



Statement of Faith

1.1 | Statement of Our Knowledge of God and His Work

Trinity Christian Reformed Church's (Trinity) Statement of Faith comes from God speaking to his Church. God's people are able to know him, live with him, and work with him because God speaks through the universe God has made,¹ and the Holy Spirit allowing the Church understand God's revealed message to humanity;² the 66 books of The Bible, both the Old and New Testaments.³

Our faith is well-defined by historic creeds and confessions affirmed by the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) as well as official Position Statements of the CRCNA.⁴ The Creeds of our Church are *The Apostles' Creed*, *The Nicene Creed*, and *The Athanasian Creed*. Our Confessions are *The Heidelberg Catechism*, *The Canons of Dordt* and *The Belgic Confession*. We also see parts of our faith in two other CRCNA documents: *Our World Belongs to God* and *The Belhar Confession*.

Our faith covers all of life, but at the center is God revealing himself as the loving Creator, Judge, Redeemer, and King in four points of Redemptive History:

Creation

1. God is simply God: infinite, invisible, almighty, loving, merciful and righteous.⁵ God is revealed as three persons who are one divine God: Father, Son and Spirit.⁶
2. Our universe exists because the Father made it through his Word and Spirit. Though broken and cursed,⁷ all things are held together to reveal God's purpose and glory.⁸

¹ Psalm 19; Romans 1.20; Belgic Confession, Article 2

² Luke 24.45; John 14.17, 16.13-14; Romans 8.26-27; I Corinthians 3.16; Ephesians 1.13, 17; Belgic Confession, Art. 3, 5

³ Luke 24.44-45; Acts 16.14; II Timothy 1.13-14; Belgic Confession, Art. 2-7

⁴ All of these documents can be read online or downloaded at <http://www.crcna.org/welcome/beliefs>

⁵ The Belgic Confession, Art. 1

⁶ The Belgic Confession, Art. 8-9

⁷ Genesis 3; Romans 2

⁸ Genesis 1.1; Genesis 1.31; Romans 8.20-24; Colossians 1.16-17



3. All people were created by God as “man” and “woman” in God’s “image and likeness”⁹ to physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually¹⁰ reflect God’s holiness¹¹ and righteousness¹² on earth. Adam and Eve were blessed by God to govern all creation, and he called them “very good.”¹³

Fall

4. Our covenantal parents, Eve, and then Adam, were deceived by Satan to distrust and hate God in hope of becoming equal with God.¹⁴ Except for God’s only Son,¹⁵ we are all naturally physical *and* spiritual children of the first man, Adam.¹⁶ We are all spiritually dead in sin and deserve the wrath of God.¹⁷

Redemption

5. “God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses,”¹⁸ gave Jesus as “the propitiation¹⁹ for our sins,”²⁰ so that *anyone* who believes²¹ in Jesus as “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world”²² is not simply rescued from God’s wrath, but is reborn²³ into Christ’s righteousness and holiness and united with Jesus through the Holy Spirit.²⁴ This is the Church, distinct from all other people on earth through all time.²⁵

Consummation

6. Though the Church is now with Christ as King in his Spirit,²⁶ this same Jesus will bring all faithful believers together with him to fully share in his glory and honor.²⁷

9 Genesis 1.26-27; 2.18-24

10 Deuteronomy 6.5; Matthew 22.37

11 **Holiness:** Holiness is a cutting off or separation from what is unclean and a consecration to what is pure. ...God is holy in that he is utterly distinct from his creation and exercises sovereign majesty and power over it. W. Elwell & P. Comfort, Tyndale Bible Dictionary, Tyndale Reference Library (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), 608.

12 **Righteousness:** ...the fulfillment of just expectations in any relationship, whether with God or other people. *ibid.* 1134.

13 Genesis 1.28-31; Belgic Confession, Art. 14

14 Genesis 3.1-7

15 John 3.16; Belgic Confession, Art. 10, 18

16 Genesis 5.1-3

17 John 3.18; Romans 3.23; Ephesians 2.3; Belgic Confession, Art. 14-15

18 Ephesians 2.4

19 **Propitiation:** The act of appeasing another person’s anger by the offering of a gift. W. Elwell, P. Comfort, Tyndale Bible Dictionary, Tyndale Reference Library (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), 1087.

20 I John 4.10 (Romans 3.25; Hebrews 2.17; I John 2.2; Belgic Confession, Art. 21

21 Mark 1.15, 16.16; Luke 8.12; John 1.29; 3.14-18, 5.24, 46, 6.29, 35-47, 7.38, 8.23-24, 11.25-26, 12.46, 20.27-29, 20.30-31; Acts 2.37-39, 13.47-48, 16.31; Romans 3.21-22, 10.5-13; Galatians 2.16, 3.22; I Timothy 1.16; Belgic Confession, Art. 22

22 Exodus 12.1-32; John 1.29

23 John 3.3-8; II Corinthians 5.17; I John 5.1;

24 Belgic Confession, Art. 26

25 Ephesians 1.1-14; Belgic Confession, Art. 27-28

26 Ephesians 2.6

27 Matthew 5.5, 25.34; Luke 14.12-14; John 6.39-40, 44, 54; Romans 6.5; I Corinthians 15.35-57; Ephesians 2.4-6; I Thessalonians 4.16-17; I Peter 1.3-5; Revelation 21.1-8; Belgic Confession, Art. 37



1.1a | Statement on Marriage

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman as “one flesh:”²⁸ a holy covenant²⁹ created by God the Father, confirmed by Jesus the Son [Matthew 19.4-6], and supported by his Apostles in the Spirit.³⁰ Because marriage reflects the union of Christ to his Church:

1. Marriage Ceremonies are inherently Christian, and will be conducted that way by any Trinity officer. “The Church building and grounds are only used for Christian weddings where either the bride, the groom, or an immediate family member is a professing member of the congregation”.
2. Though divorce is *allowed* by God in cases of adultery or desertion by an unbelieving spouse,³¹ it is not *mandatory* in either case. All marriages are to be repaired, if the husband and wife are willing.
3. Remarriage after divorce while the previous spouse is still living is not scriptural.³² While the CRCNA official position is to *neither issue a clear prohibition against remarriage nor attempt to list with legal precision the circumstances under which remarriage does not conflict with biblical teaching*,³³ issues of remarriage will be addressed on a case-by-case basis by the Pastor and/or elders.
4. A relationship involving people of the same biological gender (regardless of transgendered identification), members of the same extended family unit, or a person and a non-person, is not a “marriage” and cannot be affirmed by Trinity or its officers.³⁴ No Member of Trinity will perform any ceremony (called “marriage” or otherwise) affirming these relationships.

Trinity’s Marriage Ceremony Policy

1. The Pastor will supervise counseling for the bride and groom, usually taking place in a series of four to six meetings where the Pastor teaches the couple about a scriptural understanding of the Covenant of Marriage and their roles within that Covenant, both to God and to one another. Additional meetings may take place to arrange wedding plans and rehearsals. **Note:** *Allowances may be made to this point by the Pastor and/or Elders on a case-by-case basis.*
2. Both the bride and groom must hold faith in Jesus as “the Christ, the Son of the Living God.”³⁵
3. During the engagement, the couple will live separately, committed to celibacy before marriage.

²⁸ Genesis 2.18-25

²⁹ **Covenant:** A sacred kinship bond between two parties, ratified by swearing an oath. S. Hahn, “Covenant,” ed. John D. Barry et al., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016). See Genesis 15 for the literal display of *cut a covenant*: The covenant is void – or fulfilled – only when one party dies, as the cutting apart of an animal (and shedding of blood) signifies.

³⁰ Genesis 2.20-25; Matthew 19.4-6; Ephesians 5.22-23; I Peter 3.1-7

³¹ Matthew 5.32; I Corinthians 7.15

³² Matthew 19.3-8; Luke 16.18; Mark 10.11-12

³³ *Divorce & Remarriage*, <https://www.crcna.org/welcome/beliefs/position-statements/divorce-remarriage>

³⁴ Genesis 2.20-25; Leviticus 18.22-23, 20.11-21; Romans 1.22-27; I Corinthians 6.9; I Timothy 1.8-11

³⁵ Matthew 16.16; See also I.L.5, *Redemption*



1.1b | Statement on Gender

God wonderfully and lovingly created people to display his image and likeness in two distinct and complementary genders, “male” and “female”.³⁶ However, in the Fall, our whole human nature was corrupted: body *and* spirit.

Though humans have historically observed distinctively male and female traits, dividing between two sexes since Adam and Eve, the brokenness of body and spirit allow those traits to become confused. We believe both original sin³⁷ and willful sin³⁸ contribute to this confusion of gender and sexuality. Therefore, while some souls experience varying aspects of Gender Dysphoria,³⁹ we hold that a transgender identity and forcing someone to become more biologically similar to the opposite sex through attire, drugs, hormone therapy, or surgery, are futile and broken attempts to bring peace to a soul apart from resurrection in the image and likeness of Christ.⁴⁰

We believe that the Holy Spirit mediating the Peace of Christ in this life brings support and clarity to souls dealing with *all kinds* of brokenness. It is our honor to stand with *anyone* who seeks to follow Christ, and bear with them whatever is necessary to grow in Christ, now and into eternity.

1.1c | Statement on Sexuality

The human sexual nature is, to say the least, *complex*, and continues to be redefined by medical doctors, psychologists, philosophers and theologians. While we do not pretend to accurately define the human sexual nature, we do believe God has spoken about how we should glorify him as sexual beings.

No one merely and only acts “sexually” with a spouse. Our sexual nature is part of us as individuals, and we all live as sexual *beings*; we see the world, think, and desire not simply as “human” but as *male* or *female*. From Scripture, we affirm God’s design for sexual intimacy: that it occur only between a man and a woman united in the covenant of marriage.⁴¹

While sexual sins are damaging in a way others are not,⁴² *they do not require more forgiveness or a different offering of atonement than any other sin*.⁴³ God promises to redeem and restore anyone who confesses and gives up their sin, seeking God’s mercy and forgiveness through Jesus’ atoning sacrifice.⁴⁴

³⁶ Genesis 1.26-27

³⁷ **Original Sin:** A term referring to the universal defect in human nature caused by the fall, entailing the loss of original righteousness and the distortion of the image of God (*imago Dei*). A. Hay, “Original Sin,” ed. John D. Barry et al., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).

³⁸ James 1.14-15

³⁹ **Gender Dysphoria:** as a general descriptive term refers to an individual’s discontent with the assigned gender. It is more specifically defined when used as a diagnosis. R. Parekh, M.D., M.P.H., *What Is Gender Dysphoria?* (American Psychiatric Association; <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/gender-dysphoria/what-is-gender-dysphoria>) Feb. 2016

⁴⁰ Romans 8.29; I Corinthians 15.50-57

⁴¹ Genesis 2.23-25; Exodus 20.14; Leviticus 20.10; Matthew 5.32; 1 Corinthians 7.36

⁴² I Corinthians 6.18

⁴³ I Corinthians 6.9-11

⁴⁴ John 3.16-18; Romans 10.9-10; I Corinthians 6:9-11



We believe that every person must be given compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity.⁴⁵ As we learn more about human sexuality, we realize that God’s commands in Scripture are given in love. Our sexual desires and experiences have powerful impact on our identity, for good and for evil, both now and in the future.

Since “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”⁴⁶ and no one’s desires are entirely pure,⁴⁷ we strive to carefully practice repentance in our own lives before offering ‘help’ to others.⁴⁸ Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are themselves sinful, not in accord with Scripture, and require forgiveness from Christ.

1.1d | Statement on the Sanctity of Human Life

We believe that all human life is sacred, possessing remnants of God’s “image and likeness.”⁴⁹ This value extends to every human in every way, including unborn children, the elderly, the physically or mentally disabled, and all conditions of a soul from conception onward.⁵⁰ We are therefore called to value, defend and promote the good of all people.

1.2 | Statement of Final Authority for Faith and Conduct

This Statement of Faith does not cover all of our beliefs. In all parts of life, Jesus, The Word of God, the Savior and the Son of God⁵¹ is the Church’s Shepherd⁵² and King.⁵³ He is our final authority in every part of life – in this world and in the next. As a rule, the sixty-six books of the Bible are the same Word of God given through the Holy Spirit to establish and regulate our faith.⁵⁴ As a member congregation of the CRCNA, Trinity’s faith, doctrine, and practice is overseen by Classis⁵⁵ Central Plains of the CRCNA.

45 Leviticus 19.18; Matthew 5.43-45, 7.12

46 Romans 3.23

47 Jeremiah 17.9, Romans 3.10-12

48 Matthew 7.3-5

49 Genesis 1.26-27

50 Psalm 139

51 Matthew 10.32, 11.27, 16.15-18, 20.23, 26.39; Luke 10.22, 24.46-47; John 1.1-2; Colossians 1.15-20; Hebrews 1.1-14

52 John 10.1-18; Hebrews 13.20-21 (Psalm 23)

53 Daniel 7.13-14; Luke 1.30-33; Revelation 11.15; Heidelberg Catechism Lord’s Day 12, Question & Answer 31.

54 Matthew 4.4 (Deuteronomy 8.3); II Timothy 3.16-17; II Peter 1.16-21; Belgic Confession, Art. 5

55 A regional delegation of Pastors, Elders and Deacons for counsel and oversight of neighboring congregations. See CRCNA Church Order, SII.C “Classis”