

Hope Church Statement of Faith

God is Triune. There is one God. The heavens tell us of the glory of God and all things exist from Him, to Him and for Him to the praise of His glory. God is infinite, eternal, almighty and perfect in holiness, truth and love. In the Godhead, there are three distinct Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, co-existent, co-equal, and co-eternal. Each Person of the Godhead is fully God. The Father is neither the Son nor the Holy Spirit. The Son is neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son, yet each is truly Deity. One God — Father, Son and Holy Spirit — is how God has revealed Himself. (*Genesis 1:26; Psalm 19:1-2, 45:6-7, 110:1; Isaiah 44:8, 45:18, 48:16; Deuteronomy 6:4; Malachi 2:10; Matthew 3:13-17, 28:17-20; Mark 12:29; Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; James 2:19*)

God the Father. God the Father is the Creator of heaven and earth. By His word and for His glory, He freely and supernaturally created the world out of nothing. Through the same word, He daily sustains all His creatures. He rules over the entire universe and, together with the Son and the Spirit, is the only Sovereign. His plans and purposes cannot be thwarted. He is faithful to every promise, works all things together for good to those who love Him and in His unfathomable grace gave His Son Jesus Christ for mankind's redemption. He made all things, including mankind, for the praise of His glory. (*Genesis 1:1; Psalm 33:6, 33:9, 90:2; Proverbs 16:33, 19:21; Job 34:14-15; Acts 4:24, 17:24-26; Romans 8:28, 11:36; Hebrews 11:3; Revelation 4:11*)

Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, is the eternal Word made flesh, supernaturally conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary. He is fully God and is fully man. He is perfect in nature, teaching and obedience. He was always with God and is God. Through Him all things came into being and were created. He was before all things and in Him all things hold together by the word of His power. He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born over all creation and in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He is the only Savior for the sins of those whom the Father has given Him having shed His blood and died in their place on Calvary's cross. By His death in our place, He revealed the divine love and upheld divine justice, removing our guilt and reconciling us to God. Having redeemed us from sin, the third day He rose bodily from the grave, victorious over death and the powers of darkness and for a period of 40 days appeared to over 500 witnesses performing many convincing proofs of His resurrection. He ascended into heaven where, at God's right hand, He intercedes for His people and rules as Lord over all, awaiting His return. He is the Head of His body, the church, and should be adored, loved, served and obeyed by all. (*Matthew 26:64; John 1:1-18, 3:13, 8:58; Acts 1:3, 2:23, 4:10, 13:29-31; 1 Corinthians 15:6; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:20-22; Colossians 1:15-20, 3:1; Hebrews 8:1, 12:2, 13:8; Revelation 1:5*)

The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, the Giver of life, convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. Through the proclamation of the gospel, He persuades men to repent of their sins and confess Jesus as Lord. By the same Spirit, a person is led to trust in divine mercy. The Holy Spirit unites believers to Jesus Christ in faith, brings about the new birth and dwells within the regenerate. The Holy Spirit has come to glorify the Son who in turn came to glorify the Father. He will lead the church into a right understanding and rich application of the truth of God's Word. He is to be respected, honored and worshipped as God the Third Person of the Trinity. (*John 14:15-20, 14:25-27, 15:26; Romans 5:5; 1 Corinthians 12:3; Ephesians 1:13-14; 1 Thessalonians 1:5; 2 Timothy 1:14; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:12; 1 John 5:6*)

Scriptures. We accept the Bible, including the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament, as the written Word of God. The Bible is an essential and infallible record of God's self-disclosure to mankind. It leads us to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Being given by God, the Scriptures are inspired by God. Therefore, as originally given, the Bible is free of error. Each book is to be interpreted according to its original audience, context and purpose and in reverent obedience to the Lord who speaks through it in living power. All believers are exhorted to study the Scriptures and diligently apply them to their lives. The Scriptures have the power to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart. The Scriptures are the authoritative and normative rule and guide of all Christian life, practice and doctrine. The Scriptures are totally sufficient and must not be added to, superseded or changed by later tradition, extra-biblical revelation or worldly wisdom. Every doctrinal formulation, whether of creed, confession or theology, must be put to the test of the full counsel of the Scriptures. (*Ezra 7:10; Ecclesiastes 12:9-11; Psalm 119:160; Matthew 4:4, 7:24; Romans 2:13; 1 Timothy 4:16; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12; James 1:22; Revelation 22:18-19*)

Man. God made man — male and female — in His own image that man might glorify Him and enjoy Him forever. Although made a little lower than the angels, man is the crown of His creation. He made man to rule over His creation and to be fruitful and multiply. Tempted by Satan, man rebelled against God. Being estranged from his Maker, yet responsible to Him, man became subject to divine wrath, inwardly depraved and apart from a special work of grace, utterly incapable of returning to God. This depravity is radical and pervasive to all mankind from birth. It extends to his mind, will and affections. Unregenerate man lives under the dominion of sin and Satan. He is at enmity with God, hostile toward God, and hateful of God. Fallen, sinful people, whatever their character or accomplishments, are lost and without hope apart from salvation in Christ alone. (*Genesis 1:26-28, 3:1-6; Psalm 8:5; Romans 3:10-12, 5:10; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Ephesians 2:1-3, 2:12; Colossians 2:13; Hebrews 2:6-8*)

The Gospel. The one and only God, Creator of everything, who is infinitely powerful, holy and good, made us in His image to know and enjoy Him. Our first parents, Adam and Eve, were deceived by the devil and rebelled against God, bringing sin into the world. As a result, we are now born with a sinful nature that is hostile to the loving rule of God. Like our first parents, we all rebel against God, making us guilty of sin, the penalty of which is death and eternal separation from God in Hell. In His great love, God entered into human history as the man Jesus Christ. Jesus came into the world to destroy the works of the devil and to rescue fallen humanity from sin and death. Jesus lived a perfect, sinless life, and willingly gave up His life on the cross, thus taking on Himself the punishment for the sins of humanity. Jesus rose from the dead three days later, showing that God accepted Jesus' sacrifice and that God's wrath against the believer in Jesus had been exhausted on the cross. He now calls us to repent of our sins and trust in Jesus Christ alone for our forgiveness. If we repent of our sins and trust in Jesus, we are sealed by the Holy Spirit as an adopted son of God and transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, being born again into a new life, an eternal life with God. (*Genesis 1:26-28, 3:1-24; John 1:1, 1:14, 6:47, 10:18, 14:6; Acts 13:28-31; Romans 3:21-26, 5:8, 5:12, 6:9, 6:23, 8:14-17; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Galatians 4:4-7; Ephesians 1:13, 2:1-5, 3:6; Colossians 1:4-6, 1:13; 1 Timothy 1:15, 2:5; Hebrews 2:17, 4:15, 9:15; 1 Peter 1:3, 3:18; 1 John 1:9, 2:2, 3:8, 4:10*)

Man's Response to the Gospel. Man's response to the gospel is rooted in the free and unconditional election of God for his own pleasure and glory. The proper response to the gospel is faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ, a faith that is accompanied by repentance from sin. Biblical repentance is characterized by a changed life, and saving faith is evidenced by kingdom service or works. While neither repentance nor works save, unless a person is willing to deny himself, pick up his cross and follow Christ, he cannot become His disciple. This gospel of grace is to be sincerely preached to all men in all nations. (*Matthew 28:19; Mark 1:15; John 1:12; Acts 10:45, 15:11; Romans 9:11-24; Ephesians 1:4-6, 2:4-10; 2 Peter 1:10-11*)

Man's Inheritance through the Gospel. Salvation, the free gift of God, is provided by grace alone, through faith alone, because of Christ alone, for the glory of God alone. Anyone turning from sin in repentance and looking to Christ and His substitutionary death receives the gift of eternal life and is declared righteous by God as a free gift. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to the believer. He is justified and fully accepted by God. Through Christ's atonement for sin an individual is reconciled to God as Father and becomes His child. The believer is forgiven the debt of his sin and, via the miracle of regeneration, liberated from the law of sin and death into the freedom of God's Spirit. All those who believe in Christ, are sealed with the Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of their inheritance until they acquire possession of it in glory. (*John 3:15-16; Acts 15:11; Romans 5:21; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:11-14, 2:8-9; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 2 Timothy 1:9; Jude 21*)

Sanctification. The Holy Spirit is the active agent in our sanctification and seeks to produce His fruit in us as our minds are renewed and we are conformed to the image of Christ. Though indwelling sin remains a reality, as we are led by the Spirit, we grow in the knowledge of the Lord, freely keeping His commandments and endeavoring to so live in the world that all people may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven. All believers are exhorted to persevere in the faith knowing they will have to give an account to God for their every thought, word and deed. The spiritual disciplines, especially Bible study, prayer, worship and confession, are a vital means of grace in this regard, as well as means of intimacy with and growth in Christ. Nevertheless, the believer's ultimate confidence to persevere is based in the sure promise of God to preserve His people until the end, which is most certain. (*Matthew 5:16, 10:22, 12:36; Romans 8:29-30, 12:12, 14:12; Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 6:17-18;*

Philippians 1:6; Colossians 3:16, 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:12; Hebrews 4:12-13, 12:7; James 1:25; 1 Peter 2:19; 1 John 1:9)

Empowered by the Spirit. Jesus Christ baptizes believers in the Holy Spirit, in whom also believers are sealed for the day of redemption. The Holy Spirit regenerates, forever indwells, and graciously equips and empowers the Christian for intimate fellowship with Him and for godly living and service through the Church, His Body. The Holy Spirit desires to continually fill each believer with power to witness, and imparts His supernatural gifts for the edification of the Body and the work of ministry in the world. All believers are granted by the Spirit specific supernatural gifts that are designed for the building up of the church and as a testimony to unbelievers. All the gifts of the Holy Spirit at work in New Testament are available today and are to be earnestly desired and practiced in an orderly manner and are essential for the mission of the Church in the world today. (*Matthew 3:11; John 14:15-20, 14:25-27; Acts 4:29-30; Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 2:10-12, 2:14, 3:16, 6:19, 12:1-13; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Galatians 3:1-5; Ephesians 1:13-14, 5:18)*

The Church. The mission of the church is to make disciples, teaching them to obey all that Jesus commands. God by His Word and Spirit creates the Church, calling sinful men into the fellowship of Christ's Body. By the same Word and Spirit, He guides and preserves the church. The church is not a religious institution or denomination. Rather, the Church universal is made up of those who have become genuine followers of Jesus Christ through faith in Him and the repentance of their sins. The Church exists to worship and glorify God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It also exists to serve Him by faithfully doing His will in the earth. This involves a commitment to see the gospel preached and churches planted to the ends of the earth for His glory. When God transforms human nature, this then becomes the chief means of society's transformation. Upon conversion, newly redeemed men and women are added to a local church in which they devote themselves to teaching, fellowship, the administering of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and prayer. All members of the Church universal are to be members of a local church. In this context, they are called to walk out the gospel as the people of God and demonstrate the reality of the kingdom of God. The Holy Spirit has given gift ministries to the church (including prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers) for the equipping of Christ's body that it might mature and grow. Through the gift ministries, all members of the church are to be nurtured and equipped for the work of the ministry. In the context of the local church, God's people receive pastoral care and leadership and the opportunity to employ their God-given gifts in His service in relation to one another and to the world. The church is to practice discipline when its members fail to live according to the Scriptures. The church is to provide for the physical needs of its members and to care for the needy and helpless, including the unborn, widows and orphans. (*Leviticus 19:17; Matthew 18:15-17; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, 12:12-31; Ephesians 1:22, 3:8-10, 4:11-16; Colossians 1:18; 2 Thessalonians 3:13-15; Titus 3:10-11; James 1:27)*

Ordinances of the Church. Water baptism is only intended for the individual who has received the saving benefits of Christ's atoning work and become His disciple. Therefore, in obedience to Christ's command and as a testimony to God, the church, oneself and the world, a believer should be immersed in water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Water baptism is a visual and symbolic demonstration of a person's union with Christ in the likeness of His death and resurrection. It signifies that his former way of life has been put to death and vividly depicts a person's release from the mastery of sin.

The Lord's Supper is to be observed only by those who have become genuine followers of Christ. This ordinance symbolizes the breaking of Christ's body and the shedding of His blood on our behalf, and is to be observed repeatedly throughout the Christian life as a sign of continued participation in the atoning benefits of Christ's death. As we partake of the Lord's Supper with an attitude of faith and self-examination, we remember and proclaim the death of Christ, receive spiritual nourishment for our souls, and signify our unity with other members of Christ's body. (*Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38, 8:12; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-32)*

Satan and Demons. The kingdom of God is opposed by Satan, originally a great and good angel, who rebelled against God, taking a multitude of angels with him. He was cast out of God's presence and is at work with his demonic hosts to establish his counter-kingdom of darkness and evil on the earth. Satan was judged and defeated at the cross of Christ and will, at the end of the age, be cast forever into the lake of fire, which has been prepared for him and his angels. In the present, Satan wages war against the Church and blinds the eyes of unbelievers to keep

the gospel from spreading in the world. Believers are given authority in the name of Jesus to battle for His glory in the advance of His kingdom. (*Genesis 3:14-15; Matthew 12:25-29, 25:41; Mark 9:38; Luke 10:18-20; John 12:31, 16:11; Acts 16:18; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 6:10-20; Colossians 1:13, 2:15; 2 Peter 2:4; 1 John 5:19; Jude 6; Revelation 12:7-9, 20:10*)

The Consummation. The consummation of all things includes the future, physical, visible, personal and glorious return of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead and the translation transformation of those alive in Christ, the judgment of the just and the unjust, and the fulfillment of Christ's kingdom in the new heavens and the new earth. In the consummation, Satan with his demons and all those outside Christ are finally separated from the benevolent presence of God, enduring eternal punishment, but the righteous, in glorious bodies, shall live and reign with Him forever, serving Him and giving Him unending praise and glory. Then shall the eager expectation of creation be fulfilled, and the whole earth shall proclaim the glory of God Who makes all things new. (*Daniel 7:13-14; Matthew 16:27-28, 24:29-31; Romans 6:5; 1 Corinthians 15:50-57; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 1:7, 20:11-15*)

Manhood and Womanhood. We believe that both men and women are created in God's image, equal before God as persons and distinct in their manhood and womanhood. Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of the created order. Male headship in marriage was established by God before the Fall, and was not a result of sin. In the family, husbands should forsake harsh or selfish leadership and grow in love and care for their wives; wives should forsake resistance to their husbands' authority and grow in willing, joyful submission to their husbands' leadership. In the church, redemption in Christ gives men and women an equal share in the blessings of salvation; nevertheless, some governing and teaching roles within the church are restricted to men. In all of life Christ is the supreme authority and guide for men and women, so that no earthly submission—domestic, religious, or civil—ever implies a mandate to follow a human authority into sin. (*Genesis 1:26-27, 2:16-18, 2:21-24, 3:1-16; Daniel 3:10-18; Acts 4:19-20, 5:27-29; 1 Corinthians 11:2-16; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Timothy 2:11-15; Titus 2:2-6; 1 Peter 3:1-7*).

Marriage and Sexuality. We believe that marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime; it is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the opportunity for spiritual growth and sanctification through mutual sacrificial love and service, the framework for intimate companionship, the gift of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. (*Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:18-19*)