

Statement of Belief

The Statement of Belief of the Netherlands Reformed Christian School at 164 Jacksonville Rd., Pompton Plains, is comprised of the following Core Beliefs. These beliefs form the purpose of the school's existence, and the basis for all of its policies, procedures, and lifestyle expectations.

We believe, as authoritative and binding, the Doctrinal Standards and Liturgy which can be found in the back of the Psalter.

1. **The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament (the "Bible")** to be the Word of God¹, the only infallible rule of faith and practice.
2. **The creeds of the early Apostolic Church namely:**
 - (a) the Apostles Creed;
 - (b) the Nicene Creed; and
 - (c) the Athanasian Creed.These creeds are an excellent summary of the catholic undoubted Christian faith.
3. **That the Three Forms of Unity** and the doctrinal truths therein explained are undoubted, being a sound explanation of God's Word. We subscribe to the Three Forms of Unity established at the Synod of Dordt in 1618/1619; the Three Forms of Unity are the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession of Faith and the Canons of Dordt:
 - (a) **The Belgic Confession of Faith** was written as a detailed creed in 1561 to prove to the persecutors of the Reformation that the adherents of the Reformed faith were not rebels as was charged, but law-abiding citizens who professed only biblical doctrines. The author, Guido de Bres, was martyred for writing the confession, but not before it was copied down. Its 37 articles still provide a timeless account of what we believe today.
 - (b) **The Heidelberg Catechism** is a series of questions and answers that were developed early into the Reformation which commenced in 1563, in Heidelberg, Germany, to teach adults and children the principal doctrines of the Reformation in the line of the Apostolic Church. Under the mandate of Frederick III of Saxony, Germany, Zacharius Ursinus and Caspar Olevianus wrote the Heidelberg Catechism, to provide a simple and easy-to-memorize method explaining the doctrines of free and sovereign grace and the way of salvation through Christ as experienced by all His people. It was written to be used to instruct the people of his electorate and afterward was translated into many languages and is still used worldwide. All questions and answers in our English translation of this catechism are supported by biblical references as found in the Authorized King James version.
 - (c) **The historic document, the Canons of Dordt**, was written and sanctioned in 1618 and 1619, by a council of the highly esteemed Synod of Dordt, in response to non-biblical interpretations that were being promoted by many reformed churches in the early 1600s. Although the Synod of Dordt (held in Dordrecht, The Netherlands) was a national synod of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands, it had an international character, since it was composed not only of sixty-two Dutch delegates, but also of twenty-seven foreign delegates representing eight European countries (including for instance, England, France and Germany). The "synod" of ministers and professors of theology was called to examine what God's Word teaches on the various issues. Their findings were compiled into canons and are very relevant today, given the continued prevalence of the various errors.

¹ in the translation of the "Authorized King James" version or the Dutch "Statenvertaling", being the most reliable translations, translated directly from the original languages in which the Bible was written.

4. **That the Shorter and Longer Westminster Catechisms** handed down from the English Reformation and written by the famous Westminster Assembly of divines (1643-1649), further support the three forms of unity.
5. **The five points of Calvinism** as briefly summarized below and also known by the acronym TULIP.
 - (a) **Man's Total Depravity**
After our willful disobedience and fall in Paradise, we are born in sin and are spiritually dead. We cannot do anything anymore that can please God and have in ourselves no ability to ever be reconciled with our Creator. If there had not been a way opened from God's side we all would go eternally lost and that righteously. Only God can make us spiritually alive from spiritually dead.
 - (b) **God's Unconditional Election**
God has elected a people from eternity, not because of a foreseen faith or good works in man, but in His sovereign good pleasure. Those He has elected He will, at His appointed time, bring to conversion, justify, sanctify and glorify them. Election is an act of God's sovereign predestination, which includes reprobation. Salvation is a Divine work without any contribution by man.
 - (c) **God's Limited Atonement**
Although Christ's blood shed on Golgotha is sufficient to save the entire human race, His blood has only been shed to redeem His people who are given Him by His Father.
 - (d) **God's Irresistible Grace**
God, through the work of the Holy Spirit, calls His people irresistibly. A person may try to resist this calling but will fall on God's side at His time.
 - (e) **Perseverance of the Saints**
God preserves His people in grace. Although His people may fall into sin, God will bring them to repentance and ultimately to glory, at His time. Jesus speaks of none being able to pluck His people out of His Father's hands.
6. **The five Solas of the Reformation:**
 - (a) **Sola Scriptura (Scripture Alone)**
The Bible, the inspired Word of God, is the final authority in all matters of doctrine and practice. The creeds, confession, and catechisms are all upheld because they agree with, and further explain Scripture, but the Bible alone is the ultimate authority (2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:19-21²).
 - (b) **Sola Fide (Faith Alone)**
The sinner is saved by faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ, not in any precondition or anything done of themselves. The just shall live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4, John 3:18,36, Romans 1:17³).
 - (c) **Sola Gratia (Grace Alone)**
Grace implies that all benefits to God's people have come, and do come as gifts from God. They are neither merited nor earned, but are freely given (Romans 3:24, Ephesians 2:5,8⁴).
 - (d) **Solus Christus (Christ Alone)**
Only Christ's sacrifice on the cross of Calvary has any merit or value with God the Father. Our efforts before and after our salvation add no merit (John 14:6, Acts 4:12⁵).

² 2 Timothy 3:16: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

2 Peter 1:19-21: "19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: 20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21 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 Ghost."

³ Habakkuk 2:4: "Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith."

John 3:18,36: "18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Romans 1:17: "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."

⁴ Romans 3:24: "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Ephesians 2:5,8: "5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved). 8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."

⁵ John 14:6: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

Acts 4:12: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

(e) Soli Deo Gloria (Glory to God Alone)

God's purpose in all His Work is to glorify and honor His Name. Everything in life and all the happenings in the world, as they occur in His Providence, will work out to the glory of God alone (Revelation 4:11, 7:12⁶).

7. Our doctrine is founded upon the infallible Word of God, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Confession of Faith, and the Canons of Dordt.

- (a) The infallible Word of God (as translated in the Authorized King James Version only, being more accurate than any other English translations).
- (b) We believe in the infallible Word of God from Genesis 1 through Revelations 22. We believe that God created the world in six days, not in periods; see Genesis 1 and Exodus 20:11.
- (c) That we all lay under the curse of sin through our covenant head Adam (Psalm 51).
- (d) That we have turned away from God voluntarily. "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Psalm 53:3) We have become the children of the devil, therefore subject to a threefold death: temporal, spiritual, eternal, and have no power from themselves to come back in God's favor, yet we are responsible creatures; have lost the image of God and have become image-bearers of Satan, have broken the Covenant of Works (Genesis 3), changed our glory into shame, yet God is unchangeable and requires back His image as He did before the fall.
- (e) That only a personal calling of God (John 3 and John 1:43) through the working of the Holy Spirit can convert us and turn us from our sinful ways to convince us of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8-12) and therefore salvation is a one-sided work of God.
- (f) That Christ cannot be taken as our Savior through any of our duties or our own power for we are unwilling and unable to do any good toward our salvation, but Christ must be revealed and given unto us as a gift of the Father, out of sovereign grace, without any act or help from our side, for "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not" (John 1:11), but God overpowers them, for "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power" (Psalm 110:3).
- (g) That the elect only shall be saved and that Christ did not die for all mankind, only for those who are given Him of the Father as a reward for His mediatorial work (John 6:39) and who are foreknown from eternity. (I Peter 1:2a).
- (h) That God has commanded us to acknowledge Him in all our ways, etc. (Proverbs 3:6), wherefore there is no ground to be insured (Lord's Day 10) for God's providence goeth over all things. (Matthew 6:24-34).
- (i) That our doctrine is not a doctrine of understanding (comprehension) but of believing for "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." (John 20:29)
- (j) That we are dependent of God in all things for "Without Me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5) and all that we receive in this life is undeserved on account of our sins, therefore we are in duty bound to acknowledge God for all blessings received as our Maker, Creator, Benefactor, and Provider, also before and after our meals.
- (k) That we make a definite distinction in baptism between children of which all are under the covenant but the elect only are in the covenant, "for many be called, but few are chosen." (Matthew 20:16, I Corinthians 10:1-5)
- (l) That grace is not inherited but "I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight." (Exodus 33:12, Revelation 13:8) We also have evidences and proofs that the Lord works in the generations, (Psalm 89 and 105), and other places, but still salvation remains a personal matter.
- (m) That the Word of God is the rule of our life and all that is contrary therewith must be rejected as false and unprofitable. (Isaiah 8:20)

⁶ **Revelation 4:11:** "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."
Revelation 7:11,12: "**11** And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, **12** Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen."

- (n) That God's people are weaned from this world mostly by afflictions, to bring them down in their unworthiness so God may receive all the honor and men be abased at the lowest. The Lord grant this to all of us out of free and sovereign grace.

8. We acknowledge the absolute authority of God's Word in all areas of life, as the Ten Commandments (God's Law) teach us.

These commandments include salutary rules for every person and for society as a whole. Additionally, for us, they uncover sin and, with the Holy Spirit's applying power, bring a need for Christ in our hearts. These commandments are also for those who are regenerated to live by out of gratitude.

In considering the Ten Commandments, the following applies:

- Living according to God's commandments is a command; the Biblical teaching of man's depravity does not negate this.
- God's grace restrains from living in gross sin. Education according to God's Commandments also helps to form the conscience.
- Living to the glory of God can only be worked by God's grace and never by our efforts.

The following explains the Ten Commandments one by one:

1. "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me."

God calls for us to worship and adore Him above all. It is not permitted to equate any creature or thing with Him or to ascribe divine honor to it.

2. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments."

The way in which God is to be served is determined by Him. We have no right to say or think anything about Him beyond what He has revealed about Himself in His Word. That revelation teaches us that God may not be represented physically by us in any way, because by so doing we would draw Him down to the level of creatures and thus dishonor Him. God demands a continual listening to His Word; otherwise, it is not possible to know His will nor obey Him.

3. "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."

God requires that we use His name only with reverence, awe, and love and that the Bible be read and spoken about reverently. In reading, in singing, and in prayer, we are to seek God's glory. We reject the misuse of God's name, lighthearted use of Scripture words, and all speaking of God that is not reverent.

4. "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it."

Sabbaths are special days. Upon Christ's resurrection from the dead, the first day of the week (Sunday) became the Sabbath. Sunday is a gift from God, to hear His Word and also to rest our bodies. By virtue of the abiding mandate of this commandment, this day is set apart for the service of God. This means that we must faithfully attend the services of the Christian

congregation to which we belong.

5. “Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.”

This commandment gives guidelines regarding relationships to superiors and of superiors to those under them. All authority is given by God and those who are placed above others are accountable to Him. At school, authority comes from the Board to administrators to teachers and other personnel and to students. Authority is not to be abused and, along with discipline, is for our good. Therefore, it must be exercised in love and within the framework of the Bible. Respect is taught in the home and children are taught to carry this through to all placed above them.

6. “Thou shalt not kill.”

Love of one’s fellow man, according to the requirement of God’s commandments and the example of Christ, compels us to make a commitment to the spiritual and physical welfare of our neighbor. Reverence for life is taught among other things in our dealings with one another and especially with the students. Our school provides a physically safe environment for all students where everyone is treated with Biblical respect.

7. “Thou shalt not commit adultery.”

This commandment has to do with forming an unbreakable union in marriage between one man and one woman. The marriage relationship is respected. One’s fellow man is approached with respect (also chastely and with purity). Sexually slanted jokes and harassment are forbidden. There is no room for casual intimate relationships. Monogamous marriage is seen as the God-given form of intimacy between men and women. God wants us to accept our human bodies which we have received from Him and also keep them pure and unaltered. In our outward appearance, we also express the biological distinction between male and female in how we dress.

8. “Thou shalt not steal.”

We respect the property of others, whether staff, students, or of the institution. The benefit of our fellowman must be promoted and we, as stewards, deal with them as we would want them to deal with us. The eighth commandment also means that we are called to responsible and dedicated use of all that which God has entrusted to us.

9. “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”

In conversations with and about others, purity is to be exercised without gossiping or presenting a view that is contrary to the truth, either by omission or commission. We advocate open and honest communication. Information that can be labeled a lie will be rejected. The honor and good report of others must be promoted.

10. “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor’s.”

We are called to put these commandments into practice in all love and purity not having the least desire in thought or in deed contrary to any of God’s commandments. We seek to serve and respect the lives and well-being of others: person, privacy, and property realizing that only God can give us grace to live perfectly before Him.

9. We also acknowledge the following:

- (a) God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27, Matthew 19:4, Mark 10:6⁷). We believe that rejection of one’s biological sex and the attempt to alter one’s gender is

⁷ **Genesis 1:26-27:** “26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.”

Matthew 19:4 “And He answered and said unto them, Have you not read, that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female.”

a rejection of the image of God within that person; God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance.

- (b) The term "marriage" has only one meaning; the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:5-6, Mark 10:7-9⁸). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Corinthians 6:18 and 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4⁹). We believe that God has commanded that there should be no intimate sexual activity outside of a biblical marriage between a man and a woman;
- (c) Any form of sexual immorality (including but not limited to homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Leviticus 18, Romans 1: 24-29, Romans 7:1-3, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 7:10-11¹⁰);
- (d) All human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable value, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through to natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life including the unborn and the aged (Psalm 139: 13-16¹¹);
- (e) Special Days
 - a. Christian holidays (i.e., Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension Day, and Pentecost,) must be celebrated in a Christian manner for their religious significance as practiced in the Reformed tradition.
 - b. Other special days (e.g., denominational prayer days, Reformation Day, etc.) should be observed in a manner consistent with NRC denominational tradition.
- (f) Men and women are to dress modestly and in accordance with their biological sex (Deuteronomy 22:5¹²).
- (g) Office bearers shall only be males (I Corinthians 14:34 and I Timothy 2:11-15¹³).

Mark 10:6 "But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female."

⁸ **Genesis 2:24**: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

Matthew 19: 5-6: "5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?"

⁶ Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

Mark 10:7-9: "7 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; 8 And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. 9 What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

⁹ **1 Corinthians 6:18**: "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body."

1 Corinthians 7:2-5: "2 Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. 3 Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. 4 The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband; and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. 5 Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency."

Hebrews 13:4: "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

¹⁰ **Leviticus 18**: Entire chapter

Romans 1:24-29: "24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

25 Who changed the truth of God unto a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. 26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: 27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; 29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,"

Romans 7:1-3: "1 Know ye not brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? 2 For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. 3 So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man."

1 Corinthians 6:9-10: "9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

1 Corinthians 7:10-11: "10 And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: 11 But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife."

¹¹ **Psalm 139:13-16**: "13 For Thou has possessed me in my mother's womb. 14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. 15 My substance was not hid from Thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. 16 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."

¹² **Deuteronomy 22:5**: "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God."

¹³ **1 Corinthians 14:34**: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law."

1 Timothy 2:11-15: "11 Let the women learn in silence with all submission. 12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. 13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. 15 Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."