



# **Statement of Faith**

Effective 1/1/2021

Grace Church operates and functions under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

The basic doctrines within the Church Statement of Faith represent what we believe to be core elements of biblical teaching. We expect all members of Grace Church to hold to and affirm these doctrines.

We do not expect all members to embrace all aspects of these doctrines, but members should expect that the doctrines will be maintained by Grace Church, and members may not teach contrary to them.

### **Doctrine of God**

We believe in one God existing as one and three distinct persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, each of whom is fully God, yet there is one God.

Each person has the same nature and attributes and is worthy of the same worship, honor and praise. The entire Christian faith is bound together with the confession of God's Trinitarian nature (Matt. 28:18-20).

We believe in God the Father, the Creator of heaven and earth. We believe in the Son, God from God, eternally begotten but not made, who taking on a human nature for the sake of our salvation (John 1:14; Heb. 1:3). He is fully God and fully man. 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 (Col.1:15-20). He suffered, died, was buried, resurrected, ascended and sits at the right hand of the Father until He returns for the final judgment and consummation of the Kingdom. We believe in the Holy Spirit who eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son and is sent by the Father and Son to give new life (John 15:26-27). The Holy Spirit unites believers to Jesus Christ in faith, brings about the new birth and dwells within the believer (Eph. 1:13-14). The Holy Spirit has come to glorify the Son who, in turn, came to glorify the Father. He will lead the Church into understanding and application of the truth of God's Word. He is to be respected, honored and worshiped as God, the third person of the Trinity.

The triune God, Father, Son and Spirit, is the Creator of all things, visible and invisible. As the immortal and eternal Creator, He sovereignly rules over all of His creation (Ps. 24:1).

### **Doctrine of Revelation**

God has made Himself known to the world in Jesus Christ, the Scriptures and creation.

We believe that God has made Himself known to His creation. He has revealed Himself to us in His Son, the incarnate Word (Heb.1:1-2), in Scripture, the inspired Word (2 Tim. 3:16), and in creation (Ps. 8; Rom. 1:20)

We believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the perfect revelation of who God is. Jesus Christ is the "image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15), "the exact imprint of his nature" (Heb. 1:3) and a perfect reflection of God the Father (John 5:19).

We believe the Scriptures, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, are the inspired Word of God and are therefore without error. These writings alone constitute the verbally inspired Word of God, which is utterly authoritative and free from error. The Scripture is sufficient for all that God requires for us to believe and do and is therefore to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it teaches; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; and trusted, as God's pledge, in all that it promises (Is. 40:6-8).

As God's people hear, believe and obey the Word, they are equipped as disciples of Christ and witnesses to the gospel (Rom. 10:14-17).

### **Doctrine of Creation and Providence**

We believe that God created the world from nothing and governs all things at all times in all places.

God created the whole world from nothing (Gen. 1:1-2; Ps. 24:1). God's creative work is the overflow of the love present within the Trinitarian fellowship. Creation, according to the design of God, was good (Gen. 1:3-31).

### **Doctrine of Humanity**

We believe that all humanity is created in the image of God.

God made humanity—male and female—in His own image (Gen. 1:27-30). Set apart as His image bearers, every human being is sacred. All men and all women, bearing the image of God, are meant to represent God in His creation (1 Cor. 10:31). God declares the created order to be very good, distinguishing men and women as His agents to care for, manage and govern over it. They enjoy equal access to God by faith in Christ Jesus. Adam and Eve were made to complement each other in union in the covenant of marriage that establishes the only God-ordained pattern of sexual relations for men and women.

### **Doctrine of Sin**

We believe that sin has fractured all things, leaving the world in need of salvation.

Through the temptation of Satan, humanity transgressed the command of God and fell from their original holiness and righteousness (Gen. 3). Now the entire human race inherits a nature that is opposed to God and His law (Rom. 3:9-20). Therefore, all humans are under condemnation. It extends to the mind, will, body and affections. Unregenerate humanity lives under the dominion of sin and Satan (Eph. 2:1-3). He is at enmity with God, hostile toward and hateful of God.

### **Doctrine of Salvation**

We believe that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

We believe that, due to universal death through sin, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless born again (John 3:5-8); that salvation is only by grace through faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ; and that all who receive the Lord Jesus Christ through faith are declared righteous by God and become children of God (Heb.10:19-25).

We believe the Scriptures teach that the new birth, is that act of God by which the Holy Spirit imparts a new nature and a new spiritual life, and the person becomes a new creation in Christ Jesus (Gal. 2:20).

### **Doctrine of the Church**

We believe that the Church is the body of Christ sent into the world for the glory of God.

God, by His Word and Spirit, creates the Church, calling sinful humanity into the fellowship of Christ's body (1 Cor. 12:12-31). By the same Word and Spirit, He guides and preserves that newly redeemed

humanity. The Church is made up of those who have become genuine followers of Jesus Christ. The Church exists to worship and glorify God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The ministry of the Church is an extension of the ministry of Jesus in the power of the Spirit.

The mission of the Church is to bring glory to God by making disciples (Matt. 28:18-20). The Church is called to make disciples through worship, prayer, teaching of the Word, observance of the ordinances, fellowship, the exercise of our gifts and talents, and the proclamation of the gospel both in our community and throughout the world.

We believe there are two ordinances of the Church: The believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Water baptism is only intended for those who have received the saving grace of Christ through the new birth of the Holy Spirit. In obedience to Christ's command and as a testimony to God, the Church, and the world, believers are baptized by water. 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 a former way of life has been put to death and depicts the release from Satan, sin and death.

The Lord's Supper is an ordinance that symbolizes the breaking of Christ's body and the shedding of His blood on our behalf and is to be observed throughout the Christian life as a sign of continued participation in the atoning sacrifice of Christ's death. As we come to the table 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 each other.

### **Baptism by Immersion**

The precedent we find in the New Testament is baptism following conversion by immersion into water. Baptism by immersion is meant to symbolically depict the believer's real union to Christ in His death and resurrection (Rom. 6:1-14).

### **Doctrine of Resurrection and The Kingdom of God**

We believe that Jesus Christ is returning to the world in the future to judge the living and the dead.

The consummation of all things includes the future, physical, visible, personal and glorious return of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead and the glorification 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 hosts and all those outside Christ, is finally separated from the presence of God, enduring eternal punishment (Rev. 20:7-15), but the righteous, in glorious bodies, will live and reign with Him forever, serving Him and giving Him unending praise and glory. Then the expectation of creation will be fulfilled, and the whole earth shall proclaim the glory of God, who makes all things new (Rev. 21:1-5).