

Baptism Statement and Resolve

The CGL Board of Overseers has prayerfully deliberated over the issue of baptism and membership for several years. It is our desire to provide clarity out of biblical conviction moving forward while embracing unity in every possible way. This process has been informed by multiple discussions with conference leadership of Converge National as well as input gathered from many of our churches within Converge Great Lakes.

The Board of Overseers affirms the historical position of Converge on baptism by immersion for believers as a requirement for membership in the local church. We also affirm the 1995 statement produced by the national conference affirming a 2 tiered model of association if a local church body chooses that approach. We recognize and value that local churches may make unique allowances in the case of difficult circumstances such as physical or emotional inabilities.

For those churches who have moved away from this historical position of our movement, we invite them into dialogue back towards unity over the course of this next year. For those churches that choose not to apply believer's baptism by immersion for local church membership, we pray God's blessing as they associate with a movement that is consistent with their practice.

The Board of Overseers Resolve

September 2017

Converge Statement of Faith

7. The Church: We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, work and fellowship....

Converge Membership Requirements

SECTION A. REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP Churches are eligible for membership in Converge, upon the following conditions: 1. The church shall subscribe without reservation to the Affirmation of Faith found in Article III of these bylaws; 2. The church shall practice only believer's baptism by immersion....

1995 Declaration on 2 Tiered Association

We, the board of overseers, reaffirm the biblical mandate of believers baptism by immersion and that it be a prerequisite for church membership as stated in the BGC Constitution. We further recommend that, if in the process of reaching people from diverse backgrounds, a local church establishes different levels of association for the purpose of allowing people to identify with a BGC church while they consider church membership: 1. The church should affirm in its Constitution, Articles of Incorporation, or By Laws, the biblical practice of believers baptism by immersion. 2. A term other than "church member" be used to identify these people. 3. Spiritual leadership positions (such as pastor, elder, deacon, governing board), the privilege of voting on constitutional changes, and the calling of a pastor be constitutionally limited to those who are church members, and 4. All delegates to district and BGC meetings be church members. Adopted in St. Paul, Minnesota, 1995

President Ridout's Statement on Unique Execeptions

"It is the standard expectation and norm for Converge churches to require believer's baptism by immersion for membership. However we acknowledge the autonomy of the local church in limited exceptions in this matter."