

Anderson University Statement of Faith

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Preamble

The religious doctrinal statement of Anderson University is reaffirmed annually by the Board of Trust, administration and Christian Studies faculty. The University's faculty and staff are confessing Christians who have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and agree annually to respect and undergird the University's faith statement as they carry out their University responsibilities.

The statement is a summary of the biblical doctrine that is accordant with evangelical Christianity. It also contains distinctive elements of the institution's South Carolina Baptist identity and convictions*, and it expresses a Christian belief system that informs an Anderson education inclusive of the study of biblical knowledge, human knowledge, and human culture.

Anderson University's family of faculty, staff, and students is diverse as its members come from different cultures and ethnicities, denominational and non-denominational perspectives. This statement guides the University's governance, leadership, and culture, but it is not to be confused with or required as a personal faith statement of individuals for employment or student admission.

Anderson University has been affiliated with the South Carolina Baptist Convention (SCBC) since its founding in 1911. The SCBC affirms the Southern Baptist Faith and Message 2000 (BFM2000)*. The University's statement of faith is to remain consistent with the BFM2000, yet it is specific to Anderson University as a separate entity fostered by the SCBC and as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Anderson University is a member of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU), the International Alliance for Christian Education (IACE), and the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities (IABCU), and a partner of the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF).

The Statement

God

We believe in one living and true God, who exists eternally as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - the same in essence but distinct in person. In God exists, simply and eternally, all perfections of goodness, truth, and beauty. He created the heavens and earth from nothing by his sovereign will and sustains and governs them by his almighty power and love. He has revealed himself and his truth in the created order, in the Holy Scriptures, and supremely in Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ is God the Son, incarnate. He is the eternally begotten Son of the Father, who in the fullness of time took to himself a complete human nature - body and soul - uniting divinity and humanity in one person for the salvation of the world. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, lived a sinless life, died as a sacrifice for sin, rose bodily on the third day, and ascended into heaven. Even now he intercedes for his people, and one day he will come again to judge the living and the dead and to consummate his eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit is the Lord and giver of life, the third person of the Trinity, who eternally proceeds from the Father and Son. He is sent by the Father and Son to indwell believers, to empower them for holiness, and to equip them for service and witness.

Humanity

We believe that human beings are the special creation of God, in his own image and likeness, and the crowning achievement of his creation. In the beginning, human beings were innocent of sin and endowed by God with freedom of choice, yet chose to sin against God and brought sin and death into the human race. Thus, all persons (except Jesus Christ) come into the world under the curse of sin and need redemption. Only God, by his grace, can bring one into his holy fellowship and enable one to fulfill God's creative purpose. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created humanity in his own image, and in that Christ died for humanity; therefore, every person of every race and ethnicity possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christ-like love.

Satan

We believe in the existence of Satan, sin, and evil powers, and that all these have been defeated by God through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Redemption

We believe Jesus Christ died for all the sins of the world. His suffering and death on the cross and his resurrection from the dead were for all peoples and provide the only redemption from sin.

Salvation by Grace

We believe that all who freely accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord are “born again” (made new, renewed, or regenerated) and thereby become children of God, and are enabled to offer spiritual worship acceptable to God. Salvation is by God’s grace alone through faith. People cannot save themselves by works of righteousness, but works of righteousness are products of the Holy Spirit.

Conversion

We believe that authentic Christian life begins with conversion to Jesus Christ which involves repentance and faith in Him; conversion to Christ results in justification (forgiveness) and sanctification (growth in holiness). These are gifts that cannot be earned or inherited.

Scripture and Creeds

We believe that the sixty-six books of Holy Scripture are inspired by God’s Spirit, are without error, and are the sole supreme and final authority under God for Christian belief and life; Jesus Christ is the focus of divine revelation. Creeds and confessional statements are expressions of common faith under the authority of Christ and Scripture.

The Church

We believe that the one, holy, universal Church is the “body of Christ,” those people who believe and accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. The Church was instituted by Jesus Christ to be the people of God, the body and bride of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit. The universal, or invisible, church is made up of all true believers regardless of race, gender, age or station in life; the visible church is the local expression of this people of God in particular congregations of believers. The mission of the church is to make disciples of all nations by proclaiming the good news (the Gospel) of Jesus Christ and by faithfully administering the Lord’s ordinances and discipline. The purpose of the church is to glorify God as his redeemed people in all of its words and actions: in its worship, evangelism, service, care for creation, and care for all people, especially the poor and needy.

Baptist Distinctives

We believe in the autonomy of the local congregation, separation of church and state, and voluntary cooperation between congregations for evangelism and education. We believe in freedom of conscience from government domination or control and in the liberty and competency of every Christian believer to interpret Scripture, in conversation with the whole body of Christ, and to go directly to God in prayer.

Ordinances

We believe in two ordinances instituted by Christ to be observed by his people until he returns: water baptism of believers by immersion and the Lord’s Supper.

Gender, Sexuality and Marriage

We believe, that God, in his image, created humanity as male and female (Genesis 1:27) and that Jesus affirmed this truth (Matthew 19:4, Mark 10:6). On the basis of biblical teaching and together with the vast majority of Christians throughout the ages, we affirm that marriage between one man and one woman is the only proper context for sexual intimacy and that abstinence should be observed in singleness.

The Lord’s Return and Last Things

We believe that Jesus Christ will return to earth, personally, visibly, and unexpectedly, in power and glory to raise all the dead, judge people and nations, consign Satan and his followers to hell, save all people who believe in Jesus Christ by faith, and to bring His Kingdom to fulfillment.

Notes:

*As expressed in the [Baptist Faith and Message 2000 statement](#) of the Southern Baptist Convention

Resources:

[Baptist Faith and Message 2000](#)

[Nicene Creed](#)

[Apostles Creed](#)

[Academic Freedom](#)

