



DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

Section A. Doctrinal Statement

The Bible

We believe that God has spoken in the sixty-six books of the Bible, both Old and New Testaments (hereinafter referred to as “Bible” or “Scripture”), through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged.

We believe that although God may give individual believers guidance in various ways, we reject the teaching that implies that individuals can receive “words from God” that have the same authority as Scripture. Therefore, the Bible alone is to be believed in all that it teaches; obeyed in all that it requires; and trusted in all that it promises. (Psalm 19:7-11; Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

God

We believe in one God, who directly and immediately created all things, and who is holy and infinitely perfect; in whom all things have their source, support, and end. He exists eternally in a loving tri-unity (trinity) of three equally divine Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 5:3-4; Hebrews 1:1-3, 8)

Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity past to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory. Since He is not limited in knowledge or power by any external forces or the will of His creatures, what He purposes will come to pass. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. (Genesis 1:1; Deuteronomy 32:3-4; John 17:3; Acts 17:28; Ephesians 1:3-5; 3:7-13; Revelation 4:11)

- **God the Father:** Although God the Father shares the same essence with God the Son and God the Spirit, He is to be distinguished from the two other members of the Trinity. The Father is not begotten nor is He the One who was crucified. He is frequently spoken of as “the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” He is also our Father, and we are described as His children. Hence, Jesus taught us to pray, “Our Father who art in heaven.” The Father is the one who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. The Father loved the world and gave His Son on our behalf. (Matthew 6:9; John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 1:3; Ephesians 1:3) Although the Fatherhood of God finds its clearest expression in the New Testament, this filial relationship was already known to the faithful in Old Testament times. For example, David, Isaiah, and Jeremiah refer to the intimacy of the Father/Son relationship. (Psalm 103:13, 14; Isaiah 64:8; Jeremiah 3:19) In Christ, the Father was propitiated; that is, His anger against sin was turned away from us. Thus, both His love for us and His holy anger against sin found expression in and were fully satisfied through the work of Christ on the cross. Thus, we affirm that our God is our Redeemer.

- **God the Son:** We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person with two natures. Although Jesus Christ, who is Israel's promised Messiah, existed from eternity past, He was conceived in human flesh through the Holy Spirit and born of Mary who was a virgin. He lived a sinless life, was crucified and died under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate. (Matthew 1:23; John 1:1; Ephesians 1:15-23; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Hebrews 1:8)

We believe that Jesus Christ honored God's law as expressed in both the Old Testament and New Testament by His personal obedience and substitutionary death on the cross for sinners. He is the one Mediator between God and man, fully God and fully man, being the only One in whose person God and man can be reconciled. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and consummate His redemptive mission. To Him we gladly give our obedience and worship, being deeply grateful for His grace toward us while we were yet sinners. (John 14:6; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; 1 Timothy 2:5-6)
- **God the Holy Spirit:** We believe that the Holy Spirit exists as a co-equal and co-eternal Person within the Trinity and as such is fully divine. We believe that He glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ and God the Father in all that He does. He convicts the unconverted of their sin and regenerates all who believe; and in Him all believers are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. By the Holy Spirit the Godhead now indwells all believers. He also illuminates, guides, equips, and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service. (John 7:38-40; 16:7-11; Acts 1:8; 5:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 5:16-18) We believe that the Holy Spirit distributes gifts to the church for the edification of the body of Christ. These gifts of service are intended to display both the diversity and unity of the one body in its mutual edification and ministry. His presence in the life of believers is the guarantee that God will bring us safely into heaven where we will enter fully into the inheritance that awaits us. (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13-14)

[The Human Condition](#)

We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image as male and female, thus the gift of two different yet complementary sexes reflects the goodness of God's creation. However, because Adam and Eve voluntarily rebelled, as their descendants we are born under the condemnation of sin and also inherit a sin nature. Therefore, sin has affected the whole of our being, leaving us morally and spiritually "dead in [our] trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, renewed, and reconciled to God. (Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3)

Since humanity is the crowning work of God's creation, each human being is created in His image, is sacred, and is worthy of respect and Christian love. This respect must be accorded to all human life from the moment of conception until natural death. (Psalm 139:13-16; Revelation 5:9-10)

[Salvation](#)

We believe that salvation involves the redemption of the entire person—body, soul, and spirit—and is offered freely to all who receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. The moment we trust Him as Savior, we pass from death unto life, accepted by the Father according to the measure of Christ’s acceptance, and loved even as He is loved. As our representative and substitute, we believe that He shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for our salvation. We rejoice that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). (Acts 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 Peter 3:18)

We believe this salvation is a gift of God’s grace, appropriated through faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ. This faith is a gift of divine grace, and is not simply knowledge of Jesus Christ, but is an act of personal trust accompanied by the miracles of regeneration and justification, leading to sanctification and glorification.

We believe that regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God’s grace whereby we become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart brought about by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin and is accompanied by repentance and faith in Christ, resulting in a new nature within us. (John 3:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Titus 3:4-7)

We believe that justification is God’s gracious and full acquittal of the sins of all who are regenerated. Christ’s righteousness is imputed to the regenerate, and God declares them to be entirely righteous, bringing them into a relationship of peace and favor with Himself. (Romans 3:19-26; 5:1; Galatians 3:10-14)

We believe that sanctification is the process by which God sets believers apart for His own purposes, that they might progress toward spiritual maturity by the presence and power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Thessalonians 2:19; 4:3)

We believe that glorification is the culmination of salvation and will be the final blessed and abiding state of all who have been redeemed. (Romans 8:17, 30; 2 Thessalonians 1:10)

[Angels and Satan](#)

We believe that all angels were created by God but that a part of their number fell into sin under the leadership of Satan, who in his original rebellion against God is the cause of sin in the universe. Satan’s temptation of Adam and Eve resulted in their disobedience and fall into sin. Satan and his hosts are declared enemies of God and man and will be eternally punished in the lake of fire. Satan, though irredeemably evil, is nevertheless subject to God and His eternal plan. (Genesis 3:15; Colossians 2:15; Revelation 20:10)

The holy angels are preserved from sinning by a divine decree and exist to serve God according to His good pleasure. They also glorify God in their obedience and service to

believers, and they will eventually be used by God to judge the wicked. (1 Timothy 5:21; Hebrews 1:14; Revelation 7:1-3)

[The Church](#)

The church, which had its special beginning on the day of Pentecost, is comprised of all who have been baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ, of which He is the head. The true church is manifest in local churches whose membership should be comprised only of believers. (Matthew 16:18; Acts 1:8; 2:43; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:20-23)

The Lord Jesus Christ instituted the ordinances of baptism and communion, which tangibly and symbolically express the Gospel. Although these ordinances are not the means of salvation and do not confer special grace, when they are celebrated by the church in genuine faith, they do confirm and nourish the church, the body of Christ. (Matthew 26:26-29; 28:18-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

In obedience to Christ's command, we urge every believer upon profession of faith to joyfully follow our Lord's instructions and be baptized "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). We encourage those who were baptized as infants to follow in believer's baptism as a testimony of their own personal faith in Christ. We desire to follow the pattern of the New Testament in which conversion was followed by baptism by immersion.

[Christ's Return](#)

We believe that God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring this present era to a close. According to His promise, our Lord Jesus Christ will return imminently, personally, and bodily for His church and also for the establishment of His kingdom on earth. For believers, His coming is their blessed hope and demands constant expectancy, holy living, and sacrificial service. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14; 2 Peter 3:8-14)

When the future millennial kingdom is established, the national promises given to Abraham will be fulfilled and Israel shall be restored to the glory predicted in the Scriptures, with Christ ruling from Jerusalem. As expressed in Habakkuk 2:14, "For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah 2:2-5; Jeremiah 31:35-37; Zechariah 14:1-5; Luke 1:30-33; Acts 1:6-7; Romans 11:25-27; Galatians 3:9, 14, 23-29)

The Church believes and teaches that the premillennial return of Christ to establish His earthly reign is an important doctrine of eschatology. All who teach and preach in the Church are expected to do so consistent with this interpretation of end-time events. However, those with a different understanding of the coming kingdom are permitted to join our membership.

[Eternal Destiny](#)

We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the Gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning unbelievers to condemnation with eternal conscious punishment and believers to eternal joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, where we will forever celebrate the justice of God and His loving mercy to the praise of His glorious grace. (Matthew 25:46; Revelation 15:1-4; 20:11-15)

We believe that all believers who die are immediately conscious in the presence of the Lord, although their bodies will be resurrected at the second coming of Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:1-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) Unbelievers who die are conscious in Hades and will eventually be resurrected to face the Great White Throne judgment and eternal punishment in the lake of fire. (Matthew 25:46; Revelation 20:11-15)

Section B. Our Lifestyle Covenant (“Christian Living”)

[Commitment to Christian Living](#)

We believe that God’s justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor, and justice for the oppressed. With God’s Word, the Spirit’s power, and fervent prayer in Christ’s name, we are to combat

the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the Gospel in word and deed.

As an expression of our union with Christ and other believers, we whole-heartedly commit ourselves to living in a manner worthy of the Gospel. We believe that the following statements accurately express scriptural principles for living self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age according to Titus 2:11-14. Both in an effort to please Christ and in deference to the consciences of fellow believers as the Scriptures admonish, we will strive to abide by these principles in our personal lives by the grace of God. If we, as members, are found to be lacking in any of these areas, we will submit to the leadership of the Elders of this Church and, if necessary, to their discipline (see Article 8) to safeguard the spiritual health of this body and the reputation of Christ.

- By God's grace, we will yield to the power of the Holy Spirit who resides within us to produce the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:16-24)
- By God's grace, we will take advantage of public and private means of spiritual growth, such as: regular attendance at our Sunday services; fellowship with other believers; participation in the ordinances (baptism and communion); and the application of personal spiritual disciplines (Bible reading, fasting, prayer, etc.).
- By God's grace, we will contribute financially to the ministry of the Local Church, giving regularly, proportionally, and generously as God has prospered us.
- By God's grace, we will witness to the world seeking to lead others to faith in Christ, and will do so with integrity and graciousness, following the leading of the Spirit.
- By God's grace, we will separate ourselves from all sinful pleasures, practices, and associations, and will refrain from all immodesty and immoderate behavior. We will seek to live in such a way as to not bring reproach upon the Lord Jesus Christ.
- By God's grace, we will use our spiritual gifts as God enables us.
By God's grace, we will abstain from indulging in any and all forms of salacious behavior.
- By God's grace, we will abstain from all sexual relationships outside of the marriage bond between one man and one woman as defined and taught in Scripture (see Section C.1, Human Sexuality, below).
- By God's grace, we will be free from destructive habits that enslave us and compromise both our fellowship with God and our witness to the world.
- By God's grace, we will be free of all alliances with secret cultic organizations or occultist affiliations and will avoid being unequally yoked with unbelievers.

Note: Scriptural support for the above Lifestyle Covenant is found throughout the Scriptures. Some of the specific passages are as follows: Romans 1:18-32; 8:12; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:1-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9.

Section C. Other Matters Pertaining to Biblical Ethics

[Human Sexuality](#)

We believe sex is a gift from God to be enjoyed within the marriage relationship. We believe that God has commanded abstinence from any form of sexual/intimate activity outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that participation in any activity related to fornication, pornography, homosexuality, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, and/or adultery is a sinful perversion of God's gift of sex. We believe that God created human beings male and female; therefore, we hold the distinction between the two sexes to be sacred. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to change the appearance of one's sex by hormones, surgery, or any other means. (Romans 1:18-32)

[Family Relationships](#)

We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society and that a marriage which reflects biblical priorities and principles is the foundation of a healthy family. Children are a gift from God and are both a blessing and a reward to their parents who are called to train them daily and diligently in God's truth. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them to God through a consistent lifestyle example, appropriate teaching, and discipline. (Deuteronomy 6:7-9; Psalm 127:3-5; Ephesians 5:22-33; 6:1-4)

We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God and both are made in God's image. God has given each sex distinct and separate spiritual roles in the home and the church. The husband is to love and serve his wife as Christ loves the church, to recognize that she is his essential helper and companion, and to live with her in a nurturing and understanding way. The wife is to submit to the loving leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ, to be her husband's loving friend, and to respect him as a matter of spiritual service. A husband's responsibility includes giving priority to spiritually leading his family and providing for his family's material needs. A wife's responsibility includes giving priority to home management and the nurture of her children. (Genesis 1:27; 2:15, 18; 3:19; 5:2; Proverbs 31:10-31; Ephesians 5:22-33; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Peter 3:1-7)

We also honor those who remain single and are committed to a life of chastity and single-minded devotion to Christ. The Apostle Paul, who himself was single, taught that such a lifestyle was not only good but has the advantage of enabling the believer to serve the Lord without distraction. (1 Corinthians 7:8, 32-34)

[Divorce and Remarriage](#)

We believe that God hates divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. We recognize that divorce and remarriage might be permitted under certain conditions. However, whether a person has a biblical reason to divorce or whether a divorced person has biblical grounds for remarriage is subject to the determination of the church leaders, based on the teachings of Scripture. We urge those who are struggling in their marriages to seek counsel from mature believers with fervent prayer that God might bring about reconciliation and renewed commitment to the marriage vows. (Genesis 2:24; Malachi 2:16; Matthew 19:3-9; 1 Corinthians 7:10-13)

[Abortion and Euthanasia](#)

We believe that human life is a sacred gift from God and must be respected from the moment of conception (fertilization) until natural death. We believe that the intentional, willful termination of a pregnancy (“abortion”) at any time after conception constitutes the taking of unborn human life. Accordingly, abortions, including for reasons of birth defects, gender selection, birth control, population control, or even in the tragic instances of rape or incest, and acts of encouraging, facilitating, or paying for abortions, are inconsistent with Scripture and the glory of God. (Psalm 139:13-16)

We oppose active intervention with the intent to produce death (“euthanasia”), whether for the relief of suffering, economic considerations, or convenience of the person, family, or society. We do not oppose the withdrawal or failure to institute artificial means of life support in patients who are clearly and irreversibly deteriorating, in whom death appears imminent beyond reasonable hope of recovery.

[Love and Unity](#)

We believe that we should demonstrate biblical love for all people, especially fellow believers, but also toward unbelievers who may oppose us, and toward those who engage in sinful actions. We must interact with all people graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in them.

[Lawsuits among Believers](#)

We believe that civil lawsuits among believers violate the teaching of Scripture and are a discredit to the name of Christ. Specifically, three reasons are given for this prohibition: our witness to the world is jeopardized; such lawsuits reflect the secular values of greed and an unwillingness to suffer wrong; and such lawsuits demean the leadership of a church, since the appointed church leaders should be capable of resolving such disputes (1 Corinthians 6:1-8). When such disputes arise, they should be brought to the attention of the church leadership for guidance, instruction, and if necessary, mediation or arbitration.