

Significant Decisions on Doctrine

Over the years the General Assembly has adopted statements or legislated on a number of doctrine-related matters. Here are some of them.

Women may be ordained as elders (1955) and as ministers (1964)

A statement of fundamental doctrines, 1965-71

The Faith We Affirm Together (an ecumenical statement of faith, 1968)

Ministers have liberty of private opinion, but are required to participate in the ordination of women (1984)

The ordination formula requires ministers to be willing to baptise a child of believers (1993)

Presbyteries may authorise elders to administer communion (1991) and baptism (2006)

Both infant baptism and believers' baptism must be available to the people in any congregation, but neither practice of baptism should be enforced upon either minister or people contrary to their conscience (1995)

The Presbyterian Church is called by God to work with others to make Jesus Christ known through: proclaiming the gospel, teaching and nurturing people in Christian faith, loving service responding to human need, seeking to transform society, caring for God's creation (1995)

'In accordance with the supreme and subordinate standards of the Church', church courts may not 'accept for training, license, ordain or induct anyone involved in a sexual relationship outside of faithful marriage between a man and a woman' (2006)

A new contemporary confession of faith and subordinate standard (the Kupu Whakapono and commentary), in addition to the historic Westminster standards (2012)

A Presbyterian Church minister may solemnize marriage only between a man and a woman (2016).

Future updates of this information will be made after consultation with the Doctrine and Book of Order Advisory Committees.