



Statement of Beliefs

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Preamble:

We articulate this summary of belief in a spirit of humility and commitment to the Historic Christian Faith found in the Apostles¹ and Nicene Creeds², as well as contemporary statements of faith³ that are in accord with orthodoxy and the Bible.

Postures:

- Evangelical, but not exclusive
- Biblical, but not dogmatic
- Historically-Rooted, but not rigid
- Local-church focused, but not independent

Affirmations:

- We affirm the centrality of the word of God.
- We affirm the necessity of the new birth.
- We affirm a commitment to the whole mission of the church.
- We affirm the church as a fellowship of believers.
- We affirm a conscious dependence on the Holy Spirit.
- We affirm the reality of freedom in Christ.

Beliefs:

1. There is one, eternal God, Creator and Lord of the universe who, in the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, governs all things according to God's will and is accomplishing God's purpose in the world and in the church.
2. The Holy Scripture in its entirety is inspired by God's Spirit through human authors and constitutes the revelation of God's truth to humanity. It is wholly true and trustworthy in all that it affirms. Whatever the Bible, rightly interpreted, is found to teach, we are bound to believe and obey. It is our supreme authority in every matter of belief and conduct.
3. All human beings are created in God's own likeness and therefore have inherent value and equality before God. Human sin and guilt since the fall have rendered us subject to God's wrath and condemnation and have resulted in our alienation from God's life, suppression of God's truth and hostility to God's law. God's love desires all to come to repentance and to be reconciled.

¹ ccel.org/creeds/apostles.creed.html

² ccel.org/creeds/nicene.creed.html

³ Lausanne Covenant, BFM (1925, 1963, 2000), NAE Statement of Faith.

4. Salvation from the guilt, penalty and all other consequences of sin has been achieved solely through the work of Jesus Christ – his perfect obedience, substitutionary death, bodily resurrection and exaltation as Lord. Jesus alone is fully God and fully human, the only mediator between God and humanity. There is salvation through no other person, creed, process or power. Each sinner is justified before God and reconciled to God only by divine grace appropriated by faith alone.

5. We believe the Holy Spirit guides and instructs us in life. He fills all true believers at the moment of salvation. He lives in individuals, guides in the understanding of God's Word, and empowers God's church for life in this world. He empowers every believer with spiritual gifts so that every believer has a mission and purpose in His kingdom and in this world. All of the gifts of the Holy Spirit on display in the church of the New Testament are available today, are vital for the mission of the church, and are to be earnestly desired and practiced.

6. There is one, holy, universal and apostolic church, which is the Body of Christ, and to which all true believers belong. The church's calling is to worship God forever and to serve God's mission of reconciliation.

7. We believe in the priority of fellowshiping in the local church with other believers. The Church is not a physical building in which we gather but is the body of believers that live, work and serve together for the advancement of God's Purposes. This includes worship, celebration of the ordinances and sacraments, study of scripture, sacrificial living, gospel proclamation and pursuing biblical justice. Believers need each other as brothers and sisters in Christ.

8. We affirm that all people are created in the image of God and have eternal worth. The truth of the image of God in all people has often been deeply distorted by divisions between people along ethnic, racial, gender, socio-economic, and cultural lines. We reject any teaching or practice that upholds these distortions and perpetuates a doctrine of superiority within the body of Christ. We lament the ways scripture has been illegitimately used to cause harm and strive by the power of the Holy Spirit to pursue reconciliation with all people.

9. We affirm the wisdom and beauty of God's design in the creation narrative for our identity, relationships, and sexuality. We pursue with joy the pattern God has formed and repent of the ways we have often failed to live in accord with these teachings. We deeply lament how people made in the image of God have encountered isolation, fear, and dehumanizing rhetoric from the Church. We commit ourselves to creating communities full of grace that serve the good of our neighbors, city, and world.

10. We affirm that God created human beings in his image and that every human life from conception to death bears the image of God and has eternal worth. Therefore, we commit ourselves to a consistent ethic of life that safeguards the essential nature of human life at all stages, with a special concern to protect the lives of the most vulnerable.

11. As the Father sent the Son into the world, so the Lord Jesus Christ sends his church to participate in God's mission by words and works. The church is called: to make Christ known; to proclaim God's truth and the gospel of God's grace; to make disciples among all

nations; to exhibit God's character through compassionate care for the needy; to demonstrate the reality of God's kingdom through creative and sacrificial living, the community of love, the quest for righteousness, justice and peace, and the care of God's creation.

12. As the Lord Jesus ascended to his Father, so he will return personally, visibly and in glory. He will raise the dead and bring salvation and judgment to final completion. God will then fully establish his Kingdom and finish the new creation – a new heaven and a new earth from which all evil and evildoers, all suffering and death, will be excluded and in which God will be glorified forever.

13. As a church of baptized believers, we believe baptism and Holy Communion, also called the Lord's Supper, to be the ordinances and sacraments of the church. Christ commanded their practice to be visible signs of the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers. Baptism is the visible sign of a person coming into the covenant family of God. Holy Communion is a sign of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross and is celebrated often. While we affirm other sacramental acts, such as marriage and anointing, that are important in one's Christian life, these acts do not contribute to an individual's salvation or restoration before God.