

ARTICLE 2

STATEMENT OF FAITH AND COVENANT

SECTION 2.01—STATEMENT OF FAITH

The following articles comprise the Scriptural beliefs of this church and its members.

- A. The Holy Scriptures. We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the verbally and plenary inspired Word of God. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible, and God-breathed and, therefore, are the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament are the complete and divine revelation of God to Man. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning. The King James Version of the Bible shall be the official and only translation used by the church. (2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:20–21)
- B. The Godhead. We believe in one triune God, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; John 14:10, 26; 2 Corinthians 13:14)
- C. God the Father. We believe in God the Father, who is an infinite personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. He infallibly foreknows all that shall come to pass, concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, hears and answers prayer, and saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. (Jeremiah 1:5; Matthew 7:11; Matthew 23:9; John 4:24; 1 Timothy 1:1-2; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Revelation 1:6)
- D. The Person and Work of Christ.
 - 1. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He

might reveal God and redeem sinful men. (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1–2, 14; 2 Corinthians 5:19–21; Galatians 4:4–5; Philippians 2:5–8)

2. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice, and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. (Acts 2:18–36; Romans 3:24–25; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Peter 1:3–5)
3. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate. (Acts 1:9–10; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 9:24; 7:25; 1 John 2:1–2)

E. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.

1. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a living being with personality who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and, that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing of believers unto the day of redemption. (John 16:8–11; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:12–14; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13–14)
2. We believe that He is the divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit. (Ephesians 1:17–18; 5:18; 1 John 2:20,
3. We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelist, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the assembly in order that they can do the work of the ministry. (Romans 12:3–8; 1 Corinthians 12:4–11, 28; Ephesians 4:7–12)
4. We believe that the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing, were temporary. Speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit. Ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in

the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing. (1 Corinthians 1:22; 13:8; 14:21–22)

F. The Total Depravity of Man. We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God; but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Man is totally depraved and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. (Genesis 1:26–27; Romans 3:22–23; 5:12; 6:23; Ephesians 2:1–3; 4:17–19)

G. Salvation. We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins. (Matthew 12:31–32; John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8–10; 1 Peter 1:18–19; 1 John 1:9)

H. The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers.

1. We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. (John 6:37–40; 10:27–30; Romans 8:1; 38–39; 1 Corinthians 1:4–8; 1 Peter 1:4–5)
2. We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word. However, the Scriptures clearly forbid the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh. (Romans 13:13–14; Galatians 5:13; Titus 2:11–15)

I. The Church.

1. We believe that the local church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again and scripturally baptized persons. (1 Corinthians 12:12–14; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 1:22–23; 5:25–27)
2. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament

Scriptures. (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28–32; 1 Timothy 3:1–13; Titus 1:5–11)

3. We believe in the autonomy of the local church, free of any external authority or control. (Acts 13:1–4; 15:19–31; 20:28; Romans 16:1, 4; 1 Corinthians 3:9, 16; 5:4–7, 13; 1 Peter 5:1–4)
4. We recognize water baptism and the Lord's Supper as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church in this age. (Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 2:41–42, 8:36–38; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26)

J. Separation. We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord. God commands His people to separate from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations. We are opposed to the use of alcoholic beverages. (Romans 12:1–2; 14:13; 1 Corinthians 6:19–20; 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1–5; 1 John 2:15–17; 2 John 9–11)

K. The Second Coming of Christ. We believe in that blessed hope, the personal, imminent return of Christ, who will rapture His church prior to the seven-year tribulation period. At the end of the Tribulation, Christ will personally and visibly return with His saints, to establish His earthly Messianic Kingdom for 1,000 years, which was promised to the nation of Israel. (Psalm 89:3–4; Daniel 2:31–45; Zechariah 14:4–11; 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 4:13–18; Titus 2:13; Revelation 3:10; 19:11–16; 20:1–6)

L. The Eternal State.

1. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. (Matthew 25:46; John 5:28, 29; 11:25–26; Revelation 20:5–6, 12–13)
2. We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord. (Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17; Revelation 20:4–6)

3. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in Hell, in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection. Then, when soul and body are reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment. (Matthew 25:41–46; Mark 9:43–48; Luke 16:19–26; 2 Thessalonians 1:7–9; Jude 6–7; Revelation 20:11–15)

M. The Personality of Satan. We believe that Satan is a living being with personality, the author of sin and the cause of the Fall of Man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6–7; Isaiah 14:12–17; Matthew 4:2–11; 25:41; Revelation 20:10)

N. Creation. We believe that God created the universe in six literal, twenty-four-hour periods. We reject evolution, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin. (Genesis 1–2; Exodus 20:11)

O. Civil Government. We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home, 2) the church, and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. We believe that we must obey the state unless it requires us to act contrary to our faith, at which time we must obey God rather than the state. (Matthew 22:15–22; Acts 5:29; Romans 13:1–7; Ephesians 5:22–24; Titus 3:1–2; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 2:13–14)

P. Human Sexuality.

1. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one naturally born man and one naturally born woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest,

fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance.

(Genesis 2:24; Genesis 19:5, 13; Genesis 26:8–9; Leviticus 18:1–30; Romans 1: 26–29; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:1–8; Hebrews 13:4)

2. We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one naturally born man and one naturally born woman for life.

(Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:10; Ephesians 5:22–23)

Q. Family Relationships.

1. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church.

Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:18; 1 Timothy 2:8–15; 3:4–5, 12)

2. We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are a heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them, through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including Scriptural corporal correction. (Genesis 1:26–28; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4–9; Psalm 127:3–5; Proverbs 19:18; 22:15; 23:13–14; Mark 10:6–12; 1 Corinthians 7:1–16; Ephesians 5:21–33; 6:1–4, Colossians 3:18–21; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1–7)

R. Divorce and Remarriage. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses

dies. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery except on the grounds of fornication. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the office of pastor or deacon. (Malachi 2:14–17; Matthew 19:3–12; Romans 7:1–3; 1 Timothy 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)

S. Abortion. We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. (Job 3:16; Psalm 51:5; 139:14–16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jeremiah 1:5; 20:15–18; Luke 1:44)

T. Euthanasia. We believe that the direct taking of an innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death. (Exodus 20:13, 23:7, Matthew 5:21; Acts 17:28)

U. Love. We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or the use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 5:44–48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34–35; Romans 12:9–10; 17–21; 13:8–10; Philippians 2:2–4; 2 Timothy 2:24–26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17–18)

V. Missions. We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ, we must use all Biblical means to go to the foreign nations and not wait for

them to come to us. (Matthew 28:19–20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46–48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:20)

W. Giving. We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to financially support his local church. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of his tithe or offering once the gift has been made. (Genesis 14:20; Proverbs 3:9–10; Acts 4:34–37; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6–7; Galatians 6:6; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Timothy 5:17–18; 1 John 3:17)

SECTION 2.02 – AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature, whether print or electronic, used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.

SECTION 2.03 – COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of our Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we do now, in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; and to contribute

cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spreading of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and personal devotions; to educate our children in the truth of God's Word; to seek the salvation of our families, acquaintances, and all others; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful to our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid excessive anger, tattling, backbiting, and all gossip or secretive meetings regarding personal issues of church members, church leadership, or practice; to abstain from such worldly amusements as gambling, intoxicating drink, pornography, and the abuse of drugs; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy of speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready to secure reconciliation without delay.

We moreover engage, that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.