

Articles of Faith and Doctrine

We affirm ...

1. The Holy Bible is God's divinely inspired message to the world. It is a completely trustworthy guide and the final authority in all matters of faith and life. (Psalm 19:7-11; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:20, 21)

2. There is one God, perfect and loving, who exists forever in three persons and who is the creator of the universe. (Genesis 1:1; Deuteronomy 6:4; Jeremiah 31:3; Matthew 3:16,17; Colossians 1:16)

- *God the Father* rules over, upholds and provides for all creation. (Psalm 103; John 4:23)

- *Jesus, God the Son*, became fully human and entered the world through birth to a virgin, Mary, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit. He lived a sinless life that led to his suffering and death for our sin. He did this out of love to bring us into relationship with God. Then he came back to life physically, and returned to heaven where he sits at the right hand of the Father. (Matthew 1:18-25; John 1:1; Acts 1:9; Acts 2:32-33; 1 Corinthians 15:3-5; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 5:1,2; 1 Peter 3:18)

- *God the Holy Spirit* was sent from heaven to show people the way to God, helping us to recognize our sin and leading us to Jesus for forgiveness. The Holy Spirit gives new life to Jesus' followers, enabling them to understand God's truth. The Spirit encourages, empowers and equips them to live in accordance with God's purposes. (John 14:26; John 16:8,13; Romans 8:15,16; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Galatians 5:22-26; Ephesians 1:13-14)

3. All people are created in the image and likeness of God. Every one of us has value and dignity, and is full of promise and unique potential. (Genesis 1:27,28; Psalm 139:13-16; Jeremiah 29:11-13; John 3:16)

4. Nevertheless, humanity has rejected God's provision and leadership, resulting in sinful acts, brokenness and injustice in each one of us and in the world. In fact, all of God's good creation has been marred by sin and is estranged from God. When Jesus died on a cross, he took upon himself the punishment for all our sin. Everyone who turns to him, personally convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit, experiences forgiveness and a restored

relationship with God. Then we can fully enjoy the life of promise and potential for which we were created. (Genesis 1:31; Psalm 53:1-3; Isaiah 53:4-6; Matthew 11:28-30; John 3:16-18; Romans 4:25; Colossians 1:15-20; Ephesians 2:8-10; 1 Peter 2:24,25; 1 John 1:8-10)

5. The Christian Church is a global community, made up of local congregations of people who follow Jesus. In the Bible, the Church is called to live in unity, humbly dependent upon God's provision and leadership, and to love God and others sacrificially. The Church is the embodiment of Jesus in the world, commissioned to participate with him in bringing peace, unity, healing and justice to all people, and to take the good news of God's love and forgiveness through Jesus to everyone, everywhere. (Micah 6:8; Matthew 16:18; Matthew 22:37-40; Matthew 28:19,20; John 15:5, 12-14; John 17:20-23; Acts 1:8; Colossians 1:18; James 1:27)
6. God is building a spiritual kingdom with power, mercy and truth, and is drawing people to it. At a moment of God's choosing, Jesus will return to the earth as King and Judge to establish a new heaven and a new earth. While God desires a relationship with everyone, those who reject God's love and forgiveness will be eternally separated from God. All those who accept God's love and forgiveness will live eternally in God's presence. (Matthew 5:3-10; Matthew 11:12; John 3:36; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Corinthians 4:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; 2 Peter 3:8; Revelation 21:1-8)