

United Fellowship Community Church Statement of Faith

So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we have passed on to you... (2 Thes 2:15)

SECTION 1 – GOD

We believe in one living, infinitely perfect, eternal and personal God who is the creator of all things. We believe God, created the heavens and the earth without pre-existent material in six, consecutive, twenty-four hour days. (*Gen. 1; Deut 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; Psalm 33:6, 9*)

We believe God to be:

- **Eternal** – existent outside of time; without beginning or end (*Gen 21:33; Psalm 90:2*)
- **Sovereign** – supremely powerful and in authority over all (*Psalm 66:7; Eph 1:11*)
- **Immutable** – incapable of change (*Malachi 3:6; James 1:17*)
- **Faithful** – consistently truthful, worthy of trust (*2 Tim 2:13; 2 Thes 3:3; Ps 119:90*)
- **Omniscient** – having all knowledge of all things (*Psalm 94:11, 139:2; Acts 15:8*)
- **Omnipotent** – having unlimited power (*Genesis 18:14; Revelation 19:6*)
- **Omnipresent** – fully present everywhere (*Psalm 139:10*)
- **Holy** – absolutely pure and righteous (*Psalm 99:3; Isaiah 6:3; I Peter 1:16*)
- **Righteous** – possessing all virtues in perfect balance (*Ezra 9:15; Psalm 7:11*)
- **Good** – nothing can be added to make Him better (*Psalm 107:1; Psalm 31:19; Romans 8:28*)
- **Patient** – slow to anger (*Nahum 1:3; Nehemiah 9:17, Psalm 103:8*)
- **Merciful** – withholding punishment toward the penitent (*1 Kings 3:6; Psalm 86:5; Psalm 136:1*)
- **Gracious** – bestowing unmerited blessings to His elect (*Eph 2:8-9; 2 Tim 1:9; Romans 3:24*)
- **Jealous** – intolerant of rivalry or unfaithfulness regarding Him as the one and only true God (*Deut. 6:4; Exodus 20:5; Jer. 10:10*)

We believe God exceeds all human understanding and definition; that the above listed attributes only touch upon His absolutely perfect essence and embodiment of all things holy. (*1 John 4:8; Ephesians 1:5*)

SECTION 2 – THE TRINITY

We believe in the Trinity of the Godhead, that one God eternally exists in three persons – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – all having precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections, all being worthy of precisely the same honor, confidence, and obedience. (*Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 12:29; John 1:1-14; Acts 5:3-4; II Cor. 13:14; Galatians 1:1; Hebrews 1:1-3*)

SECTION 3 – THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Scriptures are complete in the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, which alone constitute the Bible, the inerrant Word of God. We believe that the books commonly called 'The Apocrypha', are not divinely inspired, are not part of the canon of Scripture, and are therefore of no authority to the church of God.

We believe that the Bible is an inspired book, in the sense that holy men of God, long ago, "were moved by the Holy Spirit" to write the very words of Scripture. We believe that this divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the writings – historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic – as they appeared in the original manuscripts. (*2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21*)

We believe that the whole Bible in its original form is without error, and that the Scriptures, 1) contain all that man is to know and believe concerning God and, 2) are intended as a practical instruction for man to live in a manner which glorifies God. (*Romans 15:4; 1 Cor. 2:13; 1 Cor. 10:11*)

We believe that the Scriptures center about the Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work, in both His first and second coming, and therefore no portion is properly read or understood unless it leads to Him. (*Luke 24:27; John 5:39; Acts 17:2-3, 18:28, 26:22-23, 28:23*)

SECTION 4 – CHRIST

We believe that the second person of the blessed Trinity (as preannounced in the prophecies of the Scriptures), the eternal Son of God, Jesus Christ, came into this world that He might manifest God to men, fulfill prophecy, and become the Redeemer of a hopelessly lost world. We believe He was born of a virgin, and received both a human body and a sinless human nature. (Luke 1:30-35; John 1:18, 3:16; Heb. 4:15)

We believe that, on the human side, Jesus Christ became and remained a perfect and sinless man throughout His life; yet He retained His absolute deity, being at the same time God and man, and that His earth-life sometimes functioned within the sphere of that which was human and sometimes within the sphere of that which was divine. (Luke 2:40; John 1:1-2; Phil. 2:5-8)

We believe that, in fulfillment of prophecy, Christ came first to Israel as her Messiah, and that being rejected of that nation, He gave His life as a ransom for all, Jew and Gentile alike. (John 1:11; Acts 2:22-24; 1 Tim. 2:6)

We believe that in His infinite love for the lost, Christ voluntarily accepted His Father's will and became the divinely provided sacrificial Lamb which took away the sin of the world. We believe He bore upon Himself, and in our place, the holy judgments against sin which the righteousness of God must impose. His death upon the cross was therefore substitutionary in the most absolute sense—the just for the unjust—and by His death, He became the Savior of the lost. (John 1:29; Rom. 3:25-26; 2 Cor. 5:14; Heb. 10:5-14; 1 Pet. 3:18)

We believe that, according to the Scriptures, Jesus Christ arose from the dead in the same body in which He had lived and died, and that His resurrection body, though glorified, is the pattern of that body which ultimately will be given to all believers. (John 20:20; Phil. 3:20-21)

We believe that, on departing from the earth, Christ was accepted of His Father and that His acceptance is a final assurance to us that His redeeming work was perfectly accomplished. (Mark 16:19; Heb. 1:3)

We believe that Christ became Head over all things to the church, which is His body, and in this ministry He ceases not to intercede and advocate for the saved. (Eph. 1:22-23; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2-1)

SECTION 5 – THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the blessed Trinity, though always present from eternity past, took up His abode in the world in a special sense on the day of Pentecost, fulfilling Christ's divine promise. We believe that He dwells in every believer, unites all to Christ in one body (His church), and that He, as the Indwelling One, is the source of all power, acceptable worship and service. (Hebrews 9:14; John 14:26; 1 Cor. 3:16)

We believe that the Holy Spirit will never remove Himself from the church (which is the body of Christ), nor will He abandon even the weakest of those He indwells. We believe that He seeks to fill believers with Himself, so that they not be filled with themselves nor with their experiences. We believe that His holy indwelling of Christ's church will cease only when Christ comes to receive His own at the completion of the church age. (John 14:16-17, 16:7-15; 1 Cor. 6:19; Eph. 2:22; 2 Thes. 2:7)

We believe that Christ as Lord and Savior does His work through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit convicts of sin. Through the Holy Spirit, those who believe are born again. The supreme ministry of the Spirit is to lead men to Christ and His salvation. As Christians yield to Christ and obey His Word, the Holy Spirit transforms (sanctifies) them into the spiritual image of Jesus Christ, and enables the believer to perseverance in faith and holiness and resist worldly lusts. (John 3:16; Galatians 5:16-24)

We believe that the Holy Spirit empowers believers to become effective witnesses for Christ and His salvation through the filling of their hearts with a love for the lost, and the desire to practice Christian discipleship. The Holy Spirit bestows upon each believer "gifts", holy enablements as He wills for the building up of the body of Christ. (1 Corinthians 12)

We believe that some gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues, were temporary. We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism, nor of the filling of the Spirit. (Acts 4:7-10; Rom. 8:23; 1 Cor. 13:8)

We believe the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is God's seal of ownership of the Christian believer. He is God's guarantee that He will also redeem the bodies of believers on the day of Christ. (John 16:7-15; Acts 1:8; 2:1-21; I Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19; 12:11-13; Gal. 5:22-24; Eph. 1:13-14; 5:30)

SECTION 6 – MAN

We believe man was created in the image and likeness of God, but through Adam's sin, all mankind inherited a sin nature. Every man is therefore born a sinner in both nature and practice, and has become alienated from God. Because of sin, man is condemned and under judgment, without hope, and utterly helpless to remedy his lost condition. He is totally depraved (which does not mean that man is as bad as he can be, but rather that man is as bad off as he can be). We believe that as the consequence of his sin, man lost his spiritual identity with God, and become spiritually dead in trespasses and sins, thus making him subject to the power of the devil. (Romans 3:9-12; 3:23; 5:12)

We believe that this spiritual death, or total depravity of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire human race of man, *except* to the Man Jesus Christ alone. We believe that because of this total depravity, every child since Adam has been born into the world with a nature possessing no spark of divine life, and therefore is spiritually dead, thus making him subject to the power of the devil, and unchangeably so, apart from the intervention of divine grace. (Gen. 1:26, 2:17, 6:5; Ps. 14:1-3; Jer. 17:9; John 3:6, 5:40, 6:35; Rom. 3:10-19, 8:6-7; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 John 3:8)

Because of his depravity, we believe that man naturally possesses no spark of divinity. He is therefore spiritually dead and needs to be made alive through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. We believe this regeneration comes solely through God's grace, and that His grace is freely offered for man's own personal faith in the death of Jesus Christ as being a substitutionary death for his own. (Psalm 51:5; Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:10-12; Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:17-18)

SECTION 7 – SIN

We believe sin to be anything contrary to the holy nature of God, and to fall short of His holy standard is to sin. We believe Satan is the author of sin, the deceiver of Eve, and through Eve, Adam. We believe Satan is the open and declared enemy of both God and man, and he shall someday be eternally punished in the lake of fire. (Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:2-11; Romans 14:23; I Peter 1:14-15; I John 3:4; Revelation 20:10)

SECTION 8 - SALVATION

We believe salvation is the gift of God, brought to many by grace and received only by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is totally the work of a loving God toward man and has no bearing upon any sacraments, ordinances, good works, or human merit. (John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5)

We believe that this salvation is available to all men, but effective for only those who repent (turn away) from their sin and turn to Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. (Acts 17:30; Romans 6:23; I Timothy 2:3-6)

We believe man is immediately justified (declared righteous) by God and receives eternal life at the moment of his conversion. This conversion is what Jesus Christ meant when He said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God". (John 3:3; Ephesians 1:13-14)

We believe justification is a judicial act of God's grace wherein He acquits a person of all sin and accepts that person as righteous in His sight because of the imputed righteousness of Christ. Justification is strictly a work of God's grace, gained through faith alone, and solely on the account of Christ. (Rom. 3:23-24; Ephesians 2:8-9)

We believe all who are born again by the Spirit of God are kept by God's power alone. They are secure in Christ forever, sealed by the Holy Spirit who is the guarantor of their inheritance. We believe this eternal salvation rests solely in the faithfulness of God, not in the faithfulness of man. (John 6:37-4; John 10:27-30; Ephesians 1:13-14)

We believe it is the privilege of the believer to rejoice in the assurance of his salvation, declared to be so through the faithful testimony of God's Word. However, the Scriptures clearly forbid the use of his assurance of salvation as a liberty to carry out the desires of the flesh. (Romans 8:13; Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 7:25; I Peter 1:3-5; I John 2:1-2)

SECTION 9 - BAPTISM

We believe in obeying the instruction of the Lord Jesus to baptize believers with water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. We believe that, according to the order of Christ, the baptism of believers is obligatory. (*Matthew 28: 19-20*)

We believe that full immersion in water is the manner of baptism for the believer. However, we understand if complete immersion is impossible due to physical limitations, or is medically ill advised, we believe baptism can – in these instances only – be carried out through pouring or sprinkling of water. (We believe that God regards the believer's heart and his desire to follow the Lord Jesus' commandment as more important than the actual manner of baptism in these cases.)

In order to qualify for baptism one must repent, turn to Christ in sincere faith, and accept Him as Lord. We regard water baptism as an ordinance of Christ which symbolizes, 1) the baptism of the Holy Spirit, 2) a divine cleansing from sin and its guilt, 3) an identification with Christ in His death and resurrection and, 4) the commitment to follow Him, to live and walk in the newness of life. (*Acts 2:16-21; 22:16; Romans 6:4-6; 1 Corinthians 12:13; 1 Peter 3:21*)

SECTION 10 – THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that the Lord's supper, was instituted by Christ on the same night in which He was betrayed, and was ordained by Him to be observed as a perpetual remembrance of His own sacrifice, on our behalf, through His death on the cross, once for all. (*1 Corinthians 11:23-26*)

We believe that the Lord Jesus has, in this ordinance, appointed that all believers figuratively regard the elements of bread and wine (or grape juice) as His own body and blood; and to partake of these elements in communion with one another in remembrance of Him until He comes again. (*1 Corinthians 11:23-26*)

We believe that the elements of bread and wine only *represent* the body and blood of the Lord Jesus, and do not in any way change into the actual substance of Christ's body and blood through the mystical act known by many as transubstantiation.

We believe that before partaking in the ordinance of the Lord's supper, all that desire to do so should first pray and reflect upon their own relationship with the Lord Jesus, inwardly examining themselves and their walk with the Lord, that it be not carnal; and after such examination, they should decide whether or not to partake of the elements at this time; for as by doing so unworthily, they do so sinfully. (*2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 11:29*)

SECTION 11 – MARRIAGE

We believe that at the beginning of human history God instituted marriage. He ordained that a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, and that the two shall become one in love and mutual submission. It is God's will that marriage be a holy state, monogamous, and for life. (*Genesis 1:27, 28; 2:24; Mark 10:6-9*)

We believe that marriage between a man and a woman is representative of the relationship Christ has with all believers, He the groom, and His church the bride; that as a man pledges his utmost faithfulness, devotion, watch-care and provision to his wife, so does our Lord promise the same to all who believe in Him. (This is why human sexual sin is so grievous in His eyes, for it reflects a betrayal of those vows and pledges which bond a man solely to his wife, and therein does demonstrate a personal neglect of the holy bond between Christ and His bride, the church, of which we are all members.) (*Is. 61:10; Rev. 19:7-9*)

We believe that it is fully acceptable to God to serve Christ unmarried. (*1 Corinthians 7:8*)

We believe that Christians shall marry only in the Lord, by that we believe a Christian man should only marry a Christian woman, and for the sake of spiritual unity in the home they should become members of the same congregation. The Christian home ought regularly to have family worship, to seek faithfully to live according to the Word of God, and to support loyally the church in its mission. We believe it is appropriate for parents to formally pledge themselves to the faithful Christian nurture of their children. (*Ephesians 6:1, 4*)

We believe that homosexual relationships are sinful in the eyes of God, and have always been so. Therefore, we believe that there should never be an allowance for homosexual marriage, either between two men, or two women; that this defiles the holy institution of marriage in the eyes of God. (*Rom. 1:26; 1 Corinthians 6: 9-10, 18-20*)

SECTION 12 – THE CHURCH

We believe the church is the visible expression of the spiritual "body of Christ" and is composed of born again believers, all who have professed faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. (*1 Cor.12:13; Ephesians 1:22-23, 5:25-27; 1 Timothy 3:15*).

We believe that those who have been born again, saved and baptized, and now seek to walk in the newness of a Christ-led life, should join a local church, so that they might grow in their own faith and serve to mutually edify one another. (*Matthew 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42; 5:13-14; 2Cor. 9:13*)

We believe that this community of believers is made up of people who are neither perfect or sinless, but by grace their lives are continually changing, coming more and more under the control of the Holy Spirit to walk in the newness of life, thereby more fully expressing His love, joy, peace, holiness, and other Christ-like qualities. (*1Cor. 6:11; 1 Thes. 4:3-8*)

We believe that the function of the church is to preach the Gospel, without hypocrisy, declaring in word and evidencing in true lifestyle, the good news that humankind can find salvation from sin through faith in Jesus Christ. (*Rom. 1:16; 12:9; 1Cor. 9:14*)

We believe that every born again member of the church is gifted with particular strengths and abilities, unique to each individual, which can be realized, developed and used through the power of the Holy Spirit toward Christian work, and that it is the responsibility of each member to understand and gladly put to use their God-given gifts, each according to their own ability. (*Rom. 12:4-8*)

SECTION 13 – THE CHRISTIAN WALK

We believe that we are called with a holy calling, to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and so to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit that we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. We believe that this lust of the flesh, which in this life is never eradicated and will be with us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage, needs to be kept by the Spirit constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence in our lives to the dishonor of our Lord (*Rom.6:11-13; 8:2,4,12-13; Gal. 5:16-23; Eph.4:22-24; Col. 2:1-10; 1 Peter 1: 14-16; 1John 1:4-7; 3:5-9*)

SECTION 14 – THE STATE OF MAN AFTER DEATH

We believe the bodies of men after death return to dust, but their souls, which neither die nor sleep, having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them. The souls of the righteous being then made perfect in holiness, are received into paradise, where they are with Christ, and behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies; and the souls of the wicked are cast into hell; where they remain in torment and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day. (*Gen.3:19; Luke 23:43; 2Cor. 5:6-8; Phil. 1:23; Luke 16:22-24*)

SECTION 15 – THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

We believe at the day and the time of Christ's return to earth, all of the dead in Christ shall be raised up first in bodily form; then those believers who are alive at the time shall not die, but be changed and raised in like fashion with the dead, both to meet in the air together with the Lord. (*1 Thes. 4:13-17; 1Cor. 15:50-52*)

SECTION 16 – THE LAST JUDGEMENT

We believe God has appointed a day wherein He will judge the world in righteousness, this performed by Jesus Christ, to whom all power and judgment is given of the Father; and in this day, not only the apostate angels shall be judged, but likewise all persons that have lived upon the earth shall appear before the tribunal of Christ, to give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds, and to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil. (*Mt. 12:36; 25:32-46; Acts 17:31; Rom. 14:10; 1Cor. 6:3; 2Cor 5:10*)

We believe this final judgement is to reveal the manifestation of, 1) the glory of His mercy, in the eternal salvation of the elect, and 2) his justice, in the eternal damnation of those wicked and disobedient; for then shall the righteous go into everlasting life, and receive that fullness of joy and glory with everlasting rewards in the presence of the Lord; but the wicked, who know not God, and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be cast from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, and into everlasting torments, to be punished with everlasting destruction. (Mt. 25:21, 34, 46; Mark 9:48; Rom. 9:22-23; 2Thes. 1:7-10; 2Tim. 4-8)

We believe as Christ would have us to be certainly persuaded that there shall indeed be a day of judgment, both to deter all men from sin, and for the greater consolation of the godly in their adversity, so will He have that day unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come. (Mark 13:35-37; Luke 12:35-40; 2Cor. 5:10; 2Thes. 1:5-7)