

Essential Beliefs.

God.¹

We believe and celebrate that there is only one God who eternally exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We affirm the historic belief in the Trinity. God is the Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer of all things. In humility and awe we affirm wonder and mystery of God and His nature. He reveals Himself to be the living and only God infinite in love, wisdom, power and holiness, emanating glory and joy from His being. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are equal in nature, authority, and eternity.

Jesus Christ.²

We believe and celebrate that Jesus is the Christ (Chosen One) who is fully God and fully man. The Son has always existed, as all things were created through him. Jesus was born of the virgin Mary and is God the Son incarnate. Whereas Adam failed in representing humanity, Jesus lived the perfect and sinless life, making him the only one who could atone for our sins and redeem humanity. Jesus was crucified under Pontius Pilate and was resurrected by the power of the Holy Spirit three days later. Jesus has now ascended to be with the Father and our advocate in Heaven. Jesus is the King over all things and he will return to render final judgment. Jesus is our Lord, Savior, and Coming King.

Holy Spirit.³

We believe and celebrate that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity and is God's Spirit within, among, and at work in the lives God's people. The Holy Spirit draws people to salvation and when we respond in obedience to the gospel, the Spirit of God indwells us, makes us a new creation in Christ, and seeks to fill our whole being with His presence for worship, Christ-like character, freedom, power and gifts. We believe in the continuation of all the spiritual gifts, and we seek to exercise them with order, humility, and wisdom in accordance with the instructions found in Scripture. The Holy Spirit is our guarantee that we belong to God and will be raised with Christ and have eternal life.

¹ Genesis 1:26, Deuteronomy 6:4, Matthew 28:18-20, Galatians 3:20, 1 Timothy 2:5, 1 Peter 1:2.

² Luke 2:11, Acts 13:23, Romans 8:34, Romans 10:9, Colossians 3:1.

³ Isaiah 61, John 14:15-26, Acts 1:8, Romans 8:11, Romans 8:26-27, 1 Corinthians 12-14, Ephesian 4.

Scripture.⁴

We believe and celebrate that there are sixty-six books located in the Bible that collectively bring together our Holy Scriptures. The scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are a selection of His word in written form, inspired by the Holy Spirit. They are the only infallible guide for faith, life, and practice. They are to be interpreted according to their context and purpose. God continues to speak to his people through his Word.

Image of God.⁵

We believe that all humans are equally and uniquely created in the image of God. When sin, however, entered the human heart our image was distorted, though not destroyed. Being made in the image of God means that all people should be treated with dignity, respect, and love. Functionally, the image God in man implies that humanity is relational, vocational, volitional, rational, and creative. We should steward our responsibilities, resources, and gifts accordingly. Because of the Image of God in humanity, Christians should reject racism, hatred, injustice, abuse, assault, violence, etc. God created all of humanity in his image, and we should care for others as he has cared for us.

Salvation.⁶

We believe and celebrate that salvation is found in Christ alone and it is the free gift of God that must be received by faith alone. Scripture teaches that as a result of sin, all are totally lost in need of being found. In Scripture, sin is depicted as a sickness to be healed, separation between God and man in need of reconciliation, the source of death and destruction, and a debt that must be paid. Because of Christ's atoning work, Jesus heals our depravity; reconciles us back to God; gives us new eternal life and victory over death; and pays the debt of our sin. The blessings of Christ are reserved for those who confess Jesus to be their Lord and Savior and commit to a life of following him in the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. Those who refuse the invitation to salvation will be eternally separated from God.

⁴ 1 Thessalonians 2:13, 2 Timothy 3:15-17, 2 Peter 1:21.

⁵ Genesis 1:27-28, Luke 6:31, James 3:9.

⁶ Genesis 3, Isaiah 59:1-2, Romans 3:23, Colossians 3:5-6, Romans 10:13, Ephesians 2:18, Titus 3:5-7, 1 Timothy 2:4.

Kingdom of God.⁷

We believe and celebrate that the Kingdom of God has been brought close by the first coming of Jesus and will be brought into complete reality when he returns. The gospel of the Kingdom was a primary teaching for Jesus. The Kingdom of God exists wherever God's people are willingly living under the rule, reign, and sovereignty of God. God is sovereign over all, ruling over all, and reigning over all, but those who follow Jesus into his Kingdom will experience the wholeness, goodness, and life-giving nature of the Kingdom.

The Church.⁸

We believe and celebrate that the Church is the chosen people of God who are called to reach the lost, make disciples, and expand the Kingdom, globally and locally. The Church is made up of all believers in all cultures throughout time and across the earth who are empowered by the Holy Spirit for the purposes and mission of God. Scripture reveals the Church to be the body of believers whose Head is Christ; the bride whose bridegroom is Christ; the priesthood who are to perform the roles of proclamation, discipleship, service, and sacrament. Christ calls us to gather in local congregations to worship God, to grow in faith through His Spirit and word, and to foster unity in love and truth as we experience the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Return of Christ.⁹

We believe and celebrate that Jesus will return in a glorious manner to bring completion to redemptive history. In a way, salvation and new creation have already been inaugurated, but not yet consummated. At Christ's return, the Kingdom of God will be fully realized and every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord. This does not mean that all will be saved, but rather that all will recognize the reality of King Jesus. It will be the moment of great grace and joy for those who believe and the day of sorrow for those who refused him. The return involves the gathering of God's people and the resurrection of believers and non-believers alike for final judgement. At his return, all things will be made new.

⁷ Psalm 103:19, Daniel 2:44, Matthew 6, Mark 1:15, Acts 28:31.

⁸ Matthew 28:18-20, Romans 12:5, Ephesians 4:16, Ephesians 2:20-22.

⁹ Matthew 24, Philippians 3:20-21, Titus 2:11-13, Revelation 20:1-7.