

# **RIDGEWOOD CHURCH / STATEMENT OF FAITH**

## **1. The Scriptures**

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God; as a result, all Scripture is authoritative, infallible, and inerrant, and as such is wholly true in everything it affirms. The Scriptures are the unique, full, and final authority on all matters of faith and practice (Ps. 19:7; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21).

## **2. The Trinity**

The Scriptures reveal that the one God eternally exists in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each person has distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being (Matt. 3:16-17, 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14).

## **3. God the Father**

There is but one God, the Maker, Preserver, and Ruler of all things, having in and of Himself all perfections, and being infinite in them all; and to Him all creatures owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience that springs from faith (Deut. 6:4; Ps. 145:3; John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:4-6; 1 Tim. 1:17).

## **4. Jesus Christ the Son**

Jesus, the Messiah (i.e., the Christ), is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father, fully God and yet also fully human. Jesus lived a sinless human life and gave Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He rose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power and His authority over sin, death, and the devil. He ascended to His Father, at whose right hand He is seated, and He lives forever to make intercession for His people. He will return again visibly and bodily. He is the only Mediator, the True Prophet, the Great High Priest, the Bridegroom of the Church, and the Sovereign King of the universe (Isa. 53:10-12; John 1:1, 14; Acts 1:9-11; Rom. 3:21-26, 8:34; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; Gal. 3:13; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 1:1-3).

## **5. The Holy Spirit**

God the Holy Spirit, co-equal with the Father and the Son, applies the work of Christ to believers and distributes spiritual gifts to every believer according to His sovereign good pleasure, for the purpose of building up the body of Christ and bringing glory to the Father and the Son. He is the Comforter, the

Spirit of Adoption, the Seal of our Salvation, and the Guarantor of our inheritance in Christ (John 14:16-17, 16:14; Acts 5:3; Rom. 8:14-17; Eph. 1:13-14)

## **6. Providence**

From eternity, God decrees or permits all things that come to pass, and He perpetually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and all events. Even so, His sovereign governance does not in any way make Him to be the author or approver of sin, nor does His sovereignty destroy the free agency and responsibility of human beings (Prov. 16:33; Isa. 46:9-11; Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3; Jas. 1:13-15).

## **7. Man**

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. God created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. In the beginning man was free from sin. The sacredness of humanity is evident in that God created man in His own image; therefore, every person of every ethnicity possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally disabled, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Gen. 1:26-30; Ps. 139).

## **8. Gender, Sexuality, & Marriage**

The gift of gender as male and female is part of the goodness of God's created order, is the fundamental and universal biological distinction of the human race, and is not determined by one's self-perception. As embodied souls, gender is a part of the essence of human nature. As a result, it is therefore not possible to sever the connection between one's gender and one's biological sex at birth.

Marriage is the joining of one man and one woman in an exclusive, lifelong, public covenant. Sexual intimacy is a good gift from God to be enjoyed only within the confines of marriage. Any form of sexual intimacy outside the marriage covenant constitutes immorality. Sexual immorality includes lust, pornography, adultery, polygamy, fornication, homosexuality, same-sex marriage, bestiality, incest, cohabitation, and disagreement with and attempts to change one's biological gender (Gen. 2:18-25; Matt. 15:18-20; Mark 7:21-22; Rom. 1:21-32; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 6:18; 7:2-5; Eph. 5:21-33; 1 Tim. 1:9-10; Heb. 13:4; Jude 7).

## **9. Sin**

Through the temptation of Satan, Adam transgressed the command of God and fell from his original holiness and righteousness. As a result, his posterity—the entire human race—inherits a nature corrupt and wholly opposed to God and His law. Consequently, all human beings are under condemnation, and as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become actual transgressors (Gen. 1:26-27, 3:1-7; Rom. 5:12-19; Eph. 2:1-3).

## **10. Election**

Election is the gracious purpose of God by which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners; moreover, election is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness that is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. Even so, election is not inconsistent with the free agency of human beings but serves to exclude boasting and to promote humility (Gen. 12:1-3; Matt. 24:22, 31; Luke 1:68-79; John 6:44-45, 65; Acts 20:32; Rom. 8:28-39; 1 Cor. 1:1-2; Eph. 1:4-23; Col. 1:12-14).

## **11. Regeneration**

Regeneration is a change of heart, brought about by the Holy Spirit, who gives life to those dead in trespasses and sins, enlightening their minds spiritually and bringing them to a saving understanding of the Word of God. Moreover, regeneration is a work of God's free and special grace alone whereby He renews sinners' whole nature so that they love and practice holiness (Eph. 2:1-6; Tit. 3:5; 1 John 5:1).

## **12. Repentance**

Repentance is a gift of God whereby the Holy Spirit convicts people of the manifold evil of their sin, resulting in godly sorrow that leads to turning from their wicked ways to pursue a life of holiness (Acts 2:37-38, 11:18; 2 Cor. 7:10-11).

## **13. Faith**

Saving faith is the belief, on God's authority, of whatever is revealed in His Word concerning Christ, accepting and resting upon Him alone for justification and eternal life. It is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, is accompanied by all other saving graces, and leads to a life of holiness (Rom. 3:27-28, 4:1-5, 17-25, 10:14, 17; Eph. 2:8; Phil. 1:29; Jas. 2:14-26).

## **14. Justification**

Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal of sinners who believe in Christ, through the propitiation that Christ has made, not because of anything done by them but because of the obedience and

righteousness of Christ that is imputed to them by faith (Acts 13:38-39; Rom. 3:21-26, 8:34, 10:3-4; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:9).

## **15. Sanctification**

Those who have been regenerated and justified are also sanctified by God's Word and the Spirit dwelling in them. Sanctification is the process by which all believers are gradually conformed more and more to the image of Christ through the power and work of the Holy Spirit, who enables them to pursue a life of joyful obedience to all of Christ's commands (Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:25-27; Rom. 8:1-17; Gal. 5:13-24; 2 Pet. 1:3-11).

## **16. Perseverance of the Saints**

All those whom God has regenerated will never totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace but will most certainly persevere to the end. Though they may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the church, and invoke temporal judgments on themselves, they nevertheless shall be renewed again unto repentance and will ultimately be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (John 6:37-40, 10:28-29; Rom. 8:28-39; 1 Cor. 1:8-9; Phil. 1:6; 1 John 2:19).

## **17. The Church**

The Lord Jesus is the head of the church, which is composed of all His true disciples, and in Him is invested supremely all power for its governance. According to His commandment, Christians are to associate themselves into particular local churches, and to each of these churches He has given authority for administering the order, discipline, and worship that He has appointed. The regular offices of a local church are Elders (Pastors) and Deacons. The mission of the church is to engage in God's mission of redeeming people from all the peoples of the world (Matt. 28:18-20; John 10:16; Acts 20:17, 28; Eph. 1:22, 5:23; 1 Tim. 3:1-13, 5:17-18; Tit. 1:5-9; Heb. 10:25).

## **18. Baptism**

Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus, obligatory upon every believer, wherein he is immersed in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as a sign of his fellowship with the death and resurrection of Christ, of remission of sins, and of giving himself up to God to live and walk in

newness of life. It is also a prerequisite to membership in the local church (Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-5; 1 Cor. 12:13).

## **19. The Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper is the divinely given act of communing with Christ and each other and of commemorating Christ's death by partaking of bread and the cup, which strengthens the believer's faith, renews his or her commitment to Christ and His people, marks the church off from the world as one body, and anticipates the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. (Matt. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 10:16-17, 11:23-34)

## **20. The Lord's Day**

The Lord's Day is a Christian institution for regular observance wherein believers should engage in exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Rev. 1:10).

## **21. Liberty of Conscience**

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men that are in any way contrary to His Word or not contained therein. Even so, Christians should submit to the laws of the authorities who have been ordained by God so long as these laws do not contradict the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 15:9; Rom. 13:1-7, 14:4; Acts 5:29; Col. 2:20-23).

## **22. The Resurrection**

After death, the bodies of human beings return to dust, but their spirits return immediately to God—the righteous to rest with Him, but the wicked to be reserved under darkness until the final judgment. The bodies of all the dead, both the righteous and the wicked, will be raised at the last day. The wicked will be raised to judgment, but the righteous will be raised to dwell forever with Christ in bodies resurrected in the same manner as Christ (John 5:28-29; 1 Cor. 15:12-28; 2 Cor. 5:1-10; Phil. 1:23).

## **23. The Judgment**

God has appointed a day where He will judge the world through Jesus Christ, every person according to his deeds. The wicked—those who have not trusted in Christ—will suffer eternal, conscious punishment, but the righteous—those who have trusted in Christ—will receive the promised eternal inheritance of everlasting life and will live with Christ forever in the new heavens and the new earth (Matt. 25:46; John 5:22, 27-29; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:6-11; 2 Cor. 5:10; Eph. 1:11-14; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; 2 Tim. 4:8; Rev. 7:13-17, 14:9-11, 21:1-8).