

What we believe as a church: Articles of Faith

The Constitution of Grace Bible Church, Canal Winchester, Ohio, shall be comprised of its Church Covenant, Articles of Faith, and By Laws.

DIVISION I

CHURCH COVENANT

Having believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and submitting to Him as Lord of our lives, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly enter into a covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We, by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, will walk together in Christian love set forth in the Holy Scriptures, and do hereby promise to promote the Lord's Church through this assembly by regular attendance at scheduled meetings, persistent prayer, and giving of our talents and gifts.

DIVISION II

ARTICLES OF FAITH

We feel constrained by fidelity to Christ and to God's Word to adopt the following statement of doctrine to which we ask assent of all applicants for membership. (II Timothy 3:1-7; 4:14; II Peter 2:1-2)

ARTICLE I

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Scriptures, in the original writings, are the verbally inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of God. We accept the writings of the Old and New Testaments (66 books) as a reliable transmission of those autographs and the only and final authority for faith and practice. (Matthew 5:18; John 10:35; 12:48; 17:17; II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:21)

ARTICLE II

THE ONE TRIUNE GOD

The True God – We believe in one God, eternally existing in Three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

(a) God the Father – We believe in God the Father, perfect in holiness, boundless in love, infinite in wisdom, measureless in power. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayers, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ, His Son. (Genesis 1:1; Deuteronomy 33:27; Psalms 18:30; 104; 135:6; 147:5; Matthew 28:19; Mark 12:29; John 4:24; 5:23, 26; Acts 5:3-4; II Corinthians 13:14)

(b) God the Son – We believe in Jesus Christ, God the Son, pre-existent with the Father, begotten by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary; sinless in His nature and life, infallible in His teaching, making atonement for the sins of the world by His substitutionary death on the cross. We believe in His bodily resurrection, His ascension into Heaven, His perpetual intercession for His people and His glorious second advent according to promise. (Isaiah 53:5-6; Matthew 1:23; 20:28; Luke 24:36-43; John

1:1, 14, 29; 3:16; 8:46; 20:25-28; Romans 9:5; Galatians 3:13; Colossians 2:9; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 4:14-15; 9:24; 13:8; I John 2:1; Revelation 22:16)

(c) God the Holy Spirit – We believe in the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit. We believe that He came from God to convince and convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and to regenerate, sanctify, indwell, comfort, and empower those who believe in Jesus Christ. (Genesis 1:2; Psalms 104:30; Matthew 28:29; John 3:5; 14:26; 16:8-22; Acts 5:3-4; Romans 8:24; I Corinthians 6:11-19; 12:13; II Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 4:30)

ARTICLE III

CREATION

We accept the Genesis account of creation: that God willed into being the heavens and earth and all that is in them. Man was created perfect in the image of God by a special act of God. (Genesis 1:2; Exodus 20:11; Psalms 33:6-9; Mark 10:6; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 11:3)

ARTICLE IV

FALL OF MAN

We believe in the fall of man; that by personal disobedience to the revealed will of God, man became a sinful creature and the progenitor of a fallen race, universally sinful in both nature and practice, alienated from the life and family of God, with no humanly possible means of recovery or salvation. (Genesis 3:1-24; Matthew 29:26; Mark 7:21-23; John 8:42-44; Romans 1:18; 3:29-32; 5:12; 7:18; Ephesians 2:3; 4:18)

ARTICLE V

SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH

We believe in salvation by grace through faith; that salvation is the free gift of God, neither merited nor secured in any part or in whole by any virtue or work of man, but received only by personal repentance/faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom all true believers have as a present possession the gift of eternal life, a perfect righteousness, justification, sonship in the family of God and every spiritual resource needed for life and godliness; that this salvation includes the whole man, and apart from Christ there is no possible salvation. (John 3:16; 5:24; 6:26-29; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 16:30-31; Romans 3:22-23; 4:4-5; 5:18; 11:16; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 1:3; 2:8-9; I Thessalonians 5:23; Titus 3:5; II Peter 1:8, I John 5:13)

ARTICLE VI

ETERNAL SALVATION

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who by repentance and faith trust Him as their personal Savior are justified on the ground of His blood shed on Calvary and His resurrection from the dead and are born again of the Holy Spirit, and thereby become the children of God. (John 5:24; 8:31-34; 10:27-30; Romans 8:5, 35-39; 13:13-14; II Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 5:13; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:1; Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 10:26-31; I Peter 1:3-5; I John 2:1, 6; 3:3; 3:6-10)

ARTICLE VII

RIGHTEOUS LIVING AND GOOD WORKS

We believe in righteous living and good works as evidence and fruit of the indwelling Holy Spirit. As Christians, we should keep the Word of the Lord, know God's will and accept as our responsibility the duty and privilege of glorifying our Heavenly Father.

Good works such as evangelizing the lost and discipling all men are rendered in gratitude for the infinite and undeserved mercies of God. These works result in heavenly reward. (Matthew 7:16-18; 28:19-20; John 14:23; 15:16; Acts 1:8; Romans 6:14; 12:1-2; I Corinthians 3:10-15; 5:10; II Corinthians 5:19; Ephesians 2:8-10; Colossians 3:3; Titus 2:14; I John 2:6; 3:9-11; 4:19; 5:4)

ARTICLE VIII

THE EXISTENCE OF SATAN

We believe in the reality and personality of Satan, a fallen archangel, leader of fallen angels and adversary of God with supernatural powers which only God can overrule. (Job 1-2; Isaiah 14:13-14; Ezekiel 28:13-17; Matthew 4:1-11; 12:24-26; 25:41; Luke 22:31-32; John 8:44; 12:31-32; 16:11; II Corinthians 4:4; I Timothy 3:7; Revelation 12:9-11; 20:10)

ARTICLE IX

THE PRE-MILLENNIAL SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe in the pre-millennial second coming of Jesus Christ, that His return from Heaven will be personal, visible and glorious. (Matthew 13:41-43; Mark 13:33-37; Luke 1:32-33; I Corinthians 15:24-28; Revelation 6:1-18; 19:1; 20:6, 11-15; 21:1; 22:6, 20)

ARTICLE X

FUTURE LIFE, BODILY RESURRECTION, ETERNAL JUDGMENT

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all the dead, the saved to eternal life and blessedness in Heaven and the unsaved to eternal, conscious suffering and woe in Hell. (Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-31; John 5:28-29, 6:39-40; Romans 8:23-24; I Corinthians 15:12-58; II Corinthians 5:1-10; Philippians 1:21-23, 3:20-21; I Thessalonians 4:14-16; II Peter 2:9; I John 3:2; Jude 13; Revelation 20:11-15, 21:8)

ARTICLE XI

THE CHURCH

We believe that the Church of Jesus Christ is a living spiritual body of which Christ Himself is the Head and consists of all born again people. (Matthew 16:18; Acts 1:8; 2:1-13; 2:41-47; 15:14; I Corinthians 12:12-28; Ephesians 1:22-23; 3:21; 4:23-33; I Thessalonians 4:13-18)

We believe that the local church is a congregation of immersed believers, united together by faith in Christ and by covenant for the purpose of worshipping God, edifying one another, and evangelizing the world. (Acts 2:41; Philippians 3:3; Ephesians 4:11-15; I Corinthians 12:4-7; Matthew 28:19-20)

ARTICLE XII

TWO SCRIPTURAL ORDINANCES: BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe in two scriptural ordinances: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Christian Baptism is the immersion of the believer in water into the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, to show forth in solemn and beautiful emblems our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Lord with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life. The Lord's Supper is the partaking of the bread and the cup by which, believers commemorate together the sacrificial love of Christ, preceded always by solemn self-examination. (Matthew 3:5-6; 28:19-20; Mark 16:16; Luke 22:14-20; John 3:22-23; 4:1-2; Acts 2:38-41; 8:12, 36-39; 16:32-34; 18:8;

Romans 6:4; I Corinthians 11:26; Colossians 2:12)

ARTICLE XIII

THE LORD'S DAY

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, and is not to be confused with the Jewish Sabbath. This congregation will meet weekly on the Lord's Day in remembrance of the Savior's resurrection. (John 20:19; Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Hebrews 10:24-25)

ARTICLE XIV

SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD

We believe in separation from the world, that since our citizenship is in Heaven, as the children of God we should walk in separation from this present world, have no fellowship with its evil ways, abstain from all unclean amusements and habits which defile mind and body; that Biblical separation also forbids alliances of any nature, such as cooperation in cooperative meetings, councils or organizations with churches which are apostate in that they reject any of these fundamental doctrines: the triune nature of God, the Deity of Christ, the virgin birth of Christ, the sinless life of Christ, and/or the verbal inspiration and authority of the Bible as the Word of God as set forth and supported in these Articles of Faith. (Luke 8:14; Romans 12:2; I Corinthians 16:10-20; II Corinthians 6:14,18; Ephesians 5:31; Philipians 3:20; Colossians 3:17; I Thessalonians 5:22; I Peter 2:11; II John 9-11)

ARTICLE XV

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts. He has given abilities, opportunities and enablement; that is, grace gifts, to each believer for the building up of the Church. He has given specially gifted men to the Church such as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers for the edifying of the souls and the building up of the Body of Christ. (I Corinthians 12:4-11; 13:8-10; II Corinthians 12:7-10; James 5:14-16)

We believe that the sign gifts tongues, healing, prophecy, etc. are not normative for the Church of Jesus Christ. (I Corinthians 12-14; II Corinthians 12:7-10; James 5:14-16)

ARTICLE XVI

HOME AND FOREIGN MISSIONS

We believe that home and foreign missions are a basic ministry of the local church outreach. The solemn responsibility rests upon all the saved to help reach all the lost, and thereby evangelize the world. (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8)

ARTICLE XVII

CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe in the authority of civil government and that it was instituted by divine appointment for the interest of all. It is our duty to pray for all those in authority and to obey the laws of the land so long as they are not opposed to the will of the Lord Jesus Christ as set forth in the Scriptures. (Exodus 18:21-22; Matthew 22:21; Acts 4:19-20; 23:5; Romans 13:1-7)

ARTICLE XVIII

MARRIAGE

We believe a wedding is an act of worship. Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, Grace Bible Church will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman. Further, the pastors and staff of Grace Bible Church shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. Finally, the facilities and property of Grace Bible Church shall only host weddings between one man and one woman who are both believers. (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-12; Luke 16:18; I Corinthians 6:15-20; II Corinthians 6:14-15).

ARTICLE XIX

GENDER AND SEXUALITY

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complimentary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Genesis 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (I Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matthew 15:18-20; I Corinthians 6:9-10).

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Grace Bible Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Grace Bible Church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Grace Bible Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage and Gender and Sexuality (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; I Thessalonians 5:22). We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; I Corinthians 6:9-11).

ARTICLE XX

FINAL AUTHORITY FOR MATTERS OF BELIEF AND CONDUCT

This statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Grace Bible Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Elder Board is Grace Bible Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.