

The 10 Doctrines

(Listed below are the general theological beliefs.)

- ✚ **#1 Beliefs-** *We believe that each person should work out their own personal spiritual beliefs with respect, curiosity, and spiritual sensitivity to the “still small voice” in each person. A person could consider consulting with clergy, laity, religious institutions, holy books, science, philosophy, rationality, history, culture, and common sense as part of the process of forming a personal rational spiritual belief system.*

- ✚ **#2 Bible-** *We believe the Bible is a special collection of words- some inspired by God and other words only the thoughts of its human authors. Only the words that reflect God’s true nature of Love are divinely inspired- they pass the love test. Words in holy books that do not pass the love test, are not divinely inspired. We believe that we must correctly, carefully, and contextually discern the words of any holy book to determine if they are inspired by God. Any study of biblical passages must include a consideration of the type of literature it is. Is it history? – physical evidence it transpired. Or is it a parable? - not an actual event, but a story written to teach a point. Always consider with any informational source the important questions with each: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?*

- ✚ **#3 God-** *We believe that God is Love. God is one, eternal, good, loving, & positive spiritual force that indwells all humanity. This force prompts us to be moral, authentic, & loving. God has revealed herself/himself to humanity as Creator of time and space, Savior from anything not of love, and as an indwelling Spirit or consciousness in all humanity. God has no specific gender and can be referred to in any pronouns we feel comfortable using.*

- ✚ **#4 Beginning-** *We believe in the beginning God created time, matter, and space with the “big bang” around 14 billion years ago. God watched all life in the universe develop and encouraged the process of evolution. On Earth, as humanoids evolved into more intelligent beings, around 100,000 years ago, God breathed into us the “gift of conscience” or more commonly referred to as a “soul”. The soul begins as a neural construct within the physical brain and has 7 specific characteristics:*

The seven characteristics of a soul:
 1. *Is able to be self-aware.*
 2. *Is able to consider its future- including the physical death of the body.*
 3. *Is able to hear the voice of God within and make moral decisions.*
 4. *Is able to achieve high levels of executive cognitive functions.*
 5. *Is able to develop new ideas that they have not previously been exposed to.*
 6. *Is able to empathize with others and connect within the general consciousness of the universe.*
 7. *Is able to evolve from being merely physical to being eternal.*

- ✚ **#5 Morality-** *We believe with the “gift of conscience” or a “soul” we are challenged to overcome our primal and Darwinian instincts that had guided our successful evolution. The instincts that still remain that are fearful of others, selfish, cruel, and unloving are part of our “fallen” or “primitive” nature. The challenge of our lives is to become better creatures of love, compassion, and morality. This is no easy task and requires new thought patterns and behaviors. We all fail at this change sometimes. We all make mistakes. We all sin.*

Anything not of love is sin. When we do or say unloving things, we sin. In our relationships with other people we must always ask ourselves if what we are saying or doing is loving. If our actions and words towards others are not loving, it is sin. It is also important that we love ourselves. This includes maintaining a balanced, stable, healthy life for ourselves and our families. We should seek to avoid abusing our bodies or our minds with extremes, excesses, addictions, abusive people & things, and impulses that can lead to negative

consequences. Avoiding sin isn't fire insurance that prevents us from eternal death in a fictitious hell. Avoiding sin is life insurance to protect us from harm, and to provide for us a temporal life of peace, fulfillment, and joy.

The seven ways to get freedom from sin:

1. Realization- to fully comprehend what we have done is contrary to love.
2. Repentance- ask God to help us change our thinking.
3. Change thinking- in the present
4. Change behavior-in the present & future
5. Apologize- for the hurt of the past.
6. Make restitution- for harm
7. Continue to walk- in the light of love from lesson learned.


✚ **#6 Gender, Orientation, & Affection-** We believe that our gender, sexual orientation, and romantic affections can be determined by a combination of contributing factors including genetics, hormones, experiences, and environment. Physical shape of genitalia can play a role for some in determining gender but can be completely irrelevant for others. Each person is open to find their space regarding gender in a time and within circumstances they feel are appropriate. Our job is not to judge, but to assist and support the individual- if requested, in each person's journey of self-discovery. God does not look at our genitalia, God looks at our "heart"- inner thoughts in the brain that lead to actions. We will not have genitalia in eternity. So it is fair to say God is not as interested in our gender, orientation, and sexual organs as the "church" has been through the millennia. Sexual expression is a wonderful and healthy thing for humans to experience as long as it follows the key principles. Sexual expression in violation of the principles can be very damaging to individuals. So the principles should be followed with great care.

The 7 key principles for appropriate human sexual and/or affectional interactions:

1. Is loving- fulfills needed desires of all involved.
2. Is helpful- assist with procreation, relationship bonding, or life enjoyment.
3. Is honest- all individuals understand and accept the rules and circumstances.
4. Is consensual- age, desire, & cognitive ability
5. Is appropriate- no issues of power, control, ethics, or other conflicting relationships.
6. Is NOT harmful- does not cause damage to a person's body, mind, spirit, or reputation.
7. Is respectful- of boundaries of others and self.


✚ **#7 Jesus-** We believe the Old Testament authors viewed God in ways that weren't always congruent with God's true nature. Jesus contained divinity within his human form. Jesus' primary mission in life was to bring love and forgiveness to a world filled with sin, hate and retribution. Jesus taught us that love was the most important commandment, and should be the primary force in our lives. Jesus taught that love should guide all our words and actions. This message of love was radical at that time and still is in this modern era. The religious and political leaders of his day did not like his message and his inclusivity towards marginalized persons, so they had him executed. Jesus was physically silenced for 3 days, but afterward he, and his message arose to show the world that love triumphs over hate and death.

✚ **#8 Church-** We believe Jesus' message lives in his disciples to this day, and is spread throughout the world by our actions and words. The church that Jesus would endorse should be inclusive of all persons, should be a positive force in life, and should reach out into the community to help others. The church should encourage congregants to fully engage their spiritual journeys with religious prayers, experiences, and rituals (Communion, baptisms, marriages, commitment ceremonies, baby & pet dedications, blessings, glossolalia, meditations, etc.). These spiritual prayers, experiences, and rituals should be pulled from various faith traditions based on efficacy and truth. The church should be supported by our time, our talent, and our treasure.

 **#9 Prayer and Worship-** *We believe that prayer is not a “to do” list humans press upon a “cosmic robot” God. It is not a popularity contest to see how many people praying can convince God to intervene. Prayer is a way to silently, verbally, or through meditation to connect ourselves to our higher purpose. Worship is not a way to gratify the ego of a narcissistic deity. Music, singing, and worship are wonderful ways to open up ourselves to refreshing emotional transcendence.*

The Seven things that prayer & worship do:

- 1. It is a way we maintain spiritual homeostasis by dispersing negative emotions with positive ones.*
- 2. It facilitates communication between the emotional and logical parts of the brain.*
- 3. It provides us a way to feel some comfort that we can at least do something that feels helpful in seemingly impossible situations.*
- 4. It is a way to create and analyze the best possible options in challenging situations.*
- 5. It is a way to remain humble, grateful, and gain fresh insights into God, self, others, and the universe.*
- 6. It is a way to increase our empathy for others in challenging situations.*
- 7. It is a way to speak/sing positive words to ourselves and/or to others during challenging situations.*

 **#10 Eternity-** *We believe most things that begin will come to an end. Our planet will eventually be consumed by our Sun in its dying process that includes states of exponential growth some 5 billion years from now. The Earth will melt with a fervent heat as the Sun expands, and will indeed pass away. New matter, new heavens, and new planets will be created through the passing of the old ones. Before the Earth is destroyed, while humans exist on the planet, it is up to us how wonderful or how miserable life will be here. It is important for us to keep the planet in a manner that is clean and thoughtful of the environment. There is no predestined fate of apocalypse. The many passages of holy books that some interpret as apocalyptic events do not pass the “love test” of divine inspiration and/or correct interpretation.*

We believe all life will perish at some point. The “conscience” or “soul” will outlive the body and will exist in an eternal place. There will be a retention of some personality characteristics, but there will be no genders in eternity, for we shall be as the angels- God’s special messengers. There is no place of eternal torture and punishment- this is incongruent with a loving, good God. There is however a place of eternal enlightenment the Bible calls Heaven- a place where mysteries are revealed, love replaces hate, understanding is obtained, hurt is healed, and human souls are reunited. Both the unloving person and the loving person, once they die shall willingly and happily confess divinity is within Jesus, and that Jesus’ teachings of love are transcendent and sovereign.