

Statement on the Roles of Men and Women in Ministry

An Official Statement of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada

Historically, the C&MA in Canada has valued unity in vision while accepting diversity in biblically-supported theological positions. Continuing in this biblically-grounded practice, we welcome, respect, and value those who hold differing views on the role of men and women in the church. We desire for all to work together in unity, requiring none be silent about or betray their convictions. Our differences are to be managed, not eliminated. We heartily believe that the Alliance “theological tent” is large enough for all of us, and that the person and presence of Jesus Christ is our unifying centre. To this end, the following document has been prepared to assist us in affirming the convictions that we share, understanding and learning from our differences, and covenanting to move forward together amidst our diversity with mutual love and respect as we seek to reach the nations for the glory of God.

1. Before God and one another we share agreement in the following truths:

- 1.1. CREATED EQUAL – Men and women are both created in the image of God and invited into relationship with Him. As such, they are equal in value, dignity and worth (Genesis 1:27; Galatians 3:26-29).
- 1.2. GIFTED AND EMPOWERED TO LEAD – Both men and women are filled with the Holy Spirit and gifted to serve and lead in the Body of Christ. Throughout Scripture God has used both men and women in places of leadership, having influence in governance and in spiritual affairs (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:17-18; 1 Corinthians 11:4-5; Romans 12:3-8; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 Corinthians 12).
- 1.3. CALLED TO BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP – All leaders in the church are called to follow the model of Christ by leading with sacrifice, humility, and love. There is no room in the church for domineering or abusive forms of leadership. The Bible is our guide for discerning the qualifications and mandate of leaders in the church (Philippians 2:5-8; Mark 10:42-45; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; 1 Peter 5:1-5).
- 1.4. COMMISSIONED TO PARTICIPATE IN A GLOBAL MANDATE – In responding to the call of our Lord Jesus to follow Him and take His message of love and reconciliation to the whole world, we in the C&MA believe that God has called both men and women, empowered by God’s Spirit, to serve in this Kingdom task (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:18-20).

2. Before God and one another, we covenant:

- 2.1. To wholeheartedly embrace, teach, and lead in willing submission to our C&MA statement of faith.
- 2.2. To hold fast to the unity that is founded upon our mutual belonging to Christ and each other, while respecting and appreciating the differences among us on this issue (Ephesians 4:1-6).
- 2.3. To be men and women who continue to diligently study the Scriptures, being open to the Spirit’s leading as we respectfully enter into continuing dialogue, understanding that our theological disagreement doesn’t need to stir division, but rather can strengthen us by sharpening our commitment to be grounded in God’s truth (2 Timothy 2:15, 3:14-17; 1 Corinthians 2:10b-16; 1 John 2:27).
- 2.4. To be servant-leaders who are accountable and sensitive to the Spirit of God for the way we release and empower men and women to serve in vital ways within our church context, paying particular attention to those appointed to the office of elder/overseer, ensuring that their life and doctrine reflect the biblical qualifications (1 Timothy 4:16).
- 2.5. To allow churches the freedom to hire based upon their theological convictions.

- 2.6. To be a denomination that trains, credentials and ordains those who interpret Scripture from both egalitarian and complementarian perspectives. We will welcome both to fill denominational leadership positions. The Alliance is committed to allowing denominational leaders to live within their theological convictions regarding the roles of men and women in the church while providing reasonable accommodations that enable them to uphold Alliance policies where conflict between convictions and policy arises.

We acknowledge that there are a variety of positions regarding this issue. The complementarian guideline and egalitarian guideline that follow are therefore not meant to be exclusive, but rather to delineate the range of options within the C&MA. These guidelines and practices are provided to assist individuals and churches as they discern their local practice.

3. Amendments

This statement may be amended by a majority vote of General Assembly, with written notice having been given prior to General Assembly.

Adopted – General Assembly 2016