

STATEMENT OF FAITH

Living Hope Community Baptist Church

A Washington Nonprofit Religious Corporation

Of the Scriptures

We believe in the authority and sufficiency of the Holy Bible (Scriptures) comprising the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments. We believe that the Scriptures, as originally written, were verbally and completely inspired by God working through the lives of Spirit-controlled men. Therefore, the Bible is infallible and inerrant in all matters of which it speaks.

We believe the Bible to be the true center of Christian unity and the ultimate standard by which all human conduct, beliefs, and opinions must be compared and tested.

(Scripture references: 2 Timothy 3:16, 17 and 2 Peter 1:19-21)

The True God

We believe there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite Spirit, the Maker and supreme Ruler of Heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love. We believe that in the unity of the Godhead, there are three Persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—equal in every divine perfection and fulfilling distinct but harmonious functions in the great work of redemption.

(Scripture references: Exodus 20:2, 3; 1 Corinthians 8:6; and Revelation 4:11)

The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature. He was active in the creation, and is at present actively restraining Satan until God's purpose in this world is fulfilled. He works in the hearts of men and women to convict them of their sin, of their need for the righteousness of Christ, and of the judgment to come. He bears witness to the truth of the gospel through the preaching and testimony of believers, He works in those who respond to the gospel by gifting them with a “new birth” through faith in Christ, and He is the seal of God’s ownership of the believer and enables, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and helps the believer to live a godly life.

(Scripture references: John 14:16, 17; Matthew 28:19; Hebrews 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35; Genesis 1:1-3; John 16:8-11; Acts 5:30-32; John 3:5, 6; Ephesians 1:13, 14; Mark 1:8; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:49; and Romans 8:14, 16, 26, 27)

The Devil (Satan)

We believe that Satan, the Devil, is a real person. He was originally created by God as an angel, but rebelled against and became the enemy of his Creator. He is the unholy god of this present age, the ruler of all the powers of darkness (lesser demons), and will eventually be sentenced to eternal condemnation in the lake of fire (Hell).

(Scripture references: Matthew 4:1-11; 2 Corinthians 4:4; and Revelation 20:10)

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Creation

We believe the literal, biblical (Genesis) account of the creation of the physical universe, angels, and man. That is, we believe that the account in Genesis is not allegory nor myth, but a literal, historical account of the direct, immediate creative acts of God without any evolutionary process. This means that man was created by a direct work of God and not from previously existing forms of life and that all humans are descended from the historical Adam and Eve, the first parents of the entire human race.

(Scripture references: Genesis 1; 2; Colossians 1:16, 17; John 1:3)

The Fall of Man

We believe that the first humans, Adam and Eve, were created in innocence and in the image and likeness of God. Through deliberate, willful disobedience, Adam lost his sinless and happy state. Since then, all men and women have inherited Adam's sin nature (inclination to sin), are by nature hostile to and separated from God. Without Christ, men and women are spiritually dead. Mankind is therefore under the deserved condemnation of a holy God, without defense or excuse.

(Scripture references: Genesis 3:1-6; Romans 3:10-19; 5:12, 19; and 1:18, 32)

The Virgin Birth

We believe that Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner, born of Mary, a virgin, and that He is both the God and man.

(Scripture references: Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; John 1:14)

Salvation

The salvation of sinners is completely and totally a work of God's grace. God is both the initiator and the agent in the salvation of man. Salvation is possible only because Jesus Christ, the sinless Son of God, shed His blood through His death on the cross. In his death on our behalf, a once and for all sacrifice, He fully satisfied the just demands of a holy and righteous God. Three days after his death, God raised Jesus from the dead, proving without doubt that He is God. Jesus is now enthroned in Heaven and is in every way qualified to be our suitable, compassionate, and all-sufficient Savior.

We believe that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation. Repentance is a change of mind and purpose toward God prompted by the Holy Spirit and is an integral part of saving faith.

(Scripture references: Jonah 2:9; Ephesians 2:8; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24, 25; John 3:16; Matthew 18:11; Philippians 2:7, 8; Hebrews 2:14-17; Isaiah 53:4-7; 1 John 4:10; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians. 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24)

Resurrection and Priesthood of Christ

We believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ and in His ascension into Heaven where He now sits at the right hand of the Father and intercedes for us as our High Priest.

(Scripture references: Matthew 28:6, 7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; 1 Corinthians 15:4; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2-6, 51; Acts 1:9-11; Revelation 3:21; Hebrews 8:6; 12:2; 7:25; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1; Hebrews 2:17; 5:9, 10)

Grace and the New Birth

For salvation, sinners must be “born again.” This “new birth” is a miraculous new creation in Christ Jesus. It is instantaneous and not a process. In the new birth, the sinner who was once spiritually dead, is given new spiritual life, is reconciled to and enters into a personal relationship with God, and receives eternal life, the free gift of God. The new creation is a miracle, brought about by our sovereign God in a manner beyond our comprehension, solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth (Holy Scripture). As a result, we are enabled to obey the gospel, to believe in and accept Jesus Christ. The evidences of the new birth are repentance, faith, and a new way of life.

(Scripture references: John 3:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 John 5:1; Acts 16:20-33; 2 Peter 1:4; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1, 5; Colossians 2:13; and John 3:8)

Justification

We believe that justification is an act of God whereby He, as judge, declares the believer righteous (“not guilty”) based upon our faith in Jesus Christ as savior. This righteousness is bestowed upon us, not on the basis of any good works we have done, but solely through faith in our Redeemer's shed blood.

(Scripture references: Romans 3:24; 4:5; 5:1, 9; Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9)

Sanctification

We believe that sanctification is the divine “setting apart” of the believer unto God. This is accomplished in three ways. First, at the new birth wherein God, based upon redemption in Christ, establishes the believer in a position of holiness (righteousness) at the moment (s)he trusts the Savior. Second, ongoing sanctification is a continuing process as the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to the believer's life. Third, final sanctification will take place at the Lord's return.

(Scripture references: Hebrews 10:10-14; 3:1; John 17:17; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 5:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 4; 5:23, 24; 1 John 3:2; Jude 24, 25; Revelation 22:11)

The Security of the Saints

We believe that all who are truly born again are kept forever by God the Father for Jesus Christ.

(Scripture references: Philippians 1:6; John 10:28, 29; Romans 8:35-39; Jude 1)

The Church

We believe that a local church is an organized congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word. Its officers are pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures. We believe the true mission of the church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all people as we have opportunity. We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only Superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit. We believe that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in preaching and teaching the gospel and defending the faith. Each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. On all matters of membership, of polity, of government, of discipline, and of benevolence the will of the local church is final.

(Scripture references: 1 Corinthians 11:2; Acts 20:17-28; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Acts 2:41, 42)

We believe in the unity of all New Testament believers in the Church, which is the Body of Christ.

(Scripture references: 1 Corinthians 12:12, 13; Ephesians 1:22, 23; 3:1-6; 4:11; 5:23; Colossians 1:18; Acts 15:13-18)

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian baptism is the single immersion of a believer in water to demonstrate in a solemn and beautiful emblem our identification with the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, through Whom we died to sin and rose to new life. Baptism is to be performed under the authority of the local church and is a prerequisite to the privileges of church membership.

We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death until He comes and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination. We believe that the biblical order of the ordinances is baptism first and then the Lord's Supper, and we believe that participants in the Lord's Supper should be immersed believers.

(Scripture references: Acts 8:36, 38, 39; John 3:23; Romans 6:3-5; Matthew 3:16; Colossians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 11:23-28; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:41, 42)

Separation

We believe in obedience to the biblical commands to separate ourselves unto God from worldliness and false religious teaching.

(Scripture references: 2 Corinthians 6:14--7:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:9, 10; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; Romans 16:17; 2 John 9-11)

Civil Government

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interest and good order of human society. We are to pray for our leaders and conscientiously honor and obey them, except in those things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ Who is the only Lord of the conscience and the coming King of kings.

(Scripture references: Romans 13:1-7; 2 Sam. 23:3; Exodus 18:21, 22; Acts 23:5; Matthew 22:21; Acts 5:29; 4:19, 20; Daniel 3:17, 18)

Israel

We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God's eternal covenant people. Although her people are now scattered throughout the world because of her rejection of Christ (as prophesied in Scripture), Israel will one day be completely re-gathered in the Holy Land, and the nation will be saved at the second coming of Jesus Christ to earth.

(Scripture references: Genesis 13:14-17; Romans 11:1-32; Ezekiel 37)

Rapture and Subsequent Events

We believe in a literal, 1,000-year reign of Jesus Christ on this earth, during which He will rule over the earth in peace and righteousness (the Millennium). We believe in the pre-millennial return of Christ (the Rapture). At the rapture, those believers who have previously died will be raised in glorified bodies those believers then living upon the earth will never die but will be instantly transformed into their glorified bodies and all will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

(Scripture references: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 51-54; Philippians 3:20, 21; Revelation 3:10)

We believe that the Great Tribulation, which follows the Rapture of the Church, will be culminated by the revelation of Christ in power and great glory to sit upon the throne of David and to establish the millennial kingdom.

(Scripture references: Daniel 9:25-27; Matthew 24:29-31; Luke 1:30-33; Isaiah 9:6, 7; 11:1-9; Acts 2:29, 30; Revelation 20:1-4, 6)

The Righteous and the Wicked

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked. Only those who are justified by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in His eyes. All those who fail to repent and believe in Him are wicked in His sight and under His just condemnation. This distinction is true in life and after death. Believers who die are granted everlasting happiness in the presence of their God and unbelievers face eternal suffering in the lake of fire (Hell).

(Scripture references: Malachi 3:18; Genesis 18:23; Romans 6:17, 18; 1 John 5:19; Romans 7:6; 6:23; Proverbs 14:32; Luke 16:25; Matthew 25:34-41; John 8:21; Revelation 20:14, 15)

Revision History

February 8, 2004 – Original Statement of Faith approved by Congregation.

March 7, 2004 – Grammatical Corrections. Revised and Adopted by Congregation