

BELIEFS

Statement of Faith. In matters of doctrine and belief, the church strives for three things: in the essential matters, unity; in nonessential matters, liberty; in all things, charity.

Essentials We Believe.

(a) About the Bible: The Bible is God's Word to man. The Bible is God's inerrant, infallible Word to us, as originally given by God through human authors under the supernatural guide of the Holy Spirit, and is absolutely true and trustworthy. It is our only standard of faith and practice (II Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12; II Peter 1:20-21; Matthew 5:18; Psalm 119).

(b) About God: There is only one true and living God. God is the Creator and Sustainer of all things. He is infinite, eternal, unchangeable, and is revealed to us as the Godhead existent in the co-equal, co-eternal, and co-substantial persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:3-6, 13-14; Ephesians 4:6; Matthew 28:19; Genesis 1:1,3,14,18; Isaiah 9:6).

(i) The Father. The first person of the Trinity who orders and disposes of all things according to His own purpose and grace, and who continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events for His own glory. Fatherhood denotes spiritual relationship; first within the Trinity; second, within mankind, creatively in relation to all men, but spiritually only in relation to those who have been saved by His grace for their sin and come to Him through Jesus Christ (James 1:17).

(ii) The Son. Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah of the Old Testament, born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sin of all people by dying on the cross, rose from the dead to provide justification for every believer, ascended to the right hand of God where He presently intercedes for all believers, and will again, in the fullness of the Father's time, return in visible, triumphant, personal form to overthrow sin, judge the world, and establish His kingdom on earth (John 1:14).

(iii) The Spirit. The Holy Spirit is sent from God to convict the world of sin, unrighteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, cleanse, and secure from sin. He lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer a spiritual gift when they are saved. As Christians, we seek to live under His control daily (John 14:16-16; John 16:8, 13).

(c) About Man, Sin, and Satan: Man's condition is one of sin and separation from God. Man was created by innocence directly and immediately by God, in His spiritual image, for the purpose of fellowship with God and glory for God. Man was tempted by Satan and sinned, and because of this all men have been born in sin since that time. Every person has a tremendous potential for good, but all are marred by a nature of rebellion and disobedience toward God, others, and all good things ultimately and eternally in hell. All persons need to be saved from their sin.

(d) About Salvation: God has acted in Jesus Christ to deliver us from sin. Jesus Christ is the only Savior from sin. He provided forgiveness and atonement for our sins by shedding his blood on the cross and rose again to provide life and justification. Apart from Christ, there is no salvation. All men are under condemnation through personal sin, and deliverance from personal sin comes only through righteousness of Christ and not human merit. This righteousness is credited to the believer by grace through faith. The Holy Spirit regenerates or gives new life to one who commits his life to Jesus, and he is kept by God's

power forever, never to be lost.

(e) About the Church: Jesus established the church to continue His mission and ministry on earth.

A New Testament church is a voluntary association of baptized believers in Christ who have covenanted together to follow the teachings of the New Testament in doctrine, worship, and practice. We believe that the church is a self-governed organization served by two types of officers – pastors and elders.

(f) About Last Things: Jesus Christ will return and God’s plan for eternity will be carried out.

We believe in the imminent and bodily return of Jesus Christ to the earth. The dead will be raised and Christ will judge all men according to their works. Unbelievers will be cast into eternal punishment and outer darkness prepared for the devil and his angels who preceded them, and the saved will enter into the eternal state of glory with God and will in their resurrected and glorified bodies spend eternity.

(g) Death and Resurrection: Everyone will face judgment before God; some to eternal life, others to eternal condemnation.

Death involves no loss of consciousness but the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ and there is separation of soul and body until the first resurrection when the spirit, soul and resurrected body will be reunited in glorified form in heaven forever. All men will be bodily resurrected, the saved to everlasting life, but the lost into eternal condemnation.

(h) Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality:

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1:26-27.) Rejection of one’s biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-25.) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4.) 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 sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10.) We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22.) We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11.) We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of the Church.