

Statement of Faith and Church Membership Covenant



WAYSIDE
CHAPEL

Growing in grace



Statement of Faith

This Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the following Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and is, therefore, a unifying guideline to help us more clearly understand what Scripture communicates. This Statement of Faith sets the major doctrinal boundaries for all teaching in this church.

This church recognizes the following Statement of Faith as a declaration of its understanding of Biblical Doctrine:

- A. The Holy Scriptures.** We believe both the Old and New Testaments are the verbally and plerarily inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21). The Scriptures are inerrant (John 17:17), infallible (Matt. 5:18; 24:35; 1 Pet. 1:23), and God-breathed and are, therefore, the supreme and final authority for faith and life (2 Tim. 3:16-17). The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are the complete and Divine revelation of God to man.
- B. The Godhead.** We believe in one God (Deut. 6:4), and only one (Isa. 45:21-22), who is self-existent (Gen. 1:1), eternal (Psa. 102:12; Isa. 40:28), and infinite in every excellence, and who is and has revealed Himself as eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:13-17; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14)—each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections (John 10:30; 14:16-17; 15:26). We believe God hears and answers prayer (Heb. 4:16; James 5:16).
- C. The Person and Work of Christ.** We believe that Jesus Christ of Nazareth is the eternal Son of God, that He is both God and man (Col. 2:9), the two natures being inseparably united in one glorious Person through the incarnation (John 1:1, 14). We believe in His virgin conception and birth (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23; Luke 1:34-35), His vicarious atonement for the sins of mankind (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14), His bodily resurrection from the tomb (Luke 24:1-6; John 20:1-10), His ascension into heaven as the believer's High Priest and Advocate before the throne of God (Acts 1:9-11; 1 John 2:1-2), His personal, imminent return for all believers (1 Thess. 4:14-18), and the establishment of His kingdom in power and glory (Rev. 20:1-6).
- D. The Holy Spirit.** We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, equal to and of the same nature with God the Father and God the Son, whose ministry is to reprove the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8). He regenerates the unbeliever who is dead in his sins to enable him to believe (Titus 3:5). He comforts the believer (John 16:7), guides the believer to the truth (John 16:13), and testifies of and glorifies Christ (John 15:26; 16:13-15). He indwells the believer (Rom. 8:9) and seals him for the day of redemption (Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30).



- E. Total Depravity of Humanity.** We believe that all men are by nature and choice sinful and lost and have within themselves no possible means of salvation (Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 3:10-19, 23).
- F. Salvation.** We believe in salvation by grace through faith as the free gift of God, not by any virtue of works or merit by persons (Eph. 2:8-9). Salvation is initiated by God (Eph. 2:1-9) and completed by God (Phil. 1:6). As the gift of God, it can only be received by personal faith in the blood sacrifice, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (John 1:12-13; 3:16-18).
- G. Eternal Security of the Believer.** We believe that all believers possess the gift of eternal life (John 3:16-18; 1 John 5:12-13), are eternally secured by God (John 10:27-29), have a perfect righteousness in Christ (2 Cor. 5:21), can worship in the family of God (Rom. 8:14-17), and receive the divine guarantee that they shall never perish (John 5:24).
- H. Judgment.** We believe in the bodily resurrection of the saved to eternal life (1 Cor. 12:15-24) and the resurrection of the lost to punishment in everlasting fire and torment (Matt. 25:41, Rev. 20:11-15, 2 Thess. 1:6-9, Heb. 9:27).
- I. Creation.** We believe that the Genesis account of creation is neither allegory nor myth but a literal, historical account of God's creation of the universe in six literal, 24-hour days (Exod. 20:11). We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, Theistic Evolution, and any other theory that seeks to refute the Genesis account of creation as unscriptural theories of origin (Gen. 1-2).
- J. Satan.** We believe that Satan is a personal being, the author of sin (John 8:44), and the cause of the fall of man (Gen. 3:1-6); that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man (1 Pet. 5:8); and that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10-15).
- K. The Church.** We believe that the universal church of Jesus Christ is composed solely of those who have been saved through faith in Jesus Christ (Acts 2:47), having been regenerated (Titus 3:5; Eph. 2:5), sealed (Eph. 4:30), placed into the Body of Christ (the church) (1 Cor. 12:13), and gifted by the Holy Spirit for Christian service (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:1-13). As believers, we are called to assemble together locally for the worship of God, the proclamation of the Word, the administering of the ordinances, and the fellowship of believers (Heb. 10:23-25). We believe in the autonomy of the local church, free of any external human authority or control. Men are to be the pastors/elders and deacons of the church (1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:1-5, 12) under Christ's leadership. Accordingly, only men are eligible for ordination by the church.
- L. Spiritual Gifts.** As a gift of God's grace, He has generously bestowed upon believers spiritual gifts such as pastors/teachers, evangelists, teaching, discernment, exhorting, service, leading, giving, faith, and mercy to be exercised by believers to glorify God and edify the church (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:1-11; Eph. 4:11-16). We believe that the sign/revelatory gifts



of the Holy Spirit (such as tongues, healings, prophecy, and Apostles) have fulfilled their purpose and are not in use by believers today. We also believe that speaking in tongues was never a common or necessary sign of the baptism, indwelling, or filling of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:12-13; 13:8).

M. The Ordinances of the Local Church.

1. Jesus Christ instituted the Lord's Supper to commemorate His death until He comes (Luke 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-34).
2. Believer's baptism is an act of obedience. Baptism by immersion symbolizes the believer's union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, but it is not necessary for salvation (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41; 8:36-38).

N. Christian Living. We believe that it is the responsibility and privilege of all Christians to actively participate in a local church (Heb. 10:23-25), seek to win others to Christ (Matt. 5:16), live a holy life, separate themselves from ungodliness and worldly lusts (1 John 2:15-17), and to forsake that which might dishonor God or weaken their testimony (Col. 3:1-17; 2 Cor. 6:14-17; Titus 2:11-14; 1 Pet. 1:14-16).

O. Civil Government. We believe God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: (1) the home, (2) the church, and (3) the state (i.e., civil government). Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective biblically-assigned spheres of responsibility under God (Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14; 5:1-5).

P. Marriage and Family Relationships.

1. We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. The Lord Jesus affirmed this definition of marriage (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:4-6; Eph. 5:22-28). We believe the vows of holy matrimony are to be taken seriously before God because each marriage is an earthly picture of the spiritual reality of the union of Christ and His church (Eph. 5:22-33).
2. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God (Gal. 3:27-29) but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and church. The husband is to be the leader of the home (Eph. 5:23; 1 Cor. 11:3).
3. We believe God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society (Gen. 1:26-28). The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves His Church. The wife is to submit herself to the scriptural leadership of her husband as the Church submits to the headship of Christ (Eph. 5:22-33; Col. 3:18-19). Children are a heritage



from the Lord and are to remain obedient to their parents in the Lord (Psa. 127:3-5; Eph. 6:1-4; Col. 3:20). Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including scriptural corporal correction (Deut. 6:4-7; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14).

- Q. Divorce and Remarriage.** We believe God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies (Mal. 2:14-17). However, Scripture allows for divorce and remarriage in cases of fornication or abandonment by an unbelieving spouse (Matt. 19:3-9; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Cor. 7:12-16). Trusting in the grace of God for each day, we realize that life is lived in a linear fashion, and we cannot return to the past and undo decisions or outcomes.
- R. Human Sexuality.** We believe that God has commanded that no sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman (1 Cor. 5:1; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4). We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, pedophilia, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex (Gen. 18:20-19:13; Rom. 1:24-28; 1 Cor. 6:9-11). We believe God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's biological gender by perceived identity, surgery, or appearance (Matt. 19:4-6).
- S. Abortion.** We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27; Psa. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:44). Because abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life, it is unacceptable in all forms. We reject any teaching that abortions are acceptable in the case of rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental well-being of the mother.
- T. Euthanasia.** Life is a gift of God (Acts 17:28) and must be respected from conception until natural death. We believe that the direct taking of innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention (Exod. 20:13, 23:7; Matt. 5:21). Thus, we believe that an act or omission of an act that intentionally causes an unnatural death is contrary to the will of God. Discontinuing medical treatments that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be a legitimate refusal of over-zealous treatment.
- U. Lawsuits Between Believers.** We believe Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes (1 Cor. 6:1-8). We believe the church, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members (Eph. 4:31-32). We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for property loss or injuries from another Christian or their insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander.



- V. **Errant Theological Movements.** We believe that the following movements are out of harmony with the Word of God and the official doctrine and position of Wayside Chapel and are detrimental to the work of God; therefore, we oppose and reject them:
1. **Ecumenism.** Ecumenism is the effort to bring orthodox Christians into an unequal yoke with theological liberals, Roman Catholics, or other divergent religious cults or groups.
 2. **Modern-Day Charismatic Movement.** The Modern Day Charismatic Movement is characterized by non-miraculous “so-called” speaking in tongues and faith healings that do not reflect what is evident in Scripture and seeks doctrinal and life guidance through extra-biblical revelation in the forms of unverifiable dreams, visions, signs, and wonders.
 3. **Prosperity Gospel.** The Prosperity Gospel is a false doctrine that asserts that if Christians have enough faith, they will surely experience financial and physical prosperity in this life. Also known as the Health and Wealth Gospel, it often errs in misapplying the conditional covenant promises God made to Israel to individual Christians. Though Christ did promise abundant life to His followers, this abundance is instead experienced spiritually through reconciliation with God. In actuality, Christians always have and always will suffer some level of loss and persecution for their testimony to Christ (John 15:18-21).

Church Membership Covenant

All persons affiliated as members shall be expected to subscribe to and abide by the following Covenant:

Having been led, as we believe, by Divine grace through the Spirit of God, to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and give ourselves to Him, and having been baptized on the profession of our faith we do now, in the presence of God and relying on His grace, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ (Eph. 1:3-23).

We will, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, as members of a Christian church, walk together in brotherly love as Scripture commands (John 15:10-13).

We will work and pray to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:1-6).

We will remember each other in prayer, aid each other in sickness and distress, cultivate Christian sympathy in spirit and courtesy in speech, be slow to take offense, and always be ready to reconcile our differences in a timely manner as Christ has commanded (Col. 4:2-4; Rom. 12; Matt. 18:15-20).

We will seek to win souls, both corporately and individually, to salvation in Jesus Christ, and to communicate spiritual instruction to those God has placed under our care (Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:18-20).



We will strive for the advancement of this church by working to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrine (Eph. 3:20-21; 4:11-16).

We will attend consistently, participate willingly, and contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the church and expenses of this ministry, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel worldwide (Heb. 10:23-25; 2 Cor. 9:6-7).

We will seek, by Divine aid, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and remembering that, as we have been buried by baptism and raised again from the symbolic grave, so we now have a special obligation to lead a new and holy life (Titus 2:11-13).

We moreover intend, that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word (Heb. 10:23-25).

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit enable each of us to fulfill this covenant.