

Core Biblical Beliefs on Culture

The purpose of this document is to clearly communicate what we believe and teach at MissionView Church to promote unity in the church body for God's glory.

Alcohol – Opinions about social drinking vary widely in the Christian community. We believe Christians are free to avoid the use of alcohol completely, but we do not believe that the moderate use of alcohol is forbidden by Scripture[2]. According to Scripture, all Christians are to avoid drunkenness[3], maintain self-control[4], and regulate actions in all areas of their lives according to the law of love[5] and with deference to weaker brothers and sisters[6]. If Christians choose to drink, they should do so with moderation and self-control. We acknowledge the devastating effects that alcohol can have on individuals and families and are committed to walking alongside people that struggle in this area while showing them the love of Christ.

Ethnicity/Race and the Value of All Humanity – We believe that all people are created in the image of God and must be treated with love, compassion, kindness, respect, and dignity[7]; we thus condemn racism and grieve its practice. Racism is an evil that denigrates other image bearers based on differences in physical appearance, cultural practice, or certain behavioral traits that correspond to such differences. It is a sin that can be both intentional and unintentional and come in forms of both commission and omission[8]. The Bible teaches that all are equal in Christ[9] and that unity within the Church is a witness to the world of God's truth[10]. People of all races and ethnicities are fully valued and welcome at MissionView Church.

Family Relationships – We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. According to Scripture, a husband is to love and lead his wife selflessly and sacrificially as Christ loves and leads the church. His goal will be to act as a servant leader in the home putting his family's well-being above his own. A wife is to submit to her husband's servant leadership as the church submits to the headship of Christ who became a servant for us all[11]. Children are a wonderful gift and heritage from the Lord[12]. Parents are responsible for protecting their children and teaching them Biblical values through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate training and discipline[13]. The church also plays an important role in the teaching and training of children. This should be done in a loving and caring way[14], and in all cases, the church should take careful precaution to protect children from all forms of abuse and harm.

Gender Identity and Human Sexuality – We believe that God purposefully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct and complementary genders together reflect the image of God[15]. We believe that human sexuality is a wonderful gift from God that is designed to be expressed in the context of marriage between one man and one woman in a

covenantal union before God^[16]. We believe that the Bible commands sexual faithfulness for married couples^[17] and chastity for singles^[18]; we thus believe that premarital and extra-marital sexual activity (e.g., living together before marriage, adultery, and homosexual behavior) are immoral^[19]. We also believe that the Bible denounces the use of pornography and all forms of sexual abuse, exploitation, and harassment. We recognize that maintaining sexual purity is a high call and we strive to follow the model of Christ, who did not condemn but called for repentance^[20]. We endorse compassion, care, and mercy for those who struggle with sexual sin and/or gender identity. All are welcome at MissionView Church as we continue to examine the claims of Scripture together^[21].

Loving our Neighbors and Community – We believe that we should pray for and demonstrate love toward all people^[22]. We are to deal with those who disagree with or even oppose us graciously, patiently, and gently, and not by taking revenge, threatening violence, or using violence as a means to obtain personal justice. We seek to be a church that reflects God’s heart and puts our faith into practice by caring for those in our community and world that are particularly vulnerable, such as orphans, widows, refugees, and the poor^[23]. In seeking to love our neighbors and community, we recognize that Christians may take different societal and political approaches; therefore, our church does not endorse political parties or platforms. We encourage church members to be informed about Biblical truth and actively consider how it relates to the governance of our society^[24].

Marriage, Divorce, and Singleness – We believe that the Bible teaches that marriage joins one man and one woman in a single, covenantal union before God^[25]. For Christians, the sanctity of the marriage covenant is further reinforced by the New Testament use of marriage as a metaphor of Christ and the church^[26]. We believe that repentance and restoration in a broken marriage best glorifies God whenever possible and that Scripture permits divorce only in cases of adultery and abandonment^[27]. At the same time, we believe that those who have obtained an unbiblical divorce or remarriage can find forgiveness in Christ and may be greatly used by God^[28]. Marriage ceremonies performed by pastors of this church or in facilities owned or rented by this church will only be ceremonies that join one man with one woman, as their sex was determined at birth. Whenever there is a conflict between the church’s position and any new legal standard for marriage, the church’s understanding of marriage as defined by Scripture^[29] and described in this document will govern. We celebrate singleness as a gift from God (either by calling or by circumstance)^[30] and recognize that singles have important opportunities for ministry^[31]. Singles contribute to all aspects of church life and may serve in leadership positions.

Sanctity of Human Life from Beginning to End – We believe that all people are uniquely formed by God and are created in His image^[32]. We believe that human life begins at conception^[33] and that an unborn child is a living human being. Thus, we believe that abortion

constitutes the taking of a human life and we grieve its practice^[34]. Abortion, like all our sins, may be forgiven through faith in Christ and all repentant sinners are welcome as part of our community. We acknowledge the painful effects that abortion can have on individuals and families and are committed to walking alongside people who have been affected by abortion in Christ's love. In a similar manner, we believe that euthanasia or any act that facilitates premature death, is assuming a decision that is to be reserved for God^[35]. We do not believe that discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome is euthanasia.

The Role of Women in the Church^[36] – We believe that men and women are equal in essence, dignity and value and are complementary by divine design^[37]. We believe the Bible depicts a vision of men and women co-laboring as brothers and sisters in the church^[38] and we celebrate the many Biblical examples of men and women deploying their gifts together for the good of the church and for the glory of God^[39]. At MissionView Church, we seek to cultivate a sense of brotherly and sisterly love that is marked by honor, care, and sacrifice for one another. At the same time, we believe that the Bible teaches that the office of pastor/elder is reserved for qualified men who are responsible for leading the church^[40], teaching the Word of God^[41], and maintaining doctrinal integrity within the church^[42]. At MissionView Church, we also appoint qualified men as deacons to meet the tangible needs of the church^[43]. Apart from the offices of pastor, elder, and deacon, we believe that the Bible encourages women to be involved in all other aspects of church ministry^[44] (e.g., leading in areas of ministry, leading church prayer, conducting trainings, teaching women's Bible studies, co-leading community groups, providing formative input and ideas to the elders regarding the operation and direction of the church, etc.). We denounce any distorted views of Scripture that lead to the subjugation, abuse, or neglect of women. Outside of Scriptural directives regarding the church and home, we affirm that women are well suited to occupy all other leadership roles in society.

[1] Some content modified with permission from Cuyahoga Valley Church's 'Essential Beliefs on Cultural Issues' (<https://cvconline.org/statement-of-faith/>)

[2] John 2:1-12; 1 Timothy 5:23

[3] Romans 13:13; 1 Corinthians 5:11; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:18; 1 Timothy 3:2-3; 1 Peter 4:3

[4] Galatians 5:22-24; 2 Peter 1:5-7

[5] James 2:8

[6] Romans 14:20-21; 1 Corinthians 10:23-33; Philippians 2:3-4

[7] Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31; Acts 10:34-35; Romans 10:12-13

[8] Leviticus 4:27; Ephesians 4:30; James 4:17

[9] Galatians 3:28; James 2:1-9

[10] John 17:22-23; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:11-22; Revelation 7:9-10

[11] Mark 10:6-9; Ephesians 5:22-30; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Peter 3:1-2,7

[12] Psalms 127:3-5

[13] Exodus 20:12; Joshua 24:15; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Proverbs 22:6,15, 23:13-14; Ephesians 6:1-4; Colossians 3:20-21

[14] Matthew 18:5-6, 19:14; Mark 10:13-14

- [15] Genesis 1:26-27; Matthew 19:4; Mark 10:6
- [16] Genesis 2:18-25; Mark 10:6-9; Ephesians 5:22-31
- [17] Exodus 20:14; 1 Corinthians 6:13-20; Hebrews 13:4
- [18] 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8
- [19] Romans 1:26-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; 1 Timothy 1:8-10
- [20] John 8:1-11; Psalm 51:1-12
- [21] 2 Timothy 2:15, 3:16-17, 4:1-6
- [22] Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Romans 12:9-10, 17-21, 13:8-10; Galatians 5:13-14; Philippians 2:1-4; 1 Peter 3:8-9; 1 John 3:17-18
- [23] Psalm 146:9; Isaiah 1:17; Zechariah 7:9-10; James 1:27; James 2:14-17
- [24] Jeremiah 29:7; Micah 6:8; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17
- [25] Genesis 2:18-25; Mark 10:6-9; Ephesians 5:22-31
- [26] 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:31-32
- [27] Malachi 2:14-17; Matthew 19:3-9; Mark 10:11-12; Romans 7:1-3; 1 Corinthians 7:10-16
- [28] 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:1-10
- [29] Genesis 2:24; Mark 10:6-9; Ephesians 5:22-23
- [30] Matthew 19:10-12; 1 Corinthians 7:6-8
- [31] 1 Corinthians 7:32-35
- [32] Genesis 1:27, 2:7; Job 33:4; Psalm 139:16
- [33] Psalm 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:4-5
- [34] Psalm 139:13-16; Isaiah 44:24, 49:1, 5; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:44
- [35] Exodus 20:13, 23:7; Matthew 5:21
- [36] Some material modified from 'The Role of Women at the Village Church' (<https://thevillagechurch.net/about/beliefs>)
- [37] Genesis 2:18-24
- [38] 1 Corinthians 12:4-31
- [39] Luke 8:1-3; Acts 18:26; Romans 16:1-2; Philippians 4:3
- [40] 1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:7-9; 1 Peter 5:1-3
- [41] 1 Timothy 2:12-14, 3:1-7; 2 Timothy 4:1-2
- [42] 2 Timothy 4:2-5; Titus 1:5-9, 2:1
- [43] Acts 6:1-6; 1 Timothy 3:8-13
- [44] Luke 2:36-38, 8:1-3; John 20:11-18; Romans 16:1-16; Philippians 4:2-3; Titus 2:3-5