

#### **Article IV. Statement of Faith**

- A. The Scriptures: We believe the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are verbally inspired by God and are the Word of God without error in the original writings. We believe this inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of Scripture. The Scriptures are unchangeable Truth, the final authority in faith and life, and the complete revelation of God's will for the salvation of man. (John 17:17; Romans 1:16, 10:17; Galatians 2:16; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23; 2 Peter 1:19-21).
- B. The Godhead: We believe in one God as taught in the Holy Scriptures, eternally existing in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, each having precisely the same character, attributes, and perfection, and worthy of precisely the same reverence, trust, and obedience. (Matthew 28:19-20; John 1:1-2, 17:3; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:1-3; Revelation 1:4-6)
- C. Jesus Christ— His Person and Work: We believe the Lord Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man sent to earth by the Father, conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary. He died on the cross as the only sufficient substitutionary sacrifice for the sins of all mankind, His crucified body was buried and raised from the dead, and He appeared to many before ascending into heaven where He is seated at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest, Advocate, and Mediator. (Luke 1:35; Romans 9:5; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Philippians 2:6-11; Colossians 1:15-17, 2:9; Hebrews 1:3, 4:15, 9:24; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 1 Peter 1:3, 2:24, 3:18; 1 John 2:2)
- D. The Holy Spirit: We believe the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead whose ministry is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. He came in a special sense on the day of Pentecost indwelling every believer. In the Church, the Holy Spirit carries out the ministries of restraining evil in the world; convicting people concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment; regenerating and indwelling all believers; baptizing them into the Body of Christ; sealing them unto the day of redemption; and empowering them for sanctification and service. We believe that at the moment of salvation, every believer is indwelt and baptized by the Holy Spirit. We believe the Holy Spirit endows every believer with at least one spiritual gift for the operation and the completion of the Body of Christ. (John 14:16-17, 26, 16:7-15; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 12:7-11, 13, 28-30; Ephesians 2:20-22, 4:1-16, 30; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 2:1-4)
- E. The Existence of Satan: We believe the Devil is a real spiritual being who the Scriptures often refer to as Satan. Created by God, he fell from his previously blameless angelic state to become the unholy god of this world. He is the father of all lies, a deceiver, an accuser of the saints, and the Prince of darkness and sin. He blinds the minds of unbelievers and also tempts believers. Satan's power is limited to what God allows him to do. His destiny is the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire prepared for him and predicted in ages past. (Genesis 3:1-7; Job 1:10-12; Ezekiel 28:14-19; Zechariah 3:1; John 8:44; John 12:30-32; 2 Corinthians 4:4, 11:3; Matthew 4:1-11; 1 Timothy 3:7; 1 Peter 5:8-9; Revelation 12:10, 20:10)

- F. The Creation and Fall of Mankind: We believe both man and woman were originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, and they fell through sin, and, as a consequence of their disobedience to God, lost their spiritual lives, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and they became subject to the power of the devil. We also believe that this spiritual death, or total depravity of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire human race of man, the Man Christ Jesus alone being excepted; and hence every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably bad apart from divine grace, and only through regeneration by the Holy Spirit can salvation and spiritual life be obtained. (Genesis 1:26, 2:17, 6:5; Psalms 14:1-3, 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; John 3:6, 5:40, 6:35; Romans 3:10-19, 8:6-7; Ephesians 2:1-3; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Timothy 5:6; 1 John 3:8)
- G. Salvation: We believe salvation is the act by which a sinner is freed through faith from the penalty of his sin and is accepted by God as righteous. It is accomplished by God's grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, and cannot be earned or maintained by human effort; it results in a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ when a person repents of his sin and believes in the sinless life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the sufficient substitutional, payment for his sin. Those entering into this relationship by faith are eternally born-again, justified, and have become children of God. (John 1:12-13, 3:5-6, 16, 10:27-28, 17:3, 20:30-31; Acts 2:36, 4:10-12; Romans 3:21-28, 5:1, 6:23, 8:16, 10:8-13, 14:9; Ephesians 1:13-14, 2:8-10, 4:30; James 1:19-27, 2:14-26)
- H. Holy Living: We believe the evidence of salvation is a changed life. The mark of a growing believer is the presence of the fruit of the Spirit. The believer's Christian walk will express itself in conformity to Christ in life, conduct, and service. (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 1:4, 2:10, 5:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 4:3,7, 5:23; Titus 3:8; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 1 John 3:9-11)
- I. The Church: We believe the Church is a unique spiritual organism comprised of those individuals who, by grace through faith, have come to know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. The purpose of the Church is to make disciples who will bring glory to God. We believe every Christian is called to be vitally connected and committed to the local church in order to minister according to his or her spiritual giftedness and practice the "one anothers" as commanded in the New Testament for the building up of the Body in love while maintaining the unity of the Spirit. We believe in the autonomy of the visible local church with the right to self-government by a plurality of biblically qualified Elders, under Christ and over the congregation, as servant leaders. (1 Corinthians 12:12-28; Ephesians 1:22-23, 3:21, 5:23-33; Matthew 28:18-20; John 13:34-35; Acts 1:8, 2:1-21, 2:38-47, 14:23, 20:17, 20:28; 1 Corinthians 10:32, 11:23-25, 12:12-13, 15:58; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 1:22, 3:1-6, 21, 4:7-16, 5:23-32; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 5:17-22; Titus 1:5-9; Hebrews 10:25, 13:7, 17; 1 Peter 5:1-5; 1 John 1:3)
- J. The Future: We believe Jesus Christ will return to take His Church from earth, the living and the bodily resurrection of the dead in Christ, ushering in the seven-year tribulation.

At the end of the seven-year tribulation, Jesus Christ will set foot with His Church on earth to live and reign as King for one thousand years. A final judgment of mankind will follow Christ's reign with a new heaven and earth following the destruction of this heaven and earth. All believers will spend eternity in everlasting blessedness and joy with Christ while all unbelievers will spend eternity separated from God in everlasting judgment and conscious punishment. (Daniel 9:24-27; Zechariah 14:1-21; Matthew 24:29-51, 25:31-36, 25:46; John 14:3, 14:28; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:6; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-8; 2 Peter 3:10-13; Jude 14-15; Revelation 7:9-17, 19:7-16, 20:1-6, 11-15, 21:1)

- K. **Marriage and Family:** We believe marriage, as ordained by God at creation, is the sacred union of one man and one woman in a lifelong covenant commitment. All sexual relations must therefore be reserved for that union. Christian marriage is a representation of Christ's relationship to His Church. We also believe children are a blessing from the Lord. Thus, all human life is sacred and worthy of protection from the moment of conception. (Genesis 1:26-28, 2:24; Psalm 127, 128, 139:13-16; Matthew 19:1-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Ephesians 5:22-33; Hebrews 13:4)