

Proposed Change to ULBC Constitution (Article V - Doctrine)

SECTION 1: FINAL AUTHORITY FOR MATTERS OF BELIEF AND CONDUCT

Section 1 would remain unchanged

SECTION 2: STATEMENT OF FAITH

Existing Section 2 would be replaced in its entirety by this proposed Section 2

Existing Section 3 (Sanctity of Life) and Section 4 (Marriage, Gender and Sexuality) have been incorporated without change into this proposed Section 2 (See #10 & #11, respectively).

1. The Word of God

We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired word of God, inerrant in the original writings, complete as the revelation of God's will for salvation, and the supreme and final authority in all matters of faith and conduct. (Matt 5:18; Jn 10:35; 17:17; 2 Tim 3:16-17; Heb 4:12; 2 Pet 1:20-21)

2. The Trinity

We believe in one God, Creator and Sustainer of all things, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; but without division of God's nature, essence, or being. These three are equal and perfect in every divine attribute, and they execute distinct and harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence, and redemption. (Gen 1:1; Matt 28:19; Jn 1:1-3,14,18; 4:24; 10:30; Acts 5:3-4; Rom 9:5; 2 Cor 13:14)

3. God the Father

We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal Spirit, perfect and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, and love. He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men and women, hears and answers prayer, and saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. (Ex 3:14; Deut 32:6; Is 57:15; 64:8; Jer 32:17; Matt 5:45; 7:11; Jn 4:24; 5:26; 6:37-40; Acts 14:16-17; Rom 11:23; 1 Cor 8:6; 1 Jn 4:8; 5:14-15)

4. Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's eternal Son, who fully possesses the same nature and attributes as God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. He is not only true God but true Man, sent by the Father, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. We believe in His sinless life, His substitutionary atonement, His bodily resurrection from the dead, His ascension into heaven, His priestly intercession on behalf of His people, and His personal, visible return from heaven. (Mk 1:1; Lk 1:30-35; Jn 1:1-3,14,18; 10:25-38; Acts 1:11; Rom 5:8; 1 Cor 15:3-4; Col 1:15-20; 1 Thes 1:10; 4:16-17; 1 Tim 2:5; Heb 1:3; 4:15; 7:24-25; 1 Jn 2:2; 4:10)

5. The Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit, co-equal with the Father and the Son. We believe in His personality and His work in regeneration, sanctification and preservation. His ministry is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and implement Christ's work of redeeming the lost. He also intercedes for believers according to the will of God and empowers them for service through the giving of spiritual gifts and for godly living. (Jn 14:16-17; 15:26; 16:8-11; Acts 1:8; Rom 12:3-8; 1 Cor 2:13; 12:4-13; Eph 1:13; 2 Thes 2:13-14; Ti 3:5; 1 Jn 2:20)

6. Humanity

We believe God created humanity, male and female, in the image of God, free from sin. By disobeying God and falling into sin through Satan's temptation, Adam forfeited his original blessedness, both for himself and all his descendants. As a result of the fall, all persons are sinners by nature and by choice and are therefore spiritually dead; yet the Holy Spirit regenerates repentant sinners who trust Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. (Gen 1:26-27; Rom 5:12-19; Eph 2:1-9)

7. Salvation

We believe in salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone. This salvation is based upon the sovereign grace of God, was purchased by Christ on the cross, and is received through faith apart from any human merit, works, or ritual. (Rom 3:20-26; Eph 1:2-14; 2:8-9; Ti 3:5)

8. The Church

We believe in the church, the spiritual body of which Christ is the head and the spiritual temple of which Christ is the foundation. It is composed of all persons who possess saving faith in Jesus Christ and have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. This invisible, universal church expresses itself in visible local churches comprised of believers in Christ who commit themselves to God and one another. The ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper. (Matt 16:16-18; 28:18-20; Acts 2:32-47; 1 Cor 11:23-32; 12:13; Eph 1:22-23; 4:3-6; Col 1:18)

We believe each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ, is self-governing in function, and is interdependent in relationship with other true churches. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord, yet each must submit mutually to the others in love. (Matt 16:18-19; 18:15-20; 1 Cor 5:4-5; Eph 5:21)

We believe the church's scriptural officers are elders and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the offices of elder and deacon are limited to men as qualified by Scripture. (Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 2:12; 3:1-13; 5:17; Ti 1:5-9)

9. Christian Conduct

We believe saving faith inevitably produces good works. The supreme task of every believer is to glorify God in thought, speech, conduct, and lifestyle. Each Christian should seek to be a growing disciple of Jesus Christ in every area of life, a faithful steward of all resources, and an ambassador for Christ before the world. (Matt 5:14-16; 25:14-30; 28:19; Jn 13:35; 17:20-21; Rom 8:29; 1 Cor 10:31; Phil 2:14-16; Jas 2:14-26)

10. The Sanctity of Life

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable 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 (Ps 139).

11. Marriage, Gender and Sexuality

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 (Gen 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen 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 (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4).

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pedophilia and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10).

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Union Lake Baptist Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Union Lake Baptist Church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Union Lake Baptist Church in any capacity, who

11. Marriage, Gender and Sexuality (continued)

serve as volunteers, or who agree to be members of Union Lake Baptist Church agree to abide by our Statement of Faith and this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thes 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; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11).

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mk 12:28-31; Lk 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 Union Lake Baptist Church.

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

12. Last Things

We believe in the personal return of Jesus Christ in power and glory to receive His church to Himself and to bring the world to its appointed end. The dead will be raised, and Jesus Christ will judge both the living and the dead. The unrighteous will be punished in hell, and the righteous will dwell with Christ forever in the new heaven and the new earth. (Acts 1:11; 1 Thes 4:13-17; Rev 20-22)

13. Other Doctrinal Statements

To further define what we believe, we hereby adopt by reference *The Apostles' Creed*, *The Nicene Creed*, *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*, *The Gospel of Jesus Christ: An Evangelical Celebration*, and *the Danvers Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*.

The Apostles' Creed was not written by the apostles themselves, but is a good summary of their teaching. No one author can be identified, but it originated in the Western Church sometime in the first four centuries. It was an early practice of the church to have it agreed to by those being baptized. It is universally seen throughout the Christian world as the clearest statement of the faith in such brief terms.

The Nicene Creed was the product of the Council of Nicea (a gathering of 318 church leaders from the East) in 325AD. It is similar to the Apostles' Creed but more detailed because of the need to combat the Arian heresy of that day: that Jesus was a created being rather than God in the flesh (e.g., About Jesus the creed says He is "Begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father").

The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy was produced in 1978 by approximately 300 evangelical leaders for the purpose of standing against theological liberals (who questioned the reliability of the Scriptures). Some well-known participants include: James Boice, Norman L. Geisler, John Gerstner, Carl F. H. Henry, J. I. Packer, Francis Schaeffer, and R. C. Sproul. It is widely believed to be one of best statements on the inerrancy of the Bible in the history of the church.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ: An Evangelical Celebration was drafted in 1999 to promote evangelical unity by clarifying the gospel. Specifically it defends the biblical teaching on justification by faith alone in contrast with the Roman Catholic Church's erroneous teaching that justification necessarily includes our religious works. It was drafted by such notable evangelical leaders as D. A. Carson, Timothy George, Erwin Lutzer, J. I. Packer, R. C. Sproul and John Woodbridge (in addition to being endorsed by virtually every respected leader in evangelicalism – e.g., Bryan Chapell, Edmund Clowney, Jerry Falwell, Wayne Grudem, D. James Kennedy, John MacArthur, Adrian Rogers, Charles F. Stanley, John Stott & Ravi Zacharias). It was written in response to the confusion caused by some prominent evangelicals and Roman Catholics agreeing to two different documents (*Evangelicals and Catholics Together* in 1994 and *The Gift of Salvation* in 1997). It is distributed by *Ligonier Ministries, the teaching fellowship of R.C. Sproul*. All rights reserved.
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The Danvers Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood was drafted in 1987 by the Council on Manhood and Womanhood to address the “widespread uncertainty and confusion in our culture regarding the complementary differences between masculinity and femininity” and its harmful effect upon God's glory, the church, the home and our evangelical witness. It upholds the equal worth and dignity of both genders as God's image-bearers and heirs of Christ as well as their distinct roles which are both valuable and necessary according to God's wisdom. The statement also affirms the expectation that both men and women are to be liberally used in gospel work according to their varied gifts. Members of the Council include John Frame, Wayne Grudem, R. Kent Hughes, John Piper, Mary Kassian, Douglas Moo & Ray Ortlund, Jr.