

## Statement of Faith

### I. The Holy Trinity

We believe in the one triune God, self-existent and everlasting, both holy and loving in nature, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the Creator, Sustainer, and Ruler of all things. God exists in three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—each eternal in being, equal in power and glory, and identical in essence.

### II. God the Father

We believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth—from whom, through whom, and to whom are all things. He is all powerful, all knowing, and all wise. In love, He both seeks and receives sinners, adopting as His children all who repent of their sin and trust in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.

### III. God the Son, Jesus Christ

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal and only begotten Son of God, became man without ever ceasing to be God; He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and lived a sinless life. He died on the cross to be the one sufficient sacrifice for sin and to reconcile mankind to God. He was buried, rose bodily the third day from the grave, and ascended into Heaven, where He is enthroned at God's right hand. He intercedes for us.

### IV. The Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, truly and eternally God. As the third Person of the Trinity, he continually glorifies Jesus Christ, convicts of sin, righteousness, and judgment to come, regenerates all who repent and trust in Christ for salvation, sanctifies and indwells believers, and guides into all truth. He is ever present, assuring, preserving, guiding, and empowering the believer for godly living and service.

### V. The Holy Scriptures

We believe that the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments constitute the Holy Scriptures and are the written Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and therefore inerrant in the original writings, and have been transmitted to the present without corruption of any essential doctrine. They contain all that is necessary for our salvation and are the supreme authority for faith and practice.

### VI. Humanity

Humanity is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning humans were innocent of sin and were endowed by their Creator with the ability to choose between right and wrong. By their free choice Adam and Eve sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. As a result of Adam's fall and the consequent corruption of human nature, mankind is unable to choose right apart from God's grace. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human

personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race, stage of development, and level of ability possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

#### VII. Salvation

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and freely received through faith and not by our own works. God graciously justifies, regenerates all who repent of their sins and believe on Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and seals them as His own with the Holy Spirit.

#### VIII. Good Works

We believe good works are the necessary fruit of faith and follow salvation but cannot save us from our sins or prevent divine judgment. They are pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, adorn the doctrine of God, and by them a living faith may be evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit.

#### IX. The Church

We believe that the Church universal is composed of the entire body of believers in Jesus Christ, who is its founder and only Head, in Whom it is being built into a holy dwelling place of God by the Spirit. The mission of the Church is to make Christlike disciples of all nations through the proclamation of the Word of God, the administration of the sacraments, the exercise of the Spirit's gifts, and obedience to all that Christ commands.

A local church is a body of believers who agree to be governed by Scripture and to meet together regularly for the purposes of worship, mutual edification, discipleship, fellowship, evangelism, and good works.

#### X. The Resurrection of the Dead

We believe in the resurrection of all mankind at which time the body and soul will be reunited. The resurrection of the just is unto everlasting life; the resurrection of the wicked is unto everlasting judgment. The bodily resurrection of Jesus is a miracle of supreme importance and foundational to our faith.

#### XI. Love

We believe that the two great commandments which require us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and our neighbor as ourselves contain the sum of the divine law as it is revealed in Scripture. We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward both those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. We believe that the Scripture not only prohibits lying and the taking of God's name in vain, but also uncharitable conversation, gossip, backbiting, and malicious speech.

#### XII. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We

should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love.

#### XIII. Human Life

All human life is created by God in His image and is, therefore, sacred, possessing dignity, and to be nurtured, supported, and protected. The sanctity and dignity of human life demands respect for all human life from conception to natural death, especially in its most vulnerable stages and conditions.

#### XIV. Human Sexuality

We believe that God has given to us the gift of sexuality to be exercised only within the boundaries of covenanted, monogamous, heterosexual marriage. Sexual relationships outside of marriage and sexual relationships between persons of the same sex are immoral and sinful. Thus, we condemn homosexuality, lesbianism, pederasty, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, pedophilia, fornication, adultery, pornography, and other forms of licentiousness as sinful perversions of the divine gift of sexuality. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender. We believe that gender identity should match one's biological sex.

Sources: Most of the material in this statement of faith was taken directly from or condensed from the 2014 *Discipline of the Bible Methodist Connection of Churches*. Additional content was borrowed and adapted from the "Report of the Baptist Faith and Message Study Committee to the Southern Baptist Convention June 14, 2000."