

# DECLARATION OF FAITH

## (A) The Holy Scriptures

We believe the Old and New Testament Scriptures were written by men, that the scriptures were divinely inspired of God, and that they are a perfect treasure of divine instruction; that they have God for their author, salvation as their objective, and truth without mixture of error for their matter; that they reveal the principles by which God will judge us; and they therefore shall remain to the end, the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human creeds, conduct and opinions shall be tried. We believe the Canon of Scripture to be complete and closed (II Timothy 3:15-17; Romans 1:16; John 12:47-48; Philippians 3:16).

## (B) The True God

We believe there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, the Maker and supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (John 4:24; Psalm 83:18; Hebrews 3:4; Exodus 15:11; Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:11).

### 1. God the Father

We believe God the Father, the first person of the Godhead (or Trinity), to be the Father of all the redeemed; to be the Originator of our redemption in sending the Son to die for our sin; to be the One to whom Christ prayed and teaches us to pray; and the One to whom the atoning Blood of Christ was offered by the Holy Spirit; and the One who delivers all judgment to the Son; and the One to whom the Son commits all things at the close of the Millennium (John 1:12, 3:16-17, 5:22, 16:23; Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 9:14; I Corinthians 15:24).

### 2. God the Son

We believe Jesus Christ to be the second person of the Godhead (or Trinity); to be and ever shall be - God the Son; manifest in time in the flesh for the purpose of redemption; that He did in Himself by one "Sacrifice for sin" put away sin; that He rose from the dead on the third day and is now seated at the right hand of the Father as the Advocate and Mediator for men. We believe further that He was born of the Virgin Mary in the sense that no man before or since was born or could be born; and that in Himself all the attributes of God are fully manifested (Luke 1:30-35; John 1:1-14; Galatians 4:4-5; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 9:24, 26; I John 2:1-2).

### 3. God the Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit to be the third Person of the Godhead (or Trinity) and to be truly a person as is the Father and the Son. He is operative in the salvation and sanctification of every believer. He indwells the body of each believer and is Guide, Comforter, Convictor and Sealer of the redeemed. We do not believe, however, that the Holy Spirit is now producing the sign gifts in the lives of believers (John 14:26, 16:7-11; Ephesians 1:13-14; I Corinthians 14:22).

### **(C) Satan**

We believe in a personal devil who is powerful but not omnipotent. He is the former Lucifer who fell from his perfection when he said "I will be like the most High." He is now the prince of the power of the air; the unholy god of this world; man's great tempter; the enemy of God; the accuser of the saints; the father of all lies; and is doomed to the Lake of Fire for eternity (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ephesians 2:1-2; Revelation 12:10, 20:10).

### **(D) Man**

We believe man was created in holiness; in the image of God, under the law of his Maker; but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state; in consequences of which all mankind are now sinners; not by constraint, but choice, being by nature evil; and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defence or excuse (Genesis 1:27, 3:6-24; Romans 3:9-18, 5:12,19; John 3:6; Ephesians 2:1-3, 8).

### **(E) The Plan of Salvation**

We believe the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God; Who, by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Him our nature, yet without sin; honoured the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full atonement for our sins; that, having risen from the dead, He is now at the Father's right hand. He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, compassionate, and all-sufficient Savior (Ephesians 2:8; I John 4:9-10; John 3:16-17; Colossians 1:20; Hebrews 7:25; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 1:18, 53:4-6; Romans 3:21; I Timothy 2:5).

### **(F) Justification by Faith**

We believe the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is Justification; that Justification includes the pardon of sin; the promise of eternal life on the principles of His righteousness; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's shed blood; by virtue of which faith His perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favour with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity (Acts 13:38-39; Romans 5:1, 9,17, 8:1; Titus 3:5-7; I Corinthians 1:30-31; I Timothy 4:8).

### **(G) Regeneration**

We believe, in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated or born again; that regeneration consists of giving a holy disposition to the mind; that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension, by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with the divine truth, so as to secure the voluntary obedience to the gospel; and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life (John 3:3,6-7; 2 Corinthians 5:17; I Peter 2:22-25; Ephesians 5:9; Galatians 5:16-23; I John 5:4,18).

### **(H) Repentance and Faith**

We believe repentance and faith to be sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God; whereby, being deeply convinced of our guilt and danger and helplessness, and of the way of Salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy at the same time receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as the only and all-sufficient Savior ( Acts 11:18; John 16:8-9; Romans 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:8).

## **(I) God's Purpose in Grace**

We believe election to be the eternal purpose of God, according to which He graciously regenerates, sanctifies and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility and love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of His free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the gospel; that it is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence (II Timothy 1:8-9, 2:10; II Thessalonians 2:13-14; Acts 5:14; Romans 9:23-24, 8:28-31; I Corinthians 9:22; I Thessalonians 1:4-10; II Peter 1:10-11; Philippians 3:12).

## **(J) Sanctification**

We believe in the sanctification of the believer and that it has two aspects, positional and progressive. Positional sanctification takes place the moment we are born again by receiving Jesus Christ as personal Savior. Progressive sanctification means the continual growth in grace after salvation so that more and more we conform to the image of Christ and His will for our lives. Our sanctification will never be complete until we get to Heaven (Hebrews 10:10; Philippians 3:11-15; I Thessalonians 4:3, 5:23; II Corinthians 3:18).

## **(K) Assurance**

We believe assurance to be the believer's full conviction that he is, through the work of Christ in redemption, in possession of a salvation in which he is and shall be eternally kept. This conviction rests on the Scripture alone - God's promises to them who believe in Jesus Christ as Savior (John 5:24, 10:27-29; Acts 13:38-39; Romans 8:29-34; Colossians 2:2; Hebrews 6:11, 10:22; Jude 1).

## **(L) The Visible Church**

We believe the Scriptural visible Church of Christ to be a congregation of baptized believers, associated together by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His word; that the Scriptural offices recognized by this church are Pastor and Deacon, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the epistles to Timothy and Titus (Acts 2:41-42; I Corinthians 11:2,23-34; II Corinthians 5:17; Matthew 28:20; Ephesians 4:7; Philippians 1:27; I Timothy 3; Titus 1).

## **(M) The Two Ordinances**

### 1. Baptism

We believe believer's baptism to be the immersion in water of a believer, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; to show forth in solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior, with its effects in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is a prerequisite to Church membership.

### 2. Lord's Supper

We believe the Lord's Supper to be a sacred memorial, given to the local Church for the edification of believers by the sacred use of the bread and the cup commemorating the death of Christ on behalf of sinners. The observance of this ordinance is to be preceded by solemn self-examination (Acts 2:41-42, 8:36-39, 10:47-48; Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12; I Corinthians 11:26).

## **(N) The Righteous and the Wicked**

We believe the righteous, those redeemed by the blood of Christ, whether Old or New Testament saints, have passed from death into life and shall be by the grace and mercy of God, preserved unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Righteous - John 5:24; Romans 8:1, 38, 39; Jude 24; Matthew 25:21; Revelation 20:4-6; I John 2:29. Wicked - I John 5:19; Galatians 3:10; John 3:36; Matthew 25:46; Revelation 20:11-15).

## **(O) The Resurrection of Believers**

We believe in the personal, visible, pre-millennial return of the Lord Jesus Christ to this earth; that He is coming as the King of kings and Lord of lords and that He will reign on this earth for 1000 years; that this advent of the Lord Jesus Christ will be preceded by His coming in the air to receive unto Himself His Church - all those who are members of His body; and that this coming for His saints will precede the Tribulation, and that this appearance for His saints will include all, whether alive or dead, who shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and be forever with the Lord (I Thessalonians 4:13-18, 5:9-10, 2:19; II Thessalonians 2:1; II Timothy 4:8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 10:37; I Peter 5:8; I John 3:2-3; Jude 24; Revelation 20:5-6).

## **(P) Civil Government**

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society and that authorities are to be prayed for, conscientiously honoured and obeyed, except only in those things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth (Romans 13:1-7; Matthew 22:21; I Timothy 2:1-3; I Peter 2:13; Acts 5:29; Revelation 19:16).

## **(Q) Creation**

We believe that God created the universe in six days. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, Theistic Evolution and any other unscriptural theory of origin (Genesis 1-2; Exodus 20:11).

## **(R) Human Sexuality**

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity should be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography is a sinful perversion of God's gift of sex (Genesis 2:24, 19:5, 13, 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; I Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4-6).

## **(S) Divorce and Remarriage**

We believe that God hates divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. (Malachi 2:14-17; Matthew 19:6).

## **(T) Giving**

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of the portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support his local church financially. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving. We further believe 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 the 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). The giving records of the church are sealed and will remain sealed unless voted upon by the church at a regular business meeting.

## **AUTHORITY OF THE DECLARATION OF FAITH**

The Declaration of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe.

## **CHURCH COVENANT**

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Savior, and on the profession of our faith having been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God, by voluntary consent and mutual agreement, 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 go forth testifying unto all people repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ declaring with all boldness the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:21, 27).

As strangers and pilgrims who have been separated unto God through Jesus Christ, we will abstain from all fleshly lusts that war against the soul (I Peter 2:11).

We will put away from us bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, and be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us (Ephesians 4:30-32).

As we have opportunity, we will do good unto all men, especially unto them that are of the household of faith (Galatians 6:10).

We will have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but will rather reprove them without compromise (Ephesians 5:11).

Concerning the faith, we will earnestly contend for that which was once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3).

We will bring our children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4).

We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is (Hebrews 10:25).

We will keep the ordinances as they were delivered unto us (I Corinthians 11:2). We will confess our faults one to another and pray for one another (James 5:16). We will remember them which have the rule over us, who speak unto us the Word of God, whose faith we will follow, considering the end of their conversation - even Jesus Christ (Hebrews 13:7).

We will give as God hath prospered us, not grudgingly, not of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver (II Corinthians 9:7).

And whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any praise, we will think on these things (Philippians 4:8).

And that whatsoever we do, we will do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord we will receive the reward of the inheritance, for we serve the Lord Christ (Colossians 3:23-24).

We moreover promise 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.

Now may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work, to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen (Hebrews 13:20-21).