



RIVER CITY

BAPTIST CHURCH

Statement of Faith

We joyfully stand alongside our brothers and sisters in Christ throughout the ages in affirming the Apostles' Creed (2nd Century) and the Nicene Creed (325 and 381), and we also believe that the Second London Confession (1689), the New Hampshire Confession (1853), and the Baptist Faith and Message (2000) provide helpful expositions of God's Word.

Our Statement of Faith is a summary of what we believe as a church. It is anchored in God's Word and evidenced in historic Christianity. It encourages sound doctrine, protects us from error, and shows unity in Christ.

Shared fellowship is only as deep as shared beliefs. We pray you are edified as you reflect on the goodness of God expressed in these doctrines.

Together with the church in all ages:

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

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who, for us humans and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

And we believe in one, holy, universal, and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins, and we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Furthermore, we believe the following:

1. God

We believe there is one, and only one, living and true God. He is the eternal, infinite Creator and supreme Ruler of heaven and earth. He is just, merciful, and loving, and he governs all things

according to his sovereign will. He is inexpressibly glorious in holiness and is worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love. In the unity of the Godhead there are three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They are equal in every divine perfection, and they carry out distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

We also believe God, from eternity, decrees or permits all things that come to pass, and perpetually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and all events. However, God is not in any way the author or approver of sin, nor does he destroy the free agency and responsibility of mankind.

Exodus 20:3–4; Deuteronomy 4:35; 4:39; 6:4–5; 32:39; 1 Samuel 2:2; 1 Kings 8:23; Psalm 86:8–10; Isaiah 6:3; 44:6–8; 45:5–25; 46:9; Jeremiah 10:6–10; Micah 7:18; Malachi 3:6; Matthew 3:13–17; 28:18–20; John 4:24; 10:30; 14:6; 17:3; 17:11; 17:20–21; Acts 5:3–4; 1 Corinthians 8:4–6; 2 Corinthians 3:17; 13:14; Galatians 3:20; Ephesians 1:3–14; 4:5–6; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; 1 Timothy 1:17; 2:5; James 2:19; 1 John 5:20; Jude 25; Revelation 4:11

2. The Scriptures

We believe the Holy Bible, both Old and New Testaments, was written by persons who were divinely inspired, and that it is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction. God is its author, salvation is its purpose, and truth, without any mixture of error, is its content. Scripture reveals the principles by which God will judge us and the way of salvation through Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is now, and will be to the end of the world, the true center of Christian fellowship and the supreme standard for evaluating all human conduct, creeds, and opinions.

Psalm 119; Proverbs 30:5–6; Isaiah 40:8; Luke 24:25–47; John 5:39; Romans 2:12; Philippians 2:16; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15–17; Hebrews 1:1–2; 4:12–13; 2 Peter 1:19–21; 3:15–16; 1 John 4:1

3. Humanity

We believe God created humanity in his own image, and because of this every person—regardless of culture, ethnicity, developmental stage, mental capacity, or any other factor—has inherent and equal value. God created humanity male and female, as the crowning jewel of his creation. Differences between male and female are immutably rooted in God’s original biological design and are intended to foster human flourishing. His design also encompasses marriage, which is the lifelong covenant union of one biological man and one biological woman and reflects the unbreakable love between Christ and his bride, the church; and singleness, which is a gracious gift God gives in order to serve him without distraction and divided interests, and to remind us that human marriage is not the final destiny of anyone, for all who are in Christ will ultimately and gloriously be wed to Christ himself.

Genesis 1:26–30; 2:5, 7, 18–22, 24; 9:6; Exodus 21:16; Psalms 1; 8:3–6; 139:14; Matthew 19:4–6; 19:10–12; Mark 2:19–20; Mark 10:6–9; 12:25; 1 Corinthians 7:1–9, 25–35, 38–40; Colossians 1:16; Ephesians 5:25–32; 1 Timothy 1:10; Revelation 7:17; 19:7–9; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Isaiah 54:5; Revelation 21:9–10

4. The Fall

We believe that though originally free from sin, humanity voluntarily rebelled against God and fell from their holy and happy state. As a result, all persons are now sinners and lack the righteousness required by the law of God, having inherited a corrupt nature wholly opposed to him. Therefore, they are under just condemnation to a sentence of eternal ruin, without defense or excuse.

Genesis 1:27; 31; 2:16–17; 3:1–24; 6:5, 12; 8:21; Psalm 51:5; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Isaiah 53:6; Ezekiel 18:19–20; Matthew 20:15; Acts 17:26–29; Romans 1:18–32; 2:1–16; 3:9–18; 5:12; Galatians 3:10, 22; Ephesians 2:1–3; Colossians 1:21

5. God’s Purpose of Grace

We believe God eternally chose some persons unto everlasting life, not because he foresaw merit in them, but solely because of his mercy in Christ, through which he called, justified, and glorified them. Election displays God’s sovereign goodness and his infinite freedom, wisdom, compassion, and unchangeable character. It is perfectly consistent with human free agency and includes all the means necessary to achieve God’s purpose. Indeed, it encourages the greatest possible exercise of human responsibility. Electing grace extinguishes boasting, cultivates humility, promotes love, fosters prayer, fuels evangelism, and solidifies trust in God to keep those who are his.

Exodus 33:18–19; Deuteronomy 7:7–8; Jeremiah 31:3; Luke 10:22; John 1:12–13; 6:37–44; 10:16; 15:16; Acts 2:22–23; 4:27–28; 13:48; 15:14; 16:14; 18:12; Romans 3:27; 4:16; 8:28–9:24; 11:5–6; 11:28–36; 1 Corinthians 1:26–31; 3:5–7; 9:22; 15:10; Galatians 1:15–16; Ephesians 1:1–2:10; Philippians 1:6; 3:12; Colossians 3:12; 1 Thessalonians 1:4–10; 2:12; 2 Thessalonians 2:13–14; 2 Timothy 1:8–9; 2:10; Hebrews 6:11; 1 Peter 1:1–2; 2 Peter 1:10–11; 1 John 4:19; Revelation 13:8

6. The Mediator

We believe the salvation of sinners is only by the grace of God through the work of Jesus Christ, apart from any human work. Jesus is the promised Messiah and Savior of the world, and is the mediator of a new covenant between God and humanity. By the appointment of the Father, he freely took on our nature but not our sin. He honored the divine law by his personal obedience and made a full atonement for our sins by his substitutionary death, satisfying God’s justice. He rose from the dead and is now enthroned in heaven. Jesus Christ unites in his person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections and, as such, is qualified in every way to be a suitable, compassionate, and all-sufficient Savior.

Isaiah 53:4–5; 55:1; Jeremiah 31:31–34; Matthew 4:17; 11:20–24, 28–30; Mark 1:15; Luke 19:10; John 1:1–14; 3:16–21; 5:40; 6:29; 1 Timothy 2:5

7. Regeneration

We believe sinners must be regenerated, or born again, in order to be saved. Regeneration is a change of heart, accomplished by the Holy Spirit, who resurrects those dead in trespasses and sins. God’s Spirit enlightens sinners’ minds to understand God’s Word, and he renews their whole nature so that they voluntarily trust and obey God’s Son. Regeneration is a work of God’s free and special grace alone, and its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, faith, and newness of life.

Jeremiah 31:31–34; Ezekiel 36:25–27; John 1:12–13; 3:3–7; Acts 10:44; 2 Corinthians 5:17–21; Galatians 5:22–23; Ephesians 2:1–5; Colossians 2:13; James 1:17–18; 1 Peter 1:3; 1 John 2:29; 3:9–10; 4:7; 5:1–4, 18

8. Repentance and Faith

We believe the power of the gospel is sufficient to save even the greatest sinner—and that all persons everywhere are commanded to repent and believe in Jesus. Repentance and faith are sacred duties as well as inseparable graces. They are produced in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of

God, who convinces us of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ. They consist of turning to God with genuine sorrow, confession, and a petition for mercy; receiving heartily the Lord Jesus Christ as prophet, priest, and king; and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior. Faith does not guarantee a believer will enjoy physical health or wealth in this world; instead, faithful believers will often suffer on this side of heaven. But even through earthly pain, true faith trusts God for help, hope, and the joy held out to us in the promises of the gospel.

Isaiah 55:1–7; Matthew 11:28–30; Mark 1:15; Luke 15:18–21; 24:46–47; John 1:12; 3:16; 6:37; 7:37; 16:8; Acts 2:37–38; 3:19–23; 11:18; 16:30–31; 17:30; 20:21; Romans 2:4; 10:9–11, 17; 2 Corinthians 7:9–10; Ephesians 2:8–10; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 4:14; 6:1; 7:25

9. Justification

We believe justification is God's gracious and full acquittal of sinners wherein he removes our guilt, reconciles us to himself, and declares us righteous. God justifies the ungodly through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone, not through anything done by us. It is solely on account of Christ's substitutionary death and subsequent resurrection, and on the basis of his perfect righteousness, which is freely credited to us by God. Justification immediately brings us into a relationship of peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needed for time and eternity.

Psalms 103:12; Isaiah 53:11–12; Matthew 9:6; John 1:16; Acts 10:43; Romans 3:20–28; 4:1–5:21; 6:23; 8:30–34; 2 Corinthians 5:17–21; Galatians 2:15–17; 3:24; Philippians 3:7–9; Titus 3:5–7; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 2:12, 25

10. Sanctification

We believe sanctification is God's work of consecrating a believer unto holiness for his purposes; it is also a progressive work of conforming believers to the likeness of Jesus Christ. It begins at regeneration and is carried on for the duration of life in believing hearts, by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. While growth in holiness is a gift of grace, it requires believers to actively and persistently fight sin through means such as reading and hearing God's Word, prayer, self-examination, self-denial, and the mutual edification of Christian community.

John 17:17; Romans 6:5–6, 11–19; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 6:11; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 7:1; Galatians 2:20; 5:16–24; Ephesians 4:20–24; Philippians 3:13–14; Colossians 3:5–10; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 4:14; 10:24–25; 12:1, 14; 1 Peter 1:15; 1 John 3:9; Revelation 3:19

11. The Perseverance of the Saints

We believe all genuine believers endure to the end. Their persevering trust and obedience to Christ, and attachment to his people, are the primary marks distinguishing them from superficial professors. Though true believers may fall, through neglect and temptation, into sin—and thereby grieve the Spirit, impair their fellowship with Christ, bring reproach on his name, and incur his loving discipline—yet they shall again be renewed unto repentance and kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation.

Matthew 5:13; 24:13; John 6:38–40; 8:31; 10:27–29; 15:6; Romans 8:30; 11:22; 1 Corinthians 9:27; 10:12; 15:1; Ephesians 1:13–14; 4:30; Philippians 1:6; Colossians 1:22–23; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 2:12; Hebrews 1:14; 3:12–14; 4:11; 6:12; 9:15; 1 Peter 1:4–5; 2 Peter 1:10; 1 John 2:19; 2 John 1:9; Jude 20; Revelation 2–3; 14:12; 21:7

12. The Church

We believe that Christians, regenerated by the Holy Spirit from every tribe, language, people, and nation, are to associate themselves into local churches. A visible church is a congregation of baptized believers, bound together by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel. It observes the ordinances of Christ, submits to his commands, and exercises the gifts given by the Holy Spirit for mutual edification. The local church is governed by the Word of God, which teaches that Jesus alone is its king and head; that elders are qualified men given to shepherd the church as pastors; that deacons are to serve the church; and that the congregation, comprised of all members, has the responsibility to affirm members, defend doctrine, hold its leaders accountable, and carry out discipline when Scripture requires. Church members are commanded to assemble regularly, love one another, promote gospel unity, seek the good of their neighbors, make disciples of the nations, and live for the glory of God.

Matthew 5:16; 16:13–19; 18:15–20; 28:18–20; John 1:12; 13:34–35; 17:20–24; Acts 2:41–42, 47; 5:14; 6:1–6; 11:26; 14:23; 20:28; Romans 16:1; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 5:1–13; 11:25–26; 1 Corinthians 14:1–40; 2 Corinthians 2:6–8; Ephesians 3:10; 4:1–2, 11–12; 5:22–23; 1 Timothy 2:12; 3:1–13, 15; 4:13; 5:17; Titus 1:5–9; Hebrews 10:19–25; 13:7, 17; 1 Peter 5:1–5; Revelation 5:9

13. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is a joyful duty and beautiful emblem that declares our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior—and our union with Christ in death to sin and resurrection to new life. Because baptism is also an ordinance of the church, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and the Lord's Supper.

We likewise believe the Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby the members of a church, following earnest self-examination, commemorate together the saving sacrifice of Christ and their communion with him and one another. Eating the bread and drinking the cup is in no sense a sacrifice, but rather is designed to commemorate Christ's dying love; to confirm the faith of his people; and to renew their mutual bond. The ordinances belong to the gathered church, marking off believers from unbelievers and making the church visible on earth.

Matthew 3:13–17; 26:26–29; 28:18–20; Acts 2:38–42; 8:36–38; 16:32–33; 20:7; Romans 6:4; 1 Corinthians 11:17–34; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:11–12; 1 Peter 3:20–21

14. The Lord's Day

We believe the first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and points to the rest that awaits the people of God. It should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20:8; Leviticus 19:30; Psalms 26:8; 87:3; 118:15, 24; Isaiah 58:13–14; Isaiah 56:2–8; Matthew 12:1–8; Mark 2:27; Luke 4:16; John 20:19; Acts 11:26; 13:44; 17:2–3; 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1–2; Colossians 2:16–17; Hebrews 4:3–11; 10:24–25; Revelation 1:10

15. Liberty of Conscience

We believe God alone is Lord of the conscience and has designed it to be free from the doctrines and commandments of men that are contrary to his Word or not contained in it. We also believe God appointed civil government for the benefit and good order of human society. Christians should pray for, honor, and obey public officials except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Prince of the kings of the earth.

2 Samuel 23:3–4; Psalm 2:2–6; Mark 12:13–17; Luke 12:13–15; Romans 13:1–7; 1 Timothy 2:1–3; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13–17; Revelation 19:16

16. The Resurrection and the World to Come

We believe death is not the end. Though human bodies after death return to dust, their spirits live on—the righteous departing immediately to be with the Lord, and the unrighteous to be reserved under darkness until the day of judgment. We also believe the end of the world is approaching. On the last day, Christ will descend from heaven and raise the dead to final judgment. A public separation will take place that will forever fix the final state of persons in heaven or hell—the unrighteous being justly assigned to endless punishment and the righteous to endless joy, to the glory of a holy and merciful God.

Daniel 12:2; Isaiah 65:17–25; Matthew 13:36–50; 24:31–46; 25:31–46; Mark 9:43–48; Luke 14:14; John 3:36; 4:36; 5:28–29; 6:40; 11:23–27; Acts 1:11; 3:21; 10:42; 17:31; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:11; 2 Thessalonians 1:5–12; Revelation 20:1–22:21