

STATEMENT OF FAITH

WAYPOINT CHRISTIAN CHURCH, CLOVIS NM

Introduction

At Waypoint Christian Church, we welcome people from all backgrounds and at any spiritual level. We want to truly “meet people where they are, but not be content to leave them where they are.” We value times of questions and welcome all those who would sincerely inquire about any point of doctrine or belief. With our entire heart, we believe the common phrase, “In Essentials, unity; In non-essentials, liberty; In all things charity.” We believe that love - not knowledge - is the greatest mark of a mature Christian, and that love is the mark of Spiritual fruit and of the abiding presence of God’s Spirit in both a person and a church. We recognize that we are all on a spiritual journey of growth in both our knowledge of Christ and growth in His image. Our hope is that people will come seeking truth about God, life, and eternity. We know that we are all still growing and that we may be wrong sometimes in our understanding of the Bible.

Having said this, we also believe firmly that true unity cannot be had apart from truth. Salvation, for instance, cannot truly be identified or defined apart from a Biblical definition and doctrine. The unity of the faith is an issue Waypoint must address, both within its own body, as well as with other sister churches. We will humbly and graciously resist the trend to unify at all costs apart from theological standards. However, rather than only taking a defensive posture, as is the habit of so many, we want to work at cooperation wherever and whenever it is possible. This is often on a case by case basis. Scripture both admonishes the church to work toward unity (Ephesians 4:1-3) while at the same time understanding the reality and danger of false teachers and teaching, and to avoid such (Acts 20:29-31; 2 Timothy 4:3-4; 2 Peter, 2:1-3). We pray for grace to be a Church that cares for and works with other churches, while at the same time protecting its flock. This balance is often not easy to find, but we want to work hard to find it.

THE NEED FOR HUMILITY, GRACE, AND LOVE

As we discuss our theological positions among ourselves or with other people, we are committed to remembering several key aspects about the nature of theological discussions:

- No human or organization knows God’s Truth perfectly, for we are imperfect people with finite minds. Humility is to be our guide.
- Spiritual growth (faith in development) is an ongoing process. Therefore, our maturity should increase over time, and our wisdom about theology and life should grow as well.
- The church needs people who are different and who humbly hold differences of opinion. We will seek to be good listeners.
- Love is the preeminent mark of a Christian. Therefore, we will value “being loving” as we seek and discuss theological truth.
- Our goal is functional unity as we serve God and become transformed into Christ’s image. The Bible reminds us often to work and grow together as we wrestle to live out our

faith and grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus, recognizing that it is God who gave us different roles and has brought us to the different points of growth and understanding that we currently portray.

THE NEED FOR THEOLOGICAL STANDARDS

At its core, Christianity is really about (1) what we believe to be true, and (2) who we place our faith in. What we believe is important! In theological terms, what we believe is often called “doctrine” or “standards.” This document is designed to clearly disclose what we believe at Waypoint Christian Church and to help those who gather together to live out their lives faithfully.

“Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers” (1 Timothy 4:16).

Although it isn’t a new phenomenon, today we live in a world of many “gods” and belief systems. Throughout history, orthodox Christians have united around a short list of “essential truths” to help clarify the beliefs of Christianity. As strange or “new” teachings arose around them in every generation, Christians often wrote down these biblical essentials as “Creeds,” “Confessions,” or “Statements of Faiths.” The Apostle Paul wrote what is considered the first creed around 50 A.D., recorded in 1 Corinthians 15:1-9. Some important examples are the Apostles’ Creed (2nd Century)¹ the Nicene Creed (325 AD)², the Athanasian Creed (ca 6th or 7th century)³, as well as others like the Westminster Confession of Faith (A standard of reformed doctrine written in 1646 AD)⁴. The purpose of these historical statements was, and is, to define and reaffirm the core beliefs of the Christian faith, so that what we believe would have accuracy, stability, and roots.

NOTE: These following Doctrinal Essentials from the Bible are drawn in nature and detail from the historic creeds of our faith. Some of these creeds are referenced above and also quoted at the end of this document. We offer these essentials in a plain, more modern language style with few theological terms to help in discussion and understanding. More specific and detailed theological statements, including Bible references, are provided in the THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSION sections concerning doctrinal standards of leadership at Waypoint.

THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSIONS

There are a number of doctrinal essentials to which we hold. To us, doctrine, beliefs, and life standards may be divided into three groups:

- A. That which is essential for salvation: that which is, in our opinion, required to be a true Christian.
- B. That which is essential for church membership: the Historic Essentials.
- C. That which is essential for leadership at Waypoint Christian Church: those fulfilling the office or role of Pastor, Elder, Deacon, and/or Teacher are here considered to be “leadership.”
- D. Those doctrines or issues on which we allow liberty, “to agree to disagree,” while remaining in fellowship.

A. DOCTRINE ESSENTIAL FOR SALVATION

A religious man once asked Jesus, “What must I do to gain eternal life?” Jesus’ answer is clear: “Come, follow me.” Some people may think that we gain eternal life or go to heaven based on where we were born or through the faith of our parents. Some may believe that one can become a Christian through being good, through fulfilling some religious act, or through attending a certain church. None of these is the key to being a Christian. Christianity is about believing in Jesus and following him.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him,” (John 3:16-17).

What is required to be saved?

In theological terms, we believe salvation is a free gift offered to mankind by God through the finished work (the life, death, resurrection, and ascension) of Jesus Christ (Acts 15:11; Romans 3:23-24; 5:15; Galatians 2:20-21; Ephesians 2:5, 8-9; Titus 3:4-5). It is God who first reaches out to us (Matthew 9:13, Luke 19:10; Ephesians 1:3-5), and no one comes to eternal life without the Spirit drawing them (John 6:44). God is the Power Source and Actor in the work of salvation (John 3:3-8; Philippians 2:12-13; Titus 3:4-5). But, from a human perspective, in order to be saved and gain eternal life, some response is generated and acknowledged. A person is called on by God to repent of his or her sin and receive and accept Jesus Christ as Lord (personal master, ruler, or King) and Savior (the one who redeems us from the just judgment we each deserve) (Mark 1:14-15; Acts 20-21). Each individual must trust alone in what Christ has done in order to receive that salvation (John 1:12). This can be stated in a simpler, less theological way: To be a Christian, a man or woman must—as led and drawn by God’s Spirit—recognize the personal need for spiritual forgiveness, believe and confess that Jesus as God is the means of spiritual forgiveness, and invite Jesus to come in and lead his/her life (Romans 10:9-13).

This is all that any person must believe to be a Christian. While God does offer us more direction for leading a life that is joyful, peaceful, and holy, Christian faith is this simple. Christians use varying phrases from the Bible to express this place of choosing to follow Jesus: personal faith, salvation, being saved, being born again, meeting Jesus, and becoming a Christian. We believe the above to be foundational and complete (Galatians 1:6-9; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:12; John 3:16; Acts 16:31).

B. DOCTRINE ESSENTIAL FOR CHURCH MEMBERSHIP:

The Bible

We believe that the Bible is God’s own Word, written by men prepared and carried along by His Spirit. The Bible is inspired by God and is the exact testimony that God desires humanity to have of his nature, character, and plan for mankind. We believe that the Bible is affirmed as God’s instruction; obeyed as God’s command in all that it requires; embraced as God’s pledge in all that it promises. Holy Scripture is God’s witness to the person and work of Jesus the Messiah (Psalms 19:7-9; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Luke 24:27).

The Godhead (Trinity)

We believe in one God eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three are identical in essence and equal in power and glory. They possess the same nature, attributes, and perfections, and are worthy of the same worship, confidence, and obedience (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 12:29; John 1:1-4; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

The Person and Work of God the Father

We believe that God the Father is recognized, in essence, as equal to God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, but in function, superior to each. He is the source of all life and all that is created, and is the planner, and sender of Salvation. He also is the source of all blessing, and choosing us in Christ, He works all things according to the council of His own will. He is distinct from Jesus and the Holy Spirit in personhood, and is often identified as the Father and true God, the Majesty on High, sovereign, and He who dwells in inapproachable light, Whom no man has ever seen, etc. (Genesis 1:1 with John 1:1-2; John 3:16; John 10:30 with John 14:28; John 15:15-16; 15:26-28; 16:23; 17:1-5; Ephesians 1:1-12; 1 Timothy 6:13-16; Hebrews 1:1-4)

The Person and Work of Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, being conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He came to reveal God to mankind and to redeem our sinful race by giving Himself as a sinless substitutionary sacrifice on the cross of Calvary, satisfying God's righteous judgments against sin. He then arose bodily from the dead and ascended to the Father's right hand, accomplishing the believer's justification. He continually intercedes before the Father on the believer's behalf. All the Scriptures, from first to last, testify of Him (Luke 1:34-35; Luke 24:27; John 1:1-2, 4, 14, 18; 16:8; Romans 3:24-26; 8:34; 1 Corinthians 15:1-3).

The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the Divine Person who convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He also gives eternal life to those who place their trust in Christ, unites all believers to Christ in one body by His baptizing ministry, indwells them permanently, seals them unto the day of redemption, fills (controls) those who are yielding to Him, and empowers them for service. He seeks to direct their attention, not to themselves nor to their experience, but to Christ (John 3:5-8; 14:16-17; 16:7-11, 13-14; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:30; 5:18).

The Condition of Man

We believe that man was originally created in the image of and after the likeness of God, free from sin. He subsequently fell into sin by a voluntary act of personal disobedience to the revealed will of God, lost his spiritual life, and became dead in sins and corrupt in nature. These effects of sin have been transmitted to the entire human race, Jesus Christ excepted, and thus every person born into the world is alienated from a life with God and incapable of remedying his lost and depraved condition apart from divine grace (Genesis 1:26; 3:1-24; 6:5; Psalms 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:10-18; 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3).

The Means of Salvation

We believe that salvation from the guilt and condemnation of sin is possible only as the gift of God's grace. It cannot be gained by good resolutions, sincere efforts, or submission to the rules, regulations, or ordinances of any church or religion. Instead, it is freely bestowed on all who put their faith in Christ and trust in the work which He accomplished on the cross of Calvary. All who do so pass from death to life, are forgiven of their sins, accepted by the Father, and born into His family by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God (John 5:24; Ephesians 1:6-7; 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23).

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. This body was formed 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 for instruction, worship, prayer, fellowship, service, and the administration of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. They are likewise to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:42-47; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; 12:13; Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:3).

Our Life in Christ

We believe that all who have been born again by God's transforming grace are secure in Christ forever. It is their privilege to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation, not on the basis of their own worthiness, but on the worthiness of Jesus' righteousness and on the basis of God's faithfulness and the testimony of His Word. However, this assurance must not become an occasion for sin or arrogance. The reality of their faith in Christ is demonstrated by subjecting their fleshly nature and desires to the power of the Holy Spirit and by doing the good works for which He saved them, especially by demonstrating a Christ-like love for one another. We believe that corporate and individual worship is an essential part of every believer's relationship to God, and that having personal fellowship with God on a regular and consistent basis is essential for Christian growth. We believe that everything we have belongs to God - that He is the Owner (Matthew 7:20; John 10:27-29; 13:34-35; Romans 6:13; 8:28-29; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 2:10; 1 John 3:14, 23; 5:13).

The Gifts of the Spirit

We believe that every believer is bestowed with gifts for service by the sovereign Spirit of God according to God's own will, to be exercised for the edification of the church, and for the glory of the Lord, in order to fulfill specific purposes in His program (Romans 8:23; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 27-31; 13:8-10; 14:21-22; 2 Corinthians 12:7-9; Ephesians 4:7-13; Hebrews 2:3-4; 1 Peter 4:10-11; 2 Timothy 4:20).

The Culmination of History

We believe in the personal, bodily, visible return of Christ Jesus in the glory of His Father to set up on the earth a kingdom in which He shall reign in righteousness and peace. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all people: believers to enjoy eternal life with God; unbelievers to experience

judgment and then eternal suffering apart from God (2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6).

C. DOCTRINE ESSENTIAL FOR LEADERSHIP

Throughout Christianity, the essentials for salvation are consistent and unchanging. On the other hand, doctrine essential for leadership in local churches may vary greatly. Additionally, no local church or denomination, including this one, has a perfect set of doctrinal knowledge and understanding, because no human can fully know the mind of God.

The Elder body, the governing body of our church, will prayerfully consider which doctrines best define what we see as God's instructions in the pages of the Bible. Humbly, the Elder body will set certain doctrines as essential for those who are in leadership at this church. They include the essential historic doctrines above but are more specific and detailed in nature.

NOTE: These doctrines are not set in stone and are to be reviewed regularly. An individual at Waypoint may disagree with some of these doctrines and still be a Christian, an active participant in the life of the church, and a church member. While he could serve in most capacities, he could not serve in a leadership role (Pastor, Elder, Deacon, or doctrinal Teacher). Bear in mind that not all of our church doctrine is essential for salvation, and we are careful to point out that, in many cases, sincere and intelligent Christians hold different positions.

1. WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT GOD

Natural Attributes

We believe that there is but one living and true God, who is infinite in perfection, a most pure spirit (indivisible), invisible, immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute, working all things according to the counsel of His own immutable and most righteous will, for His own glory (Exodus 34:6-7; Deuteronomy 6:4; 10:17; Numbers 16:22; Exodus 15:11; 33:19; Isaiah 44:6; Habakkuk 3:6; Psalm 102:26; Job 34:12; Revelation 5:12; 7:12).

Moral Attributes

We believe that God is most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. He is also most just and terrible in His judgments, hating all sin, and will by no means clear the guilty. (From the Westminster Confession)

Trinity

We believe in one God eternally existing in three equal persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 48:16; Matthew 28:19; John 6:27; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1:8).

2. WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT GOD'S INTERACTION WITH HUMANITY

Creation & Fall

We believe that mankind was created in the image of God and that Adam and Eve sinned, and consequently, experienced not only physical death but also spiritual death (which is separation from God). The consequences of this sin affect the entire human race. All human beings are born with a sinful nature (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:17; Mark 7:20-23; John 2:24-25; Romans 5:12-19; Ephesians 2:1-3; 4:18).

Incarnation

We believe that, in order to remedy this situation, God the Son became flesh in the person of Jesus Christ, who was begotten by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, and who is true God and true man (Matthew 1:18-25; Matthew 26:38; John 8:40; John 8:54-58; John 11:33; Hebrews 1:8; Hebrews 2:14).

Atonement

We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins as a substitutionary sacrifice and that all who believe in Him are declared righteous on the basis of His shed blood (Mark 10:45; Romans 3:21-26; Romans 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:14; Galatians 1:3; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 2:2).

Resurrection

We believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ, in His ascension into heaven, and in His present life at the right hand of the Father. Jesus now serves as high priest, intercessor, and advocate on our behalf with the Father (John 20:25-27; Acts 1:9-11; Romans 1:4; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1).

Return of Christ

We believe in the literal, physical, premillennial, and imminent return of Jesus with his saints, wherein he will also gather (rapture) His church to Himself. Upon the return of Christ, God will judge the living and the dead by Jesus Christ (Isaiah 9:6-7; Isaiah 11:2-5; Matthew 24:27, 30; John 5:27; Acts 1:11; Acts 17:31; Romans 2:16; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Jude 14, Revelation 1:7; Revelation 20:4-6; 22:20).

Salvation

We believe that whoever by faith receives Jesus Christ as His Savior becomes a child of God. A person's salvation is not the result of any human effort or merit. We believe that salvation (properly understood) entails the following: justification (being declared righteous the moment one believes on Jesus), sanctification (the process of becoming holy and working out our salvation in the here and now), glorification (the culmination of salvation and the transformation of our bodies into the glorious

image of Christ upon His return) (John 1:12; Romans 3:28; Galatians 3; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 John 5:11-13).

Eternal Security

We believe that once a person is saved, it is impossible for him to lose his salvation. He is kept eternally secure by the power of God through the new birth, the indwelling and sealing of the Holy Spirit, and the intercession of Christ (John 10:25-30; John 14:16-17; Romans 8:33s-39; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Peter 1:23).

Role of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person, possessing all the qualities of personality, as well as possessing all the distinctively divine attributes. He is God. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He regenerates, seals, and sets apart the believer to a holy life. He baptizes the believer into the body of Christ, comes to indwell him permanently, and acts as the administrator of the Church during the Church age or dispensation (Isaiah 40:13-14; Psalms 139:7; John 3:5-7; John 7:37-39; John 14:16-17; John 16:8; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:9, 26-27, 1 Corinthians 2:10-11; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Titus 3:5).

Baptism of the Spirit

We believe that there is only one baptism of the Holy Spirit. This occurs at conversion at which time one receives the Holy Spirit in the Spirit's entirety. Christians may have subsequent meaningful experiences with the Holy Spirit. Any subsequent experience should properly be called a "filling of the Spirit" and not a "second baptism." It is necessary for each Christian to be continually filled by the Spirit by confessing sin and yielding his life to the Master (1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13; 4:4; 5:18-21; Colossians 2:9-10).

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

We believe that believers receive from the Holy Spirit spiritual gifts which the Holy Spirit gives as He wills. Believers should endeavor to discover, develop, and use these gifts to serve and build up the Body. The Body functions most effectively when gifts are properly exercised. However, the fruits of the Spirit, not spiritual gifts, are the evidences of being filled by the Holy Spirit (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-27; Ephesians 4:7-13).

Exercise of Spiritual Gifts

We believe in the exercise of all the spiritual gifts according to the guidelines given by Scripture. If a message is given by a spiritual gift, the message cannot contradict or add to Scripture, which is final and complete (1 Corinthians 2:4-11; 1 Corinthians 14; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; 1 Peter 4:10).

Sanctification

We believe that all believers still possess a sinful nature in this life but that God has made full provision for believers to overcome this sinful nature and to live for God through identification with Christ, a knowledge of the Scriptures, and by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit working through faith. We recognize that this is a process which will not be completed until we see Jesus face to

face. Nonetheless, we believe it is the will of God for every believer to be sanctified, as the Scripture expressly states, without which no one will see God (Romans 5:12-19; 6:1-14; 8:11-17; Ephesians 2:1-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Hebrews 12:14).

The Bible

We believe God, who is Himself Truth and speaks truth only, has inspired Holy Scripture in order to reveal Himself to lost mankind through Jesus Christ as Creator and Lord, Redeemer and Judge. Holy Scripture is God's witness to Himself. We believe that the Bible, being God's own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is of infallible, divine authority in all matters upon which it touches. It is inerrant in its entirety. This includes the fields of history and science as well as spiritual, religious, and redemptive themes. (We use the word "inerrant" not in the sense of being absolutely precise by modern standards, but in the sense of always making good its claims and achieving that measure of focused truth at which its authors aimed in the original copies.)

We believe that the Bible is God's revelation in all that it affirms; obeyed as God's command and instruction in all that it requires; embraced and believed as God's pledge in all that it promises (Matthew 5:18; John 10:35; John 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 2:13-16; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21).

Bodily Resurrection

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, both the saved and the lost. Believers are resurrected to enjoy eternal life with God. Unbelievers are resurrected to experience judgment and eternal suffering apart from God (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; 1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; Revelation 20:4-6, 12-15; 21:1-8).

The Ordinance of Baptism

We believe that baptism is a sign and testimony of a person's saving relationship with Jesus Christ. We believe that every Christian should, out of obedience to the Word of God, and as a public identification with Jesus Christ, as well as an appeal to the Church to be received in Christian fellowship (partnership), be baptized. We at Waypoint will never hinder or delay someone's obedience in baptism; however, children who become Christians must be able to give testimony with understanding of salvation and the significance of the sacrament of baptism before proceeding with baptism itself. We require no more or less of children than we would of an adult in this situation (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Ephesians 4:5).

The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper

We believe that Christians are to celebrate Communion until He returns. This celebration reminds Christians of Christ's body broken and blood shed for our sins and is to be the Church's proclamation until He returns (Luke 22:14-23; 1 Corinthians 11:17-30).

Lordship

We believe that Christ should have control of every area of a believer's life. There are no activities, thoughts, or decisions in which God is not concerned, and His will should be sought accordingly. Jesus Christ should be Lord of our work, play, thoughts, and speech every day in all situations, as

well as Lord of our ministry and service to Him (Romans 14:23; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 10:31; Philippians 1:21; 1 Peter 3:15).

Worship

We believe that corporate and individual worship are essential parts of every believer's relationship to God. We set aside specific times for corporate verbal praise, thanksgiving, adoration, and acknowledgment of the acts, attributes, and qualities of God. According to Romans 12:1, individual obedience to God, service to fellowmen, and evangelism in our everyday lives are forms of worship, as well as our verbally describing God's worth in a public worship service (Exodus 34:14; Psalms 29:1-2; John 4:23-24; Romans 12:1).

Fellowship with God

We believe that having personal fellowship with God on a regular and consistent basis is essential for Christian growth. This fellowship with God includes spending time praying, learning from the Word of God, and applying its truths to our lives (Psalm 1; Psalms 5:3; Psalm 119; Psalms 145:2; Colossians 3:16; 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:17).

Stewardship

We believe that everything we have belongs to God, that He is the Owner, and that a Christian is a steward of all God has given him. We express our commitment to God's ownership by giving back to Him a portion of what He has given to us. We determine the amount by asking Him for His wisdom. As we do this, we should give attention to what His Word says about tithing, giving cheerfully, and giving the first fruits, having faith that God will meet our needs (Haggai 2:8; Deuteronomy 8:18; 1 Corinthians 4:2, 7; James 1:5; Malachi 3:10; Luke 11:42; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15; Proverbs 3:9-10).

3. WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT THE FAMILY

Family

We believe that next to God, the family is our most important priority and responsibility. Our families are a greater priority than our ministries. The family is the most important unit in our society and, as a church, we are committed to ministering to the family and enabling each member to live out his or her God-given role and responsibilities (Genesis 2; Deuteronomy 6; Psalm 127; 1 Timothy 3).

Husbands

We believe that God has appointed the husband as the head of the family. He is to love his wife, to provide for and protect her, to lovingly lead her, to be considerate of her, and to nurture her spiritually. In short, the husband is to lay down his life as Christ did in every way by loving and leading his family. The father, as head of the family, is to lead not only his spouse, but also any children under his care in worship, faith and practice, and to train up a child in the way that he/she should go (Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Ephesians 5:25-33; 1 Timothy 5:8; 1 Peter 3:6-7).

Wives

We believe that submission is designed to be mutual within the family, as per Ephesians 5:21, "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." We believe that God has called the wife to respect her husband and submit to him as he exercises godly, loving leadership in the home. She is to do him good and not evil and is to develop a gentle and quiet spirit (Proverbs 31:1-12; Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:18; 1 Peter 3:1-6).

Parents

We believe that parents are given the primary responsibility for the spiritual training of their children. They are not to exasperate their children but to bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. The church is to be a supplement but never a replacement for the role of parents in training children. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Psalm 127:3-5; Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21).

Children

We believe that children/adolescents are to be submissive to their parents, respecting their parents' God-ordained authority while under their protection and care. Adults should continue to honor and seek counsel from their parents all of their lives, even though they are no longer under their parents' authority (Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 6:1-3; Colossians 3:20).

Abortion

We believe that from conception a preborn is a person. We believe that all persons, male and female, are made in the image of God, and therefore have eternal worth. Thus, we believe that it is sin to intentionally take the life of a preborn through abortion (Genesis 1:26-27; Psalm 139; Jeremiah 4:4-10).

Marriage

We believe God instituted marriage as symbolic of the relationship between Christ and the Church. We believe it is God's intention that marriage be a permanent, supportive relationship between one man and one woman. It is God's intention that Christians not deliberately marry non-Christians (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6; 2 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 5:22-23).

Divorce

Nowhere in the Bible does God condone divorce, and indeed, He says at one point: "I hate divorce..." (Malachi 2:16). However, because we live in a fallen world, the Bible gives guidelines to the Church on how to handle divorce. While divorce is always sinful and traumatic, it is not a sin that stands above others in the Bible. Like all who sin and repent, God is able to forgive and use divorced people in his work and Kingdom. Nor does divorce automatically disqualify one from a position of leadership within the church; each case should be examined carefully to determine the qualifications of a candidate (Matthew 19:3-9; Romans 7:1-3; 1 Corinthians 7:1-40; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6). It is our opinion that divorce may or may not disqualify a candidate for leadership. We will consider the nature of the divorce in relation to salvation, the offending party(ies) and whether there were biblical grounds for divorce. We cannot bind someone to something that the Scripture does not, nor can we qualify someone where the Scripture does not.

Remarriage

Several circumstances about remarriage are addressed specifically in the Bible. A widow or widower is free to remarry a believer. If an unbeliever divorces a believer (for whatever reason), the believer is free to remarry a believer. A believer whose spouse (believer or unbeliever) has committed adultery is free to divorce and remarry. All areas of remarriage are complicated and difficult, so any remarriage should be undertaken patiently, with great care, and with the counsel and wisdom of Christians (Matthew 19:9; Romans 7:1-14; 1 Corinthians 7:12-17; 38-39).

4. WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT THE CHURCH

Body of Christ

We believe that when a man, woman, boy, or girl receives Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, he/she is “born again” into another family beyond his/her natural, human family and now has God as his/her Father. By nature, this family must include both sexes, all ages, and they all must learn to function together as the Family of Faith, the Body of Christ, and the Church (Mark 10:28-31; John 1: 12-13; 3:1-21; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Timothy 5:1-2; Titus 2:1-8).

The Church Universal

We believe that the Church in its invisible form is universal, the true body, and Church of Christ. All believers who have been born again, from the day of Pentecost until Jesus’ return, are members of the universal church regardless of organizational and denominational affiliation (Acts 11:15-18; Ephesians 4:4-6; Colossians 1:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17).

Maturity in the Body

We believe that all believers should strive to become spiritually mature in order to function in the body of Christ. Scripture emphasizes the need for individual Christian growth and maturity as well as corporate development of faith, hope, and love (1 Corinthians 13:13; Ephesians 1:15-18; Colossians 1:3-5; 1 Thessalonians 1:3; 2 Thessalonians 1:3-4).

Discipleship

We believe in the process of biblical discipleship, also understood as spiritual reproduction, multiplication, replication, and transference, as God’s method for building the body and reaching the world. The goal of discipleship is to produce mature Christians who are able to replicate, transfer, and multiply their faith and maturity toward other believers. We believe that the Scriptural model of older (maturity in the faith) males to younger males, and older females to younger females is the best and most scriptural discipleship model to be practiced. All the members and gifts of the body are needed to accomplish biblical discipleship (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:12; 1 Thessalonians 1:6-8; 2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 2:1-8).

Every Member A Missionary

We believe that every member of Christ's Church is to be a missionary – “one who is engaged in living out and doing Jesus' ministry”–and that all believers in Jesus are New Testament era priests. As ministers and priests, we are to “own the ministry of the local church” through prayer, intercession, giving, and service. God has also given each of us a call to be missionaries in our own households, families (extended and immediate), neighborhoods, schools, and jobs. We are to be the ambassadors of Jesus to the world (Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Peter 2:9).

Full-Time, Vocational Ministry

We believe that God calls some members of the body into full-time, vocational ministry in order that they might equip the other members of the Body for ministry. This call into full-time, vocational ministry is based upon whether a man or a woman has demonstrated the ability to equip other Christians to do ministry (Acts 13:1-2; Ephesians 4:11-12).

Church Leadership

We believe in an Elder form of church government. We believe that the Biblical norm is multiplicity of leadership and that decisions ideally should be made by unanimity (consensus) of those in leadership. This implies a model of unity and humility, prayerfully seeking God through various issues, commitment to love one another as a model to the body and to the world, and commitment to the same basic body of doctrine and philosophy of ministry. We believe that the best reading of the Bible expresses that only men are to function as elders. To qualify as a candidate for eldership, a man must have developed a lifestyle which demonstrates all of the character qualities described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, as well as the one essential spiritual gift of teaching (Amos 3:3; John 13:34-35; Acts 14:21-23; 15:23-25; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1-5).

Women and the Church

We affirm that God gives all gifts—including teaching and certain leadership roles—to both men and women. We believe that godly women have and continue to offer incredible leadership, gifts and guidance to the church. We believe that God in His wisdom created men and women as equal spiritual beings, but appointed them to different roles in the church. These roles are equally important and pleasing in the Church to God. Specifically, God has appointed Elders to be accountable for the church and the rest of the body are to support them through the full exercise of their gifts (Luke 8:1-3; Romans 16:1-16; Philippians 4:2-3; Titus 2:3-5).

Deacons

We believe that deacons are gifted by the Holy Spirit in the areas of service and administration, and are called by God to serve. To be a deacon, a person must have developed a lifestyle which demonstrates all of the character qualities described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Waypoint Christian Church is also in the process of examining the Scriptures so as to discern whether women should serve in the office of deacon. Waypoint Christian church agrees that until we have ascertained the mind of the Spirit of Christ in unity, we will table printing a statement on the matter.

Servant Leadership

We believe that the main qualification for leadership is a servant's heart. The heart of a servant, which is humility, must be demonstrated before a person is given leadership responsibility (Mark 10:42-45; Philippians 2:3-4; 1 Peter 5:1-3).

Shepherding

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has entrusted to the leadership of His Church the task of shepherding His Body. Shepherding involves spiritually feeding, loving, caring for, guarding, and watching over the souls of believers. We believe shepherding is the preferred and normative term used by the Bible to describe the work of an Elder/Pastor. To be an effective shepherd one must "smell like" the sheep through love for, contact with, and proximity to the sheep of their flock (John 21:15-17; Hebrews 13:17)

5. WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT OUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE WORLD

Spiritual Warfare

We believe in the reality and personality of Satan, and that when given the opportunity, he attempts to defeat Christians. However, we believe Christians can discover and overcome Satan's schemes by applying Scriptural truth because, as Scripture affirms, "Greater is he who is in us than he who is in the world" (Job 1:6-12; Daniel 10:12-14, 20-21; Luke 10:18; John 8:44; Ephesians 6:10-18; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8-9; 1 John 4:4; Revelation 12:17).

Evangelism

We believe that Christians should proclaim the good news of Christ and salvation to non-saved persons, starting first with their own family and community, and then throughout the whole world (Isaiah 6:8; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 10:31-33; 14:25; 1 Peter 3:15).

Missions

We believe that Jesus gave the church a clear, spiritual mandate to "make disciples of all nations." Therefore, it is the responsibility of each local body to contribute to this God-ordained program by training, sending, and supporting individuals and teams for local and cross-cultural evangelism, discipleship, and church planting (Matthew 28:19; The book of Acts; 2 Corinthians 8:1-4; Philippians 4:15-19; 3 John 5-8).

Social Concern

We believe that when God created man, He gave him the cultural mandate to fill the earth by his creative powers and subdue it with his or her powers of authority and management. This responsibility of creating and controlling has never been lifted; therefore, it is a biblical Christian concern to become involved in politics, social programs, moral and social ethics, and environmental control and development (Genesis 1:28).

D. AREAS OF DOCTRINAL LIBERTY

Throughout history, churches have struggled to find the right balance of doctrine and freedom. In our differences, many disagreements have arisen. To minimize this, we have many areas of faith practice which we leave to individual conscience. This involves doctrines not discussed above on which two Christians may hold different views and still be friends, members of the same church, and members of the same leadership group. This is not to say that discussions in these areas are unimportant. We simply believe that in these areas, the Bible is not perfectly clear or is open to differing understandings. In these cases, Christians at Waypoint will offer grace to one another and agree to disagree.

Some examples might be: the time of Christ's return, the type of bread used in communion, the age of the earth, the best Bible version, the style of music used in worship, the most appropriate expression of spiritual gifts, spiritual warfare, civil involvement or disobedience, and others.

When doctrines like these are taught, it should be explained that they are not essential for salvation or for leadership. We may state the case for our positions, but we should point out that, in many cases, sincere and intelligent Christians hold different positions.

ANCIENT CREEDS AND CONFESSIONS OF THE FAITH

[1] The Apostles Creed (circa A.D. 341).

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic* church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

**Catholic is used in its truest sense of "universal," the true Christian church of all times and all places, without reference to Roman Catholicism or denominationalism. The same is true in its use within the Nicene Creed and Athanasian Creed to follow.*

[2] The Nicene Creed (A.D. 325, 381).

We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten from the Father before all ages, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made; of the same essence as the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; he became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and was made human. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried. The third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead. His kingdom will never end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life. He proceeds from the Father and the Son, and with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified. He spoke through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We affirm one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look forward to the resurrection of the dead, and to life in the world to come. Amen.

[3] The Athanasian Creed (circa 6th or 7th century)

Whoever desires to be saved should above all hold to the catholic faith.

Anyone who does not keep it whole and unbroken will doubtless perish eternally.

Now this is the catholic faith:

That we worship one God in trinity and the trinity in unity, neither blending their persons nor dividing their essence. For the person of the Father is a distinct person, the person of the Son is another, and that of the Holy Spirit still another. But the divinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one, their glory equal, their majesty coeternal.

What quality the Father has, the Son has, and the Holy Spirit has:

The Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated, the Holy Spirit is uncreated.

The Father is immeasurable, the Son is immeasurable, the Holy Spirit is immeasurable.

The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, the Holy Spirit is eternal.

And yet there are not three eternal beings; there is but one eternal being. So too there are not three uncreated or immeasurable beings; there is but one uncreated and immeasurable being.

Similarly, the Father is almighty, the Son is almighty, the Holy Spirit is almighty. Yet there are not three almighty beings; there is but one almighty being.

Thus, the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God. Yet there are not three gods; there is but one God.

Thus, the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Spirit is Lord. Yet there are not three lords; there is but one Lord.

Just as Christian truth compels us to confess each person individually as both God and Lord, so catholic religion forbids us to say that there are three gods or lords.

The Father was neither made nor created nor begotten from anyone. The Son was neither made nor created; he was begotten from the Father alone. The Holy Spirit was neither made nor created nor begotten; he proceeds from the Father and the Son.

Accordingly, there is one Father, not three fathers; there is one Son, not three sons; there is one Holy Spirit, not three holy spirits.

Nothing in this trinity is before or after, nothing is greater or smaller; in their entirety the three persons are coeternal and coequal with each other.

So in everything, as was said earlier, we must worship their trinity in their unity and their unity in their trinity.

Anyone then who desires to be saved should think thus about the trinity.

But it is necessary for eternal salvation that one also believe in the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ faithfully.

Now this is the true faith:

That we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, is both God and human, equally. He is God from the essence of the Father, begotten before time; and he is human from the essence of his mother, born in time; completely God, completely human, with a rational soul and human flesh; equal to the Father as regards divinity, less than the Father as regards humanity.

Although he is God and human, yet Christ is not two, but one. He is one, however, not by his divinity being turned into flesh but by God's taking humanity to himself. He is one, certainly not by the blending of his essence, but by the unity of his person. For just as one human is both rational soul and flesh, so too the one Christ is both God and human.

He suffered for our salvation; he descended to hell; he arose from the dead; he ascended to heaven; he is seated at the Father's right hand; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. At his coming all people will arise bodily and give an accounting of their own deeds. Those who have done good will enter eternal life, and those who have done evil will enter eternal fire.

This is the catholic faith:

one cannot be saved without believing it firmly and faithfully.

[4] The Westminster Confession of Faith (1646 AD) is a longer statement from which many Reformers, Evangelicals and Presbyterians derive their theological traditions. Although Waypoint is an independent/non-denominational church, we find our roots in many of these reformed doctrines. A complete on-line copy of a modern English version can be found at www.epc.org.