

STATEMENT OF FAITH AND COVENANT

The following 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 (every word) and plenary (complete) 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, and all issues of interpretation and meaning shall be determined by the pastor. For reasons of textual reliability, we use and promote the King James Version of the Bible; therefore it is the official version used by all pastors, officers, and teachers in all church-related ministries. (II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21)

(B) The True God.

We believe in only 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; II Corinthians 13:14; I John 5:7; Revelation 4:11)

(C) 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; II 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; I Peter 2:24; I 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)

(D) The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.

1. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person 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 them unto the day of redemption. (John 16:8-11; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; II 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.

(Eph. 1:17-18; 5:18; I John 2:20, 27)

3. We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every

believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the assembly in order that they can do the work of the ministry. (Romans 12:3-8; I 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. (I Corinthians 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22)

(E) 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)

(F) 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, Who died, was buried, and rose the third day from the grave. We believe that a person is saved the moment he repents of his sins and places his faith in Jesus Christ alone to save him. We do not believe in limited atonement, but that Christ died for the sins of every man, and desires for all men to come to repentance. (Matthew 12:31-32; John 1:12; Acts 20:21; Romans 10:9,10,13; I Corinthians 15:3-4; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; I Peter 1:18-19; II Peter 3:9 I John 5:11-13)

(G) 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; I Corinthians 1:4-8; I 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, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh. (Romans 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13; Titus 2:11-15)

(H) 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 persons.

(I Corinthians 12:12-14; II 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; I 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; I Corinthians 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; I 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; I Corinthians 11:23-26)

(I) 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, and to refrain from all immodest appearances. God has called us to a holy life. (Leviticus 19:28; Romans 12:1-2; 14:13; I Corinthians 6:19-20; II Corinthians 6:14-7:1; II Timothy 3:1-5; I Peter 1:15; I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11)

(J) The Second Advent 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 which was promised to the nation of Israel. (Psalms 89:3-4; Daniel 2:31-45; Zechariah 14:4-11; I Thessalonians 1:10, 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Revelation 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6)

(K) 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. (Matt. 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, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (Luke 23:43; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 3:21; I Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 20:4-6)

3. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body 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; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:11-15)

(L) The Personality of Satan.

We believe that Satan is a person, 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)

(M) Creation.

We believe that God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. We reject evolution as an unscriptural theory of origin. (Genesis 1-2; Exodus 20:11)

(N) 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 and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. (Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 5:22-24; Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 2:13-14)

(O) Human Sexuality.

1. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one 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; I Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; I Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4)
2. We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. (Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:2; I Corinthians 7:10; Ephesians 5:22-23)

(P) 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; I 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 an 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; Psalms 127:3-5; Proverbs 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mark 10:6-12; I Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Colossians 3:18-21; Hebrews 13:4; I Peter 3:1-7)
3. We believe that God's perfect will is for marriage to last between a man and a woman until they would be separated by death. Although divorced and remarried persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used by God, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor and deacon. (Malachi 2:14-17; Matthew 19:3-12; Romans 7:1-3; I Timothy 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)

(Q) 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. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, and birth or population control. (Job 3:16; Psalms 51:5; 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jeremiah 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

(R) 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. Thus we believe that an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder contrary to the will of God. Discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be a legitimate refusal of over-zealous treatment. (Exodus 20:13, 23:7; Matthew 5:21; Acts 17:28)

(S) Love.

We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward both 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; II Timothy 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; I John 3:17-18)

(T) Lawsuits Between Believers.

We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (I Corinthians 6:1-8; Ephesians 4:31-32)

(U) 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 available 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; II Corinthians 5:20)

(V) 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; I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 9:6-7; Galatians 6:6; Ephesians 4:28; I Timothy 5:17-18; I John 3:17)

(W) Affiliations.

This church will always be an autonomous Baptist church and will not be affiliated with any religious bodies, conventions, or associations (Baptist or otherwise) which are known or believed to be embracing or leaning toward any form of modernism, apostasy, new evangelicalism, ecumenical evangelism, charismatic or tongues movement, or any other compromise of the fundamental truths of God's Word. This church will not support in any way any organization or denomination that has become apostate or which supports apostasy or compromises with apostasy. As a New Testament church, members are free to govern themselves without ecclesiastical interference and will, as the Holy Spirit leads, cooperate with other churches, missions, and institutions which are also functioning in submission to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Scriptures.

CHURCH 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 spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred, 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 all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger, to abstain from the sale of, and use of destructive drugs or intoxicating drinks as a beverage; 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 for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior, and to secure reconciliation without delay.

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