



Expanded Statement of Beliefs

*We recognize that the Holy Word of God has been so clear in certain matters that we hold these truths to be **essential** to the Christian faith. In these matters, we strive for unity and clarity. We believe that one who desires to be a member of the church must hold to these biblical positions.*

The Holy Scriptures

We believe the Holy Scriptures are God's gracious self-revelation to His people. All Scripture is God-breathed and is therefore trustworthy, authoritative, and sufficient for all knowledge of God and matters of faith and conduct. We believe the Scriptures to be given by the verbal and plenary (inspired equally in all parts) inspiration of God as men who were carried along by the Holy Spirit spoke from God, and the Scriptures therefore are inerrant and infallible in the original writings. We believe that God has preserved His Word throughout all times and ages, and thus the Bible containing the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments do truly contain the inerrant and infallible Scriptures. The Scriptures are redemptive history, as God graciously and progressively revealed His will to the church throughout time leading ultimately to the salvation of his people in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. While the light of nature, and the works of creation do in as much reveal the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, they are not sufficient to give full knowledge of God and His will which is necessary for salvation. Thus, God in His infinite wisdom in many ways and in many times revealed Himself through His Word to the church, and more fully through the Word (or Son) incarnate. We believe the only infallible rule of interpretation of the Holy Scriptures is the Scriptures themselves, nevertheless, we recognize the inward illumination of the Holy Spirit to be necessary for the saving understanding of those things that are revealed in the Bible. We believe that the Scriptures are the sole authoritative and supreme judge, by which all controversies of faith are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, creeds, and doctrines of men are to be examined. The Word of God is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it teaches; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; and trusted, as God's pledge, in all that it promises. As God's people hear, believe, and live out the Word, they are well-equipped as disciples of Christ and witnesses to the gospel.

*References | 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Matthew 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12-13; 17:17; 1 Corinthians 2:13; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21
Proverbs 30:5-6; 1 Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Isaiah 40:8; Romans 1:19-21, 2:14-15; Psalm 19:1-3; Hebrews 1:1-2; 2 Peter
1:20-21; John 6:45; 1 Corinthians 2:9-12; Matthew 22:29, 31, 32; Ephesians 2:20; Acts 28:23*

God

We believe in the One true God revealed in Scripture, who is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal being—the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. This God is the one living and true God. He is self-existent and infinite in being and perfection. His essence cannot be understood by anyone except him. A most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions, who alone has immortality, dwelling in the light which no human can approach; who is immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, every way infinite, most holy, most wise, most free, most absolute; working all things according to the counsel of His own immutable and most righteous will, for His own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, and most just in His judgments, hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty. God has all life, glory, goodness, and blessedness in and of himself. He alone is completely self-sufficient. He does not need any creature he has made and does not gain any glory from them. Rather, he demonstrates his glory in, by, and to creatures he has made. He alone is the source of all being. Everything is from him, through him, and to him. He is completely sovereign over all creatures and does whatever he wants by them, for them, or to them. He can see everything openly and clearly. His knowledge is infinite and infallible, independent of any creature. God's knowledge is never dependent upon anything, nor uncertain. He is perfectly holy in all of his decisions, works, and commands. To God, we owe the highest forms of love, devotion, reverence, and obedience.

References | Corinthians 8:4,6; Deuteronomy 6:4; Jeremiah 10:10; Isaiah 48:12; Exodus 3:14; John 4:24; 1 Timothy 1:17; Deuteronomy 4:15–16; Malachi 3:6; 1 Kings 8:27; Jeremiah 23:23; Psalm 90:2; Genesis 17:1; Isaiah 6:3; Psalm 115:3; Isaiah 46:10; Proverbs 16:4; Romans 11:36; Exodus 34:6–7; Hebrews 11:6; Nehemiah 9:32–33; Psalms 5:5–6; Exodus 34:7; Nabum 1:2–3

The Trinity

We believe God has revealed Himself in Scripture to exist eternally in One Being (or Essence) and three distinct Persons (Subsistences), namely God the Father, God the Son (or Word), and God the Holy Spirit. The persons of the Father, Son, and Spirit are One without any division and exist coeternally and coequally. None of the persons in the Trinity are before or after, none are greater or lesser. All three persons are infinite and have no beginning, thus but One God, who is not divided in nature and being. The doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all of our fellowship with and comforting dependence upon God.

References | Matthew 3:16-17, 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Exodus 3:14; John 14:11; 1 Corinthians 8:6; John 1:14,18; John 15:26; Galatians 4:6

God the Father

We believe in God the Father, who reigns with providential care over his universe, his creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purpose of his grace. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in attitude toward all humanity.

References | Genesis 1:1; 2:7, Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11; 20:1, Leviticus 22:2, Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6, 1 Chronicles 29:10, Psalm 19:1-3, Isaiah 43:3, 15; 64:8, Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13, Matthew 6:9; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19, Mark 1:9-11, John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8, Acts 1:7, Romans 8:14-15, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Galatians 4:6, Ephesians 4:6, Colossians 1:15, 1 Timothy 1:17, Hebrews 11:6; 12:9, 1 Peter 1:17, 1 John 5:7

God the Son

We believe in Jesus Christ the eternal Son of God. The Son (or Word) was made incarnate (took on flesh) in the person of Jesus Christ, unifying the two natures in his one person, truly God and truly Man. He is God by the essence of the Father, begotten before time, and He is Man by the essence of His mother born in time. He was conceived of the mysterious and miraculous work of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He perfectly obeyed the will of his heavenly Father, lived a sinless life, performed miraculous signs, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead on the third day, and ascended into heaven. As the mediatorial King, he is seated at the right hand of God the Father, exercising in heaven and on earth all of God's sovereignty, and is our High Priest and righteous Advocate. We believe that by his incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus Christ acted as our representative and substitute. He did this so that in him we might become the righteousness of God: on the cross, he canceled sin, propitiated God, and, by paying the full penalty of our sins and making atonement for us as our perfect substitute on the cross, reconciled to God all those who believe. By his resurrection Christ Jesus was vindicated by his Father, broke the power of death and defeated Satan who once had power over it, and brought everlasting life to all his people; by his ascension he has been forever exalted as Lord and has prepared a place for us to be with him. We believe that salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved. Because God chose the lowly things of this world, the despised things, the things that are not, to nullify the things that are, no human being can ever boast before him—Christ Jesus has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness, and redemption.

References | Genesis 18:1, Psalms 2:7; 110:1, Isaiah 7:14, 53, Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:37; 14:33; 16:16, 27; 17:5, 27; 28:1-6, 19, Mark 1:1; 3:11, Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46, John 1:1-18, 29; 10:30, 38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16, 28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20, 28, Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5:20, Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3, 34; 10:4, 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8, 24-28, 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9, Galatians 4:4-5, Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10, Philippians 2:5-11, Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9, 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18, 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16, Titus 2:13-14, Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15, 24-28; 12:2; 3:8, 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22, 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9, 2 John 7-9, Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16

God the Holy Spirit

We believe in The Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father and the Son. He inspired men of old to write the holy Scriptures. Through illumination, he enables people to understand the truth of the gospel. He exalts Christ Jesus. He convicts people of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls people to the Savior and effects the regeneration of their spirits. At the moment of regeneration, he spiritually baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through his church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

References | Genesis 1:2, Judges 14:6, Job 26:13, Psalms 51:11; 139:7, Isaiah 61:1-3, Joel 2:28-32, Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19, Mark 1:10, 12, Luke 1:35; 4:1, 18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49, John 4:24; 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-14, Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, 38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17, 39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6, Romans 8:9-11, 14-16, 26-27, 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11, 13, Galatians 4:6, Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:19, 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1, 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16, Hebrews 9:8, 14, 2 Peter 1:21, 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7, Revelation 1:10; 22:17

HUMANITY

We believe humanity is uniquely created in the image of God, applying to both male and female persons and stretching across all racial and socioeconomic demarcations. Every person is worthy of dignity, respect, and love.

References | Genesis 1:26-27, 2:7, 3:6; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Romans 2:14-15

The Fall

We believe through the temptation of Satan, our first parents, Adam and Eve, transgressed God's command and fell from sacred fellowship with God. Adam and Eve represented the entire human race. The guilt of their sin was imputed and their corrupted nature was passed on to all of their offspring who descend from them by normal procreation. All humanity, therefore, inherited a sin-stricken nature, with all its guilt and a sin-filled environment. Although sin distorts the image of God in all persons, it does not destroy the image of God in any person.

Only God's grace in the person and work of Christ can liberate fallen humanity from the penalty, presence, and power of sin, and restore humanity to sacred fellowship with God once again and once for all.

References | Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:10-18; 3:22-23; 5:12; Ephesians 1-3,12; Titus 1:5; Hebrews 2:14-15; 1 Thessalonians 1:10

God's Plan of Redemption

We believe that mankind was created in the image of God. Man rebelled against His Creator, and fell into sin. As a result, man became spiritually dead, totally unwilling and indeed incapable of seeking after God. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died in the place of His people, providing full and complete forgiveness of their sins by His death upon the cross of Calvary. No other work can provide for forgiveness of sins, and no addition can be made to the completed and finished work of Christ.

References | Romans 3:10-23,10:9-13; 1 Corinthians 1:18; 15:3-4; 15:19; Ephesians 2:20; Colossians 1:20

Salvation

We believe that God, in His grace and mercy, regenerates sinful people by the power of the Holy Spirit, bringing them to new life. God grants to them the gifts of faith and repentance, which they then exercise by believing in Christ and turning from their sins in love for God. As a result of this faith (belief in the life and work of Jesus Christ, based upon the perfect substitutionary sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ), God justifies and grants Jesus' righteousness to the one who believes. God's gift of faith and the continuing work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of His people will result in good works. These good works flow from true, saving faith; they are a necessary result of faith but are not to be considered necessary to the gaining of justification, which is by God's grace through faith alone so that no man can boast.

References | John 6:43-47; 6:63-65; 10:25-30; Acts 13:48; Romans 5:1; 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-10,12; 2:1-10; 1 Thessalonians 1:4-5; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 1:9; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 2:24; Revelation 5:9-10; 13:7-8

Marriage

We believe God designed marriage and family to serve the flourishing of human society. Marriage is specifically and simply the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to illustrate the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the married couple the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression, and the means for the procreation of the human race.

References | Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5, 7, 18-22; 3; 9:6, Psalm 1: 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5, Isaiah 6:5, Jeremiah 17:5, Matthew 16:26, Acts 17:26-31, Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18, 23; 5:6, 12, 19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18, 29, 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19, 21-22, Ephesians 2:1-22, Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11

Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation

We believe God has uniquely created mankind, in the beginning, as male and female. Thus we affirm the biblical truth that there are only two genders and those genders that God has freely given through creation of every person in the womb cannot be changed and cannot be self-conceived. We believe it to be a grievous sin and error to seek to change or alter our gender to something other than God's intended created order.

We believe that God has ordered human sexual acts to be confined to the covenant of marriage, between one man and one woman. We believe that any other sexual acts are unnatural and contrary to God's created order and thus are sinful acts.

References | Romans 1:26-7; 1 Timothy 1:10; 1 Corinthians 6:9; Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6

THE CHURCH

We believe the New Testament speaks of the Church as the Body of Christ, which is the company of the redeemed, consisting of believers from all historical and cultural contexts in all times and places. The church is represented locally by a gathering of saints who are members of the New Covenant in Christ. We observe the two ordinances of Christ —Baptism and The Lord's Supper — and are governed by his Word, and seek to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. We believe God has so ordained through His word certain offices for his church — Elders and Deacons — while in such a church each member is ultimately responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord and head of the church.

References | Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:6; 2:14; 2:19; 1 Timothy 3:15

LAST THINGS

We believe that God has promised in His Word a re-creation of this world and a gathering of His people in the New Heavens and the New Earth. Christ will come again from glory to judge the living and the dead, of this day no one on earth knows. On that day there will be a physical and bodily resurrection of all who have died. In the consummation of the New Heaven and New Earth, the elect of Christ will be joined together with Christ for all eternity, and enjoy perfect unity with their God and Savior. In this new creation, there will be no death, no sin, and no evil. However, those who are not in Christ will share in eternal damnation in Hell.

References | John 14:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 2:15

