with gratitude and worship.

Our Distortion: Fall

Any rebellion against God’s perfect design is sin. It separates us from God and distorts intimacy. All of us have experienced sexual brokenness in some fashion. No longer “naked and without shame,” Adam and Eve clothed themselves with fig leaves (Genesis 2:25; 3:7). Differences between sexes meant to complement have led to dysfunctional, domineering, and even abusive relationships (e.g. physical, emotional, sexual [e.g. rape and incest], or neglect) (Genesis 3:16). Some seek to redefine the created nature of our sexuality in rebellion (Romans 1:24–27). They desire the intimacy or pleasure of sex apart from the divinely established context of marriage between a man and woman (1 Corinthians 6:16; cf. Genesis 2:24), such as homosexual or extra-marital sexual activity. Others seek an illusion of intimacy through actively indulging in lust, fantasizing, and/or pornography. All of these are indicators of our rebellion against God.

⁸ While not explicitly included in the Genesis Creation account, sexual union is for pleasure (Song of Solomon). Furthermore, reproduction of people who represent God and extend God’s rule to the ends of the earth is not limited to physical reproduction but also occurs through discipleship multiplication; the Creation language of being fruitful and multiplying greatly is used in the New Testament for how the Word of God bears fruit to multiply disciples (e.g., Acts 6:7; 12:24; 19:20; Colossians 1:6, 10).

In all the brokenness of our sexuality, the church has often failed to recognize, understand, or show compassion to those wrestling with these realities. Particularly, the church has struggled to walk in a redemptive manner with those who experience same-sex attraction and/or question their created and gendered identity. Because of the Fall, our struggles with sexuality cannot simply be reduced to our choices or developmental background, but our choices remain significant.

Our Redemption: Jesus

God loves us in our brokenness with a love so boundless that He sent Jesus to redeem what sin had distorted. Even Christians who had previously embraced many sexual sins are now described in this way: “And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Corinthians 6:11). These realities can be true for us today. There is nothing out of reach from the power of Jesus to cleanse and forgive when we turn to Him in humble repentance and submission. God floods our sexually broken world with grace and mercy to wash our sinful natures clean and makes us new creations in Jesus Christ (Titus 3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:17). Out of forgiveness rather than condemnation, we are empowered to pursue sexual wholeness and freedom from the distortions of the Fall (John 8:11). God is restoring His Creation, including His purposes for sexuality, through Jesus Christ, the firstborn of all Creation (Colossians 1:15–20).

As the body of Christ, we walk together in our sexual brokenness towards maturity in Christ. We do so by speaking the truth with understanding, love, and compassion (Ephesians 4:15). While Jesus inaugurates the restoration of all Creation, its full restoration is not yet realized. However, because of Christ’s provision, it is our privilege to choose to “walk by the Spirit” and by so doing “not gratify the desires of the sinful nature” (Galatians 5:16). We can experience the promised blessing that God desires to “fill [us] with all joy and peace as [we] trust in Him, so that [we] may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Romans 15:13). Therefore, we are freed from condemnation (Romans 8:1) and can overcome the power of sin (Romans 5:17) and Satan (Revelation 12:11) by the power of the cross of Jesus Christ!

Our Hope: Fulfillment

While Jesus’ death on the cross freed us from the penalty and power of sin, only His second coming will free us completely from the presence of sin. On that day, we will see Him face to face (1 John 3:2; 1 Corinthians 13:12), enjoying a true intimacy without shame. The battle for purity will be won (Revelation 19:8), and we will be presented blameless in His presence with great joy (Jude 24).

ATTACHMENT B

STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE – DIVORCE – REMARRIAGE

Section H2 from the
Manual of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, 2019 Edition

PREAMBLE

That the purpose of this statement be clear is imperative to its proper consideration. As an “instructional statement of The Christian and Missionary Alliance,” it is intended as an expositional guideline of common understanding to which the 1977 General Council (Calgary, Alberta, Canada) could subscribe as a basis on which to agree or disagree with grace and forbearance.

For some, the interpretation may be too broad and for others, too confining. But a common standard is needed in order to deal adequately with the issues of divorce and remarriage. The position set forth here neither promotes divorce nor weakens the scriptural stance represented in former legislation. The Commission on Divorce Study endeavored neither to take from nor to add to scriptural teaching on divorce.

INSTRUCTIONAL STATEMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE*

1. Introduction.

- a. More and more marriages are failing; divorces and remarriages are becoming increasingly common. If couples who live together without the benefit of a registered marriage contract and then separate are counted, half the marriages that take place today in North America fail.
- b. Yet marriage is an essential, sacred institution, a cornerstone of society. It was established by God Himself when the Lord said, . . . *It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make an help meet for him* (Genesis 2:18), and marriage has enjoyed divine sanction and blessing across the centuries. Ephesians 5 reveals the sacredness of marriage when the union between Christ and the Church is used to illustrate the husband-wife relationship.
- c. Therefore, the Church today must do everything in its power to encourage and maintain the institution of marriage and on God-given grounds. Some today would set standards for conduct in this area other than by the authority of the Word of God. Among even those who seek to hold to biblical authority are divergent opinions, particularly with respect to the right of divorced persons to remarry. It seems imperative, therefore, that The Christian and Missionary Alliance set forth what we understand to be the scriptural teaching on these

subjects.

- d. This statement is designed not to answer all questions and cover all situations but to provide guidelines from which can be drawn scriptural applications to varying situations. This has been written with the social conditions of North America in view. Consequently, some adaption may be necessary in countries overseas because of special social situations.

2. Marriage.

- a. God instituted marriage as an honorable estate (Hebrews 13:4) for the blessing of companionship (Genesis 2:18) and as a continuation of the divine work of creation in the history of the human race (Genesis 4:1). Marriage is not a requirement for perfection of personhood nor is it a necessity for fulfillment in God's highest purpose. Marriage may, in fact, hamper a person's unconditional readiness for the call of God, and there are those who have the gift of refraining from marriage (Matthew 19:12, 1 Corinthians 7:7).
- b. God intended marriage to be a monogamous, lifelong union as clearly implied in Genesis 2:24, *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.* Jesus recalled this original order of creation to overthrow the lax interpretation and practice of the Mosaic law (Mark 10:6ff). Although polygamy was sometimes practiced in Old Testament times, the Bible makes clear that God intended marriage to exist between one man and one woman for as long as both of them remain alive. In Romans 7:2 the apostle Paul wrote, *For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband* (also 1 Corinthians 7:39).
- c. The strict and lofty terms with which the marriage bond is described in the New Testament has its primary focus on human fellowship and the family. For the Christian the basis of all marital love is the love of Christ for the Church (Ephesians 5:31ff). Marriage is constituted first in mutual covenant. Marriage is a solemn, binding agreement entered into before God and man (Malachi 2:14). Ezekiel 16:8 uses marriage to illustrate the relationship between God and Israel and speaks of this relationship as a covenant entered into on the basis of swearing or an oath or a pledge. Jesus, in John 2, sanctioned by His presence a marriage being recognized and solemnized by a public celebration. Therefore, men and women should enter marriage with a legal contract and pledged vows, preferably under the administration of a Christian minister, not just by deciding to start to live together.
- d. Marriage is a physical union. This is clearly set forth by the apostle Paul in 1

Corinthians 6:16ff. Marriage is designed to be a unity of flesh and spirit and represents the wholeness of that unity (1 Thessalonians 4:3–5). In 2 Corinthians 12:19–21 the apostle Paul warns the Corinthian church that impenitence of those who committed sexual immorality would necessitate his intervention.

- e. In no case ought any person to enter into any so-called “marriage” with a person of the same sex. Homosexual unions are specifically forbidden in Scripture and are described as manifestations of the basest forms of sinful conduct which degrade human dignity and desecrate God’s creational design (Leviticus 20:13, Romans 1:26–27, 32, 1 Corinthians 6:9).
- f. A Christian should not marry a person who does not know Christ as personal Savior. 2 Corinthians 6:14 is explicit, *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers . . .* The final few words of 1 Corinthians 7:39 suggest the same standard; widows who remarry are told to do so *only in the Lord*. Love for Christ is never to have second place (Matthew 6:33).

3. Divorce.

- a. Divorce is a departure from the purposes of God. While in the Old Testament divorce was allowed and was apparently easily secured. This, like polygamy, was contrary to God’s highest intentions. Jesus explained that provisions for divorce in the Old Testament were an accommodation to “the hardness” of people’s hearts and a necessary evil (Matthew 19:8). The prophet Malachi declared, *For I hate divorce, says the Lord the God of Israel . . .* (Malachi 2:16, RSV). Jesus said, *What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder* (Matthew 19:6, also Mark 10:6–9). The Church, therefore, should seek always to discourage divorce as a solution to marital problems. The Bible teaches that even when a Christian is married to a nonbeliever, the Christian should continue to live with his/her mate if at all possible (1 Corinthians 7:12–13).
- b. While divorce is always contrary to God’s intentions, there are certain circumstances when it is permitted. Jesus said in Matthew 5:32 and again in Matthew 19:9 that a person is not to divorce his/her mate except for the cause of fornication. The Greek word used for “fornication” refers to habitual sexual immorality for which the synonym “whoredom” may be used, implying all kinds of immorality, including adultery which desecrates the marriage relationship – a view generally accepted by Greek scholars.
- c. The absence of this allowance in Mark 10:6–12 and Luke 16:18 does not set aside the practical conditions for carrying out the Mosaic practice of divorce in the new age Christ establishes. But He makes a sharper interpretation which handles the problem of divorce as a lesser evil to the continuation of an impossible situation.

Divorce is expressly denied for the immediate purpose of marrying someone else (Mark 10:11–12). It is incumbent, therefore, that a believer entertain divorce only as a last resort and because of violations through fornication – never as a reason to marry someone else. When one partner of a divorce has become involved in adultery, the offended mate is permitted, though not required, to get a divorce. If an unsaved husband/wife refuses to continue to live with his/her mate and departs, the believer may agree to this separation. *But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases . . .* (1 Corinthians 7:15). Such separations may result in divorce, and in that event the Christian is guilty of no wrong.

4. Remarriage.

- a. The remarriage of persons who have been divorced is permitted by Scripture under certain circumstances. If, after being divorced, one of the original marriage partners dies, the remaining partner is free to remarry. Romans 7:2 and 1 Corinthians 7:39 make clear that death dissolves the marriage relationship.
- b. When an adulterous relationship has brought about a divorce, the party that is innocent of adultery has a right to remarry. The words of Jesus, . . . *Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication*, implies the right of remarriage. When He adds, . . . *And whosoever shall marry her that is divorced (the guilty party) committeth adultery* (Matthew 5:32), the right to marry anyone guilty of adultery is denied and also to marry anyone who obtained divorce for the express purpose of remarriage (Mark 10:11–12).
- c. The consistency between the Old Testament and the New Testament is recognized as Jesus interpreted it. The passage in Deuteronomy from which Jesus quoted in Matthew 5:31 and Mark 10:2–12 indicates that the “putting away” of a wife dissolves the marriage and allows remarriage. Jesus did not change the nature of divorce as dissolving marriage and permitting remarriage; He simply rejected all rationalization and excuse for divorce and made clear that only the innocent party whose former marriage was revoked by divorce could remarry without guilt.
- d. According to the teaching of 1 Corinthians 7, which permits divorce when an unbelieving husband/wife of a believer “departs” (Section 3c), remarriage on grounds of desertion alone is not permitted according to verse 11, *But, and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.* In other words, if the unbelieving, deserting party is not deceased and does not remarry, neither should the one who has been deserted remarry.

- e. When two unbelievers have been divorced and one is subsequently converted and neither has remarried, the Christian should attempt to restore the marriage. If the non-Christian refuses, this makes the marriage the same as the kind described in 1 Corinthians 7:15.
- f. If a person is divorced on other than the above scriptural grounds and his/her former partner remarries, that partner by remarrying has, according to scriptural standards (Matthew 5:32, 19:9), committed adultery and has dissolved the original relationship.
- g. Remarriage is never commanded; it is in some cases only permitted. Divorced persons who have scriptural grounds for remarriage should enter into such remarriage only with the greatest caution. Seldom is there a marriage failure for any cause in which one of the partners is “completely innocent.” The applicant for remarriage should demonstrate an attitude of repentance for any part he/she may have had in the original failure. He/she should receive counseling from the church so as to avoid repeating destructive attitudes and actions.
- h. Persons who remarry after being divorced on other than scriptural grounds are guilty before God of adultery. Jesus said in Matthew 5:32, . . . *Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.* Such marriages should not be performed by a Christian clergyman.
- i. Persons who have been divorced on other than scriptural grounds who subsequently become Christians are not absolved from the necessity to remain unmarried by having become Christians. While it is true that we are made new creatures in Christ, we continue to bear legal and moral responsibilities that existed before conversion. A person, for example, that contracted a debt as a non-Christian is not absolved of an obligation to pay that debt by becoming a believer. A man who brought children into this world as a non-Christian must still provide for those children after his conversion. A man who contracted a marriage while a non-Christian must honor the terms of that marriage contract even after he is in Christ.
- j. Persons who were divorced and remarried without scriptural grounds prior to conversion should not feel obligated after conversion to withdraw from the subsequent marriage. The remarriage that was entered into wrongly constituted an act of adultery that broke the former marriage.

With his/her former marriage having been dissolved, the remarried person is responsible to be faithful to his/her new contract. Having broken the former

marriage, he/she is “living in adultery only” if he/she is unfaithful to his/her present marriage contract.

- k. Persons who are divorced or divorced and remarried on scriptural grounds are entitled to the full privileges of fellowship and membership in the church. A believer who was divorced or divorced and remarried on other than scriptural grounds while still a nonbeliever should likewise be received into full Christian fellowship. The grace of God in Christ forgives all sin; the person in Christ is a new creation.
- l. Discretion, however, must be exercised in the choice of divorced and remarried persons for places of leadership in the church. While all believers are equal members of the body of Christ, not all members are qualified equally for every office in the church. The offices of elder (spiritual leader) and deacon (business leader) in the church are to be filled by those of high moral and spiritual qualifications, whose pattern of exemplary Christian living is so established that it may be followed.
- m. A believer who knowingly secures a divorce on other than scriptural grounds, or a believer who knowingly marries someone who was divorced on other than scriptural grounds, or a believer whose divorce was granted on other than scriptural grounds and who remarries should be disciplined by the church and be granted the full privileges of Christian fellowship only after a demonstration of genuine repentance for deliberate departure from scriptural standards.

**Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations throughout this section are from the King James Version of the Bible.*

ATTACHMENT C

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY POLICY OF THE CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE

from the *Church Ministries Handbook*, 2019 Edition

The *Christian Community Policy* has been prepared as a model policy to describe how a church or other entity's activities, relationships, and operational policies – including the use of facilities – reflect the C&MA's sincerely held religious beliefs. For an entity other than a local church, a version is available by contacting CORPSEC@cmalliance.org.

This *Christian Community Policy* is intended to replace the former *Regarding the Faith Community and Mission* policy. A church or entity that has already adopted the former policy may adopt the newer updated version through its governance authority (e.g. elder board, governing board, etc.).

The purpose of this model policy is to provide protection for C&MA churches, districts, and other C&MA entities in face of our country's quickly changing legal, cultural, and moral standards. Specifically, the policy is designed to express the doctrinal relationship between the church's beliefs and standards and those of the denomination as a whole. If challenged, this policy will enhance the denomination's ability to support the local church.

Use of church facilities.

Recent legal developments have held that many types of facilities must not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, same sex marriage, gender identity, and other protected classes. This policy articulates the C&MA's sincerely held long-standing beliefs and standards related to family, marriage, and gender roles, and provides guidelines to ensure that the use of church facilities is consistent with the expression of these beliefs. Connecting facility use guidelines to the C&MA's beliefs will help protect the local church from legal liability based upon claims of discrimination against legally protected classes.

Provision of health care plans.

Evangelical Christian churches face increasing pressure to provide health insurance that covers procedures that violate our belief in the sanctity of life. These procedures may include abortion, abortion-inducing drugs and euthanasia. By stating that the church (or other entity) will not, for religious reasons, provide a health care benefit plan that funds these procedures and drugs, the policy protects the church against government requirements to help facilitate acts that violate our biblical beliefs.

- This policy only relates to plans provided by a church (or other entity). The policy does not prohibit participation by church employees in other insurance plans.
- The C&MA health insurance plans are consistent with this policy since they do not provide these procedures or drugs.
- Other than the C&MA plan and some other denominational group plans, very few health insurance plans will be consistent with this policy.

If a church is willing to provide a health plan that covers abortions or abortion-inducing drugs, then the church should delete the second paragraph under the heading *Sanctity of Life*, in Section IV, C.

Modifications.

Any other modifications should be made only after consulting with the Church Ministries office and the C&MA General Counsel.

Sample Policy

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY POLICY OF --- CHURCH OF THE CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE

I. Our Christian Community.

(Name of church) (the “Church”) of The Christian and Missionary Alliance (the “C&MA”) is a Christian community that exists to exercise and express our Christian beliefs and Christian mission. These beliefs include those set forth in the Statement of Faith and other sections of the *Manual of the C&MA* (the “Manual”) and additional beliefs set forth in this Policy or in other policies adopted by the Church governing body.

We exercise and express our beliefs in various ways, including:

- a. *As a Community.* We believe that God calls people to live out their faith in community with other believers, and that through such community we understand and nurture more fully the mystery of the gospel, the glory of God, the dignity and image of God which He has bestowed upon us, and the intimacy and joy for which God created us. Accordingly, we believe that our Christian community is itself an exercise and expression of our Christian beliefs; and

- b. *Through Our Activities.* We believe that all of our activities should express our beliefs and be rendered in service to God as a form of worship. As such, all Church activities further our Christian mission or purposes and are an exercise and an expression by the Church, and by each participating *representative*, of our Christian beliefs.

Our Christian community members include both *representatives* and *participants*. Our community *representatives* include pastors, officers, senior leadership team members, employees, volunteers, and formal church members. The *participants* in the life of our community include non-member attendees, guests, and contractors/vendors. These *participants* contribute to our Christian community, but they do not represent the Church unless they are also serving in one of the *representative* roles identified above.

II. General Standards for Our Christian Community.

As a Christian community, the Church exercises and expresses its Christian beliefs through the following standards.

A. Roles and Expectations for *Representatives*.

In response to God's calling on their lives, our *representatives* work together to advance our Christian mission. Church *representatives* are responsible for defining, cultivating, leading, and/or representing our Christian community as an expression and exercise of our Christian beliefs. As such, each Church *representative* is an integral part of our community. Accordingly, we expect each representative to comply with the following obligations:

1. *Christian Beliefs.* All *representatives* shall affirm their agreement with the Christian beliefs as expressed in the C&MA Statement of Faith⁹ and shall not subscribe to or promote any religious beliefs inconsistent with such beliefs. With respect to other Christian beliefs held by the C&MA, all *representatives* must affirm our belief that their calling to serve in our Christian community requires them to respect such beliefs and to abide by community standards exercising or expressing such beliefs.
2. *Christian Conduct Standards.* All *representatives* shall at all times (both during working and nonworking hours) (i) model our Christian beliefs for others, (ii) perform all of their responsibilities as a service to God, and (iii) endeavor to

⁹ *Representatives* who are formal church members are not required by the Uniform Constitution for Accredited Churches to affirm the full Statement of Faith. Formal church members are required to meet the qualifications expressed in Article III, Section 1.

comply with Biblical standards of conduct exercising or expressing our Christian beliefs, including Christian community standards adopted by the Church from time to time.

3. *Distinctly Christian Activities.* Each *representative* shall be ready, willing, and able to lead or contribute to distinctly Christian activities such as devotional worship or prayer services.

B. Roles and Expectations for *Participants*.

Although non-members, attendees, guests, contractors/vendors, and other program participants do not necessarily represent the Church Christian community, they do contribute to our community, to the experiences of other participants, and to the accomplishment of the Church's mission. Accordingly, we expect participants to respect our beliefs and abide by the Christian community standards applicable to them.

Participants are expected, in the course of their participation in our community, to respect our beliefs, support our mission, and comply with applicable community standards. Depending on their role, they may or may not be required to affirm our Christian beliefs.

C. Standards for Community Activities and Facility Use.

In furtherance of its mission, the Church engages in activities and provides facilities for evangelism, discipleship, Bible studies, worship services, conferences, retreats, education, and other activities. We engage in such activities and use our facilities solely to exercise and express our Christian beliefs and to further our Christian mission or purposes. In furtherance of our purposes, we may provide services or goods to, and may allow use of our facilities by, other groups and persons who are not associated with the Church or the C&MA. But we may prohibit any activity, or any use of Church facilities by another group or person, if we determine that such activity or use either:

- i. expresses a view contrary to our Christian beliefs,
- ii. is inconsistent with any applicable Christian community standards adopted by the Church from time to time, or
- iii. materially undermines our ability to accomplish our mission or act in furtherance of our purposes.

III. Implementation.

A. Compliance with Community Standards.

1. Spiritual Discernment.

The determination as to whether any particular *representative, participant, activity, or use of Church facilities* complies with the applicable standards requires spiritual discernment applied to each particular circumstance and shall be made in the sole discretion of the Church leaders designated by the governing body. With respect to uses by other groups or persons, the Church may consider without limitation both the content of the proposed activities and whether the group or person is generally perceived as advocating views contrary to its Christian beliefs.

2. Noncompliance.

If any Church *representative or participant* does not comply with any applicable community standard, such individual shall have an obligation to disclose such noncompliance to the Church. If the Church determines, through such disclosure or otherwise, that a Church *representative or participant* is not complying with an applicable community standard, then the Church may, in its sole discretion, determine the impact of any initial noncompliance on the Church's exercise and expression of its Christian beliefs, and whether such individual or group intends or is likely to continue in such noncompliance. Such determinations also require spiritual discernment and shall be made as described above.

The Church may also dismiss such individual from his or her position on the basis that such individual's noncompliance either (i) reflects that the individual does not affirm the Christian beliefs required for such position, or (ii) undermines the expression and exercise of the Church Christian community. Such action may be taken in accordance with any applicable procedures adopted by the Church, including The Christian and Missionary Alliance Uniform Policy on Discipline, Restoration, and Appeal.

3. Mission-Based Exceptions.

In some situations, the Church may best exercise and express its beliefs and advance its mission through a *representative, participant, activity, or facility use* not in compliance with one or more of the applicable community standards. If the governing body determines, in its sole discretion, that such a situation exists, then the governing body shall have the discretion to authorize an exception to this Policy. Any *representative or participant* granted an exception shall be asked to respect our Christian beliefs, our mission, and our community standards.

B. Delegated Authority.

To exercise or express our Christian beliefs more fully, the governing body may establish additional standards based on our Christian beliefs for the activities and facilities at the Church or for Church *representatives* or other community *participants*.

C. Scope.

The Church may amend this document at any time. This document is not intended to create any express or implied contract of employment or to alter the at-will employment relationship between the Church and its employees.

IV. Additional Standards for Our Community.

In response to current cultural trends, we have determined to articulate more specifically our Christian beliefs and associated community standards on the following subjects.

A. Sexuality and Marriage.

1. Our Christian Beliefs.

The Church expressly adopts as its Christian beliefs the Statement on Sexuality and the Statement on Marriage-Divorce-Remarriage, as currently stated in the *C&MA Manual*.

2. Standards for Community Activities.

Our beliefs regarding sexuality and marriage shall apply in all policies and programs in the Church Christian community. Among other things, in our policies and programs we will recognize only marriages consistent with our Christian beliefs. Any events in Church facilities pertaining to marriage (e.g., weddings, receptions, anniversary celebrations) must involve only marriages consistent with our Christian beliefs. We may designate certain activities, facilities, or rooms, including restrooms and locker rooms, for participation or use by a single sex, and only individuals having the designated sex as determined in accordance with our beliefs may participate in such activities or use such facilities or rooms. Also, no pornographic materials may be present in any of our facilities or activities.

3. Standards for Community Representatives.

We expect all Church *representatives* to live in accordance with our beliefs regarding sexuality and marriage (which include refraining from sexual relations outside of marriage and avoiding pornography).¹⁰ Among other things, we expect all *representatives* to avoid circumstances where there is temptation and opportunity to engage in sexual conduct contrary to our beliefs. *Representatives* may be asked to sign a statement affirming their agreement with our beliefs regarding sexuality and marriage and compliance with these standards.

4. Standards for Community Participants.

We expect all *participants* not to affirm, promote, or engage in sexual relations contrary to our beliefs (and to avoid pornography) in connection with their use of Church facilities or participation in Church activities.

We expect all guest groups to respect our Christian beliefs while participating in our activities or using our facilities. We do not accept guest groups whose primary mission or objectives are to promote, encourage, or support views in conflict with our beliefs, even if that is not the intended purpose of their event. For example, we would not host a Christian group formed to affirm same sex relationships even if the group's event objectives were consistent with our beliefs.

B. Religious Activities.

We engage solely in activities that further our Christian mission or purposes. Because we believe that all such activities are conducted in service to God as means for spiritual growth, we consider these activities to be a form of worship.

We distinguish between exclusively religious activities and integrated religious activities. Exclusively religious activities refer to activities that primarily further only religious purposes, such as devotional worship or Christian education. Integrated religious activities refer to activities that substantially further both religious and nonreligious purposes. Such activities are often similar to activities conducted by nonreligious organizations and may include certain educational programs, athletic, cultural, humanitarian, and social service activities. We conduct such activities in response to God's calling and in furtherance of and in accordance with our Christian beliefs. In addition, we present our Christian viewpoints in such activities as applicable.

¹⁰ Identifying oneself as having a same sex orientation does not disqualify an individual from serving as a *representative* provided such individual affirms the Christian beliefs and complies with the standards applicable to such individual's position.

With respect to restrictions that may be imposed on the use of funds, facilities, or other benefits, we shall not agree to any restriction that would preclude us from conducting our integrated religious activities in furtherance of our Christian mission and in accordance with our Christian beliefs. To the extent consistent with this commitment, we may agree not to use designated funds, facilities, or benefits for exclusively religious activities.

C. Sanctity of Life.

The Church expressly adopts as its Christian beliefs the Statement on the Sanctity of Life as currently stated in the *C&MA Manual*.

As dictated by these beliefs, we will not, as an institution, fund abortions in any manner, including through a health care benefit plan that covers drugs used to induce abortions. Any requirement to facilitate abortions by offering such coverage, and any penalty for failing to offer such coverage, would directly and substantially burden and undermine our exercise and expression of our Christian beliefs.

D. Social Media, Political Activity, and Other Public Statements.

In any public forum, including social media, we expect *representatives* to respect our Christian beliefs and not to challenge, disparage, or undermine them. If a *representative* chooses to express his or her disagreement with a particular belief that he or she is not required to affirm, we expect such *representative* to do so in a manner that respects our belief and makes it clear he or she is not expressing the view of the Church.

ATTACHMENT D

Answering LGBT Affirmations¹¹

Affirmation 1: “I’m gay because God made me that way. So gay must be good. I cannot believe that God would create me with same-sex attraction and then deny me the right to sexual self-expression. I intend, therefore, to affirm, and indeed celebrate, what I am by creation.”

Response: This statement makes the wrong assumption that because a person is born a certain way, that “way” must be good. Philosophers call this type of thinking naturalistic fallacy: *is = ought*, or *What is ought to be*. Adam and Eve were the only people created good (Gen. 1:26–31). After they fell into sin (Gen. 3), we have all been born into sin and much of life is not as it ought to be. Babies are born blind, without limbs, with heart problems and other issues. We never accept that because a baby is born that way it is as it should be. We try to repair the brokenness.

Some people appear to be born with a propensity to addictions, a propensity towards lust or violence, and everyone is born to be a self-worshipper. People naturally embrace a lie and rejects God’s truth (Rom. 1–2; Eph. 2:1–3; 4:17–18). Christian doctrine calls this condition *original sin*. We are born sinful (not simply committing sins), our very nature is *fallen*.

But God provides a cure to our broken state through redemption. People are to stop expressing themselves in whatever way they want (Matt. 5:27–30; 15:18–20). God calls people to follow him through repentance (Matt. 16:24–26). God regenerates/resurrects us with Christ (Eph. 2:4–10) and then calls us to put to death the remains of our sinful nature (Col. 3:1–5ff).

Affirmation 2: “You may say that LGBT practice is against nature and normality; but it’s not against my nature, nor is it in the slightest degree abnormal for me. Paul speaks about “exchanging natural relations for unnatural ones” (Rom. 1:26) but I never exchanged anything. I’ve always been gay.”

Response: This argument comes from a misunderstanding or misuse of Paul’s use of the terms “natural” and “unnatural.” Paul’s use of the term “natural” in Romans 1:26 refers to God’s original created nature for mankind, not to our fallen nature. So when Paul says that same-sex behavior is “contrary to nature” he means that it is “contrary to the way God created men and women in the beginning.”

Everyone is fallen and our fallen nature is abnormal and contrary to God’s created design. Our fallen nature means that we are flawed both physically and spiritually. Physically we struggle with certain genetic predispositions and a propensity to certain diseases. Spiritually we find it easy to lie, lust, love ourselves more than God, etc. But

¹¹ I’m grateful for Dr. Alfred Poirier, Visiting Professor at Westminster Seminary. These Responses were initially drafted by Dr. Poirier and have been adapted by permission for this purpose.

God says that our physical and spiritual flaws are not in accord with how he originally created mankind, but are the “unnatural” result of our fall from sin.

The only appropriate response to our fallen sinful condition is repentance (Ezek. 18:21-23; James 4:8-10). The Affirmation above instead seeks to embrace an aspect of our fallen sinful condition as good and right.

Further, when Paul writes that they “exchanged the truth about God for a lie,” (Rom. 1:25) he is talking about much more than same-sex behavior. He is referring to our shared, much deeper, condition as fallen creatures. At this level the exchange does not refer to a conscience and deliberate choice, but to our fallen state of being dead in sin and without hope except for the grace and mercy of God (Rom. 3:9-18; 5:1-2).

Everyone is born with an orientation to rebel against God, to hate his truth, to love the lie, and to worship created things rather than the Creator. A mere orientation does not mean that it is the way it ought to be (see response to Affirmation 1).

It is difficult for an LGBT Christian to accept the fact that his orientation and desires are compromised before God from the outset. But the deeper truth is that the orientation and desires of the entire human race are compromised from the outset. We are all fallen creatures in need of a Savior.

Affirmation 3: “I’ve been in a committed, consensual, monogamous relation with another lesbian like myself and we care for one another, are raising two young children we adopted out of poverty and inevitable death (from Cambodia), go to church regularly, and contribute substantial time and effort in building homes for the poor. We are imperfect, but we love one another and others. Isn’t love of God and neighbor the greatest thing in the world, (Matt. 22:37-40)? How then can you stand there and condemn my love for my same-sex spouse?”

Response: Love is commendable to the degree that it conforms to God’s definition of love. It is right to say that love is *a factor* for assessing the moral nature of a relationship, but it is not a *sufficient* factor. There is more to consider. True love is obeying and submitting to God (John 14:15; 1 Cor. 5:14-15). *If anyone does not love the Lord, let that person be cursed! Come, Lord!* (1 Cor. 16:22). Our Lord calls his people to love him even more than they love their parents and children (Matt. 10:37).

An unmarried Heterosexual who has sexual relations with a girlfriend, or a polygamist, both could provide an extensive list of “loving deeds,” and still be in rebellion against God.

Christ calls his people to submit to him in all things. A rich man was able to recount a long list of good deeds to Jesus, but in the end went away grieved because he was unwilling to sell his extensive property as Jesus required (Mark 10:17-27).

Love is good, but love in place of submissive and obedient love of God in all things is still rebellion.

Affirmation 4: “So you say you are against gay marriage because of the Bible. Right? Even though Jesus never said anything about being gay. And don’t quote Leviticus to me because it also forbids you from eating bacon – which I know Christians love – and it forbids you from having pastors with bad eyesight. What hypocrites! You pick and choose what laws in the OT you’ll obey and what you won’t.”

Response: First, an argument from silence in this case is no argument at all. Jesus also never said anything about incest, domestic violence, rape, or bestiality. But no one claims that Jesus affirms these practices.

Second, the Affirmation implies that Jesus’ words are somehow weightier than other Scripture. But Christians believe that “The Old and New Testaments . . . were verbally inspired by God and are a complete revelation of His will...”¹², and that all Scripture is “God breathed” (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20–21). One part of Scripture is as much God’s truth as any other. Jesus did not need to directly address same-sex behavior because the consistent message in Scripture is that any sexual relations other than within marriage between one man and one woman is sin.

Third, Jesus clearly affirmed the sexual ethic expressed in Genesis 1–2: *(A)t the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female’ and said ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and will be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh...* (Matthew 19:4–5).

Fourth, this Affirmation implies that same-sex behavior in some manner may have been culturally acceptable in New Testament times. However, Old Testament Israel and the Judaism of Jesus’ day unequivocally condemned any sort of same-sex activity. Noted scholar and gay activist Louis Compton said this about the current attempt to rewrite Jewish cultural history:

“According to this interpretation, Paul’s words were not directed at “bona fide” homosexuals in committed relationships. But such a reading, however well-intentioned, seems strained and unhistorical. Nowhere does Paul or any other Jewish writer of this period imply the least acceptance of same-sex relations under any circumstance. The idea that homosexuals might be redeemed by mutual devotion would have been wholly foreign to Paul or any other Jew or early Christian.”¹³

Fifth, the Affirmation contains a common misrepresentation and/or misunderstanding about the nature of Old Testament Law. All Old Testament law is not the same. Biblical

¹²Constitution of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, Article 1, Statement of Faith, Section 1.4.

¹³ Louis Compton, *Homosexuality & Civilization*, (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), 114.

Scholars divide Old Testament Law into three distinct categories: ceremonial law, civil law, and moral law.¹⁴

Ceremonial and civil laws were provisional in nature and are no longer in force in the New Testament age. Ceremonial laws such as those related to circumcision, dietary restrictions, and temple sacrifices were all required because in one way or another they pointed to Christ and were fulfilled or completed in Christ. Civil laws were connected to the Theocracy of Israel and most scholars agree that these laws ceased to be applicable outside of that context.

Moral laws, chiefly represented by the Ten Commandments, are universal principles reinforced by Christ, repeated in the New Testament, and applicable to all people at all times. A common interpretation is that the moral law acts as a *curb* to establish boundaries of proper behavior, a *mirror* to reveal to us our own sin, and a *guide* to show what is right and wrong. Same-sex behavior fits in the category of moral law.

Thus, this Affirmation makes a false comparison between dietary restrictions (ceremonial law), and same-sex behavior (moral law).

¹⁴ See 1 Cor 7:19; see also Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, I, Q.99. Art. 4; John Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.20.14,15. Calvin speaks of “the ancient writers who taught this division...”; *Westminster Confession of Faith*, 19.3,4; Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, three volumes, trans. George Musgrave Giger, ed. James T. Dennison, Jr., (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing, 1992) vol.2, p.166-167. For a similar division see article seven (VII. Of the Old Testament) of the Anglican *Articles of Religion*, also called the 39 Articles.

ATTACHMENT E

Recommended Books

The Bible and Homosexual Practice. Robert A.J. Gagnon. Abingdon Press, 2001.

Comprehensive, nuanced and scholarly treatise of the orthodox Christian view. Remains the standard reference.

Is God Anti-Gay? Sam Allberry, The Goodbook Company, 2013.

A readable, concise, yet theologically robust book written by a British evangelical pastor. This 90-page book contains an excellent chapter specifically addressed to the local church context.

Love into Light: The Gospel, The Homosexual and the Church, Peter Hubbard, Ambassador International, 2013.

A wonderful Gospel-centric work. Hubbard places the person and work of Christ in the center of every chapter and discussion. The book will resonate with our Alliance theology.

Loving My (LGBT) Neighbor: Being Friends in Grace and Truth. Glenn Stanton. Moody Publishers, 2014.

Practical and trustworthy guidance from the Director of Global Family Formation Studies at Focus on the Family. Winsome and unflinching in biblical integrity, this book seems to deal well with the difficult issues.

Holy Sexuality and The Gospel. Christopher Yuan. Multnomah, 2019.

This highly readable and engaging book is the most important one to read on sexual orientation and gender identity. With profound theological depth and clarity, the author welcomes readers to understand sexuality in relation to their identity in Christ.

What Does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality? Kevin DeYoung. Crossway, 2015.

Written by a trusted pastor and theologian.

Ministering to Gay Teenagers: Practical Help for Youth Workers and Families. Shawn Harrison. Simply Youth Ministry, 2014.

Practical insight from the personal and ministry experience of an Alliance pastor.

ATTACHMENT F

STATEMENT OF FAITH

A1—Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation of The C&MA,
Third Article, from the *Manual of The Christian and Missionary Alliance*, 2019 Edition

THIRD: Statement of Faith.

- (a) There is one God¹, who is infinitely perfect², existing eternally in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.³ (¹Deuteronomy 6:4, ²Matthew 5:48, ³Matthew 28:19)
- (b) Jesus Christ is true God and true man.⁴ He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.⁵ He died upon the cross, the Just for the unjust,⁶ as a substitutionary sacrifice,⁷ and all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood.⁸ He arose from the dead according to the Scriptures.⁹ He is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high as our great High Priest.¹⁰ He will come again to establish His Kingdom of righteousness and peace.¹¹ (⁴Philippians 2:6–11, ⁵Luke 1:36–38, ⁶1 Peter 3:18, ⁷Hebrews 2:9, ⁸Romans 5:9, ⁹Acts 2:23–24, ¹⁰Hebrews 8:1, ¹¹Matthew 26:64)
- (c) The Holy Spirit is a divine person,¹² sent to indwell, guide, teach, empower the believer,¹³ and convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.¹⁴ (¹²John 14:15–18, ¹³John 16:13 and Acts 1:8, ¹⁴John 16:7–11)
- (d) The Old and New Testaments, inerrant as originally given, were verbally inspired by God and are a complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men. They constitute the divine and only rule of Christian faith and practice.¹⁵ (¹⁵2 Peter 1:20–21 and 2 Timothy 3:15–16)
- (e) Man was originally created in the image and likeness of God:¹⁶ he fell through disobedience, incurring thereby both physical and spiritual death. All men are born with a sinful nature,¹⁷ are separated from the life of God, and can be saved only through the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ.¹⁸ The portion of the impenitent and unbelieving is existence forever in conscious torment;¹⁹ and that of the believer, in everlasting joy and bliss.²⁰ (¹⁶Genesis 1:27, ¹⁷Romans 3:23, ¹⁸1 Corinthians 15:20–23, ¹⁹Revelation 21:8, ²⁰Revelation 21:1–4)
- (f) Salvation has been provided through Jesus Christ for all men; and those who repent and believe in Him are born again of the Holy Spirit, receive the gift of eternal life, and become the children of God.²¹ (²¹Titus 3:4–7)
- (g) It is the will of God that each believer should be filled with the Holy Spirit and be

sanctified wholly,²² being separated from sin and the world and fully dedicated to the will of God, thereby receiving power for holy living and effective service.²³ This is both a crisis and a progressive experience wrought in the life of the believer subsequent to conversion.²⁴ (²²1 Thessalonians 5:23, ²³Acts 1:8, ²⁴Romans 6:1-14)

- (h) Provision is made in the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ for the healing of the mortal body.²⁵ Prayer for the sick and anointing with oil are taught in the Scriptures and are privileges for the Church in this present age.²⁶ (²⁵Matthew 8:16-17, ²⁶James 5:13-16)
- (i) The Church consists of all those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, are redeemed through His blood, and are born again of the Holy Spirit. Christ is the Head of the Body, the Church,²⁷ which has been commissioned by Him to go into all the world as a witness, preaching the gospel to all nations.²⁸

The local church is a body of believers in Christ who are joined together for the worship of God, for edification through the Word of God, for prayer, fellowship, the proclamation of the gospel, and observance of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.²⁹ (²⁷Ephesians 1:22-23, ²⁸Matthew 28:19-20, ²⁹Acts 2:41-47)

- (j) There shall be a bodily resurrection of the just and of the unjust; for the former, a resurrection unto life;³⁰ for the latter, a resurrection unto judgment.³¹ (³⁰1 Corinthians 15:20-23, ³¹John 5:28-29)
- (k) The Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is imminent³² and will be personal, visible, and premillennial.³³ This is the believer's blessed hope and is a vital truth which is an incentive to holy living and faithful service.³⁴ (³²Hebrews 10:37, ³³Luke 21:27, ³⁴Titus 2:11-14)

ATTACHMENT G

MODEL ARTICLES (EXCERPT)

Excerpt from E14–Model Articles of Incorporation for Local C&MA Churches, Section 2.1,
from the *Manual of The Christian and Missionary Alliance*, 2019 Edition

ARTICLE II PURPOSES, ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY AND POWERS

Section 2.1. Purposes and Ecclesiastical Authority. The Church is organized and shall be operated exclusively as a member church of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, a church denomination which operates legally as a Colorado nonprofit corporation (the “C&MA”). Accordingly, the Church shall operate under the sole ecclesiastical authority of, and be subject to the usages, doctrines and teachings of, the C&MA as set forth in The Manual of The Christian and Missionary Alliance; as such manual may be amended from time to time by the C&MA (the “Manual”). Without limiting the foregoing, the purposes of the corporation shall include promulgating such doctrines and teachings, preaching the Gospel to every creature, edifying the Christians through the education of God’s word, promoting spiritual fellowship among God’s people on the basis of the biblical faith, and promoting religious activities and to further other religious, educational, and charitable work to that end. In addition, this corporation shall be organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

ATTACHMENT H

MODEL BYLAWS (EXCERPT)

Excerpt from E15–Model Bylaws for Local C&MA Churches, Preamble,
from the *Manual of The Christian and Missionary Alliance*, 2019 Edition

PREAMBLE

The New Testament teaches that the local church is the visible organized expression of the Body of Christ. The people of God are to live and serve in obedience to the Word of God and under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

The Christian and Missionary Alliance operates on the presupposition that the congregation finds broader meaning and outreach in fulfilling its biblical responsibilities within the life and witness of the denomination.

This document constitutes the Bylaws for _____ Church of The Christian and Missionary Alliance (the “Church”). These Bylaws shall govern the nonprofit corporation or association through which the Church operates legally. As used herein, the term “Church” shall refer to such legal entity.

The Church is an integral part of the district, national, and worldwide fellowship of The Christian and Missionary Alliance and is united in governance, fellowship, and service in order to promote unity of faith in the fullness of Jesus Christ as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King, and to facilitate the spread of the gospel at home and abroad under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The Church is organized and shall be operated exclusively as a member church of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, a church denomination which operates legally as a Colorado nonprofit corporation (the “C&MA”). Accordingly, the Church shall operate under the sole ecclesiastical authority of, and be subject to the usages, doctrines and teachings of, the C&MA as set forth in The Manual of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, as such manual may be amended from time to time by the C&MA (the “Manual”).

This Preamble and Part 1 (General Bylaws) shall apply at all times. Part 2 (Developing Church Bylaws) shall apply at any time in which the Church is not an Accredited Church. Part 3 (Accredited Church Bylaws) shall apply at any time in which the Church is an Accredited Church.