

# **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

## **A. The Bible/Scriptures - *God speaks to man through His Word the Bible.***

We believe the Bible is God's written revelation to all people. We believe the scriptures are made up of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, form one book, and are the verbally inspired Word of God, inerrant in the original writings, infallible and God-breathed. The Bible is the final authority for faith and life and the only so inspired book. *Lk: 24:44-45; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21; Rev. 22:18-19.*

## **B. The Godhead - *God manifests Himself as one in the trinity.***

We believe in one triune God, eternally existing in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are identical in nature, equal in power and glory, and have the same attributes and perfections. *Gen. 1:1-2, 26; Deut. 6:4; Mt. 28:18-20; Jn. 1:1-3; 2 Cor. 13:14.*

## **C. The Creation and Fall of Man – *God is our Creator but man rebelled against Him.***

We believe that man was created in the image of God, but through Adam's sin all mankind fell, and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which is separation from God. Thus, all mankind inherited a sinful nature, and is now totally depraved, and unable to save themselves. *Gen. 1:26; 3:1-24; Jn. 3:3-7; Rom. 3:23-28, 4:2-5, 5:6-19; Eph. 2:8-9.*

## **D. The Person and Work of Christ - *Jesus Christ is God's Son, the Savior of the world.***

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. He became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit. He came to earth in order that He might reveal God to man and to redeem sinful man back to God. We believe that He accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a vicarious sacrifice, and that He confirmed our justification by His physical resurrection from the dead. *Mt. 1:18-25; Lk. 13:1-35; Jn. 1:1-3, 1:14, 1:18; Acts 10:34-43; Rom. 3:21-28; 4:24-25.* He ascended into heaven where He reigns as the Head of His Church, the Body of Christ. He is interceding for believers until He literally returns to claim His Bride, the Church, to spend eternity in His presence. *Jn. 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 1:10; 4:13-18; 5:9; Zech. 14:4-11.*

## **E. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit - *The Spirit of God gives life.***

We believe that the Holy Spirit, as the third person of the Godhead, convicts of sin, regenerates all who believe, and baptizes them at conversion into the Body of Christ. He seals believers for the day of redemption, indwelling them eternally, and endowing each believer uniquely with gifts for ministry. He guides believers into understanding and applying the Scripture to life. We believe being "filled with the Spirit" is evidenced by the fruit of the Spirit and continual thankfulness. His power and control are appropriated by faith, making it possible for every believer to lead a life of Christ-like character, bearing fruit to the glory of the Father. *Jn. 14:16-17, 26; 16:7-15; Rom. 8:9-14; 1 Cor. 12:4-7, 13; Eph. 1:13-14, 5:18-21; Gal. 5:22-23; 1 Cor. 2:9-14; 6:19-20; Heb. 9:14.*

## **F. Salvation - *Salvation is a gift we do not deserve or earn.***

We believe that salvation is the gift of God. It is offered to all persons by God's grace and received by personal faith in the person and work of His Son, Jesus Christ, apart from works or ceremony. We believe that all true believers are eternally secure in Christ.

*Jn. 1:11-12; 3:16, 10:27-30; Eph. 2:8-9; 1 Jn. 5:11-12.*

## **G. The Church - *The Church is God's family of all believers in Christ.***

We believe that the Church is a spiritual family, a living organism called the "Body of Christ." The Church began at Pentecost and is made up of all true believers. The Church is distinct from Israel and functions with Christ as her head for the purpose of glorifying God by making disciples among people of all ethnicities. The church exists in local expression for building up the faith of believers and evangelizing unbelievers. It is built up as believers, who are gifted by the Holy Spirit, serve one another in the love of Christ, and are under the authority of godly leadership. The Church comes together for worship, prayer, fellowship and the teaching of the Word, as well as for observing the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. *Mt. 28:18-20; Acts 2:37-47; 5:11; Rom. 9:3-4; 1 Cor. 11:1, 23-28; 12:13; 14:18-19; Eph.4:1-16; 1 Pet. 4:7-11.*

## **H. The Believer's Lifestyle - *A walk of faith empowered by God.***

We believe each believer is called to walk by faith in dependence upon Christ, obeying the Word and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Believers serve Christ in the local church in cooperation with local leadership, using their God given gifts, fellowshiping faithfully with the family, honoring Him with their giving, and being diligent to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Each believer is called to submit to God, resist the devil, deny the flesh, and reject conformity to the world. Believers are Christ's witnesses to the world, who boldly declare by word and deed, Christ's power to save until He comes again. Believers are Christ's ambassadors, always seeking to spread His message to all ethnicities. *Mt. 28:18-20; 2 Cor. 5:5-10; Eph. 2:10; 5:1-21; Heb. 13:15-17; Jas. 1:19-27; 4:7; 1 Pet. 3:8-16; Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Jn. 2:15*

## **I. Satan - *We have a fierce spiritual enemy to resist.***

We believe that Satan, the devil, is a fallen angel, and is the author of sin. He lives in rebellion against God and seeks to spiritually destroy mankind. Though defeated at the cross, he continues to live as the believer's adversary until the Lord condemns him to his eternal destiny in the lake of fire. He can be successfully resisted by believers through faith. *Job 1:6-12; Mat. 4:1-8; Jn. 8:44; 10:9-10; Jas. 4:7; 1 Jn. 3:8; 1 Pet.5:8-9; Rev. 20:2, 10.*

## **J. The Eternal State - *All men are given eternal souls.***

We believe that the eternal destiny of each person is sealed at death. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men: believers to the blessings of eternal life and unbelievers to conscious and everlasting punishment. *Lk. 13:22-29; Jn. 5:24-29; Heb. 9:27; Rev. 20:11-15.*

## **K. Unity & Authority - *Living in harmonious unity is God's will for believers.***

We believe that the unity of the Church is a unique revelation of the Father's love for the world. Each believer is to be diligent to humbly maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Relationships between believers within the church family are a significant visual demonstration of the truth we proclaim. Each believer is expected to work to resolve any matter of offense that may arise with another believer in accordance with the pattern of *Mt. 5:23-24; 18:15-17 and Gal. 6:1-2*.

We believe our statement of faith to be an accurate summary of the foundational teachings of the Bible, not an exhaustive declaration of our beliefs. The Bible speaks with absolute authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind. It is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For the purposes of Jerome Prairie Bible Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, the board of elders is the church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application. We view other points of doctrine, not articulated here, as non-essential to salvation and the believer's life of faith and godliness. All members are to actively avoid divisiveness in all things. Differences about non-essentials can be held to without being divisive. *Jn. 17:14-23; 1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:1-3; 1 Tim. 4:6-7; 6:3-5; 2 Tim. 2:14-26; Ti. 3:9-11; 1 Pet. 4:7-8*.

## **L. Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality - *God's original plan for genders and relationships is good.***

We believe all people are created in God's image and likeness as male and female, and our sexual identity is a gift from God established at birth. We affirm God's unique design for each of the two genders – male and female – believing each is a part of His glorious plan to reflect His image and character. Our sexuality is to be an expression of our faith offered back to Him in accord with His Word. For some, this means joining together in a one-man one-woman covenant of marriage for the purpose of procreation, union, and mutual delight reflecting the love of God to one another.

For others, this means celibacy, which allows for pure undivided devotion to Christ. Intimate sexual expression is designed exclusively for the marital relationship. All other intimate sexual activity outside of marriage is contrary to God's design for believers and is forbidden. *Mt. 18:4-9; Rom. 1:18-32; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 15-20; 7:1-40; Eph. 5:21-33; Col. 3:18-19; 1 Pet. 3:1-9, Gen. 2:24; Mat. 19:4-6*

We hold to the Biblical truths about male and female differences while reaching out with Biblical compassion, redemption, and healing to those identifying themselves as LGBTQ or other identity perspectives. As a family of faith, we repudiate rude or harassing behavior and attitudes as contrary to God's Word. *Rom. 15:7; 1 Cor. 6:9-20; Gal. 3:26-28; Eph. 4:29-32; Heb. 3:12-13; Jas. 2:1-13*

## **M. Family - *The nuclear/elementary family is an essential part of God's plan.***

We believe God has ordained the family as the foundation of a society and the primary unit of discipleship. The mother and father, serving together as husband and wife, are mutually accountable to God to disciple their children, to love the Lord and follow the Savior, through consistent teaching by lifestyle, declaration, and correction. *Deut. 6:4-7; Eph. 6:1-4; Col. 3:20-21; Prov. 22:6; 15; 23:13-14*.