

**AMERICAN BAPTIST  
RESOLUTION OF THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN  
THE AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES**

WHEREAS, Jesus, who came to bring salvation to all persons and set at liberty all those who are oppressed, calls us to work for the liberation of all persons;

WHEREAS, the empowerment of women is one of the most important issues facing the church today, and the mission of the church of Jesus Christ requires the talents of women as well as men;

WHEREAS, the American Baptist Churches USA in 1969 urged its affiliated organizations and churches to:

- (1) Reverse the declining number of positions held by professionally trained women in local churches, states, cities and regional and national staffs;
- (2) Establish policies and practices in electing and appointing persons to offices, committees and boards to ensure more adequate opportunities for women;
- (3) Give equal status to women in positions of major responsibility (deacons, moderators, trustees, etc.) within the local church;

WHEREAS, the General Board established the American Baptist Churches Task Force on Women in February 1974, as a "channel for creating a climate in which each person has the opportunity to take the risks to become the full person God intended and to use fully her or his God-given gifts";

WHEREAS, the General Board, in December 1976, adopted a Policy Statement on Human Rights which states that the American Baptist Churches in the USA will support programs and measures to assure the following rights:

The right to develop skills and abilities, to utilize these in economic, political, social, intellectual and religious institutions, and to receive a just return for one's labor;

The right to human dignity, to be respected and treated as a person, and to be protected against discrimination without regard to age, sex, race, class, marital status, income, national origin, legal status, culture or condition in society; and

WHEREAS, in 1985 and 1990, the General Board adopted and affirmed the Policy Statement on Women and Men as Partners in Church and Society stating: "we affirm that for the church to be whole and effective in its witness, it must have both women and men of all races as full partners of its ministry" and "we affirm that the churches, as well as secular organizations, should offer employment opportunities for women and men with equal compensation, recognition and appreciation":

1. RESOLVED, that the General and National Boards instruct their staffs to accelerate actions which will eliminate institutional sexism and empower women within the national and general corporations of the ABC; and
2. RESOLVED, that the General Board encourage the staff of all Covenanting and Affiliating Organizations and American Baptist related institutions to initiate actions which will work toward the elimination of institutional sexism and empower women within their respective organizations.

Section 1 is directed to the Office of the General Secretary, Offices of National Boards, and administratively related organizations.

Section 2 is directed to Regions, States, Cities, schools and colleges, homes and hospitals.

Adopted by the General Board of American Baptist Churches - December 1977

Updated for SCOR language - October 1981

Continued by the General Board for another four years - June 1982

Modified by the Executive Committee of the General Board - December 1990

Modified by the Executive Committee of the General Board - March 1995

Modified by the Executive Committee of the General Board - September 1999

(General Board Reference # - 8019:10/81)

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**POLICY BASE** - (Policy Base is previously quoted in the resolution.)