

Comparison of Denominations

- IRPC** **INDIAN RIVER PREBYTERIAN CHURCH** – Us.
- 1st PC** **FIRST PREBYTERIAN CHURCH OF FORT PIERCE** – Part of Us. Merged with IRPC several years ago.
- PCUSA** **PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)** – Our denomination. It is the result of the merger of PCUS (Southern) with UPCUSA (Northern) in 1981. Has approximately 10,500 churches and 2,000,000 members (at the end of 2010).
- PCUS** **PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES** – IRPC's old denomination. Commonly referred to as the "Southern Presbyterian Church". Merged with UPCUSA (Northern) to form PCUSA.
- UPCUSA** **UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA** - 1st PC's old denomination. Commonly referred to as the "Northern Presbyterian Church". Merged with the PCUS (Southern) to form PCUSA.
- PCA** **PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA** – Came into existence in 1973 and was an alternative to the merger of PCUS (Southern) with UPCUSA (Northern). Currently has about 1,450 churches and about 300,000 members.
- EPC** **EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH** – Came into existence in 1981 as an alternative to the merger of PCUS (Southern) with UPCUSA (Northern). Currently has about 300 Churches and 115,000 members, but is growing quickly as it has been the primary destination for churches leaving the PCUSA over the past 4 years.

IRPC - INDIAN RIVER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (ESSENTIAL TENENTS)

GOD: We worship the one only living and true God who is revealed in the Bible and who is the source of all life, glory, goodness, and blessedness.

HUMANITY—ORIGINAL RIGHTEOUSNESS AND FALL INTO SIN: Human beings were created by God in God's own image—in true righteousness and holiness—to know, love, and obey God and be righteous stewards of the creation. Our earliest forebears, instead of acknowledging, worshiping, and obeying God, became disobedient sinners and brought sin and death upon themselves and all creation.

JESUS CHRIST – INCARNATION OF THE ETERNAL WORD: Jesus Christ is fully God and fully human. In the person of Jesus of Nazareth, the eternal Son of God uniquely entered human history and became a real human being. He is truly the Word of God (Jn 1:1-3)—that is, the perfect and culminating expression of God's mind and heart, of God's will and character—present in the intimate fellowship of the Holy Trinity from eternity and fully engaged with the Father in the work of creation and redemption.

JESUS CHRIST – HIS ATONING WORK: Jesus' death on the Cross was the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world. In this act of obedience to God's will and love for humankind, Jesus acted as the divine agent for the salvation of the world. In his death he perfectly fulfilled the office of High Priest and was also the perfect sacrifice for sins—"the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." (Jn 1:29) The Cross became an altar on which his life was sacrificed as a substitute for ours, and satisfaction and expiation for sins were completely accomplished. On the sole basis of the finished work of Christ on the Cross, sinners may now be reconciled to a holy God and set free from their bondage to sin and death to live for God in holiness and joy.

SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH: Salvation is God's gracious work through Jesus Christ to reclaim humankind and all creation from sin and its consequences. Christ's righteousness and atonement are the sole basis for human salvation. Faith in Christ is the only instrument by which this righteousness is received by individual believers, resulting in their justification.

AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE: The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are God's uniquely revealed and written Word, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and are the church's first and final authority in all areas of faith and life including theological doctrine, mission, church order, character, ethical behavior, and lifestyle choices.

PCUSA - PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

In both our polity and in the theology on which it is founded, we have long recognized that “reservations” and points of disagreement in some matters of faith are not only inevitable but ultimately nourishing for the health of the church. Moreover, we have resisted listing the “essential tenets of the Reformed faith” precisely because such lists tend to confine the theology of the church within the narrow strictures of the historical moment in which the list was created, robbing it of its life and liveliness. For this reason, we have deemed it wise to have not one confessional statement but a Book of Confessions (Part I of this denomination’s constitution), in which are registered multiple statements of faith that stand in both mutual support and occasional tension.

EPC - EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

We are unique among American Presbyterians with our self-conscious attempt to balance essential and non-essential matters within a confessional heritage. We are unified in our commitment to the essentials of the historic Christian faith taught in the Bible, but allow liberty of conscience on those matters which are not so plain in or central to the Bible's teaching.

ESSENTIALS TENENTS

All Scripture is self-attesting and being Truth, requires our unreserved submission in all areas of life. The infallible Word of God, the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, is a complete and unified witness to God's redemptive acts culminating in the incarnation of the Living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible, uniquely and fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, is the supreme and final authority on all matters on which it speaks. On this sure foundation we affirm these additional Essentials of our faith:

1. We believe in one God, the sovereign Creator and Sustainer of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. To Him be all honor, glory and praise forever!
2. Jesus Christ, the living Word, became flesh through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth. He who is true God became true man united in one Person forever. He died on the cross a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. On the third day He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, where, at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He now is our High Priest and Mediator.

3. The Holy Spirit has come to glorify Christ and to apply the saving work of Christ to our hearts. He convicts us of sin and draws us to the Savior. Indwelling our hearts, He gives new life to us, empowers and imparts gifts to us for service. He instructs and guides us into all truth, and seals us for the day of redemption.
4. Being estranged from God and condemned by our sinfulness, our salvation is wholly dependent upon the work of God's free grace. God credits His righteousness to those who put their faith in Christ alone for their salvation, thereby justifies them in His sight. Only such as are born of the Holy Spirit and receive Jesus Christ become children of God and heirs of eternal life.
5. The true Church is composed of all persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit are united together in the body of Christ. The Church finds her visible, yet imperfect, expression in local congregations where the Word of God is preached in its purity and the sacraments are administered in their integrity; where scriptural discipline is practiced, and where loving fellowship is maintained. For her perfecting, she awaits the return of her Lord.
6. Jesus Christ will come again to the earth-personally, visibly, and bodily-to judge the living and the dead, and to consummate history and the eternal plan of God. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." (Rev. 22:20)
7. The Lord Jesus Christ commands all believers to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world and to make disciples of all nations. Obedience to the Great Commission requires total commitment to "Him who loved us and gave Himself for us." He calls us to a life of self-denying love and service. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:10)

**PCA - PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
(WHAT WE BELIEVE)**

1. We believe the Bible is the written word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit and without error in the original manuscripts. The Bible is the revelation of God's truth and is infallible and authoritative in all matters of faith and practice.
2. We believe in the Holy Trinity. There is one God, who exists eternally in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
3. We believe that all are sinners and totally unable to save themselves from God's displeasure, except by His mercy.

4. We believe that salvation is by God alone as He sovereignly chooses those He will save. We believe His choice is based on His grace, not on any human individual merit, or foreseen faith.
5. We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, who through His perfect life and sacrificial death atoned for the sins of all who will trust in Him, alone, for salvation.
6. We believe that God is gracious and faithful to His people not simply as individuals but as families in successive generations according to His Covenant promises.
7. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells God's people and gives them the strength and wisdom to trust Christ and follow Him.
8. We believe that Jesus will return, bodily and visibly, to judge all mankind and to receive His people to Himself.
9. We believe that all aspects of our lives are to be lived to the glory of God under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.