

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE II-A – ARTICLES OF BELIEF

Based on the Baptist Faith and Message, c2000

As Baptists, we recognize and declare that the sole authority for faith and practice is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We affirm our liberty in Christ and our accountability to each other under the Word of God. We honor the principles of soul competency and the priesthood of believers to understand Scripture as led by God through the Holy Spirit.

GOD

We believe in the one and only, living and true God, who is spirit, holy, and perfect. He only is worthy of our love, praise, worship, and obedience. God exists eternally, is ever present, and has revealed Himself in three Persons – the blessed Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each has distinct personal attributes, but without any division of nature, essence, perfection, or being. God the Father is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise.

(Genesis 1:1-31; Exodus 3:14-15; 6:2-3; 20:1-7; Deuteronomy 6:4-6; Psalms 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 1:9-11; John 1:1-18; 4:24; Acts 2:1-4; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 1:1-3; Revelation 1:8)

JESUS

We believe that Jesus Christ is God's Son. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, fully God and fully man. He lived a sinless life. He explained God to men, fulfilled prophecy, and became the Redeemer of our lost world. He was crucified for our sins. He rose from the grave with a glorified body, ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God as our Savior and Mediator. And we believe He is coming again to complete His redemptive mission for His church of believers.

(Isaiah 7:14; 53:1-12; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 11:27; 16:16; 17:5; Mark 1:1; Luke 1:26-35; 22:70; 24:45-47; John 1:1-18,29; 3:16; 10:30,38; 12:44-50; 14:1-13; 16:28; 17:1-5; 20:1-30; Acts 1:9; Romans 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 10:4; 8:6; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 9:24-28; 13:8; 1 John 4:14-15; Revelation 5:1-7)

HOLY SPIRIT

We believe the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. The Holy Spirit inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. He came at Pentecost to anoint Christ's disciples with power to preach the Good News. The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin, calls us to the Savior, and baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and Kingdom service. He exists in every Christian to comfort us and enables us to communicate with God to understand and apply the truth of Scripture. We believe the thoughts, feelings, and actions of Christians become more like Christ as we continue to be in the presence of God through the power of the Holy Spirit.

(Genesis 1:2; Isaiah 61:1; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16-17; 4:1; 12:31-32; 28:19-20; Mark 1:10-11; 13:11; Luke 1:35; 4:1,17-19; 11:13; 12:11-12; 24:39; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,16-21,38; 4:31; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44-45; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:14; Hebrews 9:14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 22:17)

AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE

We believe the Holy Bible is the perfectly inspired Word of God and is without error. It is the final authority in all matters of belief and behavior. We believe the Bible is God's special revelation of Himself to us and a testimony to Christ. It provides inspiration as well as instructions for the Christian life. It is the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tested.

(Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; Joshua 8:34-35; Psalms 19:7-10; Isaiah 40:8; Jeremiah 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Mark 12:26; Luke 21:33; 24:27,44-46; John 5:39; 17:17; Acts 17:2-3,11; 18:28; 26:22-23; 28:23; Romans 14:4; 16:25-26; 1 Corinthians 10:11; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1: 19-21).

SALVATION

We believe that God created us - male and female - in His own image, designing us for fellowship with Him and with freedom of choice for that purpose. Sin is transgression against God, instigated by Satan to break that fellowship. Because of Adam, sin has become part of our nature and separates us from God. When we become capable of moral action and choose to remain separate from God through sin, we fall under condemnation of universal, eternal death. By God's great love and grace, redemption has been accomplished solely by the sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ on the cross for us. The only way to restore our brokenness caused by sin is by being born again through our repentance and our faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and no one comes to God the Father except through Jesus the Son. Nothing can be added to believing in Jesus Christ as a condition of salvation. At times believers may fall into sin, which grieves the Spirit and brings reproach on the cause of Christ. Such times require genuine confession and repentance, but the power of God through faith keeps us in the state of grace and salvation.

(Genesis 1:26-28; 3:1-24; Exodus 19:5-8; Leviticus 17:11; Psalms 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:1-17; Isaiah 6:5; 4:6; Jeremiah 17:5; 31:31-34; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; 26:28; 27:22-28:7; Luke 1:68-79; 2:28-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:10-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24-25; 6:29,44-45,65; 10:9,27-30; 14:6; 15:1-6,16; 17:6,12,17-19; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:26-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-23; 3:10-18,22-26; 4:3,5; 5:6-10,18-19; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:4,9-10,12-13; 11:5-6,26-36; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2,18-24,30; 6:19-20;15:10,24-26; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Galatians 2:20; 3:13,22; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-22; 3:1-12; Philippians 3:7-9; Colossians 1:12-14,19-22; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Titus 2:11-14; 3:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:6; James 1:12,18; 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:6-2:11; 3:2; Revelation 3:20)

BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances by which believers symbolically demonstrate their faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to Him. The ordinance of baptism, following Jesus' example, is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It symbolizes the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Baptized believers partake in the ordinance of the Lord's Supper consisting of the bread and the fruit of the vine to memorialize the death of Christ Jesus our Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

(Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:22; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12)

AUTONOMY OF THE CHURCH

We believe that a New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel. The congregation regularly observes the two ordinances of Christ and is governed by His laws. Believers are urged to exercise the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word and are commanded to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes in which each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord.

(Matthew 16:15-19; Acts 2:41-47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-31; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3)

EVERY MEMBER MINISTRY

We believe God cares about the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of every person. Further, we believe that every member of this church is called to minister. We believe that divine, enabling gifts for service are bestowed by the Spirit upon all who are saved. While there is a diversity of gifts, each believer is energized by the same Spirit and each is called to his own divinely appointed service. Therefore, we will develop lay leaders who will function effectively in their respective roles of service and, in turn, train and mentor other believers for ministry. Moreover, we believe some are called to be evangelists, pastors, and teachers, and that these will be sustained and encouraged in their service for God.

(Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 9:18-27; 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Timothy 4:12)

STEWARDSHIP

We believe that biblical stewardship involves the proper management of all that God has given us...time, money, abilities, and material possessions to expand His kingdom. Therefore, we encourage every member to adopt a lifestyle of stewardship that recognizes God's ownership of everything and to practice the biblical principle of tithing (giving at least one-tenth of one's income) to support the work of the church.

(Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12:1-31; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians:8-9; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 4:10)

FAMILY

We believe that the family is God's foundational institution for human society. We believe in the sanctity of life, with the gift of gender at conception being part of the goodness of God's creation. Therefore, we believe that God ordained marriage to be a lifelong commitment between one man and one woman. We support the ongoing spiritual nurture of the family, and we are committed to honoring the priority of family time through our ministries and activities.

(Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-25; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; Psalms 78:1-8; 127:1-5; 128:1-6; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8-9; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6; 24:3; 29:17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-6; 19:5-6; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:22-6:4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7)

PRAYER

We believe that prayer is the privilege and responsibility of every Christian. We pray in faith, believing that God will answer our prayers according to His will. God unleashes His power and leading in the lives of those who spend time in prayer. We are encouraged to pray for those in authority over us in our family, the church, and in government. Therefore, we will intentionally seek to set aside specific times for private, family, and corporate prayer.

(1 Samuel 12:23; Psalms 88:2; 102:17; 109:4; Matthew 5:44; 6:5-13; 17:20-21; 26:41; Mark 5:25-34; 6:46; 7:24-30; Luke 6:12; 11:1-4; 18:1; 22:44; 17:1-10; Acts 6:4; Romans 8:26; 12:12; 1 Corinthians 14:15; Ephesians 6:18; Philippians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18,25; 1 Timothy 2:1-3,8; James 5:13-16; 1 Peter 3:12; 1 John 5:16).

WORSHIP

We believe that we are created by God to worship Him, and that glorifying God is the ultimate reason for our existence. Therefore, we will seek to praise and worship Him passionately - as individuals, as families, and as a local church.

(Genesis 22:5; Exodus 20:1-11; Psalms 9:1-2; 95:6-7; 100:1-5; 122:1; 149:1-9; 150:1-6; Mark 2:27-28; John 4:21-24; Acts 17:23; 20:7; 24:14-15; Revelation 14:7)

MISSIONS

We believe that every person is important to God, that God desires a personal relationship with every individual, and that He has entrusted us with the message of salvation. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. Therefore, as individuals and collectively as the church, we will endeavor to share the message of salvation with all people both locally and throughout the world.

(Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:36-38; 10:5-15; 13:8-30,37-43;16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 10:1-12; 24:45-49; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15-18; Acts 1:8; 2:1-11; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Ephesians 3:1-12; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17)