

This document reflects Appendix A of the First Stone Ministries bylaws. The content is unchanged and has been formatted for readability.

APPENDIX A — STATEMENT OF FAITH

First Stone Ministries, Inc.

The ministry of First Stone Ministries stands firmly within historic, orthodox Christianity and joyfully affirms the authority of Holy Scripture as the inspired and infallible Word of God. We hold the following doctrines as essential to Christian life, witness, discipleship, and pastoral care.

1. The Authority of Scripture

We believe that all Scripture is inspired by God, without error in its original writings, and is fully trustworthy and sufficient for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:20–21). Scripture reveals God’s truth, God’s character, and God’s design for His kingdom and His people.

2. The Trinity

We believe in one God who eternally exists in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal in power, glory, and divine nature (Matthew 28:19; John 14:16–17).

3. The Person and Work of Jesus Christ

We believe in:

- His eternal deity
- His virgin birth
- His sinless life
- His miraculous works
- His atoning death on the cross
- His bodily resurrection on the third day
- His ascension to the right hand of the Father
- His present intercession for believers
- His future bodily return in glory and judgment

Jesus Christ is the only Savior and the only way to the Father (John 14:6; Acts 4:12).

4. Salvation

We believe that salvation is the gracious gift of God, received through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ alone. Through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, by which we are born again through the imperishable seed of the living and abiding Word of God, the believer is justified, forgiven, adopted, and empowered to live a transformed life of obedience and holiness (Romans 3:21–26; Titus 3:3–7; 1 Peter 1:23; Ephesians 2:8–10). The ultimate end of salvation is eternal glorification (1 Peter 1; 1 Corinthians 15:51–57; Romans 8:30).

5. The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

We believe in the present and active ministry of the Holy Spirit, who is the source of regeneration and new life. He indwells every believer, convicts of sin, guides into truth, produces spiritual fruit, and empowers believers for godly living and faithful service (John 3:5–8; John 16:7–15; Galatians 5:22–25). We affirm that the spiritual gifts given by the Holy Spirit continue to operate today and are to be exercised with discernment, accountability, and in submission to the authority of Scripture.

6. The Nature of Humanity and Sin

We believe that God created humanity as male and female, in His own image, according to His good and purposeful design (Genesis 1:26–27). Through the Fall, humanity became alienated from God and subject to brokenness, sin, disorder, and death (Romans 5:12–14).

Sin is rebellion against God. Any thought, word, attitude, motive, or action that falls short of God's holy and good design are the works of sin (Galatians 5:16–17).

Therefore, all people are in need of redemption, reconciliation, and restoration through Jesus Christ.

7. God's Design for Sexuality, Marriage, and Relationships

We believe that God designed sexual intimacy for the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman, a sacred union that reflects Christ's relationship with His Church (Genesis 2:18–25; Matthew 19:4–6; Ephesians 5:31–32).

We affirm that all forms of sexual behavior outside this covenant, including but not limited to fornication, adultery, homosexual and bisexual behavior, transgender or gender-divergent self-identification, pornography, cohabitation, polyamory, and other sexual practices contrary to God's created order, are inconsistent with His will for His people and are, therefore, sin and will be judged (Hebrews 13:4).

At the same time, we affirm that every person is created in the image of God and must be treated with compassion, dignity, and truth. No individual is beyond the reach of God's grace or the transforming power of the gospel. We reject shaming, hostility, and cruelty toward any person wrestling with sexual or relational brokenness. Instead, we are

committed to offering loving, biblically grounded pastoral care that invites repentance, healing, and renewed identity in Christ.

8. Transformation, Sanctification, and Hope

We believe that the gospel of Jesus Christ brings true transformation to all who surrender their lives to Him. Through the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit, believers are sanctified, renewed, and conformed to the image of Christ.

We affirm that:

- No past sin or present struggle places anyone beyond God's redeeming grace (John 6:37).
- Change is possible and expected for every believer, though sanctification is a lifelong process (2 Corinthians 3:16–18).
- Healing and growth often involve discipleship, accountability, prayer, community, and renewed patterns of thinking and living (2 Corinthians 5:17; Philippians 1:6; Psalm 1:1–3; Romans 12:1–2).

9. The Church and Christian Unity

We believe in the spiritual unity of all true believers in Jesus Christ. The Church, as the Body of Christ, is called to worship, fellowship, discipleship, mission, and holy living, bearing witness to the truth and love of God in the world (Ephesians 4:1–6; John 17:22–23).

10. Final Judgment and Eternal Destiny

We believe in the bodily resurrection of both the saved and the lost. Those who belong to Christ will experience eternal life in the presence of God, and those who reject Christ will experience eternal separation from Him (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28–29; 2 Thessalonians 1:8–9). God will judge the world in righteousness through Jesus Christ, whose kingdom will have no end (Acts 17:31).

11. Pastoral Care, Compassion, and Ministry Posture

We believe that every person is created in the image of God and is therefore worthy of dignity, compassion, and truth. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23); therefore, we approach every individual not as a problem to be fixed, but as a person to be loved, entrusting their transformation to the power of the Holy Spirit and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We affirm that:

1. Repentance and change are possible through the grace of Jesus Christ, though growth is often gradual and requires ongoing discipleship, accountability, and community.
2. Shaming, condemnation, hostility, and cruelty have no place in Christian ministry.
3. Honesty, patience, and biblical clarity must guide all pastoral care, especially in matters of sexual and relational brokenness.
4. Ministry is relational, not merely instructional. It requires listening, bearing one another's burdens, prayer, and the faithful presence of God's people.
5. The local Church is the primary context for long-term spiritual formation, healing, and belonging.
6. First Stone Ministries walks with individuals for a season, seeking ultimately to anchor them in the word of God and to seek fellowship within a healthy, biblically faithful church community.

In all things, we seek to embody the posture of Jesus—full of grace and truth (John 1:14)—trusting that He restores the brokenhearted, sets captives free, and brings beauty from ashes (Isaiah 61:1–3).

12. Human Identity and Discipleship

We believe that every person is created by God with inherent worth, dignity, and purpose. Human identity is received from God, not self-constructed, and is fully known and restored in Jesus Christ. Our true identity is not found in sexuality, attractions, trauma, relationships, or personal history, but in being beloved sons and daughters of God through faith in Christ (1 John 3:1; Ephesians 1:3–6).

We affirm that:

1. God is the author of human identity and He designed humanity as male and female, reflecting His wisdom and glory (Genesis 1:26–27).
2. Human identity has been distorted by the Fall, resulting in confusion, disordered desires, relational wounds, and broken patterns of life.
3. Authentic identity is found only in Christ and no human experience, struggle, or label—including sexual identity, relational history, or trauma—defines a person more than their identity in Christ.
4. Discipleship involves putting away false identities, renouncing sinful behaviors, and embracing the new life found in following Jesus (Luke 9:23; Titus 2:11–14). The

believer is no longer under obligation to live according to fleshly desires (Romans 8:12–13).

5. Healing is spiritual and will involve repentance, forgiveness, renewed thinking, trauma healing, relational change and restoration through Christian community (Romans 12:1–2; Galatians 6:1–2; 1 John 1:3).
6. The Holy Spirit faithfully works within believers to conform them to the image of Christ (Philippians 1:6).
7. Believers are not defined by past sins or present temptations, but by the righteousness of Christ and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 5:17, 21; Colossians 3:1–4).

We therefore reject all identity frameworks—whether cultural, psychological, or ideological—that locate a person’s core self primarily in sexual attraction, gender feelings, trauma history, or relational experience. Instead, we joyfully proclaim a Christ-centered identity that honors God’s design and invites every believer into renewed wholeness in Him.