

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

# What We Believe

### **The Bible**

God has spoken through the 66 books of the bible. As its divine author, God has uniquely guided the writing of scripture in such a way that the human authors he chose were protected from all error as they wrote. The bible remains for all time the unchanging and trustworthy authority on all matters it addresses, including every realm of the human experience.

[2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21; Hebrews 4:12, 1 Peter 1:24-25; Matthew 4:4; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Psalm 119:105]

### **God**

There is one true God, who eternally exists in a loving unity of three equally-divine persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This one God, unlimited and unrivaled in power and wisdom, is the creator, sustainer, and ruler of all things. He is present everywhere at all times, and possesses exhaustive knowledge of everything. In all he is and does, God is perfectly holy, fully righteous, and infinitely loving - and demonstrates a special concern for the human race.

[Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Timothy 1:17; Psalm 90:2; Exodus 3:14; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Genesis 1:1; Nehemiah 9:6; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:2-3; Psalm 11:7; Psalm 139:1-12; Psalm 147:5; Isaiah 6:3, 1 John 4:8]

### **People**

Human beings have been created in the image and likeness of God to glorify him and enjoy him forever. Because humans are divine image-bearers, we believe human life should be protected and valued from conception until death. Since our creator made humans male and female, and brought the first man and woman together for a one-flesh relationship, we believe that God's good design for human sexual behavior consists of either monogamous marital relations between one man and one woman, or celibate singleness.

[Genesis 1:27; Psalm 139:13-16; Genesis 2:18-25; Matthew 19:4-6; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Corinthians 6:18-20; 1 Corinthians 7:7-9]

### **Sin**

The first humans, Adam and Eve, were tempted by Satan and fell into sin, distorting the divine image they bore. As a consequence of their disobedience, all of creation and all of humanity have been corrupted by sin. Like our original parents, we all find ourselves either rejecting or neglecting God, trying to be self-sufficient and independent. As sinners by nature and by choice, the entire human race is alienated from God and stands under his just condemnation, deserving of his punishment.

[Genesis 3; Isaiah 53:6; Isaiah 64:6; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12-19; Romans 8:18-25; Ephesians 2:1-3; Colossians 1:21; Titus 3:3]

### **Jesus Christ**

Jesus Christ is God incarnate, one person in two natures, fully divine and fully human. Jesus Christ was miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit, and was born of the virgin Mary. Though he experienced the full spectrum of human temptations, Jesus never sinned in any way. His perfect life uniquely qualified him to take upon himself the punishment for our sin, as our substitute. Following his crucifixion, we believe that God raised Jesus Christ from the dead, proving Christ's innocence and confirming that God the Father accepted Christ's death as payment in full for the sins of the human race. Having finished his work on earth, Jesus ascended to heaven, where he lives and reigns today.

[John 1:1, 14, 18; Colossians 1:15-20; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:1-9; Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 1:30-35; Hebrews 4:15; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 3:18; Isaiah 53:4-6; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Acts 2:23-24; Romans 4:25; Acts 1:9-11]

## **Salvation**

Jesus Christ is the only way back to God. His saving work makes it possible for people to become spiritually alive as they are restored into a right relationship with their holy creator. Individual sinners must repent of their sin in order to turn to God. Out of his unmerited grace and mercy, God gives the gift of forgiveness and eternal life to people as they turn from their sin and trust in the finished work of Christ.

[John 14:6; Acts 3:19-20; Acts 4:12; Romans 1:16-17; Romans 4:5-6; Romans 5:1-11; Romans 6:23; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:4-10; Philippians 3:8-9; Colossians 1:22-23; Colossians 2:13-14]

## **The Holy Spirit**

God the Holy Spirit makes people aware of their need to turn from sin, and turn to Christ. He enables people to make this turn, and takes up residence in the lives of those who turn to Christ in order to teach, guide, and empower them to live a life that pleases and honors God. As believers increasingly yield their lives to his control, the Holy Spirit provides strength and motivation to successfully battle the opposing forces of the world, the flesh, and the devil. The Holy Spirit equips Christ-followers for ministry, and empowers them as witnesses for the gospel.

[John 3:3-8; John 16:8-11; John 16:12-14; 1 Corinthians 6:19; 1 Corinthians 12:3-8; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Romans 8:9-14, Galatians 5:16-23; James 4:7-8; 1 John 4:4; 1 John 5:4-5; Acts 1:8]

## **The Church**

The invisible and universal church is comprised of all believers in Christ. This one, true church, of which Christ is the head, is embodied on earth in local congregations where Christ's followers join together for worship and prayer, for learning to live God's word, for fellowship, and for evangelism. We also believe that the two biblically mandated ordinances of the church - water baptism and the Lord's Supper - visibly and tangibly express the gospel, and strengthen our faith. They are not means of salvation, but signs and seals of its reality.

[Hebrews 12:22-23; Revelation 5:9; Ephesians 1:19-22; Ephesians 4:11-16; Colossians 1:18; Acts 2:42-47; Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26]

## **Christ's Return**

Jesus Christ will return to earth a second time to establish his kingdom in this world. Christ's return will be personal, bodily, and visible. It is the great expectation of the church, and the only hope for the world. His return, for which we must constantly be prepared, is a source of encouragement, a motive for holy living, and an inspiration for ministry and mission.

[John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; Acts 3:20-21; Hebrews 9:28; Revelation 1:7; Revelation 22:12; Titus 2:13; 1 John 3:2-3; Matthew 24:36-44; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:58]

## **Heaven & Hell**

Every person who has ever lived will experience a bodily resurrection and will face one of two eternal destinies. Ultimately, those without faith in Christ will appear before God for final judgment and condemnation, and will be justly sentenced to eternal conscious punishment in hell. All people who have placed their faith in Christ's saving grace will have their lives and works judged for rewards and will live forever, experiencing eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and new earth - where God will receive worship from his people forever and ever.

[Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; Hebrews 9:27; Philippians 3:20-21; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:11-15; Revelation 21:1-22:5]