



FOREST PARK CHURCH

STATEMENT OF
FAITH

1. The Scriptures

We affirm that the Bible, both Old and New Testaments (66 books), was written by men divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit and is God's revelation of Himself to man. Scripture is therefore inerrant in the originals and authoritative in all manners. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us and will remain to the end of the world. All Scripture is a testimony of Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation. It is to be understood by all through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, its meaning determined by the historical, grammatical and literary use of the author's language, comparing scripture with scripture.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 10:35; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 3:21; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

2. The True God

We believe that there is only one living and true God and infinite spirit. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude towards all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; 83:18; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

B. God the Son

Jesus Christ is the infinite God-Man and the only begotten Son of God. Prior to His birth, He was with the Father and He is the Creator of all things. Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross with His own blood, He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He now intercedes for His own as their great High Priest. He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, who brought reconciliation between God and man. Jesus Christ shall return personally, bodily, and pre-millennially. He shall establish a universal kingdom of righteousness

and peace on this earth.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:3,7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9-11; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2-5; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God fully divine. He was active in creation. He inspired men to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. At conversion He regenerates, indwells, seals and baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. By the Scriptures, He conforms the believer increasingly to the image of Christ and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 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; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

3. The Creation and the fall of Man

We accept the Genesis account of creation. We believe man 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. To deny one's biological gender is to deny God's creation and purpose for our lives. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. In consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not only by constraint, but by choice, being utterly void of the holiness required by the law of God positively inclined to evil and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin without defense or excuse. 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 possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12-19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19, 21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

4. The Devil or Satan

Satan is a person, a fallen angel, who with other angelic beings rebelled against God and was cast out of Heaven. He is the accuser of the saints and his destiny is the Lake of Fire.

Isaiah 14:12-17; Revelation 20:10

5. Salvation

A. Atonement for Sin

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace through the bloodshed of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who by the appointment of the Father freely took upon him our nature, yet without sin honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins. His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was a voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the just dying for the unjust. Christ, the Lord bearing our sin in His own body on the cross, that having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven, preparing a place for those who have put their trust in Him.

Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 6:1-23; 8:1-18; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:7; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 1 Peter 2:22-24; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

B. Regeneration

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated or born again. Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; John 3:3; 1 Corinthians 1:18, 30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 6:15; Ephesians 2:8-22; Titus 3:5; 1 John 1:6.

C. Sanctification

Sanctification is both instantaneous at salvation and progressive throughout the believer's life. Positionally, the believer is sanctified in Christ. Practically, the believer is being sanctified by the Spirit. Sanctification is a continuing work of grace not involving the eradication of the old nature, but rather revealing in the believer the growth of the new life in Christ and being set apart for service.

John 17:17; Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; Hebrews 10:10; 12:14.

D. Justification

We believe that the Gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is justified. Justification includes that pardon of sin and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness, that it is

bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood.

Romans 3:23-25; 4:25.; 5:1-10, 16-18; 8:29-39; 10:9-10; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23.

6. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility. All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

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

7. The Local Church

We believe that a New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of born again baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; organized by New Testament principles, assembling regularly together, led by qualified pastors who are supported by qualified deacons, under the discipline of God's Word, the oversight of qualified elders, and the headship of Christ, observing the ordinances, with the purpose of expressing praise and glory to God by evangelizing the lost and equipping the saved. It is scriptural for New Testament churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel, and that each local church is the sole judge in the measure and method of its cooperation on all matter of membership, policy, government, discipline and benevolence.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; 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; Jude 3; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

8. Ordinances

A. Believer's Baptism

We believe that baptism is an act of obedience to Christ and is demonstrated by immersion in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, 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 his faith in the final resurrection of the dead.

Matthew 3:13-17; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 16:16; Luke 3:21-22; John 3:23; Acts 2:41; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12

B. The Lord's Supper

We believe that the Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby believers, through partaking of the bread and the cup, remembers the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming. The Lord's Supper is to be preceded by self examination and self determined participations.

Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 21; 11:23-29.

9. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22

10. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

11. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage

the framework for intimate companionship, the only channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.