

The 2026 Declaration of Principles

Preamble

The Advent Christian Declaration of Principles is intended to provide a clear standard for membership in the denomination among regions, conferences, churches, and ministers. It is not a complete summary of everything Advent Christians believe. It is also not meant to serve as a statement of beliefs required for individual membership in an Advent Christian church. Members are often welcomed without agreeing to all the articles here. We recommend this declaration to all seekers of truth; it being both thorough in general theological conviction as well as faithful to the traditional distinctive teachings of our denomination. It reflects our theological heritage. We care about this document because the gospel we preach is the gospel of eternal life only through Christ.

I. **We affirm** that the Bible is the inspired, inerrant, infallible Word of God, being in its entirety God's revelation given to humanity under divine inspiration and providence; that its historic statements are correct, and that it is the only divine standard of faith and practice.

We deny that the authority of God's Word - the Bible - and the truth of its testimony can ever be overturned, superseded, or added upon by any claims of new revelation or the supposed wisdom of human knowledge.

II. **We affirm** the clarity of Scripture: that all things necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation are set forth clearly in Scripture, and that, as far as the meaning of the text can be understood, Christians should seek to be of one mind in the Spirit and uphold such teachings as authoritative.

We deny that human fallibility places the true meaning of the biblical text beyond reach; that the presence of differing interpretations indicates this; or that Christians must agree on every matter of the faith to share in one fellowship.

III. **We affirm** that God is one in being and three in person, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that these three persons are fully divine and co-equal, of one substance, power, and eternity, and with one will; and that the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, and the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son.

We deny that these persons are three gods; that these persons are only three different manifestations of God; or that any of the persons are eternally subordinate to each other.

IV. **We affirm** that the eternal Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father and the Spirit, took upon himself a human nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities belonging to it, yet without sin; that the person of Jesus Christ is one person with two distinct natures, fully God and fully man, possessing the true divine will and a true human will.

We deny that Christ becomes two persons in possessing a divine nature and a human nature; that these two natures are combined into one new nature; that Christ's body was a mere shell for his inner divinity; or that the exaltation of his human nature would indicate the absence of his divine nature.

V. **We affirm** that God alone is immortal; that God created human beings as creatures with mortal natures who could yet receive and enjoy eternal life with God; that through sin they forfeited this divine birthright; and that because of sin they can only be restored to life with God by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone, resulting in a life of repentance from sin and consecration to the Lord.

We deny that human beings are inherently immortal or that God could be compelled to maintain human existence in opposition to his divine will.

VI. **We affirm** that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the eternal Son of God who took on human flesh; that he was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and lived a sinless life under the Law; that in his death on the cross he offered himself unto God as our substitute, making of himself the only sufficient sacrifice for the atonement of human sin; that Christ, having been bodily raised for our justification, has conquered sin, death, and the devil; that he has ascended to the right hand of the Father to present himself as the Lamb who was slain; that he presently intercedes for us as our Great High Priest; that both the Father and the Son have sent the Holy Spirit upon the Church to apply salvation and the benefits thereof unto her; and that the work of this salvation will be fully revealed upon the day of Christ's return.

We deny that there can be any salvation apart from the work of Christ alone or that there is any hope of salvation based upon human works, religious or otherwise.

VII. **We affirm** that death is the consequence of sin, depriving human beings of the life for which they were created; and that the belief in the sleep of the dead, historically held by Advent Christians, is within sound biblical reason.

We deny that God created human beings to live apart from the body; that the dead in Christ have already been completely restored; and that those who have died apart from Christ have already received their final punishment.

VIII. **We affirm** that in accordance with his promise, Jesus Christ will come again to this earth, even “in like manner” as he went into heaven – personally, visibly, and gloriously – to reign here forever; and that this coming is the hope of the church, inasmuch as upon that coming depend the resurrection and reward of the righteous, the abolition of sin and its consequences, and the renewal of the entire cosmos, both the heavens and the earth – now marred by sin – to become the eternal home of the redeemed, after which event the earth will be forever free from sin and death.

We deny that there is any hope for the living or the dead apart from Christ’s return and the resurrection of the dead.

IX. **We affirm** that the final judgment of all people awaits the resurrection of the dead at Christ’s Second Coming; that those who belong to Christ will live eternally with God in the new heavens and new earth; and that those outside of Christ will be condemned to the Second Death and will perish in the lake of fire.

We deny that anyone condemned to this final punishment will be given another opportunity for salvation.

X. **We affirm** that the Church is the Body of Christ; that it is an institution of divine origin, which includes all true Christians; that the Church visibly manifests itself in local congregations of believers; that these local churches are governed under the authority of Christ, with congregational involvement and biblical patterns of leadership such as elders and deacons; and that these churches should freely covenant together, agreeing to uphold standards common to the whole.

We deny that the liberties and prerogatives of the local church would preclude cooperation with a denominational body in maintaining such freely agreed-upon standards of membership.

XI. **We affirm** that the only ordinances of the Church are Baptism and the Lord’s Supper; that only those who have faith in Christ should be baptized, baptism taking the mode of immersion whenever possible.

We deny that baptism must be repeated for any who have been truly baptized and possess this faith.

XII. **We affirm** that the first day of the week, as the day set apart by the early church in commemoration of Christ’s resurrection, should be observed as the Lord’s Day; that in the freedom of the Spirit it should be used as a day for Christian worship and fellowship.

We deny that any continued practice of taking a Sabbath rest should be observed as though we remain under the Law.

XIII. **We affirm** that as servants of Jesus Christ, we have been commanded to be found ready at all times for his return, steadfastly pursuing personal holiness and the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

We deny that readiness entails speculating about the approximate time of Christ's "soon" return.

XIV. **We affirm** that the Bible teaches that properly constituted governments are ordained of God and are divine instruments for the welfare and protection of humanity, even as we await perfect justice and everlasting peace to be established in the coming Kingdom of God.

We deny that every war is just or that anyone should be compelled to take up arms in violation of their conscience.