The Complete Book of Memorials of the Communion of Reformed Evangelical Churches

The Memorials of the Communion of Reformed Evangelical Churches (CREC) serve as official denominational declarations regarding ethical, cultural, theological, and practical matters that are not formally codified within the historic confessions of faith. Incorporating these statements by reference into the CREC Constitution provides member congregations, candidate churches, and broader judicatories with a unified, biblically grounded witness on contemporary issues.

1. Constitutional Framework and Operational Rules

Purpose and Constitutional Authority

Under Article IX of the CREC Constitution, Memorials state the official position of the denomination on issues where a formal confessional statement has not been made. While historic creeds and confessions define the core doctrinal system of CREC churches, Memorials allow the broader assembly to address specific moral, social, and ecclesiastical questions that require a unified voice across all member presbyteries.

Adoption and Amendment Protocols

The procedure for adopting or revising a Memorial is structured to ensure deliberate reflection and theological consensus:

- Two-Council Process : Any proposed Memorial must be approved as a draft at a stated Council meeting and can only be formally adopted at a subsequent stated Council meeting (typically three years later). This multi-year gap guarantees that local sessions and presbyteries have ample opportunity to examine, debate, and refine the text.
- Striving for Like-Mindedness : As highlighted in the Book of Memorials introduction, this deliberate process guards the denomination against theological fads and cultural pressures, promoting steadfastness in biblical truth.
- Length Constraints : Every Memorial must be submitted in a concise form not exceeding 100 words. A Memorial may be accompanied by one or more supporting resource papers (up to 5,000 words each), which are housed separately in the CREC Book of Resources to provide extended theological argumentation without expanding the binding text itself.

Requirements for Member and Candidate Churches

Declarations concerning Memorials form an integral part of church reception and ongoing standing within the CREC:

- Candidate and Mission Churches : Prospective member churches must explicitly declare any exceptions or reservations to the established Memorials prior to admission into full CREC membership.
- Duty of Notification : Member churches are constitutionally obligated to notify the presbytery immediately if their local session alters its position on any Memorial.

- Judicial Review : If a presbytery determines that a local church's exceptions or reservations place it out of harmony with denominational standards, formal judicial inquiry or proceedings may be initiated under the Constitution.

2. Ratified Denominational Memorials

Memorial A: Ministerial Training

We believe that ministerial training is best conducted under the oversight of a local session, including an intense apprenticeship within the church which tests and develops the gifts, skills, knowledge, and spiritual qualifications of the candidate. At the same time, we recognize that many local congregations lack the resources to provide rigorous academic training, including training in the original languages. Therefore, we still see a place for churches to send men to seminaries, while retaining their responsibility to oversee and facilitate the training. Ideally seminaries would function as an academic extension which supplement the overall training program of the church.

Memorial B: Confessional Revision

Our process of confessional revision is established so that the differences between our churches may be resolved over time by a careful striving for like-mindedness. The process is established to work in a slow and deliberate fashion so that we will be less susceptible to various fads and winds of doctrine (Eph. 4:14).

Memorial C: Christian Education

God has explicitly commanded parents to bring up their children in the education and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). Given the impossibility of neutrality in education, we do heartily affirm the necessity of educating our children in a manner that is explicitly Christian in content and rigor. While parents who do not fully understand the indispensability of Christian education should be warmly received into membership, we nevertheless encourage Christian parents to seek alternatives to the government school system. In cases, where Christian education is an impossibility, parents must be active and diligent in overseeing the education of their children.

Memorial D: Creation in Six Days

God is the Author of history. Poetic descriptions and multivalent meanings of Scriptural history never negate the reality of historical events. God reveals in Genesis 1 that he created all there is in the space of six days. Man is to pattern his own work-rest rhythm according to the pattern of God’s work-rest rhythm in creation (Exodus 20:8-11), a command that assumes the reality and definition of the original creation days as being the normal twenty-four-hour days we experience. We reject any interpretation that redefines these days into anything other than six sequential twenty-four-hour days.

Contextual Note : Formally titled Creation in Six Days following revisions at the 2023 Council, Memorial D explicitly affirms calendar-day creationism, grounding the sabbath principle in the literal historical sequence of Genesis 1.

Memorial E: Terrorism and Warfare

Christians are called by our Lord to be peacemakers. We therefore renounce all acts of aggression and terrorism, while recognizing the right to self-defense for individuals and nations. Combat is lawful when it defends life, liberty, and property against criminal action. Biblical principles of warfare must be followed, never returning evil for evil, nor may women or children be mustered for combat. While God may use the actions of wicked men to administer judgment on persons or nations, His hidden decrees have not been revealed to us. Regardless, it is appropriate to respond to such events with humility and repentance.

Memorial F: Sexual Perversion

Confessing the Bible to be the authoritative Word of God, we together with the unanimous testimony of the historic Church believe that God has spoken clearly and sufficiently to the issue of human sexuality. Perversion, in its varied forms, whether gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, violates God’s design for human sexuality and is sinful, therefore, in the eyes of God. The only remedy for this, and all other sin, is found in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. All who have strayed from this confession, should return to biblical faithfulness in a spirit of repentance.

Memorial G: Worship

Corporate worship on the Lord's Day is one of our highest privileges and greatest duties. God draws us into his special presence to serve us in Word and Sacrament. He uses this time to transform us, and the world, into his likeness. A church's liturgy must be shaped by the biblical pattern of worship, including a confession of sin, the preaching of the Word, and celebrating the Lord's Supper. Worshipers must respond to God's service with submission and joy, singing psalms and hymns with glorious music. The Scriptures require regular participation in the life and worship of a local church.

Memorial H: Abortion

Because unborn humans from conception bear the image of God and are innocent of criminal wrongdoing, the act of abortion is murder and results in a corporate guilt which defiles the land when justice is not pursued on behalf of the innocent. Therefore, we oppose taking unborn human life by any means including the various types of abortive procedures, the use of the so-called morning after pill, or the use of abortifacients. Even in those rare circumstances when a pregnancy causes an immediate threat to the life of a mother, the overriding priority is to preserve life, not take it.

Memorial I: Human Sexuality

Humans are created in the image of God and therefore receive the highest honor among God's creatures. Humanity consists of two sexes – male and female – each with unique gifts, callings, and authority. God designed sexual intimacy to be enjoyed in marriage, between one man and one woman, for union, protection, companionship, and procreation of children. Any desire or act that deviates from this design is sinful and destructive, such as premarital sex, pornography, adultery, polygamy, same-sex attraction, homosexual behavior, and transgenderism. Christians must strive to forsake these sins, by the power of the Holy Spirit, trusting in the forgiveness of Jesus.

Memorial J: Nations

We believe God made all nations from one man, Adam. At Babel God scattered their rebellious unity. But God, by the cross of Christ and His Spirit poured out at Pentecost, is reuniting and reconciling the nations, drawing them into one Church, the Body of Christ. Loving family, nation, and stranger in their order, idolizing or destroying none, we repudiate nationalistic and ethnic hatred, vainglory, and persecution. We seek to unite the nations in the worship of the triune God, sanctifying all peoples, languages, and customs to His glory.