

The Doctrinal Statement of Rothbury Community Church

Article 1: Major Doctrinal Distinctives

Section 1: Scripture

We believe in the Verbal-Plenary inspiration of the Bible; that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God" and holy men of God "were moved by the Holy Spirit" to write the very words of Scripture. We believe this divine inspiration extends to all parts of Scripture; historical, poetical, doctrinal and prophetic; and that all Scripture is without error in the original manuscripts. We also believe the Bible to be infallible in its teachings and principles today and the final authority on all matters of faith and conduct (Mark 12:26, 36; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 2:13, 10:11; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21).

We believe Scripture must be understood in a historical, grammatical, literal way except where allegory and symbolism are the obvious intent. We believe Scripture must be interpreted with an understanding of God's dispensational dealings with men and that all Scripture leads to the person of Christ (Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 17:2-3, 18:28; Ephesians 3:2-4, 9; Colossians 1:25-26).

Section 2: God

We believe in one God eternally existing in three persons; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; each having precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfection and are therefore worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence, and obedience. We believe this living being to be an all-wise, providential, and supreme ruler; who is a self-existent, everlasting, personal God, the creator of the heavens and the earth, a just, holy judge and a gracious, loving and merciful Savior, and illuminating and guiding Spirit (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 12:29; John 1:1-4; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1:1-3; Revelation 1:4-6).

Section 3: Person and Work of Christ

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, took upon Himself a human form in order that He might redeem a sinful, lost world and reveal God to men. We believe that Christ through substitutionary sacrifice by death on the cross, accomplished eternal redemption for mankind. We believe His bodily resurrection and present position at the right hand of God, where He remains as head of the church, interceding for the saved, is divine testimony that the sin question has been eternally settled (John 1:1-2, 14, 18, 29, 3:16; Romans 3:24-26; Ephesians 1:22-23; Hebrews 1:3, 2:14-15, 7:25; 1 Peter 2:24, 3:18; 1 John 2:1).

Section 4: Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit is a personal spirit being, God in every respect, who convicts the world of sin, indwells all born again Christians, baptized them into the Body of Christ, and seals them unto the day of redemption. He also intercedes for, comforts, teaches, empowers, and guides believers in all truth and it is the responsibility of every born again Christian to be filled (more completely controlled) by the Holy Spirit continuously (John 14:16-17, 26, 15:26, 16:7-11; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:9-16, 26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:12-16, 12:12-14; Ephesians 1:13-14, 5:18).

Section 5: Mankind

We believe man was originally created in the 'image and likeness' of God; he fell from God into sin through disobedience incurring both physical and spiritual death. All men are born with a sinful nature, are hopelessly separated from and at enmity with God and can only come to God and be saved through the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ (Genesis 1:26-27, 9:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 5:12).

Section 6: Salvation

Salvation is provided by God through Christ for all who repent and trust in His "finished work" (see Article 1, Section 3) by faith. These believers are baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ, receive the gift of eternal life, are born again Christians and children of God. It is the will of God that all believers be sanctified by continually yielding themselves to God as a "spiritual service of worship" (John 3:16; Romans 3:25-26, 8:14-16, 10:6-13, 12:1; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 12:12-14; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 2:8-10).

Article 2: Minor Doctrinal Distinctives

Section 1: The Church

We believe the church is a spiritual body consisting of all those who truly believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior; including those who have been are, and shall be gathered together as the Body and Bride of Christ, in holy union of believers with Christ as the head (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:47; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 5:30; Hebrews 12:23).

Section 2: Baptism and Communion

We believe water baptism is an outward act symbolizing the inward change of the new birth; that a true Christian has died to self and has been raised again to newness of life. Baptism gives testimony of that change which God has already accomplished by faith in the death and resurrection of Christ (Matthew 28:19; Acts 19:5; Romans 6:1-11; 1 Peter 3:20-21).

We believe the Lord's Supper is a permanent ordinance of the church to commemorate the death of our Lord and to be observed "till He comes." The elements of this ordinance, being the bread and cup, are to symbolize the broken body and shed blood of Christ respectively (Matthew 26:26-30; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17, 11:26).

Section 3: State of the Regenerate Believer

We believe that those who are born of the Spirit of God are justified, sanctified, and complete in Christ; that, because of God's unmerited grace, the nature of His love, the ongoing intercession of Christ, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and the promise of God, all true believers are kept secure in their justified position before the Father (John 3:16; Romans 3:24-26, 8:29, 39; 1 Corinthians 1:30, 6:11,19; Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 7:25; 1 Peter 1:4-5; Jude 24).

We believe all truly born again Christians possess two natures, retaining the old fleshly nature while receiving a new spiritual nature from God. Provision is made for victory of the new nature over the old nature in Christian experience by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 10:13; Galatians 5:16-25; Colossians 3:9-10; I Peter 1:13-16).

Section 4: Christian Walk and Service

We believe God has given a Christian new life in Christ and that this new life is manifest as a holy walk. It is the believer's continual yielding to the Holy Spirit's control that causes an ever-deepening walk with God, characterized by a growing degree of separation from worldliness and conformity to the image of Christ. We deem it essential for a Christian's life to show evidence of this growth process, and that by this growth comes recognition and use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit for service.

We believe at the moment of salvation, the Holy Spirit bestows a gift(s) on believers for use in service and that these gifts vary between believers. We consider every believer a servant with responsibility to teach, and minister to the lost, the sick, and the bereaved (Romans 6:19, 22, 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 4:11-15; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4).

Section 5: Angels, Fallen and Unfallen

We believe all angels were originally created by God to worship Him, and serve Him in His dealings with man as messengers, protectors, and guardians. Angels do not die and shall be God's agents for the harvest in the end times. Lucifer, the highest ranking angel, and originator of sin, sinned against God drawing many other angels to a fall from heaven with him. Some of these angels are chained in the darkness awaiting judgment, while others actively serve the devil (Lucifer, Satan, Beelzebub) as demons, in hostility toward God attempting to overthrow His purposes (Matthew 12:25-27, 13:39; Luke 1:26-28, 10:18, 20:36; John 14:30; 2 Corinthians 11:14-15; Ephesians 2:2; Hebrews 1:6-7; 1 John 3:8; Jude 6; Revelation 12:9).

Section 6: Future Things (Eschatology)

We believe in the personal, visible and imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His Kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal joy of the righteous in God's presence and the eternal suffering of the wicked separated from God (Matthew 16:27; Mark 14:62; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1 Corinthians 4:5, 15; Philippians 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:15; 2 Timothy 4:1; Titus 2:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Revelation 20:4-6, 11-15).

The Eternal State

We believe that at death the souls of those who have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior pass immediately into His presence and there remain until the resurrection of the glorified body when Christ comes for His own; whereupon all saints, body and soul reunited, shall live with Him in heaven, rule with Him in the millennial kingdom, and abide with Him in the new earth and holy city forever. We believe the souls of the unbelieving remain after death in conscious condemnation and misery until the final great white throne judgment at the close of the millennial kingdom; where with body and souls reunited, the devil, the beast, and the false prophet and all their followers, with death and Hades, shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, a place of everlasting torment and destruction away from the presence of God and the glory of His power (Luke 16:19-26, 23:42-43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:11-15, 21).

Section 7: Men, Women and Ministry

We believe that men and women were created as equals in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27, 2:18) but with distinctions in masculine and feminine roles that are both significant and complementary, and exhibit different aspects and nature of God for His glory. Therefore, God has called men to unselfishly and lovingly lead their homes and wives to submit to and respect their husband's leadership (Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Peter 3:1-7; 1 Corinthians 11:3).

This is God's order, designed to illustrate Christ's sacrificial leadership and loving relationship toward us, the members of the Church, His Bride.

We also affirm that all Christians, men and women, are called to serve within the body of Christ and that God has given to both men and women important and strategic roles. Specifically, women are given every opportunity to serve and provide leadership in the church, with the exception of serving in the office of Pastor, Elder or Deacon or in a position in which they exercise authority over men. We do not see this inhibiting women's ministry or the gifts that God has given to women to serve in the local church (1 Timothy 2:12, 3:1-15; Titus 1:6-9, 2:3-5).

Section 8: Creation and God's Sovereignty

We believe that God created the universe in six twenty-four hour days and that, before He created the universe, nothing except God existed (Genesis 1; Exodus 31:17; Psalms 33:6-9; Acts 17:24; Hebrews 11:3; Colossians 1:16).

God chose to create the universe and all that is in it to reveal His glory, divine nature, eternal power, infinite wisdom and supreme authority and continues to rule over His creation (Exodus 20:11; Isaiah 43:7; Psalm 19:1-2; Jeremiah 10:12; Romans 1:20; Revelation 4:11).

Section 9: Marriage and Divorce

We believe that marriage is an institution created by God and defined by God in His Word as the uniting of one man and one woman in a covenant commitment for a lifetime. God created marriage for the purpose of companionship, for the channel of sexual expression, for procreation, for mutual sanctification, and to be a living illustration of Christ's relationship with the Church. We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexuality, pornography, etc. is sin according to God in His Word that, like any sin, can be forgiven when repented of. Furthermore, the dissolution of the marriage covenant through divorce is sin, except in cases of adultery or abandonment by an unbelieving spouse. The Christian may be remarried in cases of biblical divorce or in widowhood. (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12; Romans 1:18-32, 7:2-3; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 7:1-16; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Timothy 5:14; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7).