



MACNEILL BAPTIST CHURCH

1145 King St. W.
Hamilton, Ontario
L8S 1L9
(905)528-2861

macneillbaptistchurch
@cogeco.net

www.macneillbaptist.ca

Church Moderator
Al Palin

Church Secretary
Irene Costello

Affiliated with
Canadian Baptists of
Ontario and Quebec

Heather Rumball,
President, CBOQ,
5 International Blvd
Etobicoke, ON M9W 6H3

May 13, 2018

Dear Heather Rumball:

On behalf of MacNeill Baptist Church, I write to make plain our response to campaigning by the Rev. Marc Bertrand and the Rev. Paul Carter, to the Advisory Team on CBOQ Beliefs and Identity, and to the broader CBOQ leadership:

Perhaps the most direct clarifying realization is that the autonomy of the local Baptist Church is not dispensable. This “distinctive” is at our ecclesiastical core; it is front-and-center since the earliest Baptist writings. The motion proposed to CBOQ Assembly by the Rev. Mr. Bertrand and the Rev. Mr. Carter fundamentally dispenses with this central tenet and the foundation of being a member of the Baptist Convention. We cannot adopt this motion and continue to call ourselves Baptist. As a congregation, we vehemently disagree with any motion that undermines this distinctiveness.

Further, we, as a congregation, believe that pursuit of “the Way of Jesus” is an endeavor requiring the best of scholarly criticism. Honoring and applying Scripture means that we work to stay consciously aware, engaged and responsive to advocate for populations and individuals who are marginalized and scape-goated. Doing so, as a congregation, meant that many years ago we became a biblically-based welcoming and affirming community¹, supportive of the LGBTQ community. We cannot support a motion which excludes and victimizes this vulnerable population.

Fundamentalism is a reality in every human realm. As a fellowship of autonomous congregations we intentionally choose to live with that tension, but surely we must never capitulate to it. We remain adamantly opposed to this motion.

Peace to you, and to us all together.

Al Palin, Moderator

¹ To name one significant Baptist resource helpful in hearing the biblical voices speak about homosexuality: Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth, edited by LeDayne McLeese Polaski & Millard Eiland, 2000