



SPRING LAKE CHURCH BELIEFS

We believe salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone.

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God -- not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Ephesians 2:8-10 (NIV)

Our Affiliation

Spring Lake Church is a member of the Evangelical Free Church of America denomination (EFCA, or Ev. Free, for short), which is an association of around 1,500 autonomous and interdependent churches. We are united by a common doctrine and mutual commitment to serve our Lord Jesus Christ, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and obedience to the Word of God. We are interdependent with other EFCA churches in ministry and fellowship, as we seek to fulfill the Great Commission which Christ has entrusted to His Church. The growing ministry of the EFCA currently extends to around 65 countries throughout the world. For more details, visit the [EFCA website](#). What is our doctrine?

We adhere to the same doctrine as the EFCA which is summed up by this quote: "In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, charity. In all things, Jesus Christ." As a church, we differentiate between biblical core convictions, biblical persuasions and biblical personal opinions. In matters regarding our own biblical persuasions and opinions, we model charity and respect for those who differ. We consider these to be secondary issues peripheral to our core biblical convictions and therefore are not to become divisive or controversial.

We are not sacramental and practice only two ordinances: communion and believer's baptism. Communion is open to all Christ-followers, as we remember his death and resurrection by eating the bread and drinking from the cup.

To see our Statement of Faith, visit the [EFCA website](#).



SPRING LAKE CHURCH

POSITION STATEMENT SUMMARY

At Spring Lake Church, we adhere to the same doctrine as the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) which is summed up by this quote: "In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, charity. In all things, Jesus Christ." As a church, we differentiate between biblical core convictions, biblical persuasions and biblical personal opinions. In matters regarding our own biblical persuasions and opinions, we model charity and respect for those who differ. We consider these to be secondary issues peripheral to our core biblical convictions about God and salvation, and therefore are not to become divisive or controversial over secondary issues. This document summarizes what the leadership at Spring Lake Church believes about many of these critical secondary issues that are impacting our culture today.

Abortion / Sanctity of Life

Human life is great gift from God. A person's life is to be cherished from the time of conception until the time of natural death (Genesis 25:21-22, Luke 1:41-44). Since God has chosen to make us in His image (Genesis 1:26-27) and involve Himself at every age of life, it is imperative for us to affirm life's value under all conditions and maintain this high regard for life. Our society has developed an increasingly ambivalent attitude toward human life. At Spring Lake Church, there will always be a high regard for human life, plus loving compassion and forgiveness for anyone who chose an abortion. And we also affirm the God-given right for all humans to enjoy the length of life willed by their Creator. (See also Psalm 139:13-16)

Marriage

Marriage between one man and one woman is the original foundational institution of human society (Genesis 2:23-24). It was established by God as a covenant union between a man and woman, designed to be life-long until separated by death. The marriage relationship is exclusively monogamous and faithful, and designed for bearing and rearing children. It is also supernatural, and therefore divinely created designed to be like the relationship between Christ and His Church, based on a supernatural, unconditional love (Ephesians 5:22-33). The only sexual relationship that is positively affirmed in the Bible and by Spring Lake Church is between one man and one woman in a loving marriage. Any sexual act outside of biblical marriage is contrary to God's design and is sinful (Malachi 2:13-16, Hebrews 13:4).

We at Spring Lake Church understand that many marriages end in divorce and will not pass judgment on people who have been divorced, knowing that there are some circumstances where God's Word says divorce is allowed. But we also know that God says in his Word that He hates divorce and will help any struggling couple to reconcile and experience God's unconditional love so that same love can be shown between each other.

For more information about the EFCAs position on biblical marriage and same-sex "marriage", see this well written article from the EFCAs ["A Church Statement on Human Sexuality: Homosexuality and Same-Sex 'Marriage' – A Resource for EFCAs Churches"](#).

Sexual Immorality / Pornography

As stated above, the Bible teaches that sex is a gift from God to be shared between one man and one woman in a marriage relationship (Genesis 2:23-25). Therefore, all sexual practices outside of God's design for sex are very destructive to us as individuals, to our relationships with others, and to our relationship with God (Malachi 2:13-16, Hebrews 13:4). Since pornography in its many forms is known to condone and promote sexual immorality involving men, women, and children, and God created them all in His image, pornography is the degradation of His likeness. We at Spring Lake Church, we consider all sexual immorality and pornography as sinful, exploitative, offensive, and unacceptable in any form. We are committed to helping men and women find victory over these temptations and live a life of purity through grace and forgiveness of past behaviors and living daily with a cleansed, repentant heart (1 John 1:7-9). (See also Matthew 5:28-29)

Homosexuality

Though many in our culture are trying to convince people that homosexuality and same-sex attraction are natural, God's Word plainly teaches that the active participation of men and women in homosexual behavior is a degrading and unnatural passion (Romans 1:24-32). We at Spring Lake Church, we understand that some people may have tendencies toward same-sex attraction. However, the Bible also teaches that it is a choice, like other sins, that a Christ-follower can forsake, repent of, and be sanctified from it (1 Corinthians 6:9-11, James 1:13-15). We are committed to helping anyone with these tendencies to find victory over these temptations and live a life of purity. We will uphold the biblical teachings regarding homosexuality and not be swayed by the trends of common culture. We will show sincere love and, compassion, and respect for all who struggle with same-sex attraction, or any other sin, and will help them find victory and strength in Christ when tempted (1 Corinthians 10:13). Though we do not condone the practice of homosexuality, we will not condone the mistreatment of anyone struggling with this form of sexual immorality, or with any other sin. (See also Leviticus 18:22)

For more information about the EFCAs position on Homosexuality, see this well written article from the EFCAs ["A Church Statement on Human Sexuality: Homosexuality and Same-Sex 'Marriage' – A Resource for EFCAs Churches"](#).

Gender Identity

God created human beings as male and female (Genesis 1:27). The complementary, relational nature of the human race as "male and female" reflects the created order given by God when He created human beings "in His image" (Genesis 5:1-3; 9:6; 1 Corinthians 11:7; James 3:9; cf. Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 4:23-24). All of human existence, including our sexuality and sexual identity, has been deeply damaged by the fall into sin (Genesis 3; Romans 3:23; 5:12). We all are sinners, broken in some measure by this fall (Proverbs 25:26). God is not a God of confusion or contradiction. (1 Corinthians 14:33; 1 John 4:1; Hebrews 13:8; James 1:16-18; Proverbs 25:26). Those who struggle with transgender feelings or gender identity confusion were not created this way by God. God truly loves all people, considers us precious, and desires everyone to know Him and His truth (1 Timothy 2:4). The gender identity confusion that a small fraction of a percentage of children, youth and adults people struggle with in our culture, all precious people God truly loves and desires to save, reveals a confusion rooted in the enemy's deception, leading some to act on these feelings, influenced by a culture in our country trying to define a "new morality" that claims the "feelings we have actually represent the new absolutes". While Spring Lake Church will always be compassionate toward and willing to help those who struggle with gender identity issues, Spring Lake Church will not condone the intentional behavior associated with those who claim to be transgender or gender neutral. Nor will Spring Lake Church support transgender rights that legislate morally destructive and sometimes unsafe demands on our culture, local community, and our church. Spring Lake Church will show the love of Christ to those who struggle with and condone this behavior gender confusion, or any other sin, and will help them find victory and strength in Christ when tempted (1 Corinthians 10:13). (See also Deuteronomy 22:5)

Religious Freedom

Our freedom in Christ can never be taken away from us. Our freedom to practice our faith as a Christian in America is under attack. As our society drifts away from God, along with all the accompanying moral, economic and spiritual problems, we are seeing a very negative impact on our nation. Our government authorities were established by God (Romans 13:1). As Christians, even though we are future citizens of our home in heaven, we are to be salt and light today in this country that God has greatly blessed. Unfortunately, our country continues to turn its back on God. However, here at Spring Lake Church, our allegiance is to God first as we represent Him as ambassadors in this country, and then to the human rulers he has established. We must take a stand for what is clearly taught in Scripture, and share it with others, even though there may be undesirable consequences at times. God often blesses the faithful during times of persecution (Romans 8:28, James 1:2-4, 12). (See also Acts 4:18-20)

Politics / The Vote

Spring Lake Church will not endorse specific candidates, but we believe it is vitally important that we vote for those candidates who best support or defend our values, core convictions and biblical principles. Christians should not speak evil of any candidate, but pray for all candidates. God has blessed us to live as ambassadors of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20) while living as citizens of America, with a responsibility to vote for our government leaders. We will not tell people who to vote for. However, we encourage our church family to become politically informed and active, support candidates who support biblical values, and help make our country a better place for all by exercising our right to vote. (See also Titus 3:1-2)

Christian Conduct and Maturity

A follower of Jesus Christ desires to be an obedient believer living within the commands of God's Word, committed to fulfilling the will of God through the power of the Holy Spirit. This can be true of a Christian at any time. However, it's not the same as being mature. Maturity is relative to time, knowledge, experience and growth. At Spring Lake Church, we believe there is a struggle between our sinful nature and our Spirit-led nature, and we can achieve victory only when we choose to live a Spirit-centered life, not a self-centered one (Romans 8:1-17, Galatians 5:13-26). So, when a brother or sister falls into self-centered conduct or any sinful behavior, we who are growing in maturity have an obligation to love and speak biblical truth into the lives of those living in sin (Romans 14:1-15:1). Mature believers must encourage those who are stumbling by speaking the truth in love, and without a judgmental heart (Ephesians 4:14-24, 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12). By doing so, we will build up the Body of Christ and fulfill our church mission, all for the Glory of God. (See also Colossians 1:9-10)