

# *Declaration of Faith*

**THE HOLY SCRIPTURES:** We believe that the Bible, consisting only of the Old and New Testaments, inspired by the Holy Spirit, is inerrant in the original manuscripts. It alone is the infallible and authoritative Word of God for all matters of faith, conduct and doctrine. (2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

**GOD:** We believe in the triune God, Creator and Sovereign Lord of all that exists. He is infinite in His knowledge, presence, power and wisdom; perfect in love, holiness and justice. God is truly one, yet eternally self-existing in three distinct persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each person of the Godhead is equal in being, nature and power. (Matthew 28:19; Romans 11:33-36)

**THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST:** We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the promised Messiah of the Old Testament, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary at the appointed time. He is fully God and fully man without sin. He was crucified, dead, buried, and on the third day He rose bodily. The shedding of His blood is sufficient for the salvation of all mankind. Now He is seated at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for His people, and one day He will return bodily in power and great glory. (Matthew 1:18; Romans 8:33-34)

**THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:** We believe that the Holy Spirit is Himself God, the third person of the Trinity. He was sent into the world to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. At the moment of conversion, the Spirit regenerates believers, indwells them and baptizes them into the body of Christ. He is given as a guarantee of their full inheritance. He imparts gifts to each Christian, as He chooses, for the edification of the Church. He fills and empowers believers as they submit to Him. (John 16:8-11; 2 Corinthians 12:1-13)

**HUMAN NATURE:** We believe Adam and Eve were created by a direct act of God in His own image. When they disobeyed God, they were judged and punished with physical and spiritual death. As descendants of Adam, all human beings inherit this sinful condition and its consequences, are guilty before God and are totally unable to approach God or to be reconciled to Him on their own merit. (Genesis 1:27; Romans 5:12)

**SALVATION:** We believe that salvation, found in Christ alone, provides forgiveness of sin and reconciliation to God. It was purchased by the sufficient substitutionary sacrifice of Christ on the cross. It is offered by grace to all people and must be personally received by repentance and faith as God's gift, apart from any human effort. In salvation, all believers receive the righteousness of Christ and eternal life. True believers persevere. Their lives are to be characterized by spiritual growth. (John 3:16-21; Ephesians 2:8-10)

**THE CHURCH:** We believe the church is more than a building or a worship service. The New Testament affirms that the church is the community of all true believers in Christ for all time. Therefore, the church is both local and universal in that God's people at any level, from local to universal, are rightly considered the church. Both the local church and the church universal are committed to the same purpose: To worship God, encourage and equip believers for mature faith, and make disciples of all nations. Grace Church, then, is committed to "equipping people to worship God as a community on mission." (Matthew 28:19; Ephesians 5:25; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 12:28-13:3)

**MARRIAGE:** Marriage is a unique gift of God illustrating the union between Christ and His church. We believe that God's exclusive model for marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime of godliness and fidelity. Marriage provides the framework for intimate companionship, sexual expression according to biblical standards, the means for procreation, and is God's foundation for the family (Genesis 1:27-28; 2:18-25; Proverbs 5:15-22; Song of Solomon; Matthew 19:4-6; Ephesians 5:25-33).

**ANGELS:** We believe in the reality of the fallen angel, Satan, a created being who rebelled and chose to be the enemy of God and mankind. Satan has a host of demons, that are also fallen angels, to do his work. Although powerful in this age, Satan and his angels are doomed by the sacrificial death of Christ. More numerous are the angels of God that serve Him to accomplish His work and worship Him. (Isaiah 14:12-15; Hebrews 1:14)

**FUTURE EVENTS:** We believe in the visible and personal return of Jesus Christ in order to culminate history. At the appointed time, the dead shall be raised and all mankind shall appear before the Lord to give an account. Believers in Christ will be transformed and enjoy everlasting life in the presence of their Lord. Unbelievers will be condemned to everlasting, conscious punishment forever separated from God. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9)

**ORDINANCES:** We believe in a believer's baptism by immersion, as a symbol of entrance into the body of Christ. It is a public declaration of one's faith. We believe that Communion is a symbolic celebration and remembrance of our Lord's work of salvation. It is an act of worship that sustains one's faith. (Romans 6:1-6; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)