



Ponatahi Christian School



Statement of Faith, Biblical Basis, and Practical Implications

Statement of Faith	Biblical Basis and Explanation	In Practice
<p>Article One We believe in one eternal God, who has revealed Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.</p>	<p>God has revealed Himself as One God consisting of Three Persons, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost: <i>“For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one”</i> (1 John 5: 7). Though His existence as a Triune God remains a truth beyond our comprehension, the Bible reveals for our comfort that each Person has a unique part in all the works of God, not only His work of creation but also His work of redemption or salvation of sinners (Eph. 1:4-14; John 1:12-13). God’s clearest revelation is in His Son Jesus Christ, as Jesus said, <i>“He that hath seen me that seen the Father,”</i> (John 14:9) and as stated in Hebrews 1:3 about Jesus, <i>“Who is the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person.”</i> To know God the Father and the Son by faith in His Word as fruit of the Holy Spirit is the essence of eternal life (John 17:3).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We acknowledge the holiness of God in a reverent manner both in word and deed.• We refer to God as the ultimate standard of truth in the context of discipline, restorative conversations, curriculum, etc.• In all our devotions, we acknowledge God and worship Him alone.

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<p style="text-align: center;">Article Two</p> <p>We believe that God, for His glory, created a perfect universe in six literal days.</p>	<p>God created the universe as stated in Genesis 1:1, <i>“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”</i> (Ps. 33:6). When finished, God saw everything that He had made, <i>“and, behold, it was very good”</i> (Genesis 1:31). The creation of heaven and earth is also confirmed in Exodus 20:11, <i>“For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day.”</i></p> <p>God created the universe for the display of His glory and for His pleasure.</p> <p>Revelations 4: 11: <i>“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.”</i></p> <p>Furthermore, the universe is His means of revealing Himself to each human being, as Romans 1:20 records, <i>“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they [the human race] are without excuse.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We acknowledge God as the Creator of all creation. • We teach the creation story throughout our entire curriculum, particularly in the Bible stories, and sciences, and we teach our students how to support this scientifically. • The Christian worldview is explicitly described in unit planning through the Creation-Fall-Redemption-Restoration model.

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<p style="text-align: center;">Article Three</p> <p>We believe that God created us humans in His image, as male and female in a perfect relationship with Him, to glorify, and enjoy Him forever.</p>	<p>We are the crown of His creation work, as we are made to resemble God. Genesis 1: 27: <i>“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.”</i></p> <p>Besides creating us in His image as male and female , He also called us to a special task, <i>“And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air and over every living thing that moveth upon earth</i> (Gen. 1:28).</p> <p>God also initiated with us a relationship based on our obedience to His revealed will, <i>“And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”</i> (Gen. 2:16-17).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We believe that God created the distinct differences between the male and female genders. Which both reflect the image of God. We also believe that we cannot – and may not try - change how we have been created by God. • We teach our boys and girls to care for, and respect themselves as image bearers of God. • We treat each student as valuable and unique and help them to cultivate their God-given potential. • We teach the differences between the two genders in our whole curriculum and particularly in Biology and Health Education.

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<p style="text-align: center;">Article Four</p> <p>We believe that mankind broke this original relationship by sin: therefore we, and all creation, live under the penalty of separation from God, and will remain that way forever unless redeemed by an Almighty Saviour.</p>	<p>The sad truth is that Adam and Eve rebelled against their Maker and broke their relationship with Him through sin. This evil act is recorded in Genesis 3: 7: <i>“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.”</i></p> <p>As a result of this betrayal, we as mankind are partakers of the just result of this sin, namely spiritual separation from God, as stated in Romans 5: 12: <i>“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”</i></p> <p>The secondary result of our betrayal is our spiritual destruction. Sin has disabled us to love God above all and our neighbour as ourselves. The most sobering review of our fallen condition is given us in Romans 3:10-18, which contains the words, <i>“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one. (...) There is none that doeth good, no, not one.”</i></p> <p>Without God the Father seeking us through His Son and Spirit, mankind would have had no hope of being delivered from this miserable separation and destruction. God, however, revealed Himself as a seeking and saving God, according to Jesus’ words in John 3: 16, <i>“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life;”</i> and, <i>“For the Father seeketh such to worship Him”</i>(John 4:23).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We view all people in their fallen state as being sinful and sinners. We don’t take the view that children are innocent and are only ‘corrupted’ by the world or others. • While we view students as sinners, at the same time, we treat them with grace and dignity as God’s image-bearers. • The Biblical way to deal with sin issues is through confession, repentance and redemption by faith in Jesus Christ alone. • We encourage students to ask the Lord for forgiveness and restoration.

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<p style="text-align: center;">Article Five</p> <p>We believe that God Himself has provided such a Saviour in His Son Jesus Christ, and promises full forgiveness and deliverance from punishment, and the right to eternal life to all who confess their sin and trust in Jesus alone as their Saviour.</p>	<p>The good news of hope for fallen and guilty sinners is revealed in God’s way of salvation: He has provided His only Son as the substitute Saviour for His people. Jesus Christ is revealed in both the Old and New Testament God’s sacrificial Lamb: <i>“Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted; But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him”</i> (Isaiah 53: 4 – 5); <i>“Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world”</i> (John 1:29); <i>“I (said Jesus) am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep”</i> (John 10: 11). He did this by dying on the cross. Scripture reveals that God’s way of salvation is by grace alone (Eph. 2:8), through faith in Jesus Christ alone (Romans 4:5). Both of these are clearly summarised in Romans 10:8-9, <i>“But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We intentionally communicate the hope of the gospel of forgiveness and restoration, which is exclusive in the Lord Jesus Christ. • We model this in prayer and in our Christ-like attitude towards our students. • As staff, we demonstrate and ask for forgiveness from others when we have wronged them. • All students are to be reminded of their responsibility to seek the Lord in prayer, repent and believe the gospel.

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<p style="text-align: center;">Article Six</p> <p>We believe that God applies this salvation in the heart of His people by the work of the Holy Spirit.</p>	<p>The work of the Holy Spirit is so essential that only through His ministry will we experience salvation in the repentance from sin and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ teaches this in John 3:3 and 8, <i>“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see or enter the kingdom of God. The wind bloweth where it listeth [desires], and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit.”</i> And further, 1 Corinthians 12:3, <i>“Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit.”</i> And lastly, John 1:12-13, <i>“But as many as received Him [Jesus], to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name: which were born, not of blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We approach our students with the confidence that the Holy Spirit is able and willing to redeem their fallen nature. • We teach that it is ultimately God who sovereignly chooses people for salvation, while at the same time we recognise that people are commanded to repent and believe. • While we greatly desire the salvation of each of our students, we are careful not to presume it. • We teach our students that while they are personally invited to seek the LORD, it is ultimately the Holy Spirit who regenerates His people by leading them to saving faith in Christ, and who also guides and supports them in the path of sanctification.

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<p style="text-align: center;">Article Seven</p> <p style="text-align: center;">We believe that God reveals this to us in the Bible, which is His inspired, complete, and unchangeable revelation of His will and message of hope to us.</p>	<p>Though the Scriptures were penned by various men over many years, yet all of the Scriptures are the Word of the living God. Each writer was moved by the Holy Spirit who not only led them into what to write, but also secured the writing so that it is truly the infallible Word of God. This is confirmed by 2 Tim. 3:16, <i>“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness;”</i> as well as 2 Peter 1:21, <i>“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”</i> Since the Word of God is inspired by the Holy Spirit, it remains unchangeable through all ages and cultures as the revealed will of God: 1 Peter 1:23, <i>“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, we refer to the Bible in all our teaching. • In Bible lessons, we teach with an open Bible. • We use the King James Version at our school. • Students weekly memorise a Bible verse. • Regarding the gifts of the Spirit, we hold a cessationist position. This means that we believe that the sign gifts of tongues and apostolic prophecy, etc., have ceased. As a result, these will not be taught or practised at our school.

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<p style="text-align: center;">Article Eight We believe that God’s will for us all is to “Love Him above all, and our neighbour as ourselves.”</p>	<p>God’s original moral law was written on the hearts of Adam and Eve in Paradise; Jesus reaffirmed this in Matt. 22:37-39, <i>“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”</i> God Himself expounded His original law in the Ten Commandments as given in Exodus 20:1-17. Jesus emphasises this love to other people in John 13: 34-35: <i>“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”</i> Jesus also teaches in Matthew 5:17-18 that His law remains unchanged for the New Testament Church, <i>“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily, I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle [the smallest details of the Hebrew alphabet], shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our core Christian values are Respect, Diligence, Integrity, Fellowship and Kindness. • We emphasise treating each other with love and respect, both as staff and as the student body. This is the basis of our behaviour framework. • We promote opportunities for our students to serve each other and the community. • We nurture and demonstrate respect for the tangata whenua of Aotearoa New Zealand.

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<p style="text-align: center;">Article Nine</p> <p>We believe that God is building His Kingdom by uniting believers in the Lord Jesus Christ into one global church consisting of many local gatherings.</p>	<p>The purpose of Jesus' ministry through the Word and Spirit is to build God's worldwide Kingdom. Matthew 8: 11, <i>"And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven."</i></p> <p>Through the ministry of God's Word, the Lord Jesus is gathering His people and bringing them into a faith-relationship to Himself as well as a communion-relationship to fellow believers in local churches throughout the world. One day, however, all His people will be gathered together as one, Rev. 7:9, <i>"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands."</i> Despite the differences between peoples and cultures all believers are one in Christ Jesus: Eph 4: 4 – 6 <i>"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We respect cultural and ecclesiastical differences within our school community. • As a Reformed Christian school, we expect our staff to abide by our special character. • In our devotions and discussions, we focus on what unites us rather than on what we view differently. • We nurture an environment in which we have non-judgmental, open discussions.