

STATEMENT OF FAITH

As you read through this document, please know that there is nothing new, unique, or innovative about these articles of faith. This statement puts us on the solid footing of almost 2000 years of Biblical theology.

Cedarbrook is a church that “majors in the majors and minors in the minors.” We recognize that not every single matter is covered extensively in Scripture, and so we try not to be dogmatic about issues on which Bible-based believers have held divergent views. We want our central tenets to be Christ-centered and clearly supported by Scripture. More obscure doctrine or teachings with less support are left to individuals to sort out on their own.

In the following pages, we’ve added a few explanatory comments to clarify and help apply these vital Biblical doctrines. Please do not hurry through these pages. Read slowly and thoughtfully, asking yourself, “What difference does this truth make in my life? If I did not know or believe this, would it matter?”

THE BIBLE

We believe the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired word of God. We believe that Scripture in its entirety originated with God, given through men chosen by Him. Scripture, thus, at one and the same time, speaks with the authority of God and reflects the backgrounds, styles, and vocabularies of its human authors. We hold that the Scriptures are infallible and inerrant in the original manuscripts. They are the unique, full, and final authority on all matters of faith and practice; and there are no other writings similarly inspired by God. For purposes of Cedarbrook’s faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Leadership Team is Cedarbrook’s final interpretive authority on the Bible’s meaning and application.

Because we believe this...

- We strive to regularly read and study the Bible, privately and corporately, to understand and apply its message.
- We submit all aspects of our lives and conduct to what the Bible teaches. We must obey what we discover God has commanded.
- All messages, classes, and Growth Groups offered at Cedarbrook must provide teaching supported by the Bible.
- We do not accept doctrines – no matter what is claimed as their source – if they do not line up with what the Bible says.

GOD

We believe that there is one true, holy God, eternally existing in three persons — a Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — each of whom possesses equally all the attributes of deity and the characteristics of personality. God created all things, demonstrating the glory of His power, wisdom, and goodness. By His sovereign power, He continues to sustain His creation. By His providence He is operating throughout history to fulfill His redemptive purposes.

Because we believe this...

- We make knowing and loving God our highest priority in life.
- We depend on God to be at work in and around us in the daily affairs of life.
- We trust that God is a loving Father, even when life is at times difficult and tragic.
- We cannot agree with any religious group that rejects God’s revelation of himself as Trinity (as is common among most “cult” groups).

JESUS CHRIST

We believe Jesus Christ is the eternal second person of the Trinity who was united forever with a true human nature by a miraculous conception and virgin birth. He lived a life of perfect obedience to the Father and voluntarily paid for the sins of all by dying on the cross as their substitute, thus satisfying divine justice and accomplishing salvation for all who trust in Him alone. He rose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He lived and died. He ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of the Father, where He, the only Mediator between God and man, continually makes intercession for His own. He shall come again to earth, personally and visibly, to consummate history and the eternal plan of God.

Because we believe this...

- We are Christians because our faith and message is about Jesus Christ – his life, his work, his divinity, and our need to follow him. Any message that does not center on Christ, including his full humanity and divinity, and his forgiveness for all sin is not the gospel.
- Because our salvation was secured by a perfect sacrifice of a perfect person, we live knowing we are totally and unconditionally forgiven from sin now, rather than hoping we will be forgiven at some future point. We are secure in the grace of God through Christ.
- Knowing Christ will return some day, we hold the things of this world loosely, investing our lives in the things that are eternal.



HOLY SPIRIT

We believe the essential accompaniment of a genuine saving relationship with Jesus Christ is a life of holiness and obedience, attained by believers as they submit to the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. He was sent into the world by the Father and the Son to apply to mankind the saving work of Christ. He enlightens the minds of sinners, awakens in them recognition of their need of a Savior, and regenerates them. At the point of salvation, He permanently indwells every believer to become the source of assurance, strength, and wisdom and uniquely endows each believer with gifts for building the body, the church.

Because we believe this...

- As Christ-followers, we are continually striving to be more like the one who saved us; we are not content just to be forgiven; we want to exemplify Christ-like behavior in every area of life.
- The Christian life is more than just “being good.” We need the Holy Spirit to bear his fruit in us; therefore our daily lives must be yielded to the Spirit in a moment-by-moment surrender.
- When we share Christ with others, the message we present is effectual, not because of our superior reasoning or irresistible presentation, but because the Spirit is at work through us and in the heart of the person we are talking to; therefore, we depend ultimately on his invisible activity through our limited understanding of what will reach the person.
- Because the Spirit resides in us, we listen for his promptings, anticipating that he wants to direct us and will do so if we are open to him.

MAN

We believe man was created by God in His image, giving every man and woman great potential, worth, and value. Man rebelled against God, falling into sin, marring his likeness to God, and severing his relationship with God. Man is completely unable to take away or make up for his rebellion against God. Only through faith in Jesus Christ can man obtain the righteousness God requires to restore man’s relationship with God.

Because we believe this...

- We understand that, among all creation, humans are uniquely made in God’s image.
- We see all people, regardless of who they are and what they have done, as precious in God’s sight.
- We see the gospel of Jesus Christ as the one, true hope for reconciling humanity to God.

SALVATION

We believe the central purpose of God’s revelation in Scripture is to call all people into fellowship with himself. We believe the only basis for salvation is the shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection for all who believe. Only those who receive Jesus Christ by faith are justified in God’s sight and born of the Spirit, becoming children of God.

Because we believe this...

- Our message to those exploring faith contains the call to turn from fruitless attempts to earn God’s favor and cast themselves on the perfect and reliable provision of God in Jesus Christ.
- We rest secure that the Christian life we live is a “thank you” to God for the salvation he has fully provided. We neither think that our obedience enhances our salvation (as if we could add something to the death of Christ) nor do we treat his grace in a cavalier way (as an excuse to live sinfully).
- We strive to make the most of every opportunity to share Christ with those who don’t know him.

THE CHURCH

We believe there is one true church universal, comprised of all those who truly acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. As the body of Christ — His agent and representative — the purpose of the church is to glorify God by accomplishing His work and reflecting His character. The church has the God-given mission of proclaiming Christ to all people and nurturing those who believe to become mature disciples of Christ; the church should also be devoted to teaching God’s word, fellowship, worship, and prayer. The individual believer should develop his or her own gifts and abilities in service to the church and its mission. We believe the church is to be led by elders who are mature men of character, men, who lead eagerly rather than under compulsion, and by example, not by coercion or intimidation.

Because we believe this...

- We are a non-denominational church, emphasizing that all true believers are one with Christ and each other, regardless of their denominational background.
- We make personal involvement in the ministry of the church a priority in our lives.
- We want all believers to discover, develop, and deploy their spiritual gifts in order to strengthen and build up the church.
- We guard the unity of the church by working through misunderstandings and conflicts in a Christ-honoring way.



ORDINANCES

We believe baptism by immersion in water and the Lord's Supper, or communion, are ordinances to be observed by the church, but not to be regarded as a means of salvation.

Because we believe this...

- We understand baptism and communion as acts of obedience to the commands of Christ.

MARRIAGE

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female, and that these two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. We believe that God created marriage to be exclusively the union of one man and one woman, and that intimate sexual union is to occur exclusively within that union.

Because we believe this...

- We pursue lives of sexual purity that honor God.
- We view marriage as a lifelong, exclusive, and interdependent relationship between a man and woman in which both, sometimes as individuals and sometimes as partners, participate in pursuing God's mission in this world.
- We are committed to working through marital struggles with the goal of reconciliation.

HUMAN DESTINY

We believe death seals the eternal destiny of each person. For all mankind, there will be a resurrection of the body, and a judgment that will determine the fate of each individual. Unbelievers will be separated from God into condemnation (hell). Believers will be received into eternal communion with God (heaven) and will be rewarded for works done in this life.

Because we believe this...

- We recognize that our eternity is infinitely longer and more significant than our 80 or so years on earth, so we order our lives here so they take into account this eternal perspective; we choose our activities and priorities based on God's Word, recognizing that his approval supersedes every other consideration.
- The message of the gospel brings life to those who would perish eternally without Christ; we therefore seek to present his saving message as often as we can.
- As we relate to people throughout life, we see them as the eternal beings they are and accord them due respect; we have never met an average person – everyone matters to God and deserves to be treated lovingly.

THE FUTURE

We believe in the personal, physical, return of Jesus Christ to the earth to establish His kingdom at the end of the age. We believe all believers will live in God's presence in a new heaven and new earth.

Because we believe this...

- We have a sure hope for the future.
- We can face death without fear.
- We live now with an attitude of expectancy.

FAITH AND PRACTICE

We believe Scripture is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice. We recognize that the church cannot and should not bind the conscience of individual Christians in areas where Scripture is silent. Rather, each believer is to be led in those areas by the Lord, to whom he or she alone is ultimately responsible.

Because we believe this...

- We wholeheartedly embrace what Scripture teaches.
- We submit all of our lives to the authority of God's Word.
- We do not take stands on controversial issues about which the Bible is silent; individuals are left to their own consciences before God rather than depending on the church to tell them what to think or do.

We believe the Statement of Faith to be an accurate summary of what Scripture teaches. This is our attempt to capture the Bible's main themes — things that are true for all people at all times in every place. All members shall refrain from advocating doctrines that are not included in the Statement of Faith in such a way as to cause division.

