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<b>Stakeholders</b>	Eldership of Portlife Church

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## Introduction

### Overview

This policy outlines the position statement of Portlife Church with regard to a Biblical understanding of creation. Position statements authorised by the Eldership of Portlife Church form part of the values and beliefs for Portside Christian College.

## Purpose

The premise for a biblical understanding of Creation is the authority of scripture. This position statement assumes the deity of Christ and trustworthiness of the Bible as the infallible Word of God. The statement has been approved by the eldership of Portlife Church as the basis for curriculum development within the College.

Subjects specifically covered by this statement include Science, Environmental Studies and Studies of Society and Environment. However, this framework underpins all curriculum areas and is expected to be fully supported by all employees of the College.

## Statement

### Biblical concepts

The following biblical concepts are outlined as a framework for a Christian understanding of the created world.

#### (1) God the Creator

Scientists cannot arrive at any degree of certainty about how the universe came into existence because what happened then is not observable or repeatable. The question of origins is, therefore, a matter of scientific theory and, ultimately, faith. Students should be encouraged to have a lively interest in, and curiosity about, the origin of the universe and the development of the world, and have an open mind to the various scientific theories, exercising intellectual honesty and discernment in evaluating theories and arguments. These should be tested for scientific validity and be consistent with biblical teaching. Students should thus derive a model, which is an interpretation of the observable facts in line with divine revelation.

- God is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. (Genesis 1:1, Psalm 89:11; Isaiah 45:12). He is intimately involved with His creation.
- The world was created because the omnipotent God spoke and it came into existence. (Psalm 33:6, 9; II Peter 3:5).
- The whole of creation belongs to God. (Psalm 24:1).
- Jesus, the Son of God and Saviour of the world, was present at, and active in, the creation of the world. (John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2-3).
- God created a universe with order, diversity and design.
- God created the world in six days. (Genesis 1). We note that Christian scholars and eminent Christian scientists (all of whom support a strong creationist position) are divided as to whether this refers to a literal period of six 24 hour days or not. The Eldership of Portlife Church support the need for individuals to be spiritually discerning in establishing a personal position, however that position should not minimize a strong 'creationist' position.
- The Genesis account of creation indicates that God created a variety of species and kinds. The order of creation is clearly outlined with plants, sea creatures, birds and land animals as separate creations, each having various kinds. (Genesis 1:11, 20, 24).
- God's creation was perfect in the beginning. (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12.)
- All of creation has been affected by man's sin (Genesis 3:17-19; Romans 5:12; 8:20-22), but will be redeemed. (John 3:16; Romans 8:21). The world, which God made good, has become subject to decay and futility.

## **(2) People as Created Beings**

An understanding of the nature of men and women stems from beliefs about origins. Many ethical questions are based on understandings of the origin, purpose and destiny of people.

People are a separate and distinct creation, being made in the image of God. (Genesis 1:27)

### **God created people as either male or female (Genesis 1:27; Mark 10: 6)**

- God formed man from the dust of the ground. (Genesis 2:7)
- Woman was made from the man, by God, to be a helper and companion to him.
- (Genesis 2:20- 22)
- God created each person as a unique being. (Psalm 139: 1-16)
- God created people with a free will. (Genesis 2:16)
- This implies that people have:
  - A spiritual nature, being able to have a relationship with their Creator, God
  - Thoughts and emotions, which enable them to live in relationship with others
  - A moral responsibility, in that their obedience to their Creator affects their own quality of life and that of others
  - Intelligence which allows them to study, comprehend and use the natural laws that govern God's creation
  - An eternal existence that makes them precious in God's sight and which gives their life eternal value (Matthew 6:25-30)
  - Creativity, which allows them to invent and design
  - A responsibility to care for their bodies (Psalm 139:14; I Corinthians 3:16; 6:19-20; 10:31)

## **(3) The Fall**

An understanding of original sin helps to explain the fallen world in which we live.

- When first created, Adam and Eve lived in a state of innocence and moral perfection and in relationship with God
- Sin first entered the world through Adam's disobedience to God. (Romans 5:12). This is known as 'the fall'
- All of creation has been affected since sin first entered the world. (Romans 8:22)
- The entry of sin into the world resulted in separation from God. (Romans 3:23)

## **(4) Care of the Environment**

A view of the relationship of people with the environment also stems from the creation account in the Bible, where people were given responsibility for caring for the created world.

- Creation has value because God made it
- God's ways and laws can be learned through a study of creation, though a true understanding can only be attained through a personal relationship with His Son, Jesus Christ. (Psalm 19:1)
- People were given dominion over, and responsibility for, other created beings. (Genesis 2:19-20)

- People have been given responsibility to care for the created world. They are able to use it to fulfil their needs, but must use it wisely and responsibly. Subjects within the field of science provide a means of studying and understanding the environment in order to be able to care for it. (Genesis 1:26, 28; Psalm 8:6)
- The sinfulness of mankind has implications for God’s creation. (Genesis 3:15-19)
- The global flood in the time of Noah was a result of the sinfulness of people of the day. It had wide implications for creation and the environment. God promised that He would never again destroy creation by flood. (Genesis 6 – 9)
- God is the sustainer of life and the universe belongs to Him

## **(5) The Flood**

The global flood was orchestrated by God in response to the wickedness and depravity of mankind. (Genesis 6:5-8)

While the physical cause and character of the flood is a matter for speculation, the Genesis account provides some specific details and suggests some interesting considerations:

- Scripture suggests that there was no rain in the pre-flood period. (Genesis 2)
- Genesis 1:6-8 implies that there was ‘a great body (or canopy) of water vapour surrounding the earth above its atmosphere.’ Morris, p 74
- ‘The existence of the prediluvian “waters above the firmament” would have caused a healthier physical environment than now exists on the surface of the earth’ and would have ‘favoured the continued production of larger, stronger, longer-lived specimens of every type of creature.’ Morris, pp 76-77
- The biblical flood was global and was both terrestrial and atmospheric in nature. (Genesis 7:11 – 12)
- Except for Noah and his family, the animals on the ark and the sea creatures, the flood destroyed every living creature on the face of the earth over a period of forty days and forty nights. (Genesis 7:4, 12, 21-23)
- The dimensions of the ark (as described in Genesis 6:14-21) made it ‘ideal for both storage purposes and for stability in the turbulent waters of the flood.’ Morris, p 81
- God, Himself, directed the land animals and birds to the ark – pairs (ie male and female) of each ‘kind’ (‘kind’ being a broader term than what we now refer to as ‘species’). (Genesis 6:19; Genesis 7:2-9)
- The rainbow is first mentioned as a covenantal sign between God and His creation. (Genesis 9:13)

## **The Theory of Evolution**

The theory of evolution is man’s attempt to explain the origin of all things in terms of processes which are still continuing and which therefore can still be studied in the present. It ignores the Bible’s witness to a completed creation. The theory will be examined in the light of biblical truth, with discussion focused around the following:

- The theory of evolution fails to account for the origin of life and cannot provide a satisfactory explanation of the method by which evolution works
- The theory of evolution has probably contributed more to the prevalent secularist and materialistic philosophy of the world today than any other one influence

**There is a universal tendency from the highly organized to the disorganized, from the ordered to the disordered. Never is there an inherent, natural, undirected, unaided, trend towards increase of order or organization. The natural tendency is always downward.**

The theory of evolution has given rise to various other theories and ideas which contravene scripture. These include, but are not limited to:

- the theory of theistic evolution, which purports that evolution is ‘God’s method of creation’
- the theory of natural selection, which requires ‘an almost infinite number of transitional forms in the origin of new species’
- the belief that the biblical account of a catastrophic, global flood is purely legendary

## References

- Science and the Bible: revised and updated, Henry M Morris; Moody Press, Chicago, 1986
- In Six Days: Why 50 scientists choose to believe in Creation, edit. John F Ashton; Strand Publishing, Sydney, 1999
- A Matter of Days; Hugh Ross; NavPress, Colorado Springs, 2004
- The Genesis Debate: Three Views on the Days of Creation; edit. David G Hagopian; Crux Press, California, 2001

## Policy dissemination and training

Who	Method	Frequency	Details
Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
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## Distribution

Information from this policy should be included in the following documents:

**Newsletter**

**Staff Memo**

### Handbooks

College

Staff

ELC

OSHC

## Change history

Review Date	Amendments
Not known	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Policy first approved</li></ul>
April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amendments not known</li></ul>
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