DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

## THE HOLY SCRIPTURES:

We believe the Holy Scriptures, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, to be the verbally inspired Word of God, the complete and final authority for faith and life, inerrant in the original writings, infallible and God-breathed. We believe that the bible is the only rule of faith and practice. (Matt. 5:18; John 16:12-13; John 17:17; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Pet. 1:20-21)

## THE GODHEAD:

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections, each equally deserving worship. (Deut. 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; Matt. 3:16-17; Matt. 28:19; John 4:24; Acts 7:55-56; 1 Cor. 8:4; 2 Cor. 13:14)

## THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE FATHER:

We believe that God the Father:

Is the Creator of all things. He is the absolute and omnipotent Ruler of the universe who orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace. (Gen. 1: Psalm 145:8-9; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 3:9)

Is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption. In His sovereignty, He is neither author nor approver of sin, nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures, nor does He interfere with the ability of man to choose. (Joshua 24:15; Psalm 103:19; Hab. 1:13a; John 3:16; Romans 11:36; 1 Pet. 1:17; 1 John 1:5)

## THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST:

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ:

Is the eternal Son of God, God incarnate, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men. (Matt. 1:23; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2,14)

Accomplished our redemption through His death by the shedding of His blood on the Cross as a voluntary representative, a vicarious, propitiatory, and substitutionary sacrifice. Our justification is made secure by His death and His literal, physical Resurrection guarantees a future resurrection life for all believers. (Romans 1:4; 3:24-25; 4:25; 5:8-10; 1 Cor. 15:20,23; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:3-5; 2:24)

Ascended to heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate. (Acts 1:9-10; Romans 8:33-34; Heb. 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1-2)

## THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:

We believe that the Holy Spirit:

Is the third person of the Trinity. He convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He is the active Agent in regeneration. He baptizes all believers into the body of Christ. He indwells and seals them unto the day of redemption. (John 14:16-17; 16:8-11; Romans 8:9-16; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:13-14)

Is the Divine Teacher who, through His Word, guides believers into all truth, sanctifying, instructing and empowering them for service. (John 14:25-26; 16:13; Acts 1:8; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:2; 1 John 2:20,27)

## THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN:

We believe that man was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness. As a result of Adam’s sin, all mankind inherited a sinful nature and became alienated from God, incurring the penalty of spiritual and physical death. Thus, man is totally depraved, and utterly incapable to remedy his lost condition, sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration. (Gen.1:26-27; 2:7; 3:1-19; Psalm 14:1-3; Jer. 17:9; Romans 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Eph. 2:1-3,12; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11)

## SALVATION:

We believe:

That the gift of salvation is wholly of God by grace through faith. It is received by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ (which involves repentance) and is based on the merit of His shed blood which purchased our redemption. It is not on-the-basis of human merit or works. We believe every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God through justification (declared to be holy). (John 1:12; 3:16,18,36; Acts 16:31; Romans 10:9-10; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; 1 John 5:11-13; 2 Pet. 3:9)

That at salvation every believer is sanctified unto God by justification, declared to be holy and is identified as a saint. This sanctification is positional and instantaneous and has to do with the believer’s standing, not his present walk or condition. It should not be confused with progressive sanctification. (Romans 5:9-12; 8:1; 1 Cor. 1:2; 6:11; 2 Thess. 2:13; Heb. 10:10,14)

We also believe in progressive sanctification wherein the believer is brought closer to the standing he positionally enjoys. Through obedience to the Word of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (Rom. 6; 2 Cor. 3:18; 2 Pet. 1:4-8; 1 John 1:5-9)

## THE ETERNAL SECURITY AND ASSURANCE OF BELIEVERS:

We believe that all redeemed, once saved, are kept by God’s power and are thus secure in Christ forever. (John 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; 17:12; Romans 8:1,31-39; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30; Heb. 7:25; 13:5; 1 Pet. 1:3-5)

## SEPARATION:

We believe that all believers should live in such a manner as to not bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord. Separation from all religious apostasy, sinful worldly pleasures, practices and associations is commanded by God. God’s Word clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to sin. (Romans 12:1-2; 13:13-14; 14:13; 1 Cor. 5:9-13; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; Gal. 5:13; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Titus 2:11-15; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11)

## THE TWO NATURES OF THE BELIEVER:

We believe that every saved person possesses two natures, with provision made for victory of the new nature over the old nature through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit; and, that all claims to the eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural. (Romans 6:11-14; 7:14-25; 8:12-13; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:5-10; 1 Pet. 1:14-16)

## MISSIONS:

We believe that all believers are obligated to advance and communicate the Gospel to the entire world. (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 15:1-4; 2 Cor. 5:19-20) (See also Missions Policy under By-Laws.)

## THE MINISTRY AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS:

We believe that to accomplish God’s purposes in the world He has given the Church spiritual gifts.

We believe God is sovereign in the bestowment of all these gifts and that every believer has been given one or more gifts.

We believe two types of gifts were given: temporary and permanent ministering gifts. Temporary gifts were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers today. These temporary gifts: speaking in tongues, divine revelation, healing, and the working of sign miracles, gradually ceased as the apostolic era ended and the New Testament Scriptures were completed, their divine authority having been established. Scripture is the sole test of the authenticity of a man or his message. Miraculous gifts are counterfeited by Satan so as to deceive even believers.

We believe the permanent gifts were given to evangelize the world, build the church and equip the saints for the purpose of edification. It is the privilege and responsibility of all believers to minister according to the gifts of God that are given to them. (Matt. 24:24; Mark 13:22; Romans 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12-14; 2 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:7-16; 1 Peter 4:10-11; Heb. 2:3-4; Rev. 12:9; 13:13-14)

## THE CHURCH:

We believe:

That the Church, which is the body and the bride of Christ, is a spiritual organism made up of all born-again persons of this present age, which began on the day of Pentecost and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the Rapture. (1 Cor. 12:12-13; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:15; 5:25-27; Col. 1:18; Rev. 19:7-9)

That the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures. (Acts 2:41-47; Acts 9:31; Eph. 2:19-22; Phil 1:1; 1 Thess. 1:1)

That it is the responsibility of every believer to attend, support and fellowship in the local church. (1 Cor. 16:2; Heb. 3:13; 10:23-25)

We also believe in the autonomy of the local church, which is free of any external authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; 5:4-7,12,13; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Titus 2:15)

Two ordinances have been given to the church; Baptism and the Lord’s Supper:

Christian baptism by immersion is the solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer showing forth his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life. It is a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible Body of Christ and not a means of salvation. (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 2:38-41; 8:36-39; Romans 1:16; 6:1-11; 1 Cor. 1:10-17)

The Lord’s Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes and should always be preceded by solemn self-examination. We believe that the elements of communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ and are not a means of salvation. (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11:28-32; 10:16-17)

## DISPENSATIONALISM

We believe that dispensationalist is simply one who recognizes that God deals differently with people in different ages. We believe that the Scriptures reveal divinely determined dispensations which define man’s responsibilities in those successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. (John 1:17; 2 Cor. 3:9-18; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph. 1:10; 3:2-10; Col 1:24-27; Heb. 1:1-2; Rev. 20:2-6)

## THE PERSONALITY OF SATAN:

We believe that Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator, taking numerous angels with him in his fall. He introduced sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve. He is the open and declared enemy of God and man. He was defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and shall be eternally punished in the Lake of fire. (Gen. 3:15; Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-21; Eze. 28:11-19; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Rev. 20:10)

## THE SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST:

WE BELIEVE IN THAT “Blessed Hope,” the personal, imminent, pretribulational and premillennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His redeemed ones; and in His subsequent return to earth, with His saints, to establish His Millennial Kingdom. (Zech. 14:4-11; 1 Thess. 1:10; 4:13-18; 5:9; Rev. 3:10; 19:11-16)

## THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH:

We believe in the personal, imminent, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ, before the seven-year tribulation period, to remove His Church from this earth. Between this event and His glorious return with His saints, He will reward believers according to their works. (John 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 3:11-15; 15:51-53; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Thess. 4:14-5:11; Titus 2:13; Rev. 3:10)

## THE TRIBULATION PERIOD:

We believe that immediately following the removal of the Church from the earth, the righteous judgments of God will be poured out upon an unbelieving world, and these judgments will be climaxed by the return of Christ in glory to the earth. (Dan. 9:26-27; 12:1; Matt. 24:27-31; 25:31-46; John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Thess. 2:7-12; Rev. 16:1ff)

## THE SECOND COMING AND THE MILLENNIAL REIGN:

We believe that after the tribulation period, Christ will come to earth with His saints to occupy the throne of David and establish His Messianic Kingdom for a thousand years on the earth. This reign will be preceded by the overthrow of the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and by the removal of Satan from the world. It will be a time of harmony, justice, peace, righteousness, and long life. (Isaiah 11; 65:17-25; Eze. 36:33-38; 37:21-28; Dan. 7:17-27; Matt. 25:31; Luke 1:31-33; Rev. 19:11-16; 20:1-7)

## THE ETERNAL STATE:

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men. The saved are resurrected to eternal life. The souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul, and body are reunited and changed to dwell forever with the Lord. (Matt. 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; 11:25-26; 1 Cor. 15:12-56; 2 Cor. 5:8-10; Phil. 1:23; 3:20-21; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 20:4-6; 21:4)

We believe that the unsaved are resurrected to judgment and everlasting punishment. The souls of the unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious misery until the Second Resurrection, when with soul and body re-united they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment. (Matt. 2:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thess. 1:6-9; Jude 6-7; Rev. 20:11-15; 21:8)