



# STATEMENT OF ETHICAL PASTORAL CONDUCT

## PREAMBLE

As ministry and spiritual leaders, we are entrusted with the sacred responsibility of shepherding God's people, proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ, and representing His kingdom in both word and deed. Our calling is not merely vocational—it is spiritual, moral, and deeply relational. We serve not for personal gain, recognition, or authority, but as stewards of the Word of God and ambassadors of reconciliation in a broken world.

We recognize that our lives and conduct—both public and private—must reflect the character of Christ, who is our ultimate example of servant leadership, holiness, and compassion. Because of the influence and trust placed in us, our actions bear significant weight. As such, we must lead with integrity, humility, and moral courage, holding ourselves to a higher standard than the world requires.

This ethical statement is not a list of rules to be followed legalistically, but a covenantal commitment to live above reproach, to serve faithfully, and to honour Christ in all aspects of life and ministry. It is rooted in Scripture, shaped by the witness of the Church, and guided by the Holy Spirit. We affirm that ethical conduct is essential to the credibility of our witness, the health of the Church, and the advancement of the gospel.

Therefore, with prayerful dependence on God's grace, and with a deep sense of responsibility to our calling, we humbly and wholeheartedly commit to the following principles of ethical conduct.

## Personal Calling and Christlike Character

1. I will live as a follower of Jesus Christ in my actions, attitudes and behaviours, recognizing my daily need for Christ's grace and forgiveness in my life and in the lives of others (Mark 12: 30- 31; Ephesians 2: 8-10; Colossians 2: 6-7; 1 John 1: 8-10).
2. I will honour the high calling to Christian ministry and leadership and endeavour to lead a godly and exemplary life (Ephesians 4: 11-12; Titus 1:7-9).
3. I will accept responsibility for my own spiritual, emotional, physical and mental health. I will seek the help of others when I discover, or it is pointed out to me the need for support, encouragement, counselling or exhortation, and similarly act with due care towards my family and friends (2 Corinthians 5: 17- 6: 2).
4. I will commit to ongoing self-evaluation regarding my mental, emotional, and physical capacity to effectively lead and serve. I will seek regular input from trusted peers, church leadership, and medical professionals when needed to assess my ability to continue in pastoral duties. If concerns arise about my cognitive or mental well-being, I will humbly and prayerfully consider appropriate transitions, ensuring that my continued service benefits the congregation and honors God's calling. I will also support fellow ministers in making wise and gracious transitions when necessary, promoting a culture of care and accountability in leadership. (Romans 12:3; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Proverbs 15:22; 1 Kings 19:3-8)

## Biblical Faithfulness and Ministry Practice

1. I will study with diligence and teach the scriptures with integrity, presenting the whole counsel of God's word in matters of faith, doctrine, ethics and morality (2 Timothy 2: 15- 16; 2 Timothy 3: 16- 17; Hebrews 4:12).
2. I will seek to ensure the spiritual integrity of events such as marriages, funerals, child dedications, baptisms or other such services, practicing them in accordance with the patterns and practices established for CBOQ by its member congregations. (1 Corinthians 14:30; Colossians 3:17; 2 Timothy 1:13-14)
3. I will consistently seek to encourage congregations and congregants toward loyalty to and support of CBOQ, and to serve harmoniously within the patterns and practices established for CBOQ by its member congregations. (Ephesians 4:3; Philippians 2:1-2; Romans 15:5-6; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, 25)
4. I will not use my influence to alienate or remove the local church from the local Association and from the CBOQ family of churches. (1 Corinthians 1:10; Titus 3:10; 1 Peter 5:2-3; Philippians 2:1-2; Ephesians 4:3)
5. I will endeavour to grow as a Ministry Leader to offer ongoing effectiveness in ministry and leadership (Philippians 2: 1-11). This includes engaging in lifelong learning, participating in ministerial fellowship for collaboration and accountability, mentorship, coaching and spiritual direction all in an ongoing effort to faithfully steward my calling and continually develop as a Christ-centered leader. (2 Peter 1:5-8; Proverbs 1:5; 4:7; 9:9; 27:17; 1 Timothy 2:15; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)
6. I will maintain intellectual honesty in preaching, writing, and academic work, giving proper credit to sources and avoiding plagiarism or misrepresentation of ideas (Proverbs 12:22; 2 Timothy 2:15).

## Relational Ethics and Boundaries

1. I will treat all people with dignity according to the Human Rights Code of Ontario<sup>1</sup> and/or the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms<sup>2</sup>. The Code and Charter prohibit actions that discriminate against a person. Examples of discrimination are gender, race, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, marital status, physical impairment and disability. (Genesis 1: 27; Galatians 3: 26- 28) (See the Code and Charter for the full list).
2. I will not engage in aggressive or abusive behaviour, physically or verbally (Ephesians 4: 25-27).
3. I will maintain healthy physical and emotional boundaries with those to whom I minister and with those I work alongside. This means there will be no comments or behaviours that would be construed as sexual or psychological harassment according to the Ontario Human Rights Code or the Quebec Labour Standards. (Colossians 3: 1-17).
4. I will honour healthy and appropriate physical and emotional boundaries (e.g. not becoming emotionally intimate with someone I am ministering to or with) and respect and understand the power inherent in the role of a minister (Ephesians 5:3-5; James 3:1).
5. I will maintain a God-honouring and pure sexuality. I will not engage in extramarital, pre-marital, or same-sex sexual relationships or behaviour in keeping with This We Believe: Resources for Faith with Baptist Distinctives<sup>3</sup> and Resolution on Same-Sex Marriage<sup>4</sup>. I will avoid pornography<sup>5</sup> (Mark 7:21-23; 1 Corinthians 6:18-20; Galatians 5:16- 26; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8).

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/ontario-human-rights-code> for full details.

<sup>2</sup> See [http://legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/showdoc/cs/C-12?langCont=en#ga:l\\_i-gb:l\\_i-h1](http://legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/showdoc/cs/C-12?langCont=en#ga:l_i-gb:l_i-h1), especially section 10.

<sup>3</sup> <https://baptist.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/This-We-Believe.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> [https://baptist.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/au\\_cboq\\_resolution\\_on\\_same\\_sex\\_marriage.pdf](https://baptist.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/au_cboq_resolution_on_same_sex_marriage.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> *Pornography is defined as the depiction of erotic behaviour in pictures (still and motion) and/or writings intending to produce sexual excitement.*

## Legal, Ethical and Social Responsibility

1. I will maintain strict confidentiality when asked or required, except in cases where disclosure is necessary to prevent harm to persons and/or is required by law. It is required by law to report to the proper authorities suspected or declared child abuse or neglect<sup>6</sup>, elder abuse or neglect<sup>7</sup>, and vulnerable persons abuse or neglect<sup>8</sup> (Romans 13: 1).
2. I will understand and observe my responsibilities regarding the protection of children and vulnerable persons within my care, the church I serve, and the community at large (Micah 6: 8; James 1:27).
3. I will not engage in or be found guilty in a court of law of criminal activity, such as violence, abuse, theft, fraud, etc. (This is not to curtail the peaceful conscientious objection to potential government action.) (Ephesians 4: 17-24)
4. I will conduct all personal and professional financial affairs ethically and responsibly (1 Timothy 6:3-10). I will disclose and appropriately manage any potential conflicts of interest, including financial dealings, dual relationships, or personal investments that may compromise my pastoral integrity or influence.
5. I will avoid conflicts of interest in all aspects of ministry, including hiring, family relationships, business dealings, and pastoral care. When conflicts arise, I will disclose them transparently and seek accountability in addressing them (Proverbs 11:3).
6. I will refrain from illegal drug use and abuse of alcohol (drunkenness) and prescription drugs; and to seek immediate help for any addictive behaviours (drugs - legal or illegal, alcohol, gambling, pornography etc.) (Romans 13:12-14; 1 Corinthians 6:18-20).

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<sup>6</sup> In Ontario, see <http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidthereportingabuse/index.aspx> for more details on the requirements to report. In Quebec, refer to <http://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/msss/fichiers/2016/16-838-02A.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> In Ontario See <http://www.elderabuseontario.com/what-is-elder-abuse/legislation-reporting/#4> for more details on requirements to report. In Quebec, see <http://legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/fr/ShowDoc/cs/L-6.3> for details concerning the law, chapter IV articles 21.

<sup>8</sup> In Ontario, <https://www.ontario.ca/page/report-abuse-and-neglect-adult-developmental-disability>, in Quebec: <https://www.quebec.ca/en/family-and-support-for-individuals/violence/mistreatment-older-adults-vulnerable-people/about-mistreatment-older-adults-vulnerable-people>

7. I will use social media and digital platforms responsibly, ensuring that my online presence reflects Christlike character, integrity, and respect for others. (Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 3:17; Proverbs 12:18)
8. I will use emerging and future technologies, including artificial intelligence, with discernment, transparency, and accountability, ensuring these tools serve the gospel and do not compromise pastoral care, privacy, or human dignity (1 Corinthians 10:31; Philippians 4:8).

## Accountability and Peer Fellowship

1. I will follow the directives of Galatians 6:1. If I become aware that one of my CBOQ Ministry Leader colleagues is “caught in sin,” I will consider to gently but courageously encourage him/her to confess sin and take the necessary steps of repentance and restoration. If the ministry colleague remains unrepentant or unchanged regarding their sinful behaviour, I will consider the directives of Matthew 18: 15- 17 about contacting Church Leaders of that minister’s congregation or the CBOQ (and police if required by law) and inform them of the situation.
2. In the spirit of Galatians 6:1, if someone approaches me pointing out my sin, I will listen and consider their words. I will honestly reflect, confess if necessary, and consider allowing others to help me be restored in faith and practice, living out Proverbs 28:13.
3. I will serve humbly and not abuse the inherent power of the ministry position. I will refrain from any form of conduct that exploits another for my own advantage or the advantage of any third person (1 Peter 4:7-11).
4. If faced with an accusation of misconduct, I will fully cooperate with the appropriate investigative and disciplinary processes. Trusting that truth and integrity will be upheld. Likewise, I will commit to protecting others from false accusations and ensuring due process is followed in every case. (Proverbs 10:9; 28:13; Hebrews 12:11; Matthew 18:15-17)
5. I will uphold our CBOQ Baptist polity, practices and principles commonly held by our denomination and should my views change, I will initiate a conversation with CBOQ and if necessary, graciously tender my resignation. (Hebrews 13:17; Philippians 2:1-2; Amos 3:3; Romans 12:18)

## Transition and Legacy

1. Upon my retirement or resignation, I will seek to support the ministry of my successor(s) by refusing to interfere in the ministry of the church I formerly served. I will refrain from pastoral involvement (including opinion on the incumbent's decisions) except upon the clear consent of my successor(s) and church board. (Romans 12:10, 14:19; Philippians 2:3-4; Ephesians 4:3; Ecclesiastes 3:1)
2. I will, upon my departure, sever my pastoral relations with the congregation, recognizing that all pastoral functions should henceforth rightfully be conducted by a successor. (Ecclesiastes 3:1; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Corinthians 1:10, 14:33)

## ETHICS AND DISCIPLINE CHECKLIST

Please review and complete the following:

- I have read the current CBOQ Protocols for Discipline, Reinstatement, and Restoration
- I have read and understand the Statement of Ethical Pastoral Conduct.
- I have read and understand the This We Believe statement.
- I have reviewed the above documents and confirm that:
  - I am in agreement with the statements contained therein, or
  - There are statements I cannot fully support. (Please explain below.)  
Explanation (if applicable):
  
- I understand that individuals whose ministry credentials are held by Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec (CBOQ) are subject to the Protocols for Discipline, Reinstatement, and Restoration in cases of alleged professional misconduct.
- I acknowledge that failure to uphold these ethical and professional standards may result in disciplinary action, including censure, suspension, or revocation of credentials.

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Signature

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Print Name

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Date