

# **EVERGREEN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**

**21336 Evergreen Mills Road**

**Leesburg, VA 20175**

## **GOVERNING PRINCIPLES**

The board of directors (“Board”) of Evergreen Christian School (“School”) has adopted the following governing principles to guide the Board in the development and opening of the School, the hiring of School employees, attracting parents and families for enrollment in the School, expanding the Board, and developing the School’s curriculum and extracurricular activities and programs. Further, these principles are meant to be a constant guide and source of direction for all School employees. Finally, these principles are meant to inform all who inquire about the School, consider admissions, and are admitted to the School. May God always be glorified in the School and the greater community of Loudoun County, Virginia.

### **Mission**

It is the mission of Evergreen Christian School to provide students a rigorous academic and biblical education based on God’s Word, the foundation for all teaching, learning, and living.

### **Objectives**

The School is a community of believers in Jesus Christ who desire to raise their children in the historic Christian faith, to “bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4), to prepare them “to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15), to enable them “to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3), and to “serve the Lord with gladness” (Psalm 100:2).

The School affirms the historic Protestant understanding that the education of children is a responsibility that properly belongs to the sphere of the family and not to the church or to the state (Deuteronomy 6:4-9). As a discipleship school seeking to educate the children of Christian parents, the School’s goal is that the home, the School, and the church will be in consonant agreement regarding the truth and authority of Holy Scripture and the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, and thus able to consistently speak the same truth into the lives of our children. As the School partners with parents, it is important that there be a unity of purpose and a shared agreement regarding the authority of the Bible as the foundation for all teaching, learning, and living. A community of like-minded individuals is indispensable to the achievement of this purpose (Psalm 133:1; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13).

## **The School therefore seeks to:**

**Impart truth**, which is the Word of God, written and incarnate (Psalm 119:160; John 14:6). As an academic institution committed to intellectual formation and the biblical truth that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Psalm 111:10), The School purposes to impart to its students, by God’s grace through the power of the Holy Spirit, the biblical truth concerning God, themselves, and the world in which they live. In God’s world everything has meaning and purpose because everything belongs to Him, “... the world is Mine and all that is in it” (Psalm 50:12).

**Instill character**, which is the courage to live the truth of God’s Word uncompromisingly in a compromising age (Joshua 1:7). As an academic institution committed to spiritual development, the School purposes to instill, by God’s grace through the power of the Holy Spirit, the courage of character in its students to the end that they may live according to the teaching and example of Jesus Christ and the truth of Holy Scripture. Jesus Christ is the one “in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:3). Unchanging truth, properly apprehended, leads to a focused and stable character. When the affections are ever turning and ever changing, lasting character is elusive, and personality is ultimately unstable. But as students gaze upon the Lord, they are increasingly transformed into His likeness: “And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:18).

**Encourage service**, which is the imitation of Jesus, who came “not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28). As an academic institution committed to cultural engagement, the School purposes to encourage its students, by God’s grace through the power of the Holy Spirit, toward an intentional and obedient life of service to their families, the Church of Jesus Christ, and society. Because we bear God’s image, our service to God extends to every part of our life. “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom” (James 3:13).

The above institutional objectives, while distinctly focused, are melded together both logically and experientially. John Milton said that “the end of all learning is to know God, and out of that knowledge to love and imitate Him.” To see God aright makes it impossible not to love Him. Such love binds all the affections of the heart and creates in us the desire to be like Jesus. As our character is molded in conformity to Jesus Christ, it will find expression not in mere sentiment but in fruitful service to God and our neighbor.

Truth, character, and service, then, are not individual and separate pursuits. They are intertwined and “a cord of three strands is not quickly broken” (Ecclesiastes 4:12). Each reinforces and assists the others by the coordinated activity of head, heart, and hands in the accomplishment of those purposes for which the whole individual was created. When the mind is engaged with the true knowledge of God and has gained a proper understanding of Him through Holy Scripture, the affections will be gripped and stirred. When a focused mind rouses the affections, words and actions will inevitably follow. A love of truth leads to a love of its expression and produces a dogged pursuit of opportunities for such expression.

The goal of the School is to see God’s image manifested in each student so that they walk humbly with God in their minds, love mercy in their hearts, and act justly in their lives.

## **Statement of Faith**

We joyfully affirm, as members of Jesus Christ's body, the truth of God's self-revelation that is found in the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament. We receive the Bible as the only inspired, sufficient, certain, authoritative and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith and obedience (2 Timothy 3:15-17). The Bible is the ultimate rule and authority for the School's faith, teaching, and practice. We believe that salvation from sin is the gift of God, by grace through faith in Jesus, not a result of works (Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5). Because a love of truth leads to a love of its expression, the School affirms the historic statements of the Christian faith as found in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds.

### **The Apostles' Creed**

"I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic [universal] church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen."

### **The Nicene Creed**

"I believe in one God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds. God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and crucified for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried, and the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; And He shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

"And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy catholic [universal] and apostolic church; I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen."

### **Statement on the Sanctity of Human Life**

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Psalm 139:13-16).

## **Statement on Conduct**

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity because each of us bears the image of God (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). All Christians should demonstrate this in our thoughts, speech and behavior. Demeaning speech and humor has no place in the Christian community. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture or the principles of the School. That does not change what Scripture declares as right or wrong behavior, however, nor does it alter the fact that conduct in violation of God's standards carries with it consequences.

We believe that in order to preserve the religious mission, religious message, function, and integrity of the School as a Christian institution, and to provide a biblical role model to the community of believers in Jesus Christ and the greater community at large, it is imperative that all persons employed by the School in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by these governing principles (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1Thessalonians 5:22).

We believe that Christian morality must always find its source in the character and pronouncements of God as revealed in His authoritative Word. The Bible dictates appropriate standards both for belief and conduct. To believe in one's individual desires as the locus of authority and self-definition is contrary to Holy Scripture. We believe that God condemns those things that will bring His human creatures harm. The Bible condemns all forms of sin because our Creator knows what is best for us. The Bible names sins specifically so that each of us will recognize our sinfulness and look to Jesus for salvation and the forgiveness of sins. Love requires telling the truth.

## **Statement on Gender**

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female (Psalm 139:14). God has designed each person in His image, purposefully with the biological gender with which he or she was born. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26-27; 5:1-3; 9:6; 1 Corinthians 11:7; James 3:9; cf. Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 4:23-24; Colossians 3:10). The rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the wisdom of God in creating, and the intent of God in placing, the image of God within that particular gender and person. Recognizing our sex, as male or female, as a gift from God dictates that conduct designed to redefine the unique, purposeful, God-ordained gender assigned by God to each person violates the Bible and cannot be supported or affirmed by our ministry (Genesis 1:26; Deuteronomy 22:5; John 1:3; Jeremiah 1:4-5; Psalm 139:13-16). Similarly, efforts to adopt an outward identity contrary to a person's gender or attempts to change via medical intervention one's given biological birth sex in favor of the identity of the opposite sex or of an indeterminate identity are similarly viewed by us as contrary to the Bible.

## **Statement on Marriage**

As the creator and author of marriage, God alone has the authority to define it. We therefore believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union (Genesis 2:18- 25). Marriage was created for companionship (“It is not good that the man should be alone,” Genesis 2:18), for unity (“Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh,” Genesis 2:24), and for procreation (“Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth,” Genesis 1:28).

We believe that marriage is the union of one man and one woman in an exclusive, monogamous, covenantal union, as declared in the Bible (Genesis 2:18-25; Mark 10:7-8; Ephesians 5:31; 1 Corinthians 7:2; Leviticus 18:22; Leviticus 20:13; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Romans 1: 26-28; Malachi 2:14-16).

In Scripture, monogamous heterosexual marriage bears a significance which goes beyond the regulation of sexual behavior, the bearing and raising of children, the formation of families, and the recognition of certain economic and legal rights, all of which are important. Marriage between a man and a woman is emphatically declared in Scripture to create a “one flesh” union (Genesis 2:23-24; Matthew 19:5), which in turn signifies the mystery of the union between Jesus Christ and His body, the Church (Ephesians 5:22-33). Thus, we believe that God designed the heterosexual union between a male and a female as husband and wife respectively to reflect the complementary relationship between Jesus and His Church, and this is the model for biblically moral and healthy human sexual relationships (Mark 10:7-8; Ephesians 5:25; Jeremiah 29:23; 1 Corinthians 7:2; Malachi 2:14-16). This means that the foundational understanding of marriage is a covenant grounded in promises between a man and a woman which finds its divinely intended expression in the “one flesh” union of husband and wife, and between the “one flesh” union of husband and wife and God (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4; cf. Proverbs 2:16-17; Malachi 2:14; Ephesians 5:31-32).

## **Statement on Sexuality**

The Scriptures have much to say about sexual behavior, from the beautiful affirmations of the Song of Songs to the clear prohibitions found throughout the Bible (e.g., Romans 13:13-14; 1 Corinthians 5:1-2; 6:9-10, 15-18; Galatians 5:16-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8). The Apostle Paul affirms that among believers “there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality” (Ephesians 5:3). We believe that sexual intimacy is only appropriate within the context of a lifelong commitment in a faithful, monogamous, heterosexual marriage between one male and one female, regardless of how society or others seek to define marriage. (1 Corinthians 7:2; Hebrews 13:4; Romans 1:26-28; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 15). Homosexual behavior is specifically pronounced as violating Biblical morality standards in both the Old Testament and the New Testament (Genesis 19:4-11 [cf. 2 Peter 2:6-7; Jude 7]; Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Judges 19:22-25; Romans 1:24-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:8-11).

As a result, we believe that any form of sexual immorality, including but not limited to sexual intimacy outside of the biblical definition of marriage, which would further include but not be limited to premarital sexual intimacy, adultery, homosexuality or bisexual conduct, conflicts with scriptural standards for sexuality and purity and, therefore, in accordance with Scripture, is contrary to God's will (Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17; Ephesians 5:31; Romans 1:26- 28; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Leviticus 18:22; Leviticus 20:13; Galatians 5:19).

All of human existence, including our sexuality, has been deeply damaged by the Fall into sin (Genesis 3; Romans 3:23; 5:12; 8:22-23). We are all sinners, broken in some measure by this Fall. Everything from our environment to our bodily genetic code has been ravaged by sin and the Fall. Whether the homosexual attractions people experience are the product of their environment, their genetics, or another source, they are not what God intends and so do not render homosexual behavior legitimate.

While we believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matthew 15:19; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 18-20), we also believe that the gospel is full of grace and truth. It is an offer of grace and forgiveness to sinners as a call to live a holy life. It empowers us in the struggle to resist sin, including the sin of homosexual practice (Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Ephesians 4:20-24; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; Titus 2:11-13). Temptation, including sexual attraction, is not sin. Sin is yielding to temptation. Jesus himself was tempted, yet without sin (Matthew 4:1-11; Hebrews 4:15).

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

## **Conclusion**

These statements of our common faith, while sufficient, are not meant to be exhaustive concerning the extent of our belief and practice. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality and the proper conduct of all individuals, is the sole and final source of all that we think, say and do. For purposes of clarity in understanding the School's statement of faith, policies, procedures and practice, the headmaster represents and speaks for the Board as the final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application to the School's students, staff, parents, and families with regard to the School's statement of faith, policies, procedures, and practice. At least one parent of any family seeking enrollment at the School should be a Christian who regularly attends a local church. The parents of students attending the School should have a clear understanding of the Biblical philosophy and purpose of the School. This understanding includes an express willingness to have their child exposed to the clear, consistent teaching of the School's Statement of Faith within the School's program.

All members of the School's board of directors, faculty and staff must be in express agreement with the School's Statement of Faith.

Governing principles of Evergreen Christian School as of February 25, 2020. Subject to change by the Board.