



CHARIS FELLOWSHIP

*Planting Churches
Training Leaders
Doing Good*

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Introducing Charis Fellowship ...

Position Statements

At the 2016 National Conference in Toronto, our Fellowship of churches unanimously adopted the Commitment to Common Identity document as the official Identity Statement for our movement. While the Identity Statement is a summary of our internationally shared biblical convictions, mutual commitments, and common practices, it is not intended to address the specific issues that may need to be stated within each national context.

What is a Position Statement?

Position Statements are concisely worded paragraphs developed by the Fellowship Council that provide biblical clarification of specific issues of culture, theology, or practice within the ministry context of North America. Each Position Statement addresses an issue that the Fellowship Council representatives agree is necessary and helpful for our Fellowship. They are intended to provide clarity while preserving unity by only expressing what is broadly held in common by Charis Fellowship churches. While diversity of viewpoints can make it a challenging task, the Fellowship Council believes that Position Statements will be of great benefit to the Charis Fellowship.

Are Position Statements different from Resolutions?

For many years the Social Concerns Committee has provided our Fellowship with valuable teaching and statements on a variety of social issues. These important Resolutions will continue to be developed as the needs arise. Resolutions are exclusive creations of the Social Concerns Committee and provide non-binding guidance, while Position Statements carry greater weight as Charis Fellowship churches agree to “cooperate harmoniously within the parameters outlined by the Charis Commitment to Common Identity and the Position Statements.” Some resolutions may be reframed and adjusted by the Fellowship Council as the basis of new Position Statements.

How are Position Statements created and adopted?

This process of developing Position Statements takes place under the authority of the Fellowship Council. When the need for a Position Statement is identified and agreed on, a Position Statement Team is formed under the leadership of the Executive Director and approved by the Fellowship Council. A detailed Process Document has been developed by the Fellowship Council to guide the overall process. This document is available upon request. Position Statements approved by the Fellowship Council will then be presented to delegates at the next National Conference and require a 2/3rd's vote for approval. Each year additional Position Statements will be developed as needed. Each Position Statement adopted by the Fellowship must be reviewed and presented to the delegates for a reaffirmation vote every five years (or less as needed). If no action is taken, the Position Statement will be dropped.

The Position Statement Process Development document is available upon request using the contact form at charisfellowship.us.

Feedback? Questions? Post those here: <https://goo.gl/3KWS8c>

The following Position Statements affirmed by the Fellowship Council will be presented to delegates at the 2018 annual meeting of the Charis Fellowship (a.k.a. Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, inc)...

Affirmation of Life

We affirm that human life is sacred and worthy of respect. From the moment of conception, human life is precious and deserves protection from murder, suicide, abortion, and mercy killing. We affirm that those who are terminally ill deserve appropriate medical care, including palliative care and pain management, but medically-assisted suicide is not a moral or biblical option.

Ordinances

Charis Fellowship churches practice baptism by triune immersion. Our communion celebrations follow a three-fold pattern, which includes (1) the practice of washing the saints' feet and, (2) the partaking of the bread and cup and, (3) sharing the fellowship meal. We believe these ordinances have biblical and historical foundations and should be taught and practiced in our local churches.

Marriage and Sexuality

We believe God created marriage to be a public covenant relationship, normally consummated by the union of sexual intercourse, between two consenting people, one man and one woman. This covenant is to endure as long as both are living for the purposes of mutual care, mutual joy, mutual edification, procreation, and symbolizing the covenant relationship between Christ and His church to all generations. We affirm that all sexual relations of any kind that occur outside the boundaries of marriage are immoral and contradict God's design for humanity.

Eldership

We believe that the leadership position in our local churches corresponding to the biblical role of elder/overseer/pastor is reserved for men who meet biblical qualifications. We affirm that men and women are both created in the image of God, are equal in value and personhood, and are designed to be inter-dependent in life and ministry within the local church.