



Liberty
Baptist Fellowship

Endorsement Manual

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction to LBF Chaplaincy

The Liberty Baptist Fellowship partners with the Liberty Church Network, which is part of Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, VA.

Vision

Liberty Baptist Fellowship's vision is to see chaplains bearing the presence and message of Christ to provide an opportunity for people to come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and enjoy an eternal loving relationship with God and a godly loving relationship with others.

Mission

- **To provide** the best qualified chaplains for multiple specialized ministry settings.
- **To advance** the Christian witness through chaplain ministry in specialized ministry settings.
- **To support** LBF endorsed chaplains through prayer, pastoral care, training and ministry resources.

Goals

- **To endorse** pastors/ministers called to the chaplaincy ministry who are baptistic in belief and practice for the proclamation of the gospel, making disciples, and providing spiritual care.
- **To embrace** our chaplains and their families in prayer and pastoral care.
- **To enhance** the ministry of our chaplains through continuing education.
- **To engage** our pastoral leaders and churches who are a part of the Liberty Church Network on an intentional strategy in support of our chaplains and our military families.
- **To enlist** our chaplains for local church involvement and ministries.

Guiding Principles for LBF Chaplaincy

In response to the Great Commission and God's call upon the lives of our chaplains, the LBF Endorsing Team will encourage like-minded churches to engage and work alongside those considering the chaplaincy to initiate the endorsement process. This endeavor will include educational and ministerial formation through faithfulness to the Word of God and maintenance of a well-balanced and integrated lifestyle.

Partnership

The LBF Endorsement Team, LCN pastors and other like-minded churches, cooperates with institutions, professional chaplaincy associations and certifying organizations in the development and support of chaplaincy ministry through resourcing, equipping, strengthening and serving the chaplains within our organization.

Stewardship

The LBF Endorsing Team will be good stewards of its people, time and fiscal resources for sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ and for ministry to people in the name of Jesus Christ.

Dues and Endorsement Fees

Each prospective chaplain will pay a one-time endorsement application fee that pays for the initial costs of background checks and other costs of the application process.

Once endorsed, every chaplain pays monthly dues that provide the funds for salaries for staff, travel for chaplain visits, annual fees to NCMAF/ECVAC, annual chaplain conference expenses, and other administrative and miscellaneous costs throughout the year. The cost of dues is available from the LBF office or on the LBF website.

Current Endorsement Schedule:

Tier	Monthly Fee	Yearly Total
Military AD: Field Grade	\$40	\$480
Military AD: Company Grade	\$35	\$420
Military PT: Field Grade / Healthcare / Other	\$30	\$360
Military PT: Company Grade	\$25	\$300
Volunteer / Student / Candidate	\$10	\$120

CHAPTER 2: Context and Nature of Chaplain Ministry

Chaplains are ministers of the gospel, called by God to minister to people outside the walls of the church in the environment of a particular institution or organization.

A Liberty Baptist Fellowship Chaplain who is endorsed to the chaplaincy ministry must clearly understand that the context of chaplaincy is beyond the ministry environment of a local church setting, and very often in varied or pluralistic and diverse settings. Chaplains are normally employees or volunteers of a secular institution that provides ministry to their clients, employees, and families. The Chaplaincy and LBF endorsement afford called individuals unique opportunities for ministry. The office of pastor is associated with the local church, while the chaplain, a member in good standing with a local church, represents his or her church in specialized ministry settings. This change of context is a significant point of education for the chaplain, especially if they are coming from a church-based ministry setting. The following sections should help give a better understanding of the context of chaplaincy ministry.

Chaplaincy Ministry Distinctives

Tremendous insights can be gained from Jesus' example as He resided on earth. As the life of Jesus reveals, all people are to be treated with compassion, dignity and respect. When Jesus was asked about the greatest command, His response was **relational**: "Love God. Love others" (Matt. 22:37-39, HCSB). Chaplains are in the people-care business. When people provide care to others, they provide it unto God. Jesus gives assurance that whatever a person does "for one of the least of these brothers of [His], [we do] for [Him]" (Matt. 25:40). Considering that every person in the world is created in the image of God and matters to God, everyone should matter to us and be treated with love, compassion, dignity and respect.

Religious Diversity and Complexity

The chaplain's ministry is to everyone served by a particular institution. For example, the military chaplain ministers to every member of their assigned military unit, including authorized Department of Defense employees and their respective family members. A healthcare chaplain ministers to patients, patient's families, and staff members. A correctional facility chaplain ministers to staff, inmates and their families. Those served include all persons who seek the chaplain's services, including those who have no religious preference or belief. The focus is not simply on those who respond to the chaplain's presence, but to everyone within the chaplain's sphere of ministry. Every chaplain is expected to support the free exercise of religion toward all within their assigned agency or institution. This contextual focus provides chaplains with endless opportunities to be witnesses of the gospel to every person, whether they express a personal faith preference or have none.

Many institutions (i.e., a military service, prison system, healthcare facility) that host chaplaincy programs employ or provide services to people who are affiliated or claim association with a wide variety of faith groups. The chaplain is expected to perform or advise (facilitate) religious ministry to all, regardless of their faith group, as well as those of the chaplain's particular faith group. Most institutions expect the chaplain to advise on and facilitate the free exercise of religion within their organization. Simply stated, the chaplain is to ensure that all persons have access to, and the ability to appropriately exercise or express their chosen faith.

The chaplain may be expected to facilitate access to religious practices with which the chaplain may have a theological disagreement. The United States Constitution fully protects the chaplain from being compelled to violate his or her own conscience or the requirements of his or her faith. But these rights cannot be taken for granted. Chaplains must regularly educate their institutional leadership and members on the freedom of religion, as well as all religious matters. They must also be prepared to defend those within their institution, including their own religious beliefs and practices, whose freedom of religion is violated, challenged or restrained by superiors who do not understand them.

As previously stated, Chaplains are expected to perform or advise. Rather than the chaplain conducting a service or providing an ordinance/sacrament for a group with which he/she disagrees and whose tenets violate the LBF Theological Preamble, the chaplain is expected to advise appropriate provision for these persons to practice their own faith. Usually, this requires the chaplain to contact another chaplain (or civilian cleric or other religious volunteer) to provide the ordinance/sacrament/service. If no one is available within the institution or organization, the chaplain may need to contact someone outside the institution. Facilitating religious practice should be within the confines of the policies of the institution.

Women in Ministry

Thomas Road Baptist Church and the Liberty Church Network supports the statement regarding the pastorate in Article VI of the *SBC Faith and Message 2000*. Every follower of Jesus Christ is a minister and is called to serve in the church (Eph. 4:16). However, the New Testament upholds restrictions on the ministry of women, barring them from teaching men or having authority over them (1 Tim. 2:12). Nevertheless, the Bible reveals the significant role of women have in the ministry. We encourage the ministry of women in all aspects of the chaplaincy other than those positions that require ordination.

Credentials

The terms *licensed, commissioned or ordained* describe the procedures followed by local churches or denominations to vest ministerial status upon qualified individuals. Each ministerial status has specific legal and ecclesiastical provisions. Chaplains need to understand which ministry status has been given to them by their home church. We expect every chaplain position that requires ordination to be ordained and that the prospective chaplain receive his ordination from a local church (not the internet).

Institutional Structures

A chaplain must learn the structure of the organization that hosts their chaplaincy ministry. Most institutions are vertically organized, with leadership recognized in a defined “chain of command.” While the chaplain’s foremost allegiance is to God, the chaplain’s primary accountability in the organization is to the head of the organization or the next person up the chaplain’s chain of supervision. Therefore, hiring, assigning, reassigning and dismissing of the chaplain is the prerogative of the leadership within the organization being served by the Liberty Baptist Fellowship chaplain.

Institutional Policies

The management of most institutions is governed by established policies. The position of the chaplain within the agency is defined in those policies. The process for planning and execution of religious ministry and its funding will be designated in the organizational manuals or directives. The chaplain must be familiar with how the institution organizes itself and conducts its business.

For example, in some organizations, like the military, the promotion process in the organization is very competitive and strictly governed by law. In other organizations, promotion might only come when a position becomes available in the organization through another’s retirement, promotion or dismissal. Another example would be seen in how the institution provides funding for religious ministries. The chaplain must understand these policies to ensure their involvement in the programming and budgeting process. In most institutions, funding for the provision of chaplaincy services and religious programming is unrelated to the gathered religious community that assembles for worship. The chaplain’s compensation normally comes from their institution. Operational funds allocated by the organization and offerings collected are subject to the authority and policies established by the institution.

Institutional Culture

As the chaplain learns about the structure and policies of the organization they serve, they also will want to pay attention to the culture these structures and policies create. For example, a warden is tasked to run a correctional facility. That facility takes on a culture that results from the warden’s policies and the attitudes those policies engender throughout the institution. A particular military command has a culture developed around its mission and the leadership of the command. Chaplains must pay close attention to the culture that exists within their specialized ministry setting while, at the same time, maintaining their pastoral identity.

CHAPTER 3: Endorsement Policies and Guidelines

Endorsement is an official statement that affirms to a using agency or certifying organization that the chaplain is a called and qualified religious leader.

An endorsement is for a specific chaplaincy with a specific institution or certifying organization. It is the chaplain's responsibility to ensure that he or she has a current endorsement on file with their institution. Endorsed LBF chaplains must understand and comply with the endorsement requirements of this manual as well as any additional policies or guidelines issued by LBF.

Reasons/Benefits of Endorsement

An endorsement by LBF affirms that the individual is a minister in good standing and meeting all necessary requirements of Liberty Baptist Fellowship as well as our host organization Liberty Church Network. The endorsement establishes a pastoral relationship with the LBF Endorsing Team, which is fostered through chaplaincy training events, phone calls, personal correspondence, social media, and pastoral visits.

Benefits include:

1. The application process helps clarify one's calling to chaplaincy ministry.
2. A support network with other LBF chaplains.
3. Pastoral care through our LBF Endorsing Team.
4. Prayer support from the LBF Endorsing Team and partnering churches.
5. Field guidance as needed on current issues chaplains are facing in their ministry setting.

Types of Endorsements

Liberty Baptist Fellowship provides endorsement for chaplains in a variety of chaplain ministries including military, healthcare and hospice, prisons, public safety, athletics, community and corporations. Endorsements can be full time, part time, or in a volunteer capacity. We provide endorsements for wherever chaplains are needed, and if applicable, chaplains can have more than one endorsement.

General Endorsement Requirements

All chaplains endorsed by LBF must meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Clear a background check that includes credit, criminal and sexual offenses.
2. Demonstrate a call that is expressed not only in written communication, but also in actions showing a personal commitment to Christian ministry.
3. Have a proven character that is in line with chaplain ministry, exemplifying a personal and professional life with the highest practice of integrity in accordance with Scripture, and consistent with the spiritual leadership required to work well with people.
4. Be affiliated with a Baptist or like-minded baptistic church for a minimum of one year, and a member in good standing for at least six months
5. Have a pastoral reference from a Pastor, ministerial staff or someone within the hierarchy of the local church.
6. (As applicable) be licensed, commissioned or ordained by a baptistic church or church of like faith and practice, as this recognizes the role of the local church in affirming the ministry of the applicant.
7. Engaged in ministry within a local church, and for Military regular chaplaincy this must be in some sort of pastoral role.
8. Agree to the following: Appendix 1: THEOLOGICAL PREAMBLE, Appendix 2: BIBLICAL GUIDELINES, Appendix 3: DOCTRINAL STATEMENTS, Appendix 4: DOMA GUIDELINES, and Appendix 5: .

Duration of Endorsements

An endorsement is to a specific position, and thus any change in employment requires an update of endorsement. Some ministerial training programs have a specified duration. When the chaplain completes the training, the endorsement terminates. As well, some endorsements have a specified time for which they are valid. This termination date is usually stated on the endorsement and/or is expressed by the institution's policy. If an endorsement is no longer required, the endorsement will be "closed" until an update is requested. A chaplain may request the withdrawal of endorsement at any time. However, the endorsement will not be removed if the chaplain is facing adverse disciplinary or legal actions. All endorsements terminate when the chaplain is no longer affiliated with the organization to which they were endorsed and/or the chaplain no longer meets the LBF requirements for endorsement.

Endorsement Updates

Periodically, the institution will ask that the chaplain have an updated endorsement. It is the responsibility of the chaplain to initiate the process for updating an endorsement. A chaplain should contact the LBF Endorsing Team to request an endorsement update when their status or ministry needs change.

Transferring an Endorsement

A chaplain can only be endorsed through one endorsing body. However, a chaplain can change ecclesiastical endorsement for warranted reasons. Any transfer of endorsement to another religious ecclesiastical organization requires the chaplain to inform their current endorsing agent. The ecclesiastical endorsement process, requirements and timeline differs among the various religious ecclesiastical organizations. As a rule, LBF Chaplaincy provides a 90-day transition period for transfer of endorsement to another approved religious ecclesiastical body. The military has a required pathway to transfer an endorsement, and LBF will follow this procedure for all military requests for transfer.

Oversight and Supervision

Chaplains serve an institution at their invitation and therefore are under the direct supervision of the institution's supervisory structure. However, the LBF Endorsing Team retains ecclesiastical oversight of the chaplain's work and life as a representative of the Liberty Baptist Fellowship. All government sponsored chaplaincies require ecclesiastical endorsement to ensure the separation of Church and State, and count on the chaplain's religious endorser to provide religious oversight, as the government is unable to do so based on the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Likewise, civilian employers of chaplains may appreciate the endorser's religious oversight of their chaplains. e

Discipline and Withdrawal of an LBF Endorsement

If an endorsed chaplain violates a law (local, state, Federal, including Uniform Code of Military Justice), agency policy, LBF general expectation, personal or professional ethic, or should there be an embarrassment to the cause of LBF chaplaincy, disciplinary action may be in order. LBF desires that justice, grace and mercy be exercised in all situations for personal redemption and restoration. However, withdrawal of endorsement may result from any situation deemed to warrant such action.

It is the right of any autonomous entity, i.e., institution or professional organization, to which a chaplain belongs, or the judicial system, to choose to exercise disciplinary measures it deems necessary. Poor work performance will be an issue with the institution's supervisory process but may involve the LBF endorser.

The endorsed LBF chaplain's relationship with God and family is of utmost importance. Restoration to ministry is the desire of the LBF Chaplaincy. However, it may not always be possible depending on the nature of the violation. Chaplains are reminded that personal reputation is to be guarded closely. One's reputation with people is a primary building block for ministry.

Chaplains are expected to inform the LBF Endorsing Team immediately upon being accused of a violation regarding their ministry concerning a felony arrest, military issues/problems or other situation which could adversely impact the reputation of a minister of the LBF. LBF desires to be of assistance to the chaplain experiencing extreme difficulties.

The disciplinary/withdrawal process will usually include the following steps:

1. The Endorser is informed, preferably by the chaplain via telephone or other expeditious means. Institutions are welcomed and encouraged to contact the Endorser as well.
2. The LBF Endorsing Team will meet and discuss appropriate course of action.
3. The LBF Endorsing Team will work with the chaplain in a restorative relationship as appropriate to the situation and per LBF guidelines and policies.

Divorce and Remarriage

We support the statement regarding marriage in Article XVIII of the *SBC Baptist Faith and Message 2000*, which says:

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

LBF endorses divorced individuals by exception. Factors to be considered are; the applicant has the full support of their local church to serve as a pastor in their congregation and meets the requirements of LBF for divorced persons. LBF policy is that the chaplain applicant shall have been biblically divorced and recovered fully. In the event of remarriage, the chaplain applicant will have waited at least one year before remarriage and experienced several years of a successful second marriage before applying for endorsement. When LBF receives an application from someone who has been divorced, we consider their entire application package, including pastoral experience and pastoral recommendation. Additionally, we seek clarification/explanation from the applicant regarding their marital history to determine the appropriate response.

The Endorsing Team desires to play a supportive role with the chaplain and family involved in separation or divorce. A chaplain's spiritual and relational health is a vital component of their ministry. All endorsed chaplains who are currently serving and get a divorce or remarry will be evaluated on an individual basis in accordance with this LBF policy and biblical pastoral qualifications. More information on this can be found in Appendix 5:

Chapter 4: General Expectations of LBF Chaplains

Personal Ethics

Integrity

Chaplains are expected to live their lives with the utmost integrity. Integrity is being who and what you claim to be at all times, a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ serving as a chaplain. Chaplains must remember that those to whom they minister and those they serve depend on the chaplain's integrity to be of the highest quality.

Chaplain Relationships

Since chaplains are called upon to provide counseling and care to people or families experiencing various life issues, chaplains must exercise sound judgment to preclude involvement that goes beyond an acceptable counselor-client relationship. Such non-professional involvement results in the deepest personal hurt to the chaplain and other people involved, as well as loss of ministry effectiveness and Christian credibility. Any chaplain having trouble in this area is expected to inform the LBF Endorser Team and to seek counseling and assistance as early as possible.

Social Media and Faith

Profiles and posts on social media platforms should be connected to and complement the individual chaplain and the overall ministry of Liberty Baptist Fellowship. We do not expect that any comment or post made on social media will reflect negatively on the individual chaplain's ministry and Liberty Baptist Fellowship. Our desire is that our chaplains and their social media posts honor the Lord, their endorser, the chaplains home church, and their command.

Ministry to All Persons

LBF endorsed chaplains are expected to minister to all people, regardless of their religious preference, behavior choices, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity or physical condition/presence. In providing this ministry, they should seek to help the person recognize God's intended order for life and to understand their need to humbly acknowledge God's plan for their lives. Chaplains should be as inclusive as possible for mandatory activities and appropriately exclusive in ecclesiastical function and performance as long as it does not contradict their personal faith, beliefs or practices.

Relationships to Other Faith Groups

Chaplains will usually find their ministry opportunities in an environment with a diversity of religious beliefs and expressions. Liberty Baptist Fellowship chaplains should seek to display a spirit of cooperation and team building. Relationships with those of other faith groups are expected to be one of cooperation without compromise. This standard phrase summarizes LBF's chaplains'

expectation of cooperation in methodology without a compromise of our values and faith and practice. Good ministry relationships will come from being acquainted with and sensitive to the customs and cultures of the people with whom chaplains work and minister. An “open door” attitude is always a healthy approach to lasting relationships. LBF believes this attitude has merit and value because it emphasizes the worth and dignity of individuals.

Recognition of Ministry Limitations

LBF chaplains are endorsed to minister within specialized ministry environments. LBF chaplains not only represent themselves but also the churches and members of the Liberty Church Network. Endorsed LBF chaplains, within their respective institutional settings, provide ministry according to the principle of “cooperation without compromise.” LBF chaplains *will*:

- Support and conduct religious services in accordance with [Appendix 1: THEOLOGICAL PREAMBLE](#).
- Provide biblical counseling and pastoral care for those of like faith and make provisions to meet the religious or spiritual needs of others.
- Treat everyone with Christ-centered dignity, honor and respect.

LBF chaplains are free to lead or participate in religious services with any chaplain who is a Trinitarian and accepts the authority of God’s Word.

LBF chaplains have a pastoral and professional responsibility to ensure that everyone is shown Christ-centered dignity, honor and respect, regardless of differences in theological beliefs, cultural worldview and personal behavior. However, when the ministry requested does not comply with LBF beliefs and practices, the chaplain will coordinate with another chaplain or religious leader to perform the requested ministry.

Although LBF chaplains will extend dignity, love and compassion to everyone, they will *not*:

- Conduct any religious service or ceremony jointly with a chaplain, contractor or volunteer that could be reasonably misconstrued as affirming a homosexual lifestyle, sexual immorality and other such unbiblical conduct.
- Officiate, participate in or attend a marriage or union ceremony, nor provide any pre-marital counseling and/or enrichment training for any couple contrary to the following biblical mandates that:

“. . . all persons are created in God’s image and are made to glorify Him; . . . God’s design was the creation of two distinct and complementary sexes, male and female; . . . affirm God’s good design that gender identity is determined by biological sex and not by one’s self-perception.”

“ . . . marriage is between one man and one woman, ordered by God toward the union of the spouses, the means of procreation, formative of family, and foundational to the common good of society.”¹

This biblical guidance, under the authority of the LBF endorsing body, remains in effect irrespective of any civil law authorizing same-sex marriage, transgender marriage or equivalents to marriage. Questions or concerns about the utilization of these policies should be directed to any member of the LBF Endorsing Team.

Baptism and the Lord’s Supper

These are the two ordinances of LBF churches. Through the endorsement process, each cooperating church provides the chaplain with the necessary credentials to administer these ordinances and the scope of ministry. Therefore, endorsed Liberty Baptist Fellowship chaplains are to administer baptism and the Lord’s Supper under the authority of the chaplain’s local church.

Annual Reporting and Updates

LBF Chaplains are **required** to complete an Annual Activity Report at the end of each Fiscal Year. This required report is used to gather statistical data reflective of the chaplaincy to which the chaplain is endorsed. Individual reports are never used in a comparative process to evaluate effectiveness in ministry. The statistical summary and narrative parts aid in telling the story of ministry.

In addition, at least once a year, Chaplains are required to review and update personal data relevant to chaplain endorsement in order to keep the Endorser Team informed of changes. Most importantly, contact information changes (i.e., address, telephone numbers, and e-mail) could lead to endorsement withdrawal if LBF loses the ability to communicate. Included in this update is re-affirming all the LBF guidelines, statements and policies by reading through and resigning agreement to this manual.

Chaplain Annual Training Conference and Quarterly Zoom Training

Every year the LBF Endorsing Team hosts an annual training conference, typically held in Lynchburg VA near the beginning of the new fiscal year. In addition, the LBF Endorsing Team provides quarterly Zoom training. It is a requirement to attend at least one of these events. LBF believes that our Chaplains need to be refueled, equipped, and encouraged. It is important that our chaplains maintain a connection with our endorsers and other chaplains within our faith group to ensure ongoing spiritual and emotional health. This bond is essential for maintaining vitality and freshness that will be positively reflected in their chaplain duties.

¹ Baptist Faith & Message 2000
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Legal Support

Chaplains who are accused (arrested or charged) of misconduct concerning the performance of their ministry or in their personal lives are expected to immediately inform the LBF Endorsing Team. Situations involving chaplains that require “professional discipline” come within this same procedure/expectation. The chaplain must recognize that their ministry may be terminated (endorsement removed) due to a loss of respect and trust within their institution. The desire of the Endorsing Team is to be of assistance to the chaplain and their family. However, the Endorsing Team cannot provide legal advice or direct legal advocacy. Should the need arise, chaplains are encouraged to consult with third-party legal professionals as appropriate.

Privileged and Confidential Communications

Conversations between a person and a chaplain usually occur because of trust in the chaplain. When faced with a decision about a privileged or confidential communication, the LBF Chaplain must be aware of federal, state and local laws governing reporting requirements in the jurisdiction in which they minister. Some chaplains may be considered a mandated reporter especially in cases of suspected child abuse or neglect. Every chaplain should know the policies of their institution and professional practices within their specialized ministry. Confidentiality should be maintained as fully as possible within the limits of the law.

Liability Insurance

Chaplains should consult with their institution to determine whether they have liability coverage for the exercise of their ministry. LBF nor LCN provide liability insurance coverage for endorsed LBF chaplains.

Appendix 1: THEOLOGICAL PREAMBLE

The LBF Doctrinal Statement lists the basic statements on doctrine by which Baptists order their lives and service.

Liberty Baptist Fellowship chaplains who are certified for endorsement stand in special relationship to LBF churches. Because of their unique relationship, the following Biblical Guidelines are provided as clarification of the Doctrinal Statement in selected subject areas.

Adherence to these LBF Guidelines and Doctrinal Statement rests primarily with the chaplain. Herein, the LBF chaplain is bound ethically to honor his well- understood commitment to these Biblical Guidelines, Doctrinal Statement and Contractual Agreement.

The chaplain's personal responsibility does not, however, obviate LBF's institutional responsibility for enforcement.

Occasionally word will come that a chaplain is in violation of one or more of the Biblical Guidelines. In such an event, the LBF desires that the following scenario of actions shall transpire:

1. Moving from a primary motive of restoring such a one (Gal. 6:1), the Endorsing Agent will meet virtually with the chaplain to ascertain the facts, confront in love, and decide on further needed actions.
2. If the problem is insoluble through a virtual pastoral visit, or if, in the Endorsing Agent's judgment, the chaplain has disgraced himself or LBF, the Endorsing Agent will place the matter before the Endorser Committee.
3. If the Committee is convinced of the seriousness of the problem, it may appoint a member to meet with the chaplain for a further attempt at restoration, or it may withdraw endorsement.

Appendix 2: BIBLICAL GUIDELINES

I. Personal Conduct

The law of brotherly love expressed in I Corinthians 8:9 and 13 shall be normative for the walk of the LBF chaplain. He shall avoid all conduct which may be a stumbling block to others, such as the use of intoxicating beverages and tobacco, and all other questionable habits and indulgences. He shall uphold the sanctity of the marriage relationship and the home as taught by the Word of God.

You are to minister to all persons regardless of their lifestyle choices, ethnicity, or religious preference. In providing this ministry you are not condoning and or approving of behaviors the Scriptures (Holy Bible) define as sinful. If you are called upon or requested to participate in any such behavior that would harm your testimony or LBF's stance you must refrain/not participate in said function. For example, if you are requested to conduct a marriage ceremony that you believe or LBF would not agree to then you must decline. If you are asked to bless or pray for an event that is contrary to the Word of God then you must decline. If for any reason an event is published as an event that would discredit God's Word, your personal faith or LBF's Doctrinal statement you must decline. Any violation of this could cause LBF to withdraw your endorsement. If you ever feel forced to commit such violations, you must contact us immediately.

If at any time you are told you cannot speak/preach on any portion of the Word of God or you believe that your religious liberty has been threatened, we expect that you will inform our office immediately. This has and will be our policy concerning your religious liberty.

II. Ecumenism

Liberty Baptist Fellowship chaplains may not be required to enter into ecumenical worship depending upon the type of Ecumenical Worship Service and how it is to be conducted. The key to this area is to be a team player with your other chaplain faiths without compromising your personal faith or LBF.

We recognize the rights and privileges of other religious bodies, but do not desire to enter into ecumenical worship with them.

III. Baptism

Liberty Baptist Fellowship chaplains will baptize only under the specific authority of their sending church and only by immersion (Matthew 3:14-16; Romans 6:3,4). LBF chaplains will refer those whom they baptize to a Liberty Baptist Fellowship church upon the new believer's change of assignment. When an LBF church is not available chaplains should refer individuals to a Christ Centered Church of like faith and practice.

IV. The Lord's Supper

Liberty Baptist Fellowship chaplains will administer the Lord's Supper under the authority of their sending LBF church and will only use the elements of bread and non-alcoholic grape juice. They shall be free to invite all who know Christ as their Lord and Savior to partake of the elements after solemn self-examination.

V. Offerings & Dues

Liberty Baptist Fellowship chaplains are considered representatives of their sending churches. Therefore, their primary giving should be given to their sending church.

Liberty Baptist Fellowship chaplains are required to support the fellowship with annual dues collected on a monthly or yearly basis. Additionally, chaplains are encouraged to take chapel and church offerings for LBF. All dues and offerings will be restricted for use to support LBF expenses that are relevant to ensure LBF and LBF chaplains are cared for and supported.

VI. Marriage

Liberty Baptist Fellowship chaplains will exercise prayerful judgment in the performance of marriages, seeking God's will in each case, always endeavoring to be in obedience to God's Word. Three biblical principles are particularly pertinent.

1. Marriage is between one man and one woman (Gen 2:24; Matt 19:5; Eph 5:31; Lev 18:22).
2. Marriage is to be between a man and woman of like faith. II Cor. 6:14; I Cor. 7:39; I Cor. 10:21; and Eph. 5:6-11, set forth the LBF principle, "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers." Therefore, chaplains should examine carefully the spiritual condition of those who request marriage.
3. Marriage is a covenant relationship and should be ended only by death of a spouse. However, two biblical exceptions are given in Scripture for divorce and possible remarriage (Matt. 5:31-32; Matt. 19:3-11; Mark 10:2-12; and I Cor. 7:1-16). Herein, it will be the chaplain's Christian judgment and prayer on marrying divorced persons. Where exceptions are felt to be justified, however, LBF chaplains should remarry only persons whose divorces are considered to be biblically valid, as the chaplain prayerfully applies his best judgment to each situation.

VII: Glossolalia and Healing

LBF will endorse only those chaplains who refrain from the practices of speaking in tongues publicly and conducting public healing services.

Appendix 3: DOCTRINAL STATEMENTS

I. OF THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men supernaturally inspired; that it has truth without any admixture of error for its matter; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man; the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.

1. By “the Holy Bible” we mean that collection of sixty-six books from Genesis to the Revelation which, as originally written, does not only contain and convey the Word of God, but is the very Word of God.
2. By “Inspiration” we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit in such a definite way, that their writings were supernaturally and verbally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be inspired.

II. THE TRUE GOD

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite intelligent Spirit, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead, there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

III. THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person; equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He was active in the creation, and in his relation to the unbelieving world, He restrains the evil one until God’s purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, of judgment and of righteousness; that He bears witness to the truth of the gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the agent in the New birth; that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and helps the believer.

IV. OF THE DEVIL OR SATAN

We believe that Satan was once holy and enjoyed heavenly honors; but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell and drew after him a host of angels, that he is now the malignant prince of the power of the air, and the unholy god of this world. We hold him to be man’s great tempter, the enemy of God and His Christ, the accuser of the saints, the author of all false religions, the chief power back of the present apostasy; the lord of the Antichrist, and the author of all the powers of darkness—destined, however, final defeat at the hands of God’s Son, and the judgement of an eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for him and his angels.

V. OF THE CREATION

We believe in the Genesis account of creation, and that it is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically or figuratively; that man was created directly in God's own image and after His own likeness; that man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species, or developments through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms, that all animals and vegetable life were made directly, and God's established law was that they should bring forth only "after their kind".

VI. OF THE FALL OF MAN

We believe that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression, fell from his sinless and happy state, in consequence of which, all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint, but by choice; and therefore, under just condemnation without defense or excuse.

VII. OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH

We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner; born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of a woman, and He is both the Son of God and God the Son.

VIII. OF THE ATONEMENT FOR SIN

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace, through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon him our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins; that his atonement consisted not in setting us an example by his death as a martyr, but was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the just dying for the unjust, Christ the Lord, bearing our sins in his own body on the tree; that, having arisen from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven and uniting in his wonderful person the most tender sympathies with divine perfection. He is every way qualified to be a suitable, compassionate and an all-sufficient Savior.

IX. OF GRACE IN THE NEW CREATION

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Jesus Christ; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth, the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; that the proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life.

X. OF THE FREENESS OF SALVATION

We believe in God's electing grace; that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is their immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel; which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.

XI. OF JUSTIFICATION

We believe that the great Gospel which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is justification; that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works or righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed unto us.

XII. OF REPENTANCE AND FAITH

We believe that repentance and faith are solemn obligations; and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God; thereby, being deeply convicted of our guilt, danger and helplessness, and of the way of Salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession and supplication for mercy; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and openly confess Him as our only and all-sufficient Savior.

XIII. OF THE CHURCH

We believe that a church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; that its officers of ordination are pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures; we believe the true mission of the church is found in the Great Commission: First, to make individual disciples; second, to build up the Church; third, to teach and instruct as He commanded. We do not believe in the reversal of this order; we hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit; that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel; that every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; on all matters of membership, of policy, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final.

XIV. OF BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, with the authority of the local church, to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem of our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation and to the lord's Supper; in which the members of the church, by the sacred

use of the bread and the cup, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ and celebration of His soon return, preceded always by solemn self- examination.

XV. THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto eternal salvation.

XVI. OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem; while all such as continue impenitence and unbelief and in His sight wicked, and under the curse, and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost.

XVII. OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for; conscientiously honored and obeyed; except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ; who is the only lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the kings of earth.

XVIII. OF THE RESURRECTION AND RETURN OF CHRIST AND RELATED EVENTS

We believe in and accept the sacred Scriptures upon these subjects at their face and full value. Of the resurrection, we believe that Christ arose bodily “the third day according to the Scriptures”; that He ascended “to the right hand of the throne of God”, that He alone is our “merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God”; “that this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven”—bodily, personally, and visibly; that the “dead in Christ shall rise first”; “to the right hand of the throne of God”, that He alone is our “merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God”; “that this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven”—bodily, personally, and visibly; that the “dead in Christ shall rise first”; that the living saints “shall be changed in a moment”, “in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump”; “that the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His Father David”; and that “Christ shall reign a thousand years in righteousness until he hath put all enemies under His feet.”

XIX. OF MISSIONS

We believe that the command to give the Gospel to the world is clear and unmistakable and this commission was given to the churches.

XX. OF THE GRACE OF GIVING

We believe that God's method of financing His earthly work of spreading the Gospel to all nations, the care of the churches and the support of the ministry is by the tithes and offerings of His people. It is to be given to the Lord through His church or storehouse to be distributed as directed by the leadership of the Spirit as the need arises. The time to tithe is upon the first day of the week. Everyone is accountable to the Lord for one-tenth of his income and tithing was instituted long before the law was ever given and practiced by the early church.

Appendix 4: DOMA GUIDELINES

LBF Endorsed Chaplains Guidance in Response to the Supreme Court Ruling on the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) on 26 June 2013.

In light of the Supreme Court ruling on Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which states "the word 'marriage' means only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife, and the word 'spouse' refers only to a person of the opposite sex who is a husband or a wife" is unconstitutional, and the resultant Department of Defense policy changes to extend benefits to same-sex domestic partners as spouses the following policy guidance for conducting ministry for all military and VA chaplains who are endorsed by the Liberty Baptist Fellowship are as follows:

Doctrine

All religious ministry and pastoral care conducted by military and VA chaplains endorsed by LBF will fully reflect the doctrine and practices set forth by Liberty Baptist Fellowship's doctrinal statement that all LBF Chaplains sign and agree to before becoming endorsed. Doctrinal statement is located at <https://libertychaplains.org/>.

Ministry of Presence

LBF stands firm and fully believes that "all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography" are condemned by Holy Scripture as sin. Such practices violate God's biblical standards for sexual purity and are equally destructive to healthy marital relations and Christian social order. Responsible and caring ministry offered by LBF Chaplains will seek to offer repentance and forgiveness, help and healing, and restoration through the mercy and grace of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Limitations

In harmony with Holy Scripture, LBF chaplains will not conduct or attend a wedding ceremony for any same sex couple, bless such a union or perform counseling in support of such a union, assist or support paid contractors or volunteers leading same-sex relational events, nor offer any kind of relationship training or retreat, on or off of a military installation, that would give the appearance of accepting the homosexual lifestyle or sexual wrongdoing. This biblical prohibition remains in effect irrespective of any civil law authorizing same sex marriage or benefits to the contrary. Chaplains in violation of these restrictions will be subject to removal of their endorsement in accordance with *The Liberty Baptist Fellowship Endorsement Policies and Guidelines*.

Expectations

Chaplains are free to lead or participate in a worship service conducted on any military or VA installation or location designated for worship. This excludes conducting a service jointly with a chaplain, contractor or volunteer who personally practices or affirms a homosexual lifestyle or such conduct.

Pluralism

All military and VA chaplains without exception are endorsed to ensure the free exercise of religion for all service members according to DOD 1304.28, par. 6.1.2 while serving in the pluralistic environment of the military. Every chaplain remains protected under DOD policy and applicable federal law to preach, teach, counsel and provide ministry of presence in accordance with the tenets of their denominational faith group and their own religious conscience.

Therefore, endorsed Liberty Baptist Fellowship military and VA chaplains will:

1. Provide sound, biblical pastoral care for all service members, DoD personnel and their families.
2. Conduct religious support and pastoral care in accordance with the LBF Chaplain Endorsement guidelines.
3. Treat all service members, DoD personnel and their families regardless of rank or behavior, with Christ-centered dignity, honor and respect while assisting the institutional leadership in its religious mission requirements and responsibilities as guaranteed by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

Liberty Baptist Fellowship firmly believes and supports this vital ministry to our military, DoD personal and their families. We believe the above guidance will allow you to continue to offer outstanding ministry as it relates to worship, counseling, ministry of presence and readiness. We firmly believe these guidelines offers you direction and security in your ministry due to the new changes to DOMA.

If you need to discuss these guidelines further, or if you experience undue prejudice or irreparable harm as a result of following these expectations, please contact Liberty Baptist Fellowship immediately, at (434) 592-7649.

Appendix 5: HUMAN SEXUALITY ISSUES

Background

As a result of shifts in public opinion and consequent policy changes, Chaplains working in pluralistic ministry environments now face a wide range of issues surrounding human sexuality such as gender identity, transgenderism, and same-sex attraction and marriage. While these issues may appear new and unrelated, they are rooted in a broader misunderstanding of God's design of men and women in His image and the biblical understanding of the functions of human sexuality, singleness, and marriage. In order to engage the culture on these issues, Chaplains should preach, teach, and counsel about these issues within a holistic, biblical view of human sexuality as designed by God. This should be proactive, demonstrating our commitment to human flourishing as designed by God rather than reactive opposition to cultural change.

Doctrine

The LBF does not permit its endorsed Chaplains to condone beliefs or behavior that the Bible, as the Word of God condemns, or forbids. With reference to the military's stance on human sexuality to include gender identity, transgenderism, homosexuality, and same-sex attraction and marriage, all LBF Chaplains are expected to remain faithful to the Word of God, doctrinal practices, pastoral ministry, ordination vows, and Liberty Baptist Fellowship. The following broad biblical, theological commitments form the foundation of our understanding of these issues and are supported by our founding documents and Theological Preamble:

- All men and women are created in the image of God and are therefore to be treated with dignity and respect at all times.
- God created humanity with engendered souls (male and female) and complementary counterparts. While our gender is part of our identity, it is not our complete identity, especially for believers whose primary identity is in Christ.
- Marriage is an institution created by God for the benefit of men and women and the good order of society and is recognized as a covenantal union between one man and one woman. The State may regulate marriage or unions for its own purposes, but this does not change the Christian's understanding of God's basic intent for this institution.
- The Fall has twisted God's good gift of sexuality, resulting in distortions that often create tragic consequences and struggles for individuals and the culture. Any intimate, physical relationship outside the covenant of marriage, whether with the same or opposite gender, is a violation of God's will.
- The Gospel redeems fallen humanity in Christ restoring God's original intent for creation.
- We affirm the power of God through the redemptive work of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit to forgive, renew and transform men and women engaged in sinful sexual behavior around their sexuality.

Pastoral Guidance

It is an LBF chaplain's duty to identify as sin any sexual relationship that violates the Word of God. However, Chaplains are encouraged to provide spiritual counsel and guidance to the servicemember struggling with homosexuality, same-sex attraction, transgenderism or gender identity and to urge them to repent of this sin and follow Christ, as they would for any sin of a sexual nature. LBF Chaplains are expected to minister in accordance with the whole counsel of God and therefore should preach, teach, and counsel the whole counsel of God on matters of human sexuality. They should endeavor to teach what is biblically affirmed about human sexuality from a biblical, theological framework remembering that the ministry is for all service members.

Liberty Baptist Fellowship leadership encourages its Chaplains to promptly contact the LBF Endorser or an Associate Endorser for such assistance and protection as we are able to provide, if the Chaplain is challenged by a commander or senior member of his chain of command, his staff Chaplain supervisor(s), or any senior military leader to cease and desist from the Chaplain's refusal to perform the above prohibited services.



Dr. Steven E. Keith, Ch, Col, USAF (Ret.) Endorsing Agent
Liberty Baptist Fellowship