ARTICLES OF FAITH

Paragraph 1- Of the Scriptures

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be verbally inspired of God. We accept them as the only authority of faith, life and conduct, inerrant in the original writing, infallible and God-breathed. We accept the King James, the New King James, the New American Standard, the New International, and the Revised Standard versions of the Bible as reliable and good translations of the original Hebrew and Greek Scriptures. These versions, and any other approved by the board of elders, may be used in the services of the church. 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1: 20, 21.

Paragraph 2-Of the One True God

We believe that there is only One living and true God, infinite in every excellence; that in the unity of the God-Head there are three personal distinctions- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit- one in substance and equal in every divine attribute and perfection. Deut. 6:4 and 1 Cor. 8:6. One of God's attributes is His absolute sovereignty. In His sovereignty, God gave man a free will to accept or reject the salvation He has provided. It is God's will that all should be saved and that none should perish; however, God permits man's destiny to depend upon man's choice. God is no respecter of persons (Tit. 2:11, John 1:9, 1 Tim. 2:4, 2 Pet. 3:9, 1 Cor. 1:21, Acts 10:34, John 3:16).

Paragraph 3- Of the Person and Work of Christ

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been supernaturally conceived of the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin, Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem mankind (John 1:14). We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead (1 Pet. 2:24, Eph. 1:7). We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Intercessor and Advocate (Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1)

Paragraph IV- Of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He was active in creation; that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled; and that He convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; that He bears witness to the truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony; and that He is the supernatural agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption (John 16:8, 1 Cor. 12:13, Eph. 4:30). We believe the Holy Spirit is the divine teacher who guides believers into all truth and that it is the privilege and duty of all saved to be filled with the Spirit (John 16:13, Eph. 5:18).

Paragraph V-Of Satan

We believe in the distinct personality of Satan, that he was created perfect but because of pride and rebellion against God he became the originator of sin. He is the prince of this world and has great power. He blinds the minds of unbelievers. In the final judgment, Satan and his angels are destined to an eternal justice in the lake of fire (Ezek. 28:14, 15; 2 Cor. 4:3, 4; Rev. 20:10).

Paragraph VI- Of the Total Depravity of Man

We believe that the material universe, including man, came into being by direct creation of God, and not by the process of evolution. We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Man is totally depraved and of himself is unable to remedy his lost condition. (Eph. 2:1, 2; Rom. 5:8)

Paragraph VII- Of Faith and Salvation

We believe that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation. The salvation of the sinner is wholly of grace and made possible by the shedding of the blood and death of Jesus Christ upon the cross of Calvary, in our room and stead, and that there is salvation in none other than Christ, that a person's acceptance of Him is absolutely essential. To be saved, a sinner must be born again. In the new birth the one dead in trespasses and sins is made partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life as the free gift of God. The new birth is instantaneous and not a process. Evidence of the new birth appears with visible fruit of repentance, and a walk of obedience according to God's Word (John 3:7; 2 Cor.5:17; Acts 16:31; Acts 4:12).

Paragraph VIII- Of Eternal Security of Believers

We believe that all redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. It is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's word; which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh (1 Pet.l:5; John 10:28).

Paragraph IX- Of the Believer's Two Natures

We believe that every saved person possesses two natures with provisions made for victory of the new nature over the old nature through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and that all claims to the eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural (Gal. 5:16-17; 1 John 1:7-8).

Paragraph X-Of Separation

We believe that all who are save should live in such a manner as to not bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; and that separation from all religious apostasy (departure from Bible faith), all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associations is commanded of God (Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Tim.3:1-5).

Paragraph XI- Of the Ministry and Spiritual Gifts

We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts; and that the gifts of evangelists, pastors and teachers are sufficient for the perfection of the saints today. We believe that the modern tongues movement variously referred to as Pentecostalism or the charismatic movement has been the cause of great division within the church. We believe that the gift of tongues, the interpretation of tongues, miracle, healing, knowledge, and prophecy, the discerning of spirits, and apostles were definitely temporary sign gifts, given to the church, and that they ceased with the completion of the New Testament Scriptures.

Paragraph XII-Of the Church

We believe that the church Universal is a New Testament institution; unknown to the Old Testament prophets; established by Jesus Christ, who is its sole Head; revealed through the apostles; empowered and perpetrated by the Holy Spirit; composed of believers in Jesus Christ as Savior; both of Jew and Gentile; called out from the world and indwelt by the Holy Spirit: His body for service and His bride for glory. The church began with the New Testament Saints and will be consummated at the coming of Christ in the rapture (Matt 6:18; Eph. 3:9-10).

We believe that the local church is a congregation of immersed believers, associated by covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel; serving the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in it by His word; that its main offices are pastors and elders; that it has absolute right of self-government directed by the Holy Spirit and is answerable only to Christ, and that in all matters of membership, policy, government, discipline, and benevolence, the will of the local church is final (1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Tim. 3:15).

We believe that evangelistic efforts of all sorts are responsible to the local church, its officers and members; and that every evangelistic effort that holds the Holy Spirit is not using the local New Testament church in this day is unscriptural and unworthy of the support and encouragement of the Lord's people.

Paragraph XIII- Of the Ordinances

We believe that there are two church ordinances: baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Baptism is the immersion of *a* believer in the water and is properly called believer's baptism. It portrays in a beautiful and solemn way our faith in a crucified, buried and risen Savior, with its effects in our lives of death and to sin and resurrection to a new life. Baptism is a prerequisite to the privileges of church membership. The Lord's Supper is the commemoration of our Lord's death until He comes and our continual fellowship with Him: should be preceded by baptism and always by careful examination (Acts8:36-37; Romans 6:4; 1 Cor. 11:27-28).

Paragraph XlV-Of the Second Advent of Christ

We believe in the blessed hope; the personal, imminent, pre-tribulation and premillennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His redeemed ones and in His subsequent return to earth with His saints to establish His millennial kingdom (Tit.2:13; Rev. 22:12;20:6).

Paragraph XV-Of the Judgment Seat of Christ

We believe that every saved person will appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ to be judged by his Lord in regard to faithful service. This Judgment is not a judgment for sin; the believer's sin has been judged at the cross of Calvary; but for works. The result of the judgment is reward or loss. All bad or dead works will be represented by wood hay and stubble and will be consumed. Only our good works shall remain. Christians will be rewarded for works that have been judged worthy of reward by the Lord Jesus Christ (2Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 3:13-15).

Paragraph XVI- Of the Eternal State

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men: the saved to eternal life and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. The souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss, they await the first resurrection, where body soul and spirit are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious misery until the second resurrection, which shall occur after the millennium, where with soul and body reunited they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting punishment.

Paragraph XVII- Of Human Government

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interest and good order of civil society. Magistrates are to be prayed for, consciously honored and obeyed except in those things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ who is the only Lord of conscience, and the coming Prince of the Kings of the earth.