

STATEMENT OF FAITH

Essentials, Convictions, and Preferences

The purpose of this document is to provide clarity on the doctrines within New City Church. The word doctrine is defined as a belief or set of beliefs held and taught by a church. We want you to know what New City believes and teaches. We have taken our doctrines and placed them in one of three categories: Essentials, Convictions, and Preferences.

Essential doctrines are based on scripture and are non-negotiable. These are not up for debate nor reform. We are firm on our essential doctrines and it is expected that members of New City Church share these beliefs.

Convictions are not essential doctrines. However, convictions are extremely important as they express what we believe and teach about a variety of theological issues that define the Christian life. Our convictions protect the unity of New City Church. Convictions are those doctrines that all New City Church leaders submit to for the unity of our church.

Preferences are the doctrines that Christians may disagree over and yet remain in close fellowship. Within these types of doctrines, New City Church will show grace yet be diligent in protecting the unity of our local church. Preferences must not become our essentials or our convictions.

Understanding the difference between essential doctrines, convictions, and preferences is a crucial step in spiritual maturity. Doctrines can be misplaced depending on one's views. For example, someone who is fundamental is easily tempted to take a spiritual preference and make it an essential doctrine. In a comparable way, someone who is more liberal could take an essential doctrine and make it a preference.

It is our aim to share with you what we believe and why we believe it so.

Blessings,

Matt Miller

Lead Pastor, New City Church

God: Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit

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. God is all powerful and all-knowing and His knowledge extends to all things past, present, and future. We believe that only God can call men and women to Himself. We believe only God can convict men and women of sin. God has no equal. There is no other like our God!

Genesis 1:26, Isaiah 44:6, John 1:14, 10:30, 14:9-11, 14:16-17, 2 Corinthians 13:4, 1 John 5:7-8

God the Father

We believe in God the Father, the Creator of heaven and earth. We believe all things are from Him and we exist for Him. The Father is above all and through all and in all. He judges impartially according to each one's work. The Father sent the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Father has set all times by His authority and He sovereignly rules over all His creation.

Genesis 1:1, John 3:16, Acts 1:7, Ephesians 4:6, Galatians 4:6, and 1 Peter 1:17

Jesus the Son

The Apostle Paul best expresses our belief in *Colossians 1:15-20*.

Colossians 1:15-20 (Christian Standard Bible)

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For everything was created by him, in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and by him all things hold together. He is also the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile everything to himself, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

We believe Jesus is our only hope for salvation - our only means of reconciliation with God. We believe that Jesus lived a perfect life, died a complete death on the cross, and resurrected on the third day. We believe Jesus is seated at the right hand of God the Father waiting to return for His church.

John 14:6, Acts 2:23, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Ephesians 2:6, Colossians 1:15-20, Thessalonians 5:1-11

The Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit is God, has always been, and will always be. We believe the Holy Spirit is sent by the Father and the Son to provide counsel, teach, remind believers of what Jesus has commanded, and to build up His body. We believe the Holy Spirit is the seal of our salvation and the proof of our future inheritance in the Kingdom of God. We believe the Holy Spirit equips all believers with spiritual gifts to advance the Gospel of Jesus and His Kingdom.

John 14:16-17, 26, Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, Ephesians 1:13-14, 1 Peter 4:11

The Bible

We hold the Bible as our absolute truth. God's Word has no equal. We believe the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God and are therefore without error in their original writings. We affirm the Apostle Paul's writings in 2 Timothy 3:16, "All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." We believe the Bible reveals all that God requires for men and women to align their lives with His Kingdom. We believe disciples are made by hearing, believing, and obeying the Word of God.

Deuteronomy 8:3, Matthew 4:4, Matthew 28:20, Luke 24:27, Romans 15:4, 2 Timothy 3:16

The Gospel

We believe the Gospel is the good news that although we were dead in our sin, God sent His son Jesus to live a perfect life on our behalf, die a complete death to pay the penalty for our sin, and come back to life on the third day to offer us new life in His Holy Spirit. We believe it is our ultimate call to partner with God to advance His Gospel and His Kingdom. The Gospel is first, Kingdom focused. We exist as a Kingdom for God. Sin broke that Kingdom relationship. The relationship was restored by Jesus who, through a life of perfect obedience, was qualified to pay our penalty by His death. His resurrection according to the Biblical promise is proof that God is committed to restoring all His creation to relationship with Him for the purposes of His Kingdom. Jesus is both ruler and redeemer for Israel and the world.

Luke 24:47, Acts 2:22-39, Romans 1:16, 1 Corinthians 15:3-15, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Galatians 3:13

Salvation

We believe that salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. We affirm the words of Jesus in John 3:16-18 “For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Anyone who believes in him is not condemned, but anyone who does not believe is already condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the one and only Son of God.” We believe salvation, or the new birth, is that act of God by which the Holy Spirit imparts a new nature (the ability to love and obey) and a new spiritual life (the desire to obey), not before possessed, and the person becomes a new creation in Christ Jesus.

John 3:16-18, 14:15, Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 4:11, 2 Corinthians 5:14-17

Creation

We believe that God created the world from nothing. We believe God ‘said’ and it was. We believe God’s creative work is a fellowship of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We believe that God’s creation is good.

Genesis 1:1-31, Psalm 24:1, Colossians 1:17

CONVICTIONS

Doctrines with which our leaders maintain agreement

The Church

The church is not a building! We believe the church is the body of Christ, which are those called from death into life by salvation through Jesus Christ. We believe the church exists to worship God, make disciples, and bring about positive change within its city. We believe that every believer should be committed to a local church for the purpose of mutual encouragement, spiritual growth, and accountability. We believe there are two ordinances of the Church: Believer's Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Matthew 26:26-28, 28:19-20, Acts 8:8, 1 Corinthians 12:12-31, Ephesians 4:11-16, Colossians 1:18-20, Hebrews 10:24-25, 1 Peter 2:9

Disciple-Making

We believe disciple-making is the primary command of the local church. We affirm the words of Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." We believe disciple making happens as we 'go.' We believe a healthy discipleship culture includes two key elements: the baptizing of new believers and teaching believers to obey all that Jesus has commanded.

Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 15:15, John 15:16, Acts 1:8, Romans 10:14-15, 2 Corinthians 5:18-21

Baptism

We believe Baptism is the first step of obedience for a follower of Jesus. Because Jesus was baptized, His followers should also be baptized. We believe in a believer's baptism as we see in the New Testament baptism always followed salvation. Baptism by immersion is symbolic to the believer joining with Jesus in His death and resurrection. We believe baptism is a public proclamation of our new life as a follower of Jesus. We baptize believers in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 28:19, Mark 1:9, 16:16, Acts 2:37-38, 8:36-38

CONVICTIONS

Doctrines with which our leaders maintain agreement

Communion

We believe the bread and the cup are symbolic of Jesus' body and blood. We believe communion is only for the follower of Jesus. We believe communion is a consistent reminder of God's great love for us by sending His son Jesus to be our salvation. We eat the bread and drink the cup to remember and proclaim the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Matthew 26:26-28, 1 Corinthians 11:23-27

Humanity

We believe God created humans—male and female—in His own image and therefore all people have dignity and worth. Men and women enjoy equal access to God by faith in Christ Jesus and are both called to advance the Gospel of Jesus and His Kingdom. We believe in God's wise purposes, men and women are not simply interchangeable, but complement one another in mutually enriching ways.

Genesis 1:27-30

Men and Women in Ministry

We believe that men and women are equal partners in receiving salvation, theological understanding, and accomplishing the Great Commission. We believe that God created men and women to complete each other, not compete with one another.

In Genesis 2:18 we read, "Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper corresponding to him." The word "helper" is not meant to describe a subordinate position. The Hebrew word is "Ezer" and is used to express how one "helps" or "supplies" what the other is lacking. Because of this, we believe that men and women need one another to accomplish the mission and vision God has given New City Church. As we read in Genesis 1:27-31, God created "them male and female" and His creation is "very good indeed." We believe women can and should serve in the ministries of the church, including the teaching of God's Word, only excluding that of Elder/Lead Pastor.

Within the Bible, we identify numerous examples of women leading. This is also true within New City Church. For example, women lead on our Executive Team, Campus Staffs, and the Central Leadership Team. Women also serve in various areas of ministry within New City Church, such as: Discipleship, City Groups, Ministry Team Leads, and as a part of the Teaching Team.

John 20:16-18, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1: 5-9

CONVICTIONS

Doctrines with which our leaders maintain agreement

Elders

Elders—also called “Pastors”—are a group of qualified men who have the “noble work” of providing leadership and oversight of a local church. Elders provide leadership and oversight in the following ways: teaching and preaching the Word of God, protecting the church from false teachers, establishing sound doctrine for the church, laying on of hands and praying for those who are sick, and shepherding the people of New City Church.

We also confirm through God’s Word a theme of a husband and a wife becoming one flesh. In Genesis 2:24, the Bible teaches, “This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh.” In Matthew 19:5-6 Jesus repeats these words and adds to them by saying, “So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate.” The Apostle Paul echoes these words in Ephesians 5:31 as he teaches husbands and wives to lead and love in equal submission.

For this reason, New City Church encourages our Elders to include their wives within the conversations of leading and shepherding the ministry of New City Church. Never, within New City Church, would an Elder be asked to keep something from his wife. For this reason, we approach the responsibility of Elder as a Family Model.

Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:5-6, Acts 6:4, 15:6, 20:17, 28-31, Ephesians 5:31, 1 Timothy 3:2, 4:13, 5:17, 2 Timothy 4:2, 3:13-17, Titus 1:7-9, James 5:14, 1 Peter 5:1-2

Deacons

We believe deacons are a group of qualified men and women who serve the church in practical ways. Often these “practical ways” are temporary and meet a specific issue.

Romans 16:1; 1 Timothy 3:1–7; Titus 1:6–9; 1 Peter 5:1–5

Marriage

We believe that marriage was created by God as a life-long covenant between one man and one woman. We believe the marriage relationship is to be a top priority, kept pure, and an example of the relationship between Jesus and His Church.

Matt 19:4-6, Ephesians 5:21-33

PREFERENCES

Doctrines with which we may disagree over,
yet remain in close fellowship

Spiritual Gifts

We believe that God's Holy Spirit gives gifts to all believers to equip the church for ministry and to advance the Gospel of Jesus and His Kingdom. We believe all Holy Spirit given gifts 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 apostles.

Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Peter 4:11

Giving

We believe that you cannot outgive God. We believe God is a God who graciously gives and we should follow His generous examples. We believe that the believer should be generous with their time, their talents, and their treasure. We believe the tithe (10%) is where we start and not where we finish. We hold that all believers should be generous regardless of their current views of their local church. Not trusting your local church with your resources is not an excuse to not give.

Proverbs 3:9, John 3:16, 2 Corinthians 8:7-15, 9:6-8

End Times

We believe Jesus will return for His Church. He could return soon. All believers should be ready. As we wait for Jesus' return, we should advance the Gospel of Jesus and His Kingdom. We affirm the Apostle Paul's words in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, *"We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, concerning those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve like the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in the same way, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For we say this to you by a word from the Lord: We who are still alive at the Lord's coming will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the archangel's voice, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are still alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore encourage one another with these words."*

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

PREFERENCES

Doctrines with which we may disagree over,
yet remain in close fellowship

Politics

We believe our faith rests in Jesus Christ, not in any political candidate, political party, or political strategy. However, Christians have the ability in the United States to help select the nation's leaders by voting, supporting, and even becoming political candidates. In doing so, Christians may hold differing political opinions and priorities without conflicting with one another. When engaging in political discussions or activities, Christians must prioritize biblical unity by relating to one another with humility and respect. We affirm the Apostle Peter's words in 1 Peter 2:13-17, "*Submit to every human authority because of the Lord, whether to the emperor as the supreme authority or to governors as those sent out by him to punish those who do what is evil and to praise those who do what is good. For it is God's will that you silence the ignorance of foolish people by doing good. Submit as free people, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but as God's slaves. Honor everyone. Love the brothers and sisters. Fear God. Honor the emperor.*"

Joshua 5:13-15, 1 Peter 2:13-17

Personal Finances

We believe it is financially wise to avoid debt, especially consumer debt, as well as unnecessary interest. We believe that unnecessary debt often keeps the believer from joining in the opportunities to advance the Gospel of Jesus and His Kingdom.

Proverbs 22:7, 13:22, Luke 14:28, Romans 13:7

Alcohol and Drugs

We believe that the best way for a believer to approach the issue of alcohol and drugs is to ask, "What is the wise thing for me to do?" The Bible does not forbid drinking alcohol. The Bible teaches that being drunk is a sin. The Bible does not explicitly address the types of drugs. The Bible does address not allowing anything to control you other than God's Holy Spirit. As culture changes, so do our laws. The question is not, "Is this legal or illegal?" but rather, "Is this wise?"

Ephesians 5:15-18