

## **INTRODUCTION**

We believe that the 66 books of the Bible are the inspired and inerrant Word of God. <sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup> While our Statement of Faith articulates the substance of our faith and doctrinal positions, we want to reaffirm the following three values that we believe arise from God's Word. Though culture deviates from what God's Word affirms, believers are called to support and defend what God values. We believe this document represents three of those values.

### **A. THE VALUE OF DIGNITY OF ALL PEOPLE**

We believe that every person is made in the very image of God. <sup>3</sup> Regardless of age, gender, race, religion, ethnicity or socioeconomic status, all people reflect God as image-bearers and all people are called to represent God in each phase of their lives. <sup>4</sup> Despite the reality and effect of sin on us, God is restoring His image in humanity through Christ's restorative work in the gospel. The Bible defends the value of every human life; therefore, Trinity Church is "pro-life". <sup>5</sup> As such, we believe that life begins at the moment of conception and all humans are to be treated with dignity through the final moment of physical death. *For this reason, we oppose abortion, euthanasia, sexism and racism, and we support those organizations which affirm this value in seeking to reverse the effects of these evils in the world today, while not denying either of the following two values in this document.*

## **B. THE VALUE OF THE GOSPEL IN MARRIAGE** *(2022 3 Values Document)*

We believe that marriage exists as the expression of God's creative design that one man and one woman would commit to each other in physical, emotional, and spiritual fidelity. This heterosexual and monogamous union not only creates a context for partnership and establishing families, it also stands as the timeless portrait of God's love for His people. God created marriage so that a husband's love for his own wife might portray God's love and so that the wife might respond in such a way that she exemplifies the Church's response to God's love. For this reason, while cultural and historical expressions of this union vary, the monogamous, heterosexual elements do not. *For this reason, we oppose adultery, pornography, no-fault divorce, <sup>6</sup> and homosexuality, and we encourage the purity and selflessness that is necessary before, during, and after marriage. <sup>7</sup>*

## **C. THE VALUE OF GENDER IN HUMANITY**

We believe that every person is created either male or female. <sup>8</sup> Though the experience of one's gender is tainted by sin's effects and by societal distortions of God's intent, God's original design in creation still applies today: that everyone is intended to enjoy a congruence between the physical and experiential dimensions of their sexuality. <sup>9</sup> <sup>10</sup> We believe the Bible calls us to maintain a clear, biologically rooted distinction between male and female. *For this reason, we oppose the efforts to blur or erase these distinctions through transgenderism and we want to support both a biblically rooted expression of masculinity and femininity as well as compassion and care for those suffering under gender dysphoria, related struggles of identity, and feelings of misplacement. <sup>11</sup>*

## *2022 Three Values Notes (revised 11/10)*

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1. For more, read “The Scriptures” section of our Statement of Faith.
2. As in all generations, today this authority is being supplanted by other realities, from our experiences, discoveries, and progress to the redefinition of terms and evolution of philosophies that influence our culture and government. Despite how powerful any of these may seem, Trinity Church’s view of God’s Word means that all other claims at Truth (even the declaration that objective truth doesn’t exist) are subject to the final standard revealed in the clear meaning of Scripture. Life’s experiences, social constructs, changing definitions, and popular trends don’t overrule God’s Word. This document exists because these three values (originating in God’s Word) were historically agreed upon values in society. With the erosion of this cultural support and the increase of their vilification, we felt the need to reaffirm them.
3. For more, read the “Humanity” section of our Statement of Faith.
4. Sadly, humanity has not done so, and the result of that failure has been more than missing God’s standard. It has affected humanity as a whole and tainted the capacity of each person. This collective depravity and our individual guilt, combine as well with the broader effects of sin on society and history and the effects have been devastating. However, none of this removes the image of God from any person, regardless their age, maturity, background, ability, education, or upbringing.
5. Many have implied that to be “pro-life” means that we perhaps see the protection of unborn children as our sole objective. While the primary mission focus of many “pro-life” organizations we support is targeted at protecting the unborn, nothing about this view from Scripture implies a lack of desire to assist mothers and fathers who are in need and at risk of ending their pregnancies. In addition, nothing about this view implies that we do not care about the many atrocities and indignities those “from womb to tomb” suffer as well. As an example, many members of Trinity Church demonstrate a robust care for the poor and needy here and overseas, and many are involved in foster care and adoption. Lastly, Trinity Church cares for those who have had abortions in the past, to see forgiveness and restoration. In this sense, we defend the narrow definition of being “pro-life” while embracing the call to extend care and support to all who are suffering at all phases of life.

6. “No-fault” divorce refers here to the culturally accepted stance that the marital union can be broken when one or both partners decides to end the marriage. While we hold that the marriage covenant can be broken due to sexual unfaithfulness and in cases of abuse, we do not agree with this culturally accepted position about divorce. Jesus’ words that people should not separate unions God has created should be taken seriously. However, this cannot be the reason to tolerate abuse and unfaithfulness in marriage, and Trinity Church actively seeks to help couples in crisis to identify the problems in marriage, to find grace for real repentance and forgiveness, and to find refuge and safety in instances where the plan for repentance and a path for reconciliation have been resolutely ignored. Please see one of the elders for questions on this issue as it is difficult to summarize completely in a document like this.
7. If any of these mentioned struggles are current issues for you, we encourage you to find a friend in the church with whom you can discuss how they and the church can be a help for you in following Christ.
8. For more, read the “Humanity” section of our Statement of Faith.
9. This point comes from the fact that Scripture clearly portrait of sex and gender in congruence – from the creation account through the Old Testament narrative to later references back to these texts by Jesus and NT authors.
10. Taken from Bridgeway Church’s policy on Sex and Gender. For more, find it [here](#).
11. Again, with issues as personal and sexuality and gender, we encourage you to bring questions and struggles to a trusted friend or to a leader at Trinity. The Elders are available for questions about Trinity Church’s belief and practice. We are grateful to be addressing our beliefs at this point in forming this document. Practices will be forthcoming in 2023, and some may even vary due to the unique circumstances and details that make up each situation.

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*This document has been printed to summarize the changes to the Constitution and Statement of Faith as well as to introduce a new paper summarizing three historical values of Trinity Church. These changes and the adoption of the 3 Values documents will be up for vote from Sunday, Nov 13<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, Dec 11<sup>th</sup>.*

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