

1. Scripture

We believe the Scriptures—both the Old and New Testament—are the inspired, inerrant Word of God. The Bible is the believer’s only infallible source of instruction for faith and practice.

Theological Distinctives: God so superintended the human authors that, while retaining their own individual personalities and writing styles, they chose the very words that God intended. Their original writings were free from error. Proper interpretation of Scripture aims to ascertain original authorial intent by examining the immediate and canonical context, historical setting, and language (grammar, writing style, literary devices). Unless those categories dictate otherwise, the meaning of any word/passage of Scripture should be understood in its plain, literal sense.

Scripture: Psalms 19:7-9; Proverbs 30:5-6; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; John 10:35; Luke 16:17

2. GOD

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three Persons are the same in essence and equal in power and glory. Father, Son, & Holy Spirit possess the same nature, attributes, and divine perfections, and are worthy of the same worship, confidence, and obedience. They execute distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of creation and redemption.

Theological Distinctives: God brought forth the earth and all that exists *ex nihilo* (out of nothing) by the word of His power and did so as described in Genesis 1-2. He does all that He pleases with His creation and has decreed (or permitted) all that comes to pass in history. He does not simply let the world exist, but governs, sustains, and orders all things by His providence—working all things according to the council of His will for His own glory. God does this in such a way that He is neither the author or approver of sin. God’s decree does not violate the will of the creature nor remove the contingency of second causes, but rather establishes them.

Scripture: Matthew 28:19; Mark 12:29; John 1:1-18; 15:26; 16:15; 20:28; Romans 1:7; Acts 5:3-4, 9; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2; Ephesians 1:11; Romans 11:36; Romans 8:28; Hebrews 1:3

3. JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man (without ceasing to be God)—conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. *Truly God and truly man* (one person, two natures), Jesus came to reveal God to mankind and died as a sinless sacrificial substitute, satisfying God’s righteous judgment by paying the penalty for the sins of all who receive Him by faith. He was resurrected from the dead—arising bodily from the grave, and ascending into Heaven.

Theological Distinctives: All Scripture testifies of the Son. In perfect obedience to the Father, He followed and fulfilled God’s Law perfectly. He is the great High Priest, representing His people before God. As Mediator and Advocate, Jesus provides Christians access to God and makes intercession for them. He is the completely compassionate, all-sufficient Savior.

Scripture: Luke 24:23-40; John 1:1-3, 14; Romans 10:9, 19; 1 Corinthians 15:12-23, 35-37; Hebrews 4:14; 5:1-10; 7:25; 8:1-2; 9:11-15, 24; 1 Peter 3:18, 22; 1 John 2:1

4. HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the divine Person of the Trinity who convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. The Spirit regenerates, indwells, seals, and baptizes into the Church body all those who place their trust in Jesus. The Spirit strengthens believers and empowers them for service to God and Christ-like living. He guides

Christians in truth and intercedes for them. Scripture commands believers to submit to the Spirit. Walking in the Spirit is evidenced by the presence of the fruit of the Spirit.

Theological Distinctives: Enabling gifts for service are bestowed by the Spirit—according to God’s sovereign will—to be exercised for the glory of God, the advancement of His gospel, and edification of His Church. Some gifts (healing, speaking in tongues, prophecy) were employed by God in unique ways during the era of the early church. One’s understanding and practice of any/all gifts of the Spirit must be in accordance with the Scriptures. Additionally, while God may choose to heal supernaturally, the healing of the temporal body is not assured by Christ’s atoning work on the cross; the complete deliverance of the body from sickness awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection.

Scripture: John 3:5-8; 14:16-17; 15:26-27; 16:7-11, 13-14; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:4, 9, 11, 14, 23-27; 1 Corinthians 6:19; 12: 4-13, 27-31; 14:21-22; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 12:7-9; Ephesians 1:3; 13 3:16; 4:7-13; 30; 5:15-21; Galatians 5:16; 22-25; Hebrews 2:3-4; 1 Peter 4:10-11; 2 Timothy 4:20; Titus 3:5.

5. MANKIND

We believe that man was created in the image of God, sinned through personal disobedience to Him, and thereby incurred the curse of death—resulting in separation from God.

Theological distinctives: Humanity, by falling into a state of sin, cannot produce any spiritual good. Thus, man—in his unconverted state—is unable to gain salvation by his own strength, prepare himself for conversion, or produce the spiritual good that accompanies salvation. Man is thereby naturally inclined toward what is evil, opposed to the law of God, and unable to remedy his lost and depraved condition apart from divine grace.

Scripture: Genesis 1:26; 3:1-24; 6:5; Psalms 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:10-18; 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3; Romans 5:6; 8:7; Ephesians 2:1-5; Titus 3:3-5; John 6:44

6. SALVATION

We believe that salvation from the guilt and eternal condemnation of sin is only possible by the gift of God’s grace, not by human efforts or works. Salvation is freely bestowed on all who—in repentance toward God and faith in Jesus—trust in Christ, receiving and resting in Him alone. All who so place their faith in Jesus pass from death unto life, are forgiven of their sins, declared righteous, accepted by the Father, and born into His family by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God.

Theological Distinctive: From beginning to end, Salvation is a work of God’s sovereign grace alone. God, in eternity past, determined to save a multitude of guilty sinners from every tribe, nation, and tongue. To this end, He foreknew and elected them before the creation of the world. In time, He effectually calls and enables them to believe. Those chosen by the Father, whom He gave to the Son, will persevere and be kept secure in their salvation by grace through faith. This reality does not negate the free agency of man, nor diminish each individual’s personal responsibility to respond in faith to the gospel—and in fact reinforces evangelism and missions as God’s ordained means to accomplish His ordained ends.¹

Scripture: Luke 15:18-21; John 3:14; 5:24; 10:27-29; Acts 2:37-38; 11:18; 16:30-31; 20:21; Romans 5:1-2; 6:13; 8:29-39; 10:9-11; Ephesians 1:6-7; 2:8-10; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 5:1

7. THE CHURCH

We believe that all who have placed their faith in Christ are united by the Holy Spirit into one spiritual Body, the Church, of which Christ is the Head. The Body of all believers (the “universal” or “invisible” Church) originated on the day of Pentecost and will be complete at the coming of Christ for His own. The members of this one spiritual Body, are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies (the “visible” or “local” church) for worship through the preaching & teaching of God’s Word, singing, praying, fellowship, service, and the

¹ Wording adapted from a number of resources including TGC’s confessional statement.

administration of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, led by God-appointed overseers (elders). Christians who makeup local churches are called to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Theological Distinctives: The Bible describes the spiritual leaders of God's church as a plurality of biblically qualified men called elders/overseers. They are called by God to teach, lead, care for, and protect the local assembly as well as properly administrate *baptism* (a believer's immersion in water), and the *Lord's Supper* (partaking of the communion elements that signify the sacrificial death of Christ: the bread and cup).

Scripture: Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:1-4, 37-47; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; 12:13; Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:3; Colossians 3:15-16; 1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Hebrews 10:23-25;

8. THE LORD'S RETURN

We believe in the imminent, literal, physical, visible, and personal return of Jesus Christ and the consummation of all things resulting in a new heavens and earth as our eternal home and place of service under God's sovereign and benevolent rule.

Theological Distinctives: Each Christian ought to live in anticipation that the return of Christ could occur during their lifetime. The events that characterize the End Times will include increasing wickedness and persecution of God's people in this world, the removal (rapture) of God's church, the resurrection of the Dead in Christ, God's divine judgment on a disbelieving world, the great and final Battle of Armageddon where the armies of Antichrist are defeated, the establishment of the Christ-ruled Millennial Kingdom, and the ultimate establishment of the new heavens and earth.

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6

9. HEAVEN, HELL, & ETERNITY

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all people. The unforgiven sinner will go to everlasting conscious suffering in hell, and the forgiven believer will be in fellowship with God in heaven forever.

Theological Distinctives: At physical death, the souls of believers pass immediately into the presence of Jesus Christ. When Christ returns for the Church they will receive glorified bodies and be associated with Him forever in glory. At physical death, the souls of unbelievers pass immediately into torment. At the close of the Millennium they will be judged before the great white throne, then cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be separated from God forever in conscious punishment.

Scripture: Luke 16:19-26; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Revelation 20:11-15

Other Key Beliefs One Must *affirm* for Membership:

Sanctity of Life

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically and mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life.

Scripture: Genesis 1:27; Exodus 20:13; Psalm 72:12-14; Psalm 139; Jeremiah 1:4-5

Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality

Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, *Faith Community Church* will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman. Further, the pastors and staff shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. Finally, the facilities and property of the church shall only host weddings between one man and one woman.

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

Adam and Eve were made to complement each other in a one-flesh union that establishes the only normative pattern of sexual relations for men and women, such that marriage ultimately serves as a type of the union between Christ and His Church. In God's wise purposes, men and women are not simply interchangeable, but rather they complement each other in mutually enriching ways. God ordains that they assume distinctive roles which reflect the loving relationship between Christ and the Church.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. 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, but not limited to, adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, polyamory, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual with a different perspective are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of *Faith Community Church*.

Scripture: Genesis 1-2; Matthew 15:18-20; Mark 12:28-21; Luke 6:31; Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 18; 7:2-5; Ephesians 5:25-33; Hebrews 13:4

Christianity and Politics

Our primary goal as a church is to assist people in living for the glory of God, the application & advancement of His gospel, and the gathering of His disciples as we grow together as the Body of Christ, "eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). We also believe that God's Word provides wisdom and truth that can be applied to every moral and ethical societal issue. As a church, we do not promote any particular political party or parties. To the degree that any political party, policy, or position agrees with God's Word, we will be in agreement with it. To the degree that it disagrees with God's Word, we will be in disagreement with it.

Scripture: Matthew 22: 36-40; Matthew 28:19-20; Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:3; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Psalm 119:105

*The above 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 *Faith Community's* understanding of issues of faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Elder Board is the final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

**Our *Theological Distinctives* are rooted in Scripture and show an appreciation for many historic and modern creeds and confessions that reflect Scripture, serve as the Church's consistent testimony to the truth, and help train disciples in God's Word. Examples include: [The Apostles Creed](#); [The Nicene Creed](#); [The Chalcedonian Definition](#); [The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy](#); [The Nashville Statement on Sexuality](#); [The 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith](#); [The 1833 New Hampshire Confession](#), [The Gospel Coalition](#).

***We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of *Faith Community* as the local body of Christ, it is imperative that all persons employed by *Faith Community*, or who serve in leadership roles, affirm the essential doctrinal beliefs, acknowledge the church's theological distinctions, teach/lead without advocating or propagating views that deviate from the Statement of Faith (in part or in whole), and determine to live in accordance to the moral/ethical guidelines established within.