

Leighton Church Statement of Faith

The Trinity

We believe in the one true God, all powerful, eternally existing, and manifesting Himself in three persons; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They are of one substance and equal in power and glory. The triune God is the creator, sustainer, and preserver of all that exists. (Genesis 1:1; Matthew 28:19; John 10:30)

Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ is both God and man. We believe that He existed eternally and at the appropriate time became incarnate by the power of the Holy Spirit in the virgin Mary and was born of her. We believe in his sinless life, in his miracles, in his vicarious and atoning death on the cross, in his bodily resurrection from the grave, in his ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in his personal return in power and glory. (John 1:1; Matthew 1:18, 25; Hebrews 4:15; Hebrews 9:15-22; I Corinthians 15:1-8; Acts 1:9-11; Hebrews 9:27-28)

The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is equal in being with the Father and the Son. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a Godly life. We believe that everyone who accepts Christ has the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit and that the Spirit will comfort, guide and teach them. (John 14:15-26; John 16:5-16; Ephesians 1:13-14; Romans 8:12-14)

Salvation

We believe salvation comes only through Jesus Christ and cannot be earned. It is a gift of God. Those who repent of their sin and believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior are born again, receive the gift of eternal life, and become children of God. That gift comes by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. (John 3:16-17, 5:24; Romans 3:23, 5:8-9; Ephesians 2:9-10; Titus 3:3-7)

Mankind

We believe that mankind was originally created in the image and likeness of God, but fell into sin through disobedience. This fall plunged all of humanity into a state of sin and spiritual death, and brought upon the entire human race the sentence of eternal separation from God. From this condition, we can only be saved by the grace of God, through faith in the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, and by the renewing power of the Holy Spirit. Those that believe in Christ will receive the gift of eternal life with God and those that reject Him will be condemned to eternal death. (Genesis 1:27, Genesis 3:1-24, John 3:16-17, Romans 3:23-26, I Corinthians 15:20-23, Ephesians 2:1-10, I Thessalonians 4:13-18, Revelation 21:1-8)

The Word of God

We believe that the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is the divinely inspired, infallible, inerrant, and authoritative Word of God, revealing His will concerning all things necessary for salvation and Christian living. (II Timothy 3:15-17; II Peter 1:20-21)

The Church

We believe the Christian Church consists of all those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, who are redeemed through His blood, and born again by the power of the Holy Spirit. We believe in the unity of all believers in Jesus Christ and in the importance of Christian community for spiritual growth in Christ and the conversion of the world. (Ephesians 1:22-23, 2:1-4, 4:15-16; Acts 2:41-47)

The Gifts and Fruit of the Spirit

We believe that all the gifts of the Holy Spirit are available to followers of Christ today and are given for the purpose of ministry in the church, and that the fruit of the Spirit are an outgrowth of a life dedicated to Christ. (I Corinthians 12:4-11; Galatians 5:22-24)

The Sacraments

We believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are the sacraments of the Church commanded by Christ. They are tokens of our profession of Christian faith and signs of God's gracious ministry toward us. They are an act of obedience and worship, through which God confirms and strengthens our faith.

We believe that water baptism is a sacrament of the Church, commanded by our Lord and administered to believers. It is a symbol of the new covenant of grace and signifies the acceptance of the benefits of the atonement of Jesus Christ. By means of this sacrament, believers declare their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.

We believe water baptism is appropriate for all who are able to make their own public profession of faith in Jesus Christ. Therefore, we believe it is also appropriate for Christian parents to profess their faith when bringing their infant children before God and the Church for dedication, just as Mary and Joseph did with Jesus. In that dedication, we recognize that the parents and the congregation pledge to do all they can to nurture those children in the faith until they can for themselves make their own profession of faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior. (Matthew 28:19, John 3:1-8, Acts 2:37-41, Luke 2:22-35)

We believe that the Lord's Supper is an act of remembrance and celebration. The symbols of bread and wine help us recall with thanksgiving the sacrifice Christ made for us on the cross, and call us to celebrate the salvation we have in Him. (Luke 22:14-20; I Corinthians 11:23-26)

Ministry of All Believers

We believe it is every believers call to share their faith with others so that they too may come to know Christ, for when He returns He will judge the living and the dead. Those who are saved will be welcomed to spend eternity with God and those who are lost will be eternally separated from him.

Statement of Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct for Leighton Church

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Leighton Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Board of Elders is Leighton Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

Statement on the Sanctity of Human Life for Leighton Church

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of immeasurable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Psalm 139)

Church Membership Agreement for Leighton Church

The membership of Leighton Church shall be composed of individuals who are baptized believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and who are willing to abide by the tenets of the Church's statement of faith, and who offer evidence, by their confession and their conduct, that they are living in accord with their affirmations and this statement of faith and bylaws, and are actively pursuing and continuing in a vital fellowship with the Lord, Jesus Christ. The Board of Elders of

this Church shall have final authority in all matters of church governance, as set forth and described in the Bylaws.

Marriage Policy for Leighton Church

Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, Leighton Church will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman. Further, the pastors and staff of Leighton Church shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. Finally, the facilities and property of Leighton Church shall only host weddings between one man and one woman.

Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality for Leighton Church

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Genesis 1:26-27.) Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of God's created order (Psalm 139:13).

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as described in Scripture. (Genesis 2:18-25.) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (I Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4.) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matthew 15:18-20; I Corinthians 6:9-10.)

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Leighton Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Church's members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Leighton Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; I Thessalonians 5:22.)

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; I Corinthians 6:9-11.)

We believe 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 Leighton Church.

Church Facility Use Policy for Leighton Church

The church's facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of church members. The church desires that its facilities be used for the fellowship of the Body of Christ and to bring God glory. Although the facilities are not generally open to the public, we make our facilities available to approved non-members as a witness to our faith, in a spirit of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in practice.

But facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the church's faith or moral teachings, which are summarized in, among other places, the church's statement of faith and bylaws. Nor may church facilities be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed inconsistent with, the church's faith or moral teachings. The pastor and the Board of Elders together are the final decision-makers concerning use of church facilities.

This restricted facility use policy is necessary for two important reasons. First, the church may not in good conscience materially cooperate in activities or beliefs that are contrary to its faith. Allowing its facilities to be used for purposes that contradict the church's beliefs would be material cooperation with that activity, and would be a grave violation of the church's faith and religious practice. (II Corinthians 6:14; I Thessalonians 5:22.)

Second, it is very important that the church present a consistent message to the community, and that the church staff and members conscientiously maintain that message as part of their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Allowing facilities to be used by groups or persons who express beliefs or engage in practices contrary to the church's faith would have a severe, negative impact on the message that the church strives to promote. It could also cause confusion and scandal to church members and the community because they may reasonably perceive that by allowing use of our facilities, the church agrees with the beliefs or practices of the persons or groups using its facilities.

Therefore, in no event shall persons or groups who hold, advance, or advocate beliefs, or advance, advocate, or engage in practices that contradict the church's faith use any church facility. Nor may church facilities be used in any way that contradicts the church's faith. This policy applies to all church facilities, regardless of whether the facilities are connected to the church's sanctuary, because the church sees all of its property as holy and set apart to worship God. (Colossians 3:17)