

TAHOE CHURCH THEOLOGICAL STATEMENT

WHAT IS THE TAHOE CHURCH THEOLOGICAL STATEMENT?

Christianity is a beautifully diverse faith with a deep and ancient history. Over thousands of years, billions of people from different cultures and backgrounds have become followers of Jesus. With so much diversity, it can sometimes be difficult to understand how individual churches fit into this larger Christian tradition. That's why Tahoe Church has a theological statement—to clearly express our approach to following Jesus.

Throughout history, churches have struggled and split over all kinds of theological differences. Some of those debates have been about the core essentials of Christianity, while many have been over not-so-essential issues. At Tahoe Church, we hold to a guiding principle that helps us navigate these differences:

"In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity."

This phrase, likely first used by 16th century theologian Marco Antonio de Dominis, captures our approach to faith and community. Here's what it means for us:

First, we stand firmly on the foundational truths of Christianity and lead everyone in our church to do the same. These essential beliefs anchor us to the historic Christian faith and the unshakable truths of Scripture ([Ephesians 4:3-6](#), [John 17:20-23](#), [1 Corinthians 1:10](#)).

Second, when it comes to non-essential issues, we believe in liberty. While these topics matter, we recognize that faithful Christians can disagree. Rather than letting differences divide us, we embrace the freedom we have in Christ to hold varying perspectives with grace. We are going for unity, not uniformity ([Galatians 5:1](#), [Romans 14:1-5](#), [Romans 14:13-15](#)).

Finally, in everything, we commit to love. Right belief, expressed pridefully, is not love. Wrong belief, permitted freely, is also not love. But when truth is championed with love, we reflect the heart of Jesus. Our goal is to be a church that lives out that kind of love in all we do ([Mark 12:30-31](#), [Ephesians 4:15](#), [Colossians 3:14](#), [1 Corinthians 16:14](#)).

So what are the essential beliefs?

OUR ESSENTIAL BELIEFS

The essential beliefs we hold as a church aren't ideas we've made up on our own or rooted in a particular denomination. They've been shaped and refined over centuries of faithful, thoughtful engagement with Scripture—through deep biblical study, prayer, and theological reflection within the global Church. Because of this, we hold these core truths with deep conviction and gladly teach them to anyone willing to listen and explore them with us.

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God. Everything and everyone exists for the glory of God.

Genesis 1; Psalms 90:2; Matthew 28:19; I Corinthians 13:14

Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary and lived a sinless life. Jesus is fully man and fully God. He offered Himself as the only perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross under the direction of Pontius Pilot. He arose from the dead on the third day demonstrating His power over sin and death. He ascended to be with the Father, where He is interceding for us, and will return again someday to earth. He will reign as King of kings, and Lord of lords in the New Earth.

Matthew 1:20-25; John 1:1-18; Acts 1:9-11; Acts 2:22-36; Romans 1:3-4; I Corinthians 15:3-4; I Timothy 6:14-16; Hebrews 4:4-5; I John 1:1-3;

The Holy Spirit is present in the world today and makes us aware of our need for Jesus. He also lives within every Christian from the moment of salvation. The Spirit continually reveals Himself to us in order to empower us for His purpose. He provides Christians with understanding of spiritual truth and guidance in doing what is right. As Christians, we seek to live in His power and direction daily.

John 7:39, 14:15-18, 16:7-15; Acts 2:33, 15:8-9; Romans 8:1-27; Galatians 3:1-14; Ephesians 5:18; I Thessalonians 4:7-8; II Thessalonians 2:13; I Peter 1:2; I John 3:24, 4:13

The Bible is the only reliable, inspired word of God. We accept the 66 books of the Bible as the final authority for faith and practice. Every part of Scripture is useful and applicable to our everyday lives.

Luke 24:44-47; John 10:35; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Peter 1:10-12; 2 Peter 1:20-21

The Gospel is the story of the forgiveness of sins by the grace of God through faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. People are created in the image of God and have potential for great good. However, all of us have sinned in disobedience to God. This sin separates us from God. Salvation is freely available to all people, but we must accept it. It is only by trusting in Jesus Christ for forgiveness of our sin that we can be saved to eternal life with God. To be eternally separated from God is hell. To be eternally in union with Him is true life!

Romans 3:12-26, 5:1, 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 14:6, 1:12; II Corinthians 5:14-21; I Timothy 2:3-6; Titus 2:11-14, 3:5; Genesis 1:27; Isaiah 53:6a, 59:1-2; Romans 3:23; Mark 7:21-23; Galatians 5:16-25; I John 1:7-8, 3:7-10; John 3:16, 14:17; Romans 6:23, 8:17-18; I Corinthians 2:7-9; Revelation 20:15

WHERE DID WE GET OUR ESSENTIAL BELIEFS?

Creeds have served an incredibly important role in unifying Christians in essential doctrines for nearly 2000 years. These statements of belief have helped Christians across different times and traditions stay anchored in core biblical truths. In fact, Paul even quotes an ancient church creed in his own writings ([1 Corinthians 15:3-5](#)). **The Apostles' Creed**, is one of the oldest and most widely accepted summaries of Christian faith, with roots tracing back to the earliest disciples of Jesus. By affirming this creed, we stand in continuity with the historic, global church—past and present—grounding our faith not in modern preferences but in the essential truths that have defined Christianity from the beginning. It covers crucial topics around the nature of God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Scripture, Salvation, and the Church.

The Apostles' Creed

*I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the grave.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.*

Here are some helpful resources to learn more about the history and Biblical basis of the Apostles Creed:
<https://www.logos.com/grow/the-apostles-creed-its-history-and-origins>

There are many Christians all over the world who agree with these essential truths, but come from different Christian traditions. Those traditions include Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Protestant Christianity. These are all our brothers and sisters in Christ. However, Tahoe Church falls specifically in the Protestant tradition.

To help clarify what we mean by protestant, we subscribe to the **Five Solas of the Reformation**, which summarize the core beliefs that distinguish Protestant Christianity from other traditions. These “solas” are five key biblical principles that emerged from the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century. These truths affirm that people are made right with God not by religious rituals or human effort but by trusting in Jesus Christ, who offers salvation as a free gift of grace. The Reformers, like Martin Luther, championed these points to redirect Christianity back to its biblical foundations. These principles help shape the way our church functions in posture and practice.

The Five Solas of the Reformation

1. **Solus Christus (Christ Alone):** Jesus Christ is the only mediator between humanity and God. There is no other ([John 14:6](#), [Acts 4:12](#)).
2. **Sola Gratia (By Grace Alone):** Salvation is a gift from God, not a result of human merit ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)).
3. **Sola Fide (By Faith Alone):** Salvation is found by trusting in the Gospel of Jesus Christ not by human effort ([Galatians 2:16](#)).
4. **Sola Scriptura (Scripture Alone):** The Bible is the authority for Christians in faith, doctrine, and practice above any person, decree, or writing ([2 Timothy 3:16-17](#)).
5. **Soli Deo Gloria (To God’s Glory Alone):** Everything and everyone exists for the glory of God alone and believers are called to honor him with their whole lives ([1 Corinthians 10:31](#), [Romans 11:36](#)).

Here’s a helpful resource to learn more about the history and Biblical basis of the Five Solas of the Reformation:
<https://www.logos.com/grow/5-solas-reformation/>

In summary, Tahoe Church holds to a strong tradition of essential beliefs rooted in the **Holy Bible**, established in the **Apostles’ Creed** and confirmed **The Five Solas of the Reformation**.

Therefore, we are a **Christian, Protestant, Non-Denominational Church**.

DISTINCTIVES

So far, we've covered the core beliefs of the Christian faith and the Protestant tradition that shape our theological foundation as a church. But we know that people often have more questions about specific topics. In this section, we address some of the most common ones and highlight key distinctives of Tahoe Church. This isn't a comprehensive list, and no topic is covered in full, but we hope it provides some clarity. If you have more questions—about these topics or anything else—we'd love to continue the conversation. **Please reach out to us at info@tahoe.church.**

Spiritual Gifts: We believe Scripture teaches that people receive varying spiritual gifts from God that should be used for the edification of the Church according to Biblical guidelines.

Baptism: We believe Scripture teaches that baptism is an outward expression of an internal reality. Baptism is reserved for those who have personally put their faith in Jesus. Jesus calls his followers to be baptized.

Communion: We believe Scripture teaches that communion is an sacred, symbolic act of the faith reserved for those who have personally put their faith in Jesus. Jesus calls his followers to participate in communion regularly.

Gender: We believe Scripture teaches that God created two genders. God created men and women distinctly and equal in value. Gender is not a determining or limiting factor for any role in our church.

Marriage: We believe Scripture teaches that marriage is a sacred covenant reserved for one man and one woman and must be respected and protected to the best of our ability. We believe that sex is reserved for marriage.

Abortion: We believe Scripture teaches that unborn people are deeply valued by God and must be respected and protected to the best of our ability.

Justice: We believe that Scripture teaches us to seek justice and love mercy. We lament the legacy of every form of oppression and discrimination throughout the world, and we seek to confront past and present injustice through repentance, reconciliation, and biblical justice.