

FELLOWSHIP CHAPEL

2016 Constitutional Amendment concerning marriage and the wedding service

According to the Doctrinal Statement and Constitution of Fellowship Chapel, the ultimate authority for belief and practice is the primary source of the Judeo-Christian faith the inerrant Bible consisting of both the Old and New Testaments. By that ultimate authority true reality consists of the self-sufficient Triune God and His created universe (Genesis 1:1). It further claims that God has revealed by historic word and deed His purposeful design of human sexuality—that He established marriage at creation as the unique relationship between one man and one woman to fulfill His plan to manage all nature by producing a family-based society to establish a godly culture (Genesis 1:26-30; 2:4-25; cf Matthew 19:4-6; Ephesians 5:1-6:4). Moreover, this created design of marriage is said to show the very core of the Christian faith—the spiritual structure of how the resurrected ascended Christ is related to His Church (Ephesians 5:22-23)

Since all ethical standards of sexual and family behavior— according to Biblical belief— are thus rooted in the one-man-one-woman marriage design, it necessarily follows that denial of that design is denial of Christian faith and practice. Such denial replaces the Chapel's Christian belief in divinely-revealed transcendent truth with a pagan belief in an ever-changing statistic of social opinion. It virtually requires that the Chapel— with its ministry to man-woman marriages, to parents' mentoring of children, and to celebrating the relationship of Christ and the Church—cease to exist.

Therefore, to avoid grievous injury to the body and operation of the Chapel, we will only recognize the vitality and biblical accuracy of marriage as between one man and one woman, will only preach and teach in accordance with such belief, and will only hire or permit in ministry service, those who adhere to and practice such belief.

To minimize future conflict between changes in the legal definition of marriage and marriage as once-for-all defined by God, it is resolved, that as of ___(date)_____ Fellowship Chapel will henceforth adopt the traditional separation of civil and ecclesiastical marriage as practiced for centuries in European culture. The Chapel will direct a man-woman couple desiring biblical marriage to satisfy civil government requirements with the appropriate, authorized officers of state and *then* to pledge themselves as believers in Jesus Christ before God and an assembly of believers in a formal worship service officiated by the pastor or other Chapel-authorized representative. *This ecclesiastical marriage* service will include exposition of the biblical design of marriage as a one-man-one woman permanent relationship that undergirds all ethics of sexual and family behavior.