Collective Church

# Church Doctrines

*The Official Doctrines of Collective Church adopted by Board resolution*

## God

WE BELIEVE God is the Creator, Sovereign over creation. He eternally exists in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God.

(Genesis 1:1, 26-27, 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14)

## Jesus Christ

WE BELIEVE Jesus is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ and His virgin birth. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven's glory and will return again to restore all things.

(*Matthew 1:22, 23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5, 14:10-30; Hebrews 4:14, 15; 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4; Romans 1:3, 4; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Timothy 6:14, 15; Titus 2:13*)

## Holy Spirit

WE BELIEVE the Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and the Son as God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. The Christian seeks to live under His control daily.

*(John 16:7-13, 14:16-17; 2 Corinthians 3:17; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16; Ephesians 1:13, 5:1; Galatians 5:25)*

## Bible

## WE BELIEVE the Bible is God’s Word. Through the Bible God reveals Himself – His character and His will – to human beings. Penned by human authors under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Bible is truth and without error in what it intends to say. As such, the Bible is the supreme source of truth for what Christians believe and how we live. When properly understood and practiced, the Bible defines love and leads us to love God and people.

## *(Psalm 12:6, 105, 119, 160; Proverbs 30:52; Matthew 22:37-40; Timothy 1:13, 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21)*

## Humanity & Sin

WE BELIEVE human beings are made in the image of God (e.g. spiritually, volitionally and emotionally). As image-bearers of God, every person matters to God. We are God’s supreme purpose for creation. Yet, because of Adam’s sin, we are a fallen people. Human beings will always be bent toward fighting God. Sin separates mankind from God. Therefore, everyone needs a supernatural Savior.

*(Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6; Isaiah 59:1-2; John 3:16; Romans 3:23)*

## Eternity

WE BELIEVE that Heaven and Hell are real. People were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence.

*(John 3:16; John 14:17; Romans 6:23; Romans 8:17-18; Revelation 20:15; 1 Corinthians 2:7-9)*

## Salvation

WE BELIEVE that salvation—the forgiveness of sins and a restored relationship with God—is only possible by the grace of God through the blood of Jesus Christ. Salvation is a gift from God. That the Bible commands those seeking salvation to turn from sin, put their faith in Jesus, confess Christ as Lord, and be baptized into Christ's death and resurrection.

*(Acts 15:11; John 14:6, 1:12; Romans 5:1, 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:26).*

## Baptism

WE BELIEVE baptism by immersion symbolizes and identifies us with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Baptism is the public declaration that one has accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Baptism was commanded by Jesus and practiced by the New Testament church. Biblically, whenever someone believed and repented, they were baptized.

*(Matthew 3:16, 28:19-20; Mark 16:16; John 3:23; Colossians 2:12; Acts 8:36, 9:18, 16:13-15; Ephesians 4:4-6)*

## Communion

WE BELIEVE communion, or the Lord’s Supper, is an ordinance given to all believers by Jesus Christ who regularly remember His sacrifice for us and to symbolize the new covenant. The elements of bread and juice are symbols of Christ’s body and shed blood.

*(Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29)*

## Elders

WE BELIEVE elders are leaders responsible to oversee the mission and activities of the local church. We believe the Bible teaches the equal value of men and women. We believe that both men and women are called to lead in many ways. Yet, God designed the world with order. The Bible teaches that He created men and women to complement each other, and so defines roles and responsibilities within marriage, the family, and the church. In the home, God makes men ultimately responsible and accountable. In harmony with this, God holds men ultimately responsible for the church, designating them to serve as elders. We believe an Elder is a husband of one wife and if married, he must be a devoted husband. We believe that God has designed the order of the church to complement – not to create chaos with – the order of the home. Women lead in many capacities in the church.

*(1 Corinthians 11:1-12; 1 Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:6-9)*

## Church Discipline

WE BELIEVE that Church discipline is to be handled prayerfully, carefully, and justly, with individual (and escalating) attempts of restoration. The first attempt will include a private meeting with the offender. If repentance has not occurred, a second attempt with several others present will occur. If there is still no repentance, the Elders will seek to restore the offender. Finally, if the erring individual refuses to heed the warning and correction of the Elders, he/she will be removed from fellowship of the church.

*(Matthew 18:15-17; Luke 17:3; Titus 3:10)*

## Marriage

WE BELIEVE that God, the Creator, designed marriage for our good. As Creator, He, alone, is qualified to define marriage. Biblical marriage is defined as the uniting of one man and one woman in a covenant relationship for life. Marriage between a man and a woman provides the biblical framework for unique companionship, for sexual intimacy, and the means for procreation. All other sexual activity (e.g. premarital sex, adultery, homosexual practices and polygamy) are outside of God’s will and therefore destructive. The Bible considers all destructive behavior sin.

*(Genesis 2.24; Malachi 2:16; Matthew 19:4-6)*

## Gender Identity

WE BELIEVE that the Bible teaches that gender was created by God and that He created them to be male and female. Each are equal in value and uniquely reflect the image of the Creator.

*(Genesis 1:27)*

## Sexuality

WE BELIEVE that the Bible teaches that sexual activity outside of monogamous heterosexual marriage is sin. Temptation is not sin; giving in to temptation is. We believe sexual sin should be addressed by speaking the truth (be honest about its destructiveness), and lovingly seeking to help the individual find forgiveness, redemption, and hope. The good news is that when people admit their sin, God is faithful to forgive and to restore.

*(Leviticus 18:22; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 John 1:9)*

## Sanctity of Life

WE BELIEVE in the sanctity of human life, that life begins at conception, and that life continues until natural death. We believe the unborn child is a precious life created in God’s image and abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of this life. Many women who have had an abortion will come to regret their decision and feel that they have committed an unforgivable sin. The good news is that God’s love, grace and forgiveness heals and restores.

*(Deuteronomy 30:15-20, Psalm 127:3, Psalm 139:13-16, Isaiah 44:24, Ephesians 2:10)*