



ROBERTS WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

RELATIONSHIP TO THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH

The goal of Roberts Wesleyan University is to serve well its various constituencies including the Free Methodist Church. The institution enjoys a covenant relationship with the Free Methodist Church. Although it is legally independent of the church, it chooses to continue to serve the church as it does the various publics. Titles to the institution and its properties and other assets are vested in the Board of Trustees of Roberts Wesleyan University, not in the Free Methodist Church of North America. However, the University desires and intends to continue membership in the Association of Free Methodist Educational Institutions. (AFMEI)

Because of the heritage of the University and its unique origin within the Free Methodist Church, we present here the theological faith position expected of Trustees, which also represent the broader evangelical Christian community in the center of which the FMCUSA finds itself.

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father and in His personal return in power and glory.
4. We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.
5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
6. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.
7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Trustees further agree that the *Free Methodist Book of Discipline* should influence the policies of the University.

In the spirit of covenant we seek here to define the relationship between the FMCUSA and Roberts Wesleyan University. It is our intent to further the work of Christ's kingdom and to seek the mutual benefit and health of both the denomination and our institution.

To define this relationship in terms of covenant means that:

- We seek first the work of Christ's kingdom through Christian higher education.

- We show a spirit that is positive, affirming and mutually respectful.
- We speak in terms that are realistic, healthy and based on clear guiding principles.
- We seek to work together in collaborative, contributing ways, where both the denomination and the school seek the well being of the other.

Roberts Wesleyan University traces its roots to the founder of the Free Methodist Church and we state in our Constitution our continuing commitment to this tradition.

We further define our relationship with the following statements:

- A. We are guided by an educational mission of Christian liberal arts and professional studies focused upon the integration of faith and learning in harmony with the teachings of scripture and the Articles of Religion of the Free Methodist Church-USA.
- B. We are governed by a Board of Trustees and at least 25 % of the board should be members of the Free Methodist Church. All Trustees are nominated according to qualifications established by the Board of Trustees and elected by that body. The Constitution, Trustee Handbook and institutional mission statements may be amended by the Board of Trustees by a vote of more than 75% of the membership present at the regularly scheduled meeting.
- C. All Trustees are personally committed to Jesus Christ. We affirm that the *Free Methodist Book of Discipline* should influence the policies of the institution.
- D. The president shall be a member of the Free Methodist Church who actively seeks to create a Free Methodist presence in the life and leadership of the institution.
- E. The chief academic officer shall be a member of the Free Methodist Church, or one who is in both conviction and spirit committed to Wesleyan theology and perspectives.
- F. We are staffed by full-time administrators and faculty who are personally committed to Jesus Christ, evangelical in spirit, called to the ministry of Christian higher education and oriented to the Free Methodist heritage of the institution.
- G. We are certified by the Free Methodist Church for the education of ordained clergy and lay ministers of the Free Methodist Church and are intentional in this responsibility to the ministry of the Church working with, among others, the Free Methodist Ministerial Advisory Board for the Northeast.
- H. We are represented by a seminary and a department of religion having a majority of full-time faculty who are members of the Free Methodist Church and/or sister Wesleyan denominations, with all members affirming Wesleyan theology and the Articles of Religion of the Free Methodist Church as the education focus for the institutions.
- I. We are related to the denomination by inviting a bishop or a former bishop to be a full voting member of the Board of Trustees and a member of our presidential search committee.
- J. We are supportive of the denomination by offering a course in Free Methodist history and theology available for all students and making available an annual opportunity for a chapel program/lecture series for the Board of Bishops to present Free Methodism and the Wesleyan tradition.
- K. We assure the Church quality education by maintaining regional accreditation and all appropriate professional accreditations.