

TENETS OF FAITH

The church family of Covenant Community Church accepts the Holy Scriptures as the revealed will of God and the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice. For the purpose of maintaining general unity, this fellowship subscribes to the historical Apostle's Creed. Following the Creed is a formal Statement of Faith for Covenant Community Church.

The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of Heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
And born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day He rose again.
He ascended into Heaven.
And is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The holy universal church.
The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And the life everlasting. Amen.

Statement of Faith

1. The Scriptures Inspired

The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (II Tim 3:15-17; I Thess 2:13; II Peter 1:21). All of scripture is inspired, not merely some parts. God by His Spirit, has guaranteed the authenticity and reliability of both the very words and the ideas that were written, without depriving the writers of their individuality. Whatever is not established by the Holy Scriptures is not to be made an article of faith nor is it to be taught as essential to salvation.

2. The One True God

The one true and sovereign God has revealed Himself as the eternally self-existent "I AM", the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed Himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Deut 6:4; Isa 43:10, 11; Matt 28:19; Luke 3:22).

3. Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:

- (a) His virgin birth (Matt 1:23; Luke 1:31, 34-35).
- (b) His sinless life (Heb 7:26; I Peter 2:22; Heb 4:15).
- (c) His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).
- (d) His substitutionary work on the cross (I Cor 15:3; II Cor 5:21).
- (e) His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matt 28:6; Luke 24:39; I Cor 15:4).
- (f) His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9, 11; 2:33; Phil 2:9-11; Heb 1:3).
- (g) His second coming (I John 2:28).

4. The Fall of Man

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Man is totally depraved, meaning that, apart from God's grace, he is forever lost and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. (Gen 1:26-27; Rom 3:22-23; 5:12, 6:23; Eph 2:1-3; 4:17-19).

5. The Salvation of Man

Man's only hope of salvation is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God. Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. Being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Rom 10:13-15; Eph 2:8; Tit 2:11; 3:5-7).

(a) Reconciliation

We believe God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. The offering Christ freely made on the cross is the perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the world, redeeming man from all sin, so that no other satisfaction is required (John 3:14-21, Rom 5:10).

(b) Justification

We believe that justification, declaring us righteous before God, delivers us from the penalty of sin. We are never accounted righteous before God through our works or merit. Penitent sinners are justified or accounted righteous before God only by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 3:28, 5:1, Gal 2:16).

(c) Regeneration

We believe regeneration is the renewal of a man in righteousness through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, whereby we are made partakers of the divine nature and experience newness of life. By this new birth the believer becomes reconciled to God and is enabled to continually serve Him with both will and affections (Tit 3:5).

(d) Sanctification

We believe sanctification is a progressive process of separation from that which is evil and of dedication unto God. It is the work of God's grace through the Word and the Spirit, by which those who have been regenerated and justified are cleansed from sin in their thoughts, words and acts, and are enabled to live in accordance with God's will, and to strive for holiness without which no one will see the Lord. Believers are called to live as overcomers of the power of sin and increasingly exhibit the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22-23; I Thess 5:23; Heb 12:14, 13:12; I Cor 1:2, 10:13; Rom 6:1-13). Glorification is the complete and final sanctification and deliverance from the presence of sin and will be accomplished at the second coming of the Lord.

6. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is an experience of an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8). With it comes the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts, and the use of gifts in ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,8; I Cor 12:1-31). All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of the early Christian Church. This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9). The following are scriptural responses to the believer's experience of being baptized in the Holy Spirit:

- (a) Speaking in other tongues as the Holy Spirit gives utterance (Acts 2:4, 10:46, 19:6; I Cor 14:4, 5, 14, 39; Mark 16:17).
- (b) A deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43).
- (c) An intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42).
- (d) A more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20).

The Holy Spirit is manifested through a variety of spiritual gifts given to all believers. These manifestations of the Spirit are intended for the edification and sanctification of the church (I Cor 12:7-10; Rom 12:6-8; Eph 4:11).

7. Divine Healing

Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel and wherever the gospel was preached, both by Jesus and His followers, the sick were healed. In His sufferings on the cross, Jesus fully paid the penalty of the broken law and all its consequences including sin, sickness, and death. His resurrection demonstrated His Father's approval of the completeness of His finished work. The Lord Jesus commissioned His followers to go and declare to all the world that men may now be freed from slavery to sin, delivered from the wrath of God, and healed of their diseases. James further directed that sick believers should request prayer from elders, who were to anoint them with oil, believing that they would be healed; therefore, we commit ourselves to pray for any who are sick and to care for their practical needs as our resources allow. (Isa 53:4,5; Matt 8:16,17, Matt 25:36; Mark 6:13; James 5:14-16; II Cor 5:21; Rom 1:4; Heb 2:13-15).

8. The Ordinances of the Church

(a) Baptism in Water

The ordinance of baptism is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life. (Matt 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47, 48; Rom 6:4).

(b) Holy Communion

The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements--bread and the fruit of the vine--is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (II Peter 1:4), a memorial of His suffering and death (I Cor 11:26), and a token of love and union which Christians have with Christ and with one another. Those who rightly, worthily, and in faith, eat the broken bread and drink the blessed cup partake of the body and blood of Christ in a spiritual manner until He comes.

9. The Church

We believe the Christian Church is the community of all true believers under the Lordship of Christ (Eph 1:22-23, 2:19-22). It is the redemptive fellowship in which the Word of God is preached by men divinely called, and the ordinances are duly administered according to Christ's own appointment. Under the discipline of the Holy Spirit the Church displays the character of God and exists for the worship of God, the edification of believers, and to proclaim the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to all the world .

10. The Second Coming of Christ

The second coming of Christ is the great anticipation of the Church. As Christians, we should, with Paul, love to look for that "blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Tit 2:13). His coming is an incentive for holy living: "And now, little children, abide in Him; that when He shall appear we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming " (I John 2:28). "Every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself even as He is pure" (I John 3:3).

11. The Judgment and the Future State

We believe all men stand under the righteous judgment of Jesus Christ, both now and in the last day. We believe in the resurrection of the dead; the righteous to life eternal and the wicked to endless condemnation. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matt 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Rev 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8).