

STATEMENT OF FAITH

ALIGNING OUR CHURCH WITH THE WORD OF GOD

ARTICLE I — PURPOSE

We believe the purpose of Grace Covenant Church of Austin is to glorify God by guiding people to become like Christ in all of life. (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 4:11-16; Colossians 1:27-28).

ARTICLE II — THEOLOGY

1. **One True God**

We believe the LORD God is God alone. God is eternal and the creator of all things in heaven and on earth. He reigns sovereignly and supremely as the King of the universe. God calls humanity into a relationship with Him to love, worship, and serve Him alone. We believe He is one Triune God, existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each eternal in being, identical in essence, equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfection. (Genesis 1, 2; Exodus 20:2-6; Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Matthew 22:36-40, 28:19; John 14:26; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Col 1:15-17, 1 Peter 1:2)

2. **The Holy Scriptures**

We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God. We believe the Scriptures are complete and God speaks primarily through them. Inspiration is God's superintending of human authors so that, using their own individual personalities, they composed and recorded without error His revelation in the original manuscripts. All of the Scriptures are authoritative, without error, and the supreme and final authority on all matters about which they speak. We believe the Scriptures are to be understood using their literary genre, history, grammar, context, and harmony with other Scriptures as guidelines for interpretation. We believe the Holy Spirit guides believers to understand the Scriptures. (Matthew 5:18; John 10:35; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Revelation 22:18-19)

3. **The Person and Work of Christ**

We believe the Lord Jesus, the eternal Son of God, became a man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, so that He might reveal God and redeem sinful humanity. We believe He accomplished our salvation and redemption through His death on the cross as a substitutionary sacrifice and His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. (Luke 1:35; John 1:1-5, 14, 18; Romans 3:24-26, 4:25, 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, 17; Philippians 2:6-11)

We believe the Lord Jesus Christ is now in heaven, exalted to the right hand of God the Father, where, as His people's High Priest, He fulfills the ministries of intercession and advocacy. (Hebrews 1:3, 3:1, 7:23-25, 9:24, 12:2; 1 John 2:1-2)

We believe in the personal, bodily, and glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ, at a time determined by God the Father, to gather His Church and establish His Kingdom. (Zechariah 14:4-11; Acts 1:6-7; 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10, 4:13-18; Revelation 20:6)

4. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity who convicts people of sin, their need for righteousness, and impending judgment. He also regenerates believers in Christ, baptizes them into the Church, indwells them permanently, bestows spiritual gifts upon each one, empowers those yielded to Him, and seals them until the day of redemption. (John 3:8, 14:16-17, 15:26, 16:7-15; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 13; Ephesians 4:30, 5:18-21)

5. The Nature of Humanity

We believe each person is created in the image and likeness of God regardless of sex, race, ethnicity, or nationality; therefore, human life is sacred, including that of the unborn. We believe God purposefully created people male and female, and our sex is a good and unchangeable gift from Him. Therefore, every person is uniquely designed and gifted by God to fulfill his or her role in God's plan. (Genesis 1:26-27, 5:2; Exodus 21:22-25; Psalm 22:10, 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:5; Mark 10:6; Luke 1:39-45, 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

While humanity was created without sin, in Adam's sin humanity became alienated from God, inherited a sinful nature, and is totally unable without God's grace to regain a relationship with God. Despite humanity turning away from God, God continues to reveal Himself through creation, the Scriptures, and the person of Jesus Christ, so everyone is without excuse. (Genesis 3:1-24; Romans 1:18-32, 3:23, 5:12; Ephesians 2:12)

6. Salvation by Grace

We believe salvation is a gift of God by grace, not earned by good deeds, and is received through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who put their trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are forgiven of their sin, credited with Christ's righteousness, and declared children of God. (Ephesians 1:7, 2:8-9; Titus 3:3-7; 2 Corinthians 5:21; John 1:12-13)

7. The Resurrection

We believe in the bodily resurrection of every person. (John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; 1 Corinthians 15:52)

- a. Those who have put their trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior will be resurrected to enjoy eternal life with God in His glorious kingdom. They are assured of their eternal life and redemption by the power of the Holy Spirit and the intercession of Jesus Christ. (John 10:27-30; Romans 8:1, 29-30, 38-39; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 7:25; 1 Peter 1:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 20:4-6, 21:1-8)
- b. Those who have not put their trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and thus have rejected God's revelation of Himself in creation, the Scriptures, and Jesus Christ, will experience judgment and then eternal suffering separated from God. (Romans 1:18-32, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Revelation 21:27)

8. The Church

- a. We believe the universal Church is the Bride and Body of Christ with Jesus as its Head. His Bride comprises all who put their trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior regardless of denominational affiliation or Church membership. (1 Corinthians 12:4-27; Ephesians 1:22-23, 5:23-30; 1 Peter 1:3-9)
- b. We believe the local Church is an assembly of professing believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and is the primary means God uses for building the Kingdom of God. Believers have the privilege and responsibility to join voluntarily in supportive community to encourage one another to grow spiritually, care for each other's needs, and multiply the Church's influence in the wider community. (Matthew 16:18-19, 28:18-20; Acts 2:37-47; Ephesians 4:11-16; Hebrews 10:24-25)
- c. We believe the model for local Church governance in the New Testament is appointing male leaders to serve as Elders. As a group, our Elders are vested with delegated authority from the Lord for oversight of our congregation and the spiritual health of our Church. (Acts 14:23; 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 5:17-20; Titus 1:5-9; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-4)

As part of this delegated authority, the Elders may occasionally choose to author position papers, thoughtfully and prayerfully seeking to articulate a biblical view on specific cultural or theological topics that are not in the scope of this statement.

- d. We believe the Lord Jesus Christ instituted the ordinances of baptism and communion to be observed by all believers in the local Church until His return. (Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

ARTICLE III — DISCIPLESHIP

- 1.** A disciple is called to love God and love others. (Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Matthew 22:36-39; John 13:34-35; Romans 13:8)
- 2.** A disciple is called to actively seek to grow toward spiritual maturity and to preserve the unity of the Body of Christ, which brings God glory. (1 Corinthians 10:31, Ephesians 4:1-3, 11-13; Colossians 1:9-12; 2 Peter 1:3-11)
- 3.** A disciple is called to treat every individual with love, dignity, and respect, seeking to act with justice and compassion towards all people. (Micah 6:8; Matthew 7:12; Romans 12:10; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:12-14; 1 Peter 3:8)
- 4.** A disciple is called to be holy and blameless before the Lord, which is accomplished as one lives by faith and walks in the power of the Holy Spirit. As disciples submit to the work of the Spirit, the Spirit will help them address areas of sin in their life and empower them to become like Christ in all of life. (Romans 1:16-17; 12:1-2; 2

Corinthians 7:1; Galatians 1:3-5, 5:16-25; Ephesians 1:4; Colossians 1:13-14; 1 Peter 1:14-16; Hebrews 12:1-3)

5. A disciple is called to honor the Lord by how he or she lives in relationships. Some are called to marriage, which is a human institution established and defined by God in the Scriptures as a unique, holy bond of one male and one female for their shared lifetime. Others are called to singleness, whether for a season or a lifetime, which is a gift from God. Marriage and singleness are both opportunities to cultivate devotion to God. (Genesis 2:18-25; Mark 10:9; 1 Corinthians 7:2-9, 32-35)
6. A disciple is called to be a minister commissioned by the Lord Jesus Christ to do good works, proclaim salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone, and to equip and encourage others to be faithful disciples of the Lord. (Matthew 5:13-16, 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 2:10; 1 Peter 2:4-5, 9)
7. A disciple has been given one or more spiritual gifts, along with time, talents, and financial, and material resources which are to be used to serve and build up the local Church so that it effectively reflects God's love for each believer, the local community, and the world. (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Peter 4:9-11)

ARTICLE IV — AMENDMENTS

This document may be amended, modified, or rescinded by a three-fourth (3/4) affirmative vote of the active members participating in a scheduled vote on official business pursuant to the Church Bylaws.

For purposes of amending this document:

- A quorum shall be 50% of active members at the time of the meeting or vote.
- Members will be informed of the proposed amendment in writing or digital form at least two weeks prior to the vote for approval.
- Due notice of a vote will consist of the methods provided in the Church Bylaws.