

Our Statement of Faith

What We Believe

In essential beliefs – We have unity.

“There is one body and one Spirit – just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call – one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” Ephesians 4:4-6 (ESV)

In non-essential beliefs – We express liberty.

“As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions... Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls... So then each of us will give an account of himself to God... The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God.” Romans 14: 1, 4, 12, 22 (ESV)

In all our beliefs – We show charity.

“And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.” 1 Corinthians 13:2 (ESV)

Our Essential Beliefs

The following comprise the “essential” scriptural beliefs of this church and its members. If you are interested in our official Statement of Faith and our bylaws, please ask us for a copy.

- (A) **The Holy Scriptures.** We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the verbally and plenarily inspired Word of God. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible and God-breathed, and therefore are the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament are the complete and divine revelation of God to Man. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning, and all issues of interpretation and meaning shall be determined by the pastor.
- (B) **Dispensationalism.** We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life, which define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather are divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these dispensations—the law, the Church, and the Millennial Kingdom—are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture. (Gen. 1:28; 1 Cor. 9:17; 2 Cor. 3:9-18; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph. 1:10; 3:2-10; Col. 1:24-25, 27; Rev. 20:2-6)

(C) **The Godhead.** We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, coequal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections. God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; John 14:10, 26)

1. The Person and Work of the Father

God the Father reigns with providential and sovereign care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of history according to the purpose of His grace. He is all powerful, all loving, and all wise. The Father is Truth and the Father of truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. (Gen. 1:1; Ex. 3:14; Deut. 6:4; Isa. 42:5-8; 64:8; Jer. 10:10; Matt. 23:9; 28:19; Mk. 1:10-11; John 4:24; 14:6-13; Rom. 8:14-15; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6; 1 Tim. 1:17)

2. The Person and Work of Christ.

- i. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men. (Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4-5; Phil. 2:5-8)
- ii. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and, that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. (Acts 2:18-36; Rom. 3:24-25; 1 Pet. 2:24; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:3-5)
- iii. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God, whereas our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate. (Acts 1:9-10; Heb. 9:24; 7:25; Rom. 8:34; 1 John 2:1-2)

3. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.

- i. God the Holy Spirit is equal with God the Father and God the Son. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment in order to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He imparts new life to all who believe; and permanently indwells every believer from the moment of salvation to provide guidance and power for living, understanding spiritual truth, and assurance of salvation. He uniquely endows each believer with spiritual gifts that are to be used by the believer to build up the Body of Christ. The believer should seek, by faith, to live under the power and control of the Holy Spirit in order to lead a Christ like life. (Jn. 16:7-13;

14:16-17; Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 2:12; 3:16; 12:13; 2 Cor. 3:17; Gal. 5:22-25; Eph. 1:13; 5:18)

- ii. We believe that the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing, were temporary. Speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit and that ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing. (1 Cor. 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22; James 5:13-16)

(D) **The Total Depravity of Man.** Man is made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. He is the supreme object of God's creation. Originally created to have intimate fellowship with God, Adam disobeyed God, choosing to go his own way. This rebellious attitude is called sin. In Adam's sin all humanity fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became spiritually dead and alienated from God. Man is incapable of remedying this lost and depraved condition and his only hope is faith in Jesus Christ. (Gen. 1:27; Psa. 8:3-6; Isa. 53:6a; 59:1-2; Rom. 3:23; 5:12-18)

(E) **Salvation.** The central purpose of God's revelation of Himself to mankind is to call us into a restored relationship with Him. Originally created to enjoy fellowship with God, man rebelled against God, chose to go his own independent way, and was alienated from God, suffering the corruption of his nature and making him completely unable to please God. Now, man cannot make up for his sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ by faith as God's offer of forgiveness can man be saved from sin's penalty. All who receive this free gift are forgiven of their past, present, and future sins and are born into God's family. Thus, eternal life begins at the moment a person by faith receives Jesus Christ into his life.

In summary, we believe that the moment a person receives Jesus Christ as Savior by faith salvation occurs: from the penalty of sin (justification), salvation also delivers the believer from the power of sin (sanctification) in order to live a Christ like life, and salvation will one day remove the believer from the very presence of sin (glorification) when he enters heaven. (John 14:6; Rom. 5:1; 6:14, 23; Eph. 2:8-9, Titus 3:5)

(F) **The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers.**

- 1. We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1; 38-39; 1 Cor. 1:4-8; 1 Pet. 1:4-5)

2. We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh. (Rom. 13:13-14; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15)

(G) The Church.

1. We believe that the local church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, is solely made up of persons with a personal relationship and faith in Christ as Lord and Savior.
2. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures. (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11)
3. We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or control. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pet. 5:1-4)
4. We recognize water baptism of believers and the Lord's Supper as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church in this age. (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 18:18; 1 Cor. 11:23-26)

(H) Separation. We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord. God commands His people to separate from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations, and to refrain from all immodest and immoderate appearances. (Rom. 12:1-2; 14:13; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11; Lev. 19:28; 1 Cor. 6:19-20)

(I) The Second Coming of Christ.

1. **The Rapture:** The personal return of Jesus Christ to "rapture" the Church can happen at any moment. When He comes, He will claim all those who have been saved by faith in Him during the Church Age. Believers are to live a purified life as they watch for Him. (1 Thess. 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14)
2. **The Second Coming:** The Great Tribulation will be climaxed with the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth in power and glory, with His bride, to introduce the Millennial Kingdom. We believe that the devil will then be chained and the Lord Jesus Christ will reign in perfect righteousness for one thousand years. (Rev. 19:11-20:1-10)

(J) **About Eternity.** Man was created to exist forever. People will exist eternally either in union with God in Heaven through forgiveness and salvation by way of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ; or in a state of separation from God in the Lake of Fire due to rejection of Jesus Christ as Savior. (Matt. 1:8; 2:44, 46; Luke 16:19-31; John 2:25; 3:16; 5:11-13; Rom. 6:23; Rev. 20:15)

(K) **The Personality of Satan.** We believe that Satan is a fallen angel, the author of sin and the cause of the Fall of Man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6-7; Isa. 14:12-17; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Rev. 20:10)

(L) **Creation.** We believe that God created the universe. (Gen. 1-3; Ex. 20:11; Psa. 33:6; John 1:3; Hebrews 11:3)

(M) **Civil Government.** We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home 2) the church, and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. (Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14)

(N) **Human Sexuality.**

1. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)
2. We believe that the only legitimate marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23)

(O) **Family Relationships.**

1. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church (just as He did in the Godhead). The husband is to be the leader of the home and men are to be the leaders (pastors and elders) of the

church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12). Women are free to serve in any ministry capacity other than pastor, elder, or deacon.

2. We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the scriptural leadership of her husband just as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are a heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values such as how to fear the Lord, honor the Lord, and honor and obey their parents. Parents are also responsible for leading them through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including scriptural corporal correction. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Proverbs 19:18; 2:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:6-12; I Corinthians 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; I Pet. 3:1-7)

- (P) **Divorce and Remarriage.** We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce with two exceptions: 1) An unbelieving spouse abandons the believing spouse, 2) One of the spouses commit adultery. In both of these cases the innocent party is free to remarry without incurring the stigma of “one who commits adultery”. God’s intent is for the bond of marriage to last until the death of one spouse. (Matt. 5:31-32; 19:9; 1 Cor. 7:15)

Although divorced and/or remarried persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor, elder or deacon. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)

- (Q) **Abortion.** We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental well-being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Psa. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

- (R) **Love.** We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward both those who are not believers and those who oppose us. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or the use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18)

- (S) **Lawsuits Between Believers.** We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32)
- (T) **Missions.** We believe that God has given the Church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we must use all available means to go to the foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us. (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:20)
- (U) **Giving.** We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support his local church financially. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spreading of the Gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of the tithe or offering once the gift has been made. (Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17)

AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH

This Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible, and therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.