



STATEMENT OF CHURCH PRACTICES

Introduction:

These statements do not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, composed of the Old and New Testaments, is the divinely inspired Word of God, the final and trustworthy authority for faith and practice. For purposes of the Church's faith, doctrine, practice and policy, our Advisory Board is the Church's final authority.

Redemption and Restoration:

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11) Furthermore, we believe:

1. That every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of the Church.
2. That the threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Cor. 5:6), to edify believers by deterring sin and promoting purity (1 Tim. 5:20), and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Gal. 6:1).
3. That the Lord Jesus Christ has entrusted the local church with the authority and responsibility to discipline for flagrant sin or serious doctrinal error, with the goal of the restoration of the offender. This discipline is entrusted to the Board of Ministry Deacons ("Board") and is to follow the biblical pattern as set forth in Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5; 2 Corinthians 2:7-8; Galatians 6:1; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; Titus 3:10-11; and 2 John 7-11.
4. That any member of this Church who practices or affirms a doctrine or conduct that, in the judgment of the Board, is opposed to the teaching of the Word of God or the Statement of Faith and Church Practice, is threatening to the testimony of this Church, or is divisive to the body, may be subject to church discipline. Discipline will follow the said biblical pattern and is an effort to bring the individual to repentance and protect the Church from unrepentant sin. Discipline may involve exclusion from participation in ministry or communion, termination of membership, and dismissal from the fellowship of this Church. The Board reserves discretion as to how a member may be disciplined. The Church staff or Board may report to the congregation the names of those who have been disciplined, and the reason for that discipline, as described in Matthew 18:15-20.
5. That the Bible commands us to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian church (Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 6:1-8). Therefore, the Church intends to settle any controversy, claim or dispute arising from or related to this agreement or your membership with the Church by biblically based mediation and, if necessary, legally binding arbitration in accordance with the Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation of the Institute for Christian Conciliation (complete text of the Rules is available at www.iccpeace.com).

MARRIAGE AND SINGLENES

We believe that singleness and marriage are both good gifts from God and that through both, the Gospel can be embodied and lived out. God's design for both singleness and marriage point to the ultimate wedding banquet of Christ and His Church in Heaven. The term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage. Any form of sexual immorality is sinful and offensive to God, including, but not limited to, adultery, premarital sex,



lascivious conduct, homosexual conduct, transgender conduct, incest, sexual abuse, and the use of pornography. Our expectation is that every unmarried staff member remains sexually abstinent and every married staff member will remain faithful to their spouse, only pursuing a romantic or dating relationship with their spouse, and will only engage in sexual intimacy with their spouse. (Genesis 1:27-28 // Genesis 2:18-25 // 1 Corinthians 6:18 // 1 Corinthians 7:1-4 // 1 Corinthians 7:8-9 // Ephesians 5:21-33 // Hebrews 13:4 // Revelation 21:1-4)

GENDER AND LGBTQIA+

God wonderfully and immutably creates each person in His image, as male and female. He created males and females as distinct, complementary genders that together reflect the image and nature of God. Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. According to Scripture and our example in Jesus Christ we are tasked with both boundless compassion and a call to biblical standards of sexual morality. We do not endorse same-sex romantic relationships and/or sexual/gender identities apart from male or female as given by God. We also do not endorse condemning, hate-filled, self-righteous attitudes or actions toward those in the LGBTQIA+ community. Instead we will commit to following Jesus' example of embodying compassionate grace and upholding Biblical truth as we love and serve others.

(Genesis 1:27-28 // Leviticus 18:22 // Leviticus 20:13 // John 8:7-11 // Romans 1:26-28 // 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 // 1 Corinthians 6:17-20 // 1 Corinthians 7:2)