

## 20 Reasons to Join the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada

If God is calling you and your church towards affiliating with the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada, here are 20 great reasons to join us:

- 1. Access to Resources offered by Canadian Baptist staff.** Under the direction of the Executive Minister, Canadian Baptist staff members are available to all churches, pastors and camps/agencies, providing support and guidance as required or requested. The three geographical regions – BC/Yukon, Alberta, and the Heartland (Saskatchewan & Manitoba) each have a Regional Minister who is actively involved in providing spiritual help and support to all our churches and pastors. In addition, CBWC staff are also available to support churches in specific areas such as clergy care, conflict management, strategic planning, financial management and outreach.
- 2. Access to Resource Networks.** To help individual churches overcome the challenge of getting ministries started and sustaining them, the CBWC has created some resource networks in key ministry areas. Canadian Baptist staff coordinate networks of churches and leaders in youth ministry, short-term missions, children and family ministry (CFAM), Women in Focus, urban camping, and refugees & uprooted peoples. These networks make resources (such as curriculum, workshops and speakers) available to churches, coordinate partnerships among churches, and provide ongoing guidance and encouragement.
- 3. Education and support.** Carey Theological College is the pastoral and lay training arm of the local church. Located in Vancouver, it equips individuals, groups of people and clusters of churches for ministry online and where they are located. Satellite campuses and church-based learning clusters are located as far away as eastern Manitoba. Online learning is available to everyone who has access to a computer. Carey provides the only online – and most affordable – Master of Divinity degree for pastoral training in Canada, offering it in both English and Mandarin. It also offers a Doctorate of Ministry and a Masters in Pastoral Ministry. Through the William Carey Institute, it provides undergraduate-level certificates and diplomas, lay training and workshops. The Centre for Spiritual Formation offers workshops and practical training in spiritual formation. An international Certificate of Ministry is offered to students in Kenya and Bolivia. There are presently over 600 full and part time students involved in one of Carey's educational programs, not including those in international locations.
- 4. CBWC Assembly.** The CBWC Assembly is held annually to encourage:
  - fellowship and challenge amongst our churches and agencies
  - coordination of the Vision and Mission of our churches
  - spiritual input and worship for edification
  - policy decisions regarding ongoing issues, and
  - Information about the work we do together.

5. **Efficiencies of Scale.** Working together as a family of churches, we can accomplish more for God than going forward alone. The gifts and experiences of one church will be an asset to other churches. For example, a cooperative local mission among young people through Urban Camping day camps or residential camps, evangelism, training seminars, short term mission trips, and even bulk purchasing camp supplies offer a few examples of the huge variety of ways that ministry can be multiplied among us.
6. **Church health and planting coordination.** Resources and staff are available to help churches become healthy and to fulfill the mandate of reaching beyond themselves into communities and regions. Particular emphasis is placed upon enabling congregations to be Christ's Church in the community, rather than places where people attend passively and are entertained with a menu of programmes.
7. **Supplementary agencies.** Canadian Baptists directly support various agencies and ministries in western Canada including:
  - 8 camps (2 in BC, 3 in Alberta, 2 in Saskatchewan, 1 in Manitoba)
  - Chaplaincy services among prisons, the military and in hospitals.
  - Special ministries such as Joy Fellowship (disabled and handicapped ministries) and the Mustard Seeds in Edmonton, Calgary and Victoria (compassion for the impoverished) were initiated by CBWC.
8. **National focus.** Through associations with our sister denominations across Canada, we share resources, support Canadian Baptists Ministries (see below) and strengthen God's kingdom across Canada. We are affiliated with Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, Union d'Eglises de Baptistes, and the Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches. Our sister denomination in Quebec, the Union d'Eglises de Baptistes, serves the largest identified unreached group of people in North America.
9. **Canadian Baptist Ministries (CBM).** CBM is the international missions arm of four sister denominations including Canadian Baptists. Corporately, CBM ministers in some thirty countries around the world, as partners with local churches or denominations in evangelism, pastoral training and personal assistance. CBM also has a relief arm called the Sharing Way, providing practical assistance in times of famine, water shortages, or unforeseen catastrophe. In each case we work with the local churches to make sure that aid is directed to those who are most in need. You will be pleased to know that the first 25 cents of every \$1 contributed by churches to the CBWC is forwarded directly to CBM.
10. **Access to the Development Foundation.** The Canadian Baptists of Western Canada Foundation, formerly known as the Baptist Union Development Foundation (BUDF), provides resourcing and financial services to Canadian Baptist pastors and churches including:
  - Foundation Fund (deposit loan program),
  - Development Fund (funding CBWC priorities),
  - Planned Giving Services (encouraging and supporting gifts and planned gifts to support churches and ministries of the CBWC) including seminars (How to leave a well structured estate), Stewardship Services (including stewardship seminars - Good \$ense),
  - personal pastoral financial support
  - investment services for the CBWC, its members and churches.
11. **Opportunity Fund.** The Opportunity Fund (formerly known as the Trinity Opportunity Fund) provides churches and ministries with small amounts of funding for new and innovative special projects like buying webcasting equipment, starting up a social enterprise, or establishing a social justice ministry.
12. **Resource library.** Training and educational resources are available through the online library at the CBWC website, the CBWC Office and Regional offices at no charge. The CBWC covers mailing and handling costs. Treasurers' Seminars are also available upon request.
13. **Pastoral transition services.** Congregations require experienced guides during times of pastoral transition. Canadian Baptist staff will visit onsite to provide leadership for churches that are establishing search committees, evaluating local community needs, determining ministry priorities and reasonable salary packages. The CBWC Settlement Coordinator provides profiles of gifted and qualified candidates to the local church.

- 14. Credentialing pastors and ministry workers.** Canadian Baptists support all churches to maintain standards of education and personal faith commitments of pastors and ministry workers. The Ministerial Credentials Committee seeks to ensure that all pastors and ministry workers know and adhere to our common CBWC manual, *Ministerial Policies and Procedures, and Protocol*. Through the credentialing process, the CBWC seeks to ensure that individuals have common commitments and levels of acceptability for gospel ministry. Credentialing includes issues such as:
- ordination procedures through an Ordination Examining Council
  - government registration for licensing for conducting marriages
  - maintaining active ministry information profiles of pastors and ministry workers, and
  - licensing pastors and ministry workers in all our churches and agencies.
  - Credentialing services include:
    - New Pastors Orientation,
    - Baptist Identity Courses, and
    - Graduate internships
    - Ordination preparation mini-semester in coordination with Carey Theological College.
- 15. Health and benefit packages.** Through the Canadian Baptists, churches are able to provide Health and Benefit packages for all staff in a church that work more than 0.5 FTE per week. This includes: health, dental and travel insurance for workers and dependants.
- 16. Pension and life insurance packages.** The CBWC provides a pension plan and life insurance plan suited to all staff in our churches and agencies.
- 17. Pastors' and spouses' conferences.** Conferences are coordinated to fulfill many of needs related to serving in pastoral and ministry situations. The annual Banff Pastors' and Spouses' Conference is available to all pastors, ministry workers and their spouses. This is a key conference for providing networking opportunities and professional development for all staff. Yearly Regional Conferences are held in the 3 Regions of the Canadian Baptists and are available to all staff.
- 18. Accountability.** From time to time in the life of a congregation, individuals or groups can take the church in a direction that may be Biblically unsound or simply against the will of the majority, without a clear voice or leader. In such cases and upon the request of the Canadian Baptist Assembly, denominational leaders will provide clarity and direction. In cases where a pastor has violated ministerial protocol and ethical/moral guidelines, his/her credentials will be removed. A process of restoration is available for those who wish to be restored.
- 19. Liability and risk management services.** Canadian Baptists provide ongoing liability and risk management service for churches and pastors to prevent and/or prepare for various legal challenges. A Liability and Risk Management Manual has been provided to all churches and agencies within the denomination. The CBWC continues to provide regular legal and counselling help in this area.
- 20. Conflict management services.** Canadian Baptists provide ongoing conflict management mediation service for churches and pastors that find themselves in conflicted situations.