

## OUR CONSTITUTION

The Evangelical Reformed Presbyterian Church has a constitution consisting of seven documents defining what we believe and how we are governed.

Six of the seven are ones that you usually find in Presbyterian churches. Three of them deal primarily with the government of the church. We have a Form of Government, a Directory for Worship, and a Book of Discipline. Three others deal principally with doctrine – the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger Catechism, and the Shorter Catechism. Those six documents are all named parts of our Constitution.

But the ERPC also includes a seventh document as an explicit part of our Constitution. That document is the Bible — the Word of God. Our Constitution states that the Bible is the *supreme* authority of our church.

The framers believed that the other six constitutional documents are of little value unless we state, for the record, that the inspired, inerrant, infallible Word of God governs everything else. The other six documents are the words of men. They must be understood, and properly used, in submission to the Word of God as our supreme authority. By God's grace, we seek to do that.

## ARTICLES OF ALLIANCE

Our Form of Government begins with a chapter called *Articles of Alliance* which sets forth doctrinal positions that The Evangelical Reformed Presbyterian Church believes are vital.

We live in a time of great confusion and compromise in the church. Therefore, we think it is important for you to understand that we hold to certain truths. So we've reproduced the Affirmations and Denials from our *Articles of Alliance* inside this brochure.

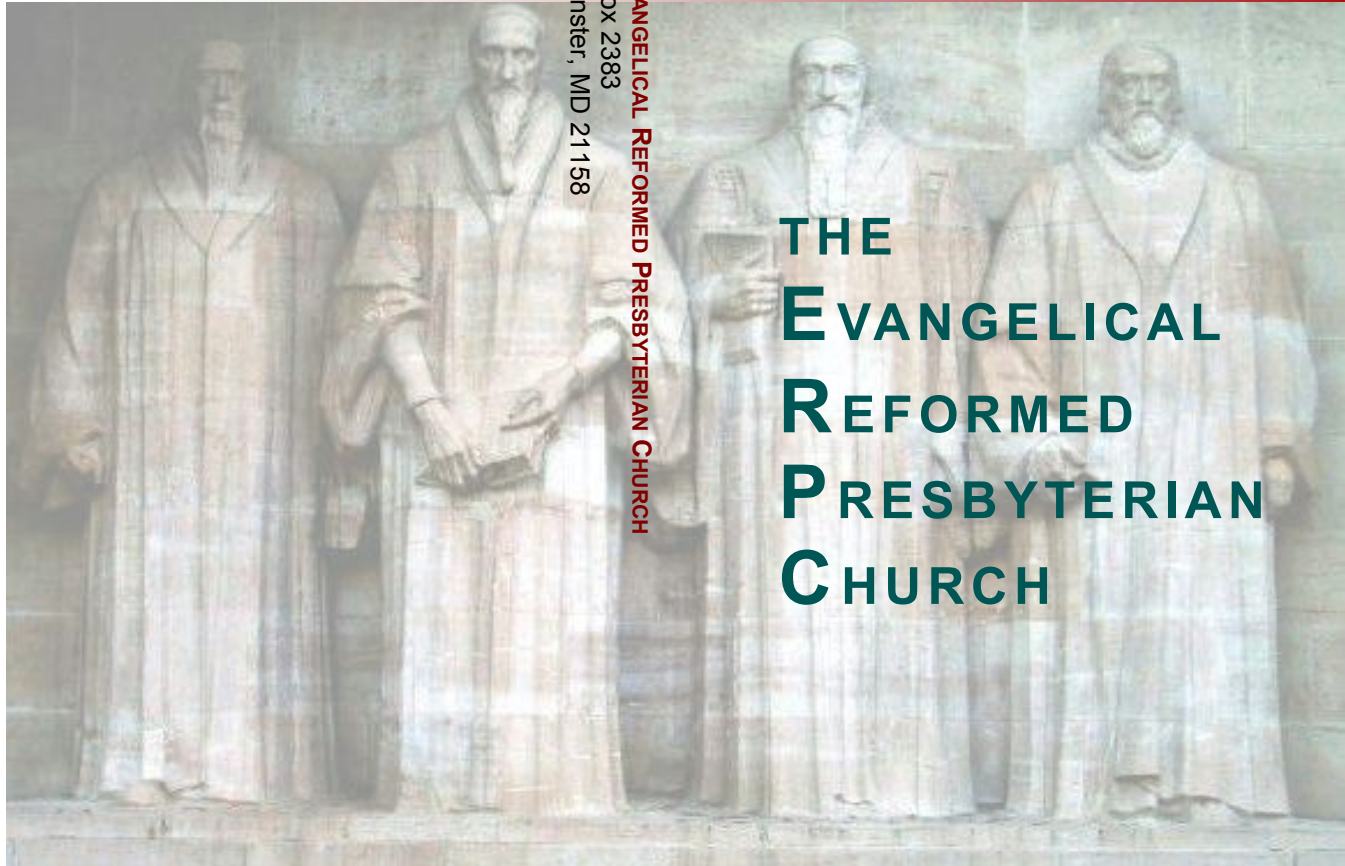
## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Our website contains information and publications including our constitutional documents, as well as sermon and conference recordings, answers to frequently-asked questions, and much more.

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# THE EVANGELICAL REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## What We Believe



## FROM OUR ARTICLES OF ALLIANCE

### Affirmations

We unite based on the following affirmations:

1. We are united in submission to the inspired and inerrant Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which are the only authoritative rule of faith and practice given by Christ to His Church. We are united in the belief that the only infallible rule for the interpretation of Scripture is Scripture itself.

2. We are united for the purpose of Christian fellowship in the communion of saints.

3. We are united in doctrine, each minister and elder of this church subscribing to grammatical-historical principles for the interpretation of Scripture, and subscribing, without reservation, to the plain and normal meaning of the words of the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms.

4. We are united in carrying out the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ to preach the Gospel to all mankind.

5. We are united in our belief that the covenant of grace is the Gospel and that the sacraments are only symbols (that is, signs and seals) of the Gospel.

6. We are united in our belief that God justifies sinners at conversion by grace alone, through faith alone apart from works, in Christ alone, and that this faith itself is the gift of God; that believers' sins are imputed to Christ, and the perfect righteousness of Christ is imputed to them; that believers are acceptable to

God not on account of the worthiness of their faith or any righteousness of their own, but because only the righteousness of Christ constitutes their righteousness before God, and it cannot be received or applied to them any other way than by believing on Christ.

7. We are united in our conviction that the Gospel should be fervently proclaimed in preaching to the end that souls may be saved, congregations established, Christians built up in our most holy faith, backsliders reclaimed, and the careless warned.

8. We are united in our conviction that the Gospel is to be freely offered to all men. The free offer of the Gospel does not entail universal salvation, nor is it contrary to the doctrine of man's total inability to save himself, nor is it contrary to the doctrine of God's complete sovereignty in salvation. The free offer of the Gospel is God's means of calling His people to repentance, and the rejection of the Gospel offer is also the condemnation of the lost.

9. We are united in maintaining reverence in the worship of the Lord, and a godly and dignified manner of worship, based upon the regulative principle, as taught in the Bible and affirmed in the Westminster Confession of Faith.

10. We are united in the conviction that the association of local congregations within the presbyterian form of government is a voluntary relationship, based upon love and mutual confidence under the authority of the Word of God and the headship of Jesus Christ, and is never to be maintained through force or coercion. We are further united in the belief that local congregations delegate limited powers to the wider assemblies (presbyteries and synods) of the church through its Constitution, and that all powers not specifically granted to those assemblies are reserved to the local congregations.

11. We are united in our belief that the Scriptures teach that the true Church of Jesus Christ

bears these three marks: the faithful proclamation of the one true Gospel; the faithful administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper; and the faithful administration of godly discipline.

12. We are united for the purpose of providing pastoral guidance and assistance to any congregation that requests such help.

13. We affirm that the Scriptures teach that the heavens and the earth were created in six literal and contiguous twenty-four hour days, and that the Scriptures teach a recent origin for the entire creation.

14. We affirm that the Scriptures teach that charismatic gifts, such as speaking in tongues and new prophetic revelations, ceased at the end of the apostolic period and are not operative in the church today.

15. We affirm that the Scriptures teach that it is not permissible to ordain women to the office of minister, elder, or deacon.

16. We affirm that the Scriptures teach that homosexuality is a sin and an abomination before God. However, we also affirm the teaching of Scripture that homosexuals who come to repentance and faith in Christ by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit receive God's forgiveness, and that they will also be empowered by the Holy Spirit to walk in newness of life and to obey God's command to forsake the lusts of the flesh.

17. We affirm that the Scriptures teach that life begins at conception, and that while it is not un-Biblical to avoid conception it is sinful to destroy human life once conceived, and that all reasonable measures should be taken to both preserve and protect it. Therefore, we oppose abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, and medical research that involves the destruction of human life.

### Denials

We are united in the denial of the following teachings, which we believe are not permitted by the Word of God:

1. We deny interpretations of Biblical law which teach that

a. the civil magistrate is to serve as the enforcer of man's duty toward God in the first four of the Ten Commandments, or to exercise any other ecclesiastical authority;

b. the ceremonial law given to Israel is in any way binding upon Christ's church today; or that

c. the judicial law given to the nation of Israel is in any way binding upon mankind today, except to the extent that "the general equity thereof may require" (WCF XIX:4).

2. We deny the teaching and practice of paedocommunion, that is, the administration of the Lord's Supper to children who are not yet of an age to be able to understand the significance of the sacrament, and have not yet made a public confession of faith in Christ.

3. We deny interpretations of the doctrine of justification which teach that

a. justification is anything other than a one-time judicial act of God by which the sinner is declared not guilty based on the merits of Christ's righteousness alone,

b. justification is not complete and final at the conversion of the sinner, or that

c. justification is in any manner dependent upon the believer's good works.

4. We deny the teaching that Scripture permits membership or involvement in any secret society.