

Connection's Statement of Faith

Connection Church is a church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Therefore, we are committed to contending for the faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3). In unity with the historic Christian church, we believe and confess the Apostles', Nicene, and Chalcedonian Creeds as accurate representations of Scripture's teaching.

The basic doctrines within Connection's Statement of Faith represent what we believe to be core elements of biblical teaching. We expect all members of Connection Church to affirm these doctrines.

The theological distinctives and convictions within Connection's Statement of Faith reflect what distinguishes Connection from other churches who would affirm the basic doctrines. These distinctives and convictions shape the way that Connection Church Rincon is led and the direction the church is heading. We do not expect all members to embrace all aspects of these distinctives, but members should expect that the distinctives will be maintained in all ministry environments at Connection Church Rincon, and members may not teach contrary to them.

Doctrine of God

We believe in one God, eternally existing as one essence and three distinct persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, each of whom is fully God, yet there is one God.

We believe in one God eternally existing as one essence and three distinct persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Each person is fully, equally, and eternally God, yet there is one God. Each person has precisely the same nature and attributes and is worthy of precisely the same worship, honor, and praise. The entire Christian faith is bound together with the confession of God's Trinitarian nature (Matt. 28:18-20). We believe in God the Father, the Creator of heaven and earth. We believe in the Son, God from God, eternally begotten but not made, who in history assumed to Himself a human nature for the sake of our salvation (John 1:14; Heb. 1:3). He is fully God and fully man. Through Him, all things came into being and were created. He was before all things, and in Him, all things hold together by the word of His power (Col.1:15-20). He suffered, died, was buried, resurrected, ascended, and sits at the right hand of the Father until He returns for the final judgment and consummation of the Kingdom. We believe in the Holy Spirit who eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son and is sent by the Father and Son to give new life (John 15:26-27). The Holy Spirit unites believers to Jesus Christ in faith, brings about the new birth and dwells within the regenerate (Eph. 1:13-14).

The Holy Spirit has come to glorify the Son who, in turn, came to glorify the Father. He will lead the Church into a right understanding and rich application of the truth of God's Word. He is to be respected, honored, and worshiped as God, the third person of the Trinity.

The triune God, Father, Son and Spirit, is the Creator of all things, visible and invisible. As the immortal and eternal Creator, He sovereignly rules over all of His creation (Ps. 24:1).

Doctrine of Revelation

God has made Himself known to the world in Jesus Christ, the Scriptures and creation.

We believe that God has made Himself known to His creation. He has revealed Himself to us in His Son, the incarnate Word (Heb.1:1-2), in Scripture, the inspired Word (2 Tim. 3:16), and in creation (Ps. 8; Rom. 1:20)

We believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the perfect revelation of who God is. Jesus Christ is the “image of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15), “the exact imprint of his nature” (Heb. 1:3) and a perfect reflection of God the Father (John 5:19).

We believe the Scriptures, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, are the inspired Word of God and are therefore without error in their original writings. These writings alone constitute the verbally inspired Word of God, which is utterly authoritative and free from error. The Scripture is sufficient for all that God requires for us to believe and do and is therefore to be believed, as God’s instruction, in all that it teaches; obeyed, as God’s command, in all that it requires; and trusted, as God’s pledge, in all that it promises (Is. 40:6-8). As God’s people hear, believe and obey the Word, they are equipped as disciples of Christ and witnesses to the gospel (Rom. 10:14-17).

Doctrine of Creation and Providence

We believe that God created the world from nothing and governs all things at all times in all places.

God created the whole world from nothing (Gen. 1:1-2; Ps. 24:1). God’s creative work is the overflow of the love present within the Trinitarian fellowship. Creation, according to the design of God, was good (Gen. 1:3-31). God doesn’t let the world exist; He makes the world exist. He upholds the universe by the word of His power, and He holds the world together in himself (Col. 1:17).

Doctrine of Humanity

We believe that all humanity is created in the image of God and possesses intrinsic dignity and worth.

God made humanity—male and female—in His own image (Gen. 1:27-30). Set apart as His image bearers, every human being is sacred. All men and all women, bearing the image of God, are meant to represent God in His creation (1 Cor. 10:31). God declares the created order to be

very good, distinguishing men and women as His agents to care for, manage and govern over it. They enjoy equal access to God by faith in Christ Jesus and are both called to move beyond passive self-indulgence to significant private and public engagement in family, church and civic life. Adam and Eve were made to complement each other in a one-flesh union in the covenant of marriage that establishes the only God-ordained pattern of sexual relations for men and women. In God's wise purposes, men and women are not simply interchangeable, but rather they complement each other in mutually enriching ways.

Distinctive || *Complementarianism*

Men and women are completely equal in essence, dignity and value but are distinct by divine design. As part of God's good, created order, men and women are to have different yet complementary roles and responsibilities in the home and church. As it relates to the church, men and women are both expected to lead; however, the office of elder is reserved for qualified men (1 Tim. 3; Titus 1).

Doctrine of Sin

We believe that sin has fractured all things, leaving the world in desperate need of salvation.

Through the temptation of Satan, humanity transgressed the command of God and fell from their original holiness and righteousness (Gen. 3). Now the entire human race inherits a corrupt nature that is opposed to God and His law (Rom. 3:9-20). Therefore, all humans are under condemnation. This depravity is radical and pervasive. It extends to the mind, will, body and affections. Unregenerate humanity lives under the dominion of sin and Satan (Eph. 2:1-3). He is at enmity with God, hostile toward and hateful of God.

Doctrine of Salvation

We believe that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

We believe that, due to universal death through sin, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless born again (John 3:5-8); that salvation is only by grace through faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ; and that all who receive the Lord Jesus Christ through faith are declared righteous by God and become children of God (Heb.10:19-25).

We believe the Scriptures teach that regeneration, or the new birth, is that act of God by which the Holy Spirit imparts a new nature and a new spiritual life, not before possessed, and the person becomes a new creation in Christ Jesus (Gal. 2:20). The mind is given a holy disposition and a new desire to serve God, the dominion of sin is broken, and the heart is transformed from a love of sin and self to a love of holiness and God.

Distinctive | | *Sovereignty of God in Salvation*

The salvation of humanity is fundamentally the work of God. Before the foundation of the world, God elected His people, setting His affection and grace upon them (Rom. 8:29-30). In love God predestined His people for adoption (Eph. 1:4-6). Faith is a gift of grace that is given by the mercy and pleasure of God, so that no one may boast. Apart from the intervention of God, humanity cannot choose of his own accord to worship God and pursue righteousness (Rom. 3; Eph. 2:1-3). God's sovereignty in salvation is comprehensive: from first to last, all of salvation is the work of God.

Doctrine of the Church

We believe that the Church is the body of Christ sent into the world to shine forth the glory of God.

God, by His Word and Spirit, creates the Church, calling sinful humanity into the fellowship of Christ's body (1 Cor. 12:12-31). By the same Word and Spirit, He guides and preserves that newly redeemed humanity. The Church is made up of those who have become genuine followers of Jesus Christ and have personally appropriated the gospel. The Church exists to worship and glorify God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The ministry of the Church is an extension of the ministry of Jesus in the power of the Spirit.

The ultimate mission of the Church is to bring glory to God by making disciples (Matt. 28:18-20). The Church is called to make disciples through worship, prayer, teaching of the Word, observance of the ordinances, fellowship, the exercise of our gifts and talents, and the proclamation of the gospel both in our community and throughout the world.

We believe there are two ordinances of the Church. One is that of believer's baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and the other is the Lord's Supper.

Water baptism is only intended for those who have received the saving benefits of Christ through the new birth of the Holy Spirit. In obedience to Christ's command and as a testimony to God, the Church, oneself and the world, believers are baptized by water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Water baptism is a command given to every Christian that represents a person's union with Christ in the likeness of His death, burial, and resurrection. It signifies that a former way of life has been put to death and vividly depicts the release from the mastery of Satan, sin, and death. It also signifies a belonging to the Church, the people of God.

Water baptism is an ordinance of the Lord by which those who have repented and come to faith in Christ express their union with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection, by being immersed in water in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is a sign of belonging to the new people of God, the true Israel, and an emblem of burial and cleansing, signifying death to the old life of unbelief, and purification from the pollution of sin.

As with water baptism, the Lord's Supper is to be observed only by those who have become genuine followers of Christ. This ordinance symbolizes the breaking of Christ's body and the shedding of His blood on our behalf and is to be observed repeatedly throughout the Christian life as a sign of continued participation in the atoning benefits of Christ's death. As we come to the table with an attitude of faith and self-examination, we remember and proclaim the death of Christ, receive spiritual nourishment for our souls and signify our unity with other members of Christ's body.

Distinctive || *Gifts of the Holy Spirit*

The gifts of the Holy Spirit that we see on display in the New Testament are still active within the life of the church. These gifts did not end with the close of the New Testament or the death of the last apostle (1 Cor. 12:1-11).

Distinctive || *Baptism by Immersion*

The precedent we find in the New Testament is baptism following conversion by immersion into water. Baptism by immersion is meant to symbolically depict the believer's real union to Christ in His death and resurrection (*Romans 6:1-14*).

Doctrine of Resurrection and Consummation of the Kingdom of God

We believe that Jesus Christ is returning to the world in the future to judge the living and the dead.

The consummation of all things includes the future, physical, visible, personal, and glorious return of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead and the glorification of those alive in Christ, the judgment of the just and the unjust, and the fulfillment of Christ's kingdom in the new heavens and the new earth. In the consummation, Satan, with his hosts and all those outside of Christ, are finally separated from the benevolent presence of God, enduring eternal punishment (Rev. 20:7-15), but the righteous, in glorious bodies, will live and reign with Him forever, serving Him and giving Him unending praise and glory. Then the eager expectation of creation will be fulfilled, and the whole earth shall proclaim the glory of God, who makes all things new (Rev. 21:1-5).

Connection Church's Convictions on Social Issues

**We aren't highlighting these areas because they are worse than others, but because they are highly debated in our culture. We want to equip you to align with the Bible and handle these issues in a way that honors God.*

Abortion

At Connection, we stand against abortion. Though the Bible never specifically addresses the issue of abortion, there are numerous teachings in Scripture that make it abundantly clear what God's view of abortion is. God is clear that He created each of us and formed us in our mother's wombs (Jeremiah 1:5; Psalm 139:13-16). We believe that God views the taking of a life, baby in the womb or adult, as murder. However, for those who have had an abortion, we believe that God still offers grace and forgiveness, and we would love to walk with you through this healing process.

Homosexuality

We believe that homosexuality is a sin. However, the Bible does not describe it as a "greater" sin than any other. It is just one of the many things listed in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. The Bible tells us that people become homosexuals because of sin (Romans 1:24-27) and ultimately because of their own choice. At Connection, we believe that God's forgiveness is available to all who repent (*turn from their sin*) and put their faith in Jesus.

Divorce

At Connection, we believe that God created marriage as a covenant to reflect His love for us (Ephesians 5:22-33). By definition, a covenant is designed to be permanent. Thus, we will never counsel someone toward a divorce, but will instead always counsel people toward forgiveness and reconciliation. Affairs do not end marriages, according to Jesus, hardness of heart is at the root of people choosing to divorce their spouse (Matthew 19:8; Malachi 2:16). The only time we counsel someone toward a separation is if abuse or illegal activity is occurring and a temporary separation is necessary for safety and to move toward reconciliation.

Alcohol

We do not believe that drinking alcohol is a sin, as Scripture never teaches that (Ecclesiastes 9:7; Psalm 104:14-15). However, Scripture is clear that getting drunk, or willfully being controlled by anything other than the Holy Spirit is sin (Ephesians 5:18; 1 Corinthians 6:12). Also, abuse of any substance (alcohol, drugs, food) is condemned in the Bible and is clearly sinful. At Connection, we teach that underage drinking is wrong because Scripture clearly tells us to submit to the governing authorities (Romans 13:1).

We also know that God's word talks about not causing other people to stumble just because you are expressing your freedom in Christ. We believe every Christian should be wise about when and where they partake of alcohol if they choose to do so (Matthew 18:7-9).

Sex Outside of Marriage

We believe that sex outside of the covenant of marriage is sin (1 Corinthians 6:18; Galatians 5:19). The Bible refers to this as "sexual immorality" which includes premarital sex, pornography, lust, homosexual relations, adultery, and any other kind of sexual relations outside of the marital covenant. The Bible is clear that God created sex and He alone can define the parameters for its use. God's Word is very clear that sex was created to be enjoyed between one man and one woman who are inside the covenant of marriage (Hebrews 13:4). Anything outside of that is sinful. For those who have fallen into the trap of sexual immorality, we believe that God offers forgiveness in Jesus and wants to help you abstain until marriage.

Gender and Sexuality

We believe that even though our culture has an ever-evolving definition of marriage, gender and sexuality, it is God alone, as creator, who has ultimate authority to prescribe and describe the marital relationship as well as human gender and sexuality. (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:1-9, Mark 10:1-12). As a consequence, we regard any and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or even lustful intent toward such, as sinful and ultimately unsatisfying. Moreover, we also regard as sinful the intent or desire to surgically alter one's biological sex to a different sex. Since the body is a creation of God, we hold sexual identity to be biologically determined, and associated gender norms are to be observed as appropriate to biblical standards. Disagreement with one's biological sex only leads to spiritual confusion and emotional chaos (Genesis 1:27, Romans 1:26-32, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Though sinful sexual expression is egregious (as is all sin), at Connection we believe the Gospel provides redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Ephesians 2:1-10, Titus 3:3-7) and we desire to walk with anyone through a process of healing and restoration.