

Harvest Fellowship Church Statement of Faith



Harvest Fellowship

2017 Edition

Harvest Fellowship of Colebrookdale
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Foreword

This edition of the Statement of Faith of Harvest Fellowship of Colebrookdale represents the latest official version and supersedes all previous editions. Updated January 2017.

A Table of Contents and Indexes are incorporated for easy reference and contain clickable links in the electronic version.

Key and Abbreviations

Abbreviations: HFC Harvest Fellowship Church
Scripture References - Unless otherwise noted the ESV is used.

Gen.	Genesis	Nah.	Nahum
Exo.	Exodus	Hab.	Habakkuk
Lev.	Leviticus	Zeph.	Zephaniah
Num.	Numbers	Hag.	Haggai
Deu.	Deuteronomy	Zec.	Zechariah
Josh.	Joshua	Mal.	Malachi
Judg.	Judges	Mat.	Matthew
Ruth.	Ruth	Mark	Mark
1Sam.	First Samuel	Luke	Luke
2Sam.	Second Samuel	John	John
1Kgs.	First Kings	Acts	Acts
2Kgs.	Second Kings	Rom.	Romans
1Chr.	First Chronicles	1Cor.	First Corinthians
2Chr.	Second Chronicles	2Cor.	Second Corinthians
Ezra	Ezra	Gal.	Galatians
Neh.	Nehemiah	Eph.	Ephesians
Est.	Esther	Phil.	Philippians
Job	Job	Col.	Colossians
Psa.	Psalms	1Thes.	First Thessalonians
Pro.	Proverbs	2Thes.	Second Thessalonians
Ecc.	Ecclesiastes	1Tim.	First Timothy
Song.	Song of Solomon	2Tim.	Second Timothy
Isa.	Isaiah	Titus	Titus
Jer.	Jeremiah	Phi.	Philemon
Lam.	Lamentations	Heb.	Hebrews
Eze.	Ezekiel	James	James
Dan.	Daniel	1Pe.	First Peter
Hos.	Hosea	2Pe.	Second Peter
Joel	Joel	1Jo.	First John
Amos	Amos	2Jo.	Second John
Obad.	Obadiah	3Jo.	Third John
Jonah	Jonah	Jude	Jude
Mic.	Micah	Rev.	Revelation

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Preamble

Harvest Fellowship Church (HFC) has adopted this Statement of Faith to declare with clarity and precision its faith and testimony to the glory of God.

HFC acknowledges as its sole Head, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Savior of man. It submits to the written Word of God and to the Holy Spirit as its only sources of guidance and power in maintaining its redemptive life and work in the world.

HFC has adopted this Statement of Faith not in substitution for, but in subordination to the Word of God. These standards have been received as being based on the Scriptures; even the elements not drawn directly from the Word have been acknowledged as based on the general rules and tenor of the Word. These standards seek to provide an effective means for the application of the teaching of the Scriptures to the faith, worship, government, and discipline of the church. Although these standards have been acknowledged to be of lesser importance than the inspired words of the Scriptures, they cannot be neglected without resulting in serious impairment of the life of the church.

HFC acknowledges as brethren all those who share its confession of faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ. It acknowledges specifically the benefits derived from similar statements of faith, creeds, confessions, and catechisms devised at many times in the history of the church. It seeks to respond to the responsibilities that these benefits bring by beseeching Almighty God to indwell it in such a way that it may, by His grace, bring glory to Himself and blessing to men.

Statement of Faith

Article 1 – The Holy Scriptures

1-1 The Holy Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, are the inspired,¹ infallible, and inerrant Word of God,² a divine revelation, the original writings of which were inspired directly by the Holy Spirit.³ They are the sufficient, supreme, complete, and final authority of faith and conduct.⁴

1-2 Inspiration is a special act of the Holy Spirit³ by which He guided the writers of the Scriptures so that their words would convey the thoughts He wished conveyed, would bear a proper relationship to the thoughts of the other inspired books, and would be kept free from error of fact, doctrine, and judgment.⁵

1-3 The Holy Scriptures, the written Word of God, are composed of all books of the Old Testament and New Testament, namely

1-4

Old Testament

Genesis	2 Chronicles	Daniel
Exodus	Ezra	Hosea
Leviticus	Nehemiah	Joel
Numbers	Esther	Amos
Deuteronomy	Job	Obadiah
Joshua	Psalms	Jonah
Judges	Proverbs	Micah
Ruth	Ecclesiastes	Nahum
1 Samuel	Song of Songs	Habakkuk
2 Samuel	Isaiah	Zephaniah
1 Kings	Jeremiah	Haggai
2 Kings	Lamentations	Zechariah
1 Chronicles	Ezekiel	Malachi

New Testament

Matthew	Ephesians	Hebrews
Mark	Philippians	James
Luke	Colossians	1 Peter
John	1 Thessalonians	2 Peter
Acts	2 Thessalonians	1 John
Romans	1 Timothy	2 John
1 Corinthians	2 Timothy	3 John
2 Corinthians	Titus	Jude
Galatians	Philemon	Revelation

1 And how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work (2Tim. 3:15-17).

2 Forever, O Lord, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens (Psa. 119:89). If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken— (John 10:35). The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever (Isa. 40:8).

3 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit (2Pe. 1:21). Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories (1Pe. 1:10,11). Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual (1Cor. 2:12,13).

4 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth (John 17:17). And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled" (Luke 24:27,44). I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book (Rev. 22:18,19).

5 Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished (Mat. 5:17,18).

Article 2 – The Trinity

2-1 There are three persons in the Godhead: the Father, the Son,¹ and the Holy Spirit.² These three are one God,³ the same in substance, eternally equal in power and glory.

1 And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." (Mat. 3:16,17). Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28).

2 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God" (Acts 5:3,4).

3 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth" (Gen. 1:1,26). Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Mat. 28:19). The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all (2 Cor. 13:14).

Article 3 – God The Father

3-1 There is but one living and true God,¹ immanent, transcendent, infinite in being and perfection, pure spirit,² invisible, immutable,³ eternal, almighty, all wise,⁴ most holy, most free, most loving, most gracious, most merciful, longsuffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin,⁵ the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, and withal most just and terrible in His judgments, hating all sin. He will by no means clear the guilty.⁶

1 I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me, that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the Lord, and there is no other (Isa. 45:5,6).

2 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth (John 4:24).

3 I the Lord do not change (Mal. 3:6a).

4 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" (Rom. 11:33,34).

5 The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation" (Exo. 34:6,7).

6 "The Lord is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but he will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, to the third and the fourth generation." (Numbers 14:18)

Article 4 – God The Son

4-1 Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the Word,¹ the eternal and true God who is of one substance and equal with the Father.² He took on Himself man's nature, with all of its essential properties except sin: Being conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary,³ He embodied two perfect and distinct natures in one person. He is fully God and fully man, the only mediator between God and man.

4-2 The Lord Jesus Christ is the revelation of God to man.⁴ In the days of His humiliation⁵, He lived a sinless life, perfectly fulfilled the Law of God, performed miracles, taught the will of God,⁵ was crucified, and died. He was buried and arose bodily from the dead on the third day. The Lord Jesus offered Himself a sacrifice for sins,⁶ satisfied the justice of the Father, propitiated the wrath of God, reconciled God and man,⁷ and obtained an eternal inheritance.

4-3 The Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, from whence He had come, and was exalted, taking His place at the right hand of the Father, where He makes intercession on behalf of all who come to God through Him.⁸

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:1-3,14).

2 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross (Col.1:15-20).

3 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us) (Mat. 1:22,23).

4 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs (Heb. 1:1-4).

5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:5-11).

6 How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God (Heb.9:14).

7 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life (Rom. 5:10).

8 Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin (Heb. 4:14,15)

Article 5 – God the Holy Spirit

5-1 The eternal¹ Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son,² is of the same substance and equal in power and glory with the Father and the Son. By Him, the prophets were moved to speak the Word of God, and all writers of the Holy Scriptures were inspired to record infallibly the mind and will of God.³ He is the only efficient agent in the application of redemption. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment,⁴ moves them to repentance, and regenerates⁵ them by His grace, enabling them to embrace Jesus Christ by faith.

5-2 The Holy Spirit indwells all true believers upon true conversion, baptizing them into one body, of which Christ is the head.⁶ He, the divine Comforter, Intercessor, and Advocate, empowers the believer for service.⁷

1 Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God (Heb. 9:14b).

2 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever. –But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you (John 14:16,26).

3 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit (2Pe. 1:21).

4 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged (John 16:7-11).

5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

6 For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit (1Cor. 12:13).

7 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Article 6 – Creation

6-1 We believe that God created the universe,¹ and everything in it,² out of nothing,³ by the Word of His power in six, literal twenty-four hour days. Having no deficiency in Himself, nor moved by any incompleteness in His joyful self-sufficiency,⁴ God was pleased in creation to display His glory⁵ for the everlasting joy⁶ of the redeemed, from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.⁷

6-2 We believe that God directly created Adam from the dust of the ground and Eve from Adam's side. We believe that Adam and Eve were the historical parents of the entire human race;⁸ that they were created male and female equally in the image of God,⁹ without sin;¹⁰ that they were created to glorify¹¹ their Maker, Ruler, Provider, and Friend by trusting His all-sufficient goodness, admiring His infinite beauty, enjoying His personal fellowship, and obeying His all-wise counsel; and that, in God's love and wisdom, they were appointed differing and complementary roles in marriage as a type of Christ and the church.¹²

1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1).

2 The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, for he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers (Psalm 24:1-2).

3 By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible (Hebrews 11:3). But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world (Hebrews 1:2). In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made (John 1:1-3).

4 Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you'" (Exodus 3:13-14). I will not accept a bull from your house or goats from your folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the hills, and all that moves in the field is mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and its fullness are mine. Do I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats? Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and perform your vows to the Most High, and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me (Psalm 50:9-15). [God is not] served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything (Acts 17:25).

5 ...everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made (Isaiah 43:7).

6 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away (Isaiah 35:10). His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master" (Matthew 25:23).

7 And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation" (Revelation 5:9). After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb" (Revelation 7:9-10)!

8 Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature (Genesis 2:7). So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them (Genesis 1:27). So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man (Genesis 2:21-22). For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive (1 Corinthians 15:22). Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being;" the last Adam became a life-giving spirit (1 Corinthians 15:45). Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come (Romans 5:14).

9 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them (Genesis 1:27). Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image (Genesis 9:6). With [the tongue] we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God (James 3:9).

10 And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day (Genesis 1:31).

11 See note 7.

12 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband (Ephesians 5:22-33) Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him" (Genesis 2:18).

Article 7 – Satan

7-1 Satan is a created angelic being who fell from his first estate.¹ He is the god of this age, ruling by the permissive will of God.² He exercises authority over the unsaved, tempts the believer to sin, and continually accuses the brethren before the throne of God.³

7-2 He has been defeated by the finished work of Christ on Calvary, and will one day be utterly and finally destroyed.⁴

1 How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit. Those who see you will stare at you and ponder over you: 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, who made the world like a desert and overthrew its cities, who did not let his prisoners go home? (Isa. 14:12-17). And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day (Jude 1:6).

2 In which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience (Eph. 2:2). In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God (2Cor. 4:4).

3 For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain (1Thes. 3:5). For the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down (Rev. 12:10b).

4 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him (Colossians 2:14-15). Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. (John 12:31). and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever (Revelation 20:10).

Article 8 – Man

8-1 God, by a special, instantaneous act, created man in His image¹ – holy, righteous, and possessing true knowledge² – by forming him out of the dust of the earth and breathing into his nostrils the breath of life. Thus, man became a living soul.

8-2 Our first parents did not remain in the glorious and happy state of their original creation; but, through the subtlety and deception of the devil,³ they disobeyed and transgressed the command of God the Creator, incurring on themselves and their posterity the sentence of spiritual and physical death. The guilt and consequences of Adam's sin are imputed to the whole human race, so that all men are guilty,⁴ inherently corrupt, totally depraved,⁵ and subjects of the wrath of God.⁶

1 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. (Gen. 1:27).

2 And to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness (Eph. 4:24). And have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator (Col. 3:10). (See also Psa. 8:4-6.)

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate (Gen. 3:1-6).

4 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men (Rom. 5:12-18).

5 No one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one. "Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive. The venom of asps is under their lips. Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; in their paths are ruin and misery, and the way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes" (Rom. 3:11-18).

6 Among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind (Eph. 2:3). (See also Rom. 1:18.)

Article 9 – Sin

9-1 Sin is any lack of conformity to the will of God¹ or any transgression of the law of God.² Although God created man morally upright, he was led astray from God's Word and wisdom by the subtlety of Satan's deceit³ and chose to take what was forbidden⁴ and thus declare his independence from, distrust for, and disobedience toward his all-good and gracious Creator. Thus, our first parents, by this sin, fell from their original innocence and communion with God.⁵

9-2 We believe that, as the head of the human race, Adam's fall became the fall of all his posterity, in such a way that corruption, guilt, death, and condemnation belong properly to every person.⁶ All persons are thus corrupt by nature,⁷ enslaved to sin,⁸ and morally unable⁹ to delight in God and overcome their own proud preference for the fleeting pleasures of self-rule.

9-3 We believe God has subjected the creation to futility,¹⁰ and the entire human family is made justly liable to untold miseries of sickness,¹¹ decay,¹² calamity,¹³ and loss.¹⁴ Thus, all the adversity and suffering in the world is an echo and a witness of the exceedingly great evil of moral depravity in the heart of mankind; and every new day of life is a God-given, merciful reprieve from imminent judgment, pointing to repentance.¹⁵

1 All wrongdoing is sin (1Jo. 5:17a). So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin (James 4:17).

2 Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness (1Jo. 3:4). For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it (James 2:10).

3 See, this alone I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes (Ecclesiastes 7:29). Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'" (Genesis 3:1)? Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate" (Genesis 3:13). But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ (2 Corinthians 11:3).

4 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of

it you shall surely die (Genesis 2:17). So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate (Genesis 3:6).

5 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden (Genesis 3:7-8). Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned (Romans 5:12). For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead (1 Corinthians 15:21).

6 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned- for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous (Romans 5:12-19).

7 In [sin] you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind (Ephesians 2:2-3).

8 Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? ...When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness (Romans 6:16, 20).

9 The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2:14). For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God (Romans 8:7-8). But to this day the LORD has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear (Deuteronomy 29:4).

10 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope (Romans 8:20).

11 And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies (Romans 8:23).

12 So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day (2 Corinthians 4:16).

13 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered" (Romans 8:35-36).

14 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13).

15 Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance (Romans 2:4)?

Article 10 – Human Ability and Responsibility

10-1 In his original creation, man was endowed with the ability to will and do good or evil and was accountable for his willing and doing.¹ However, through the fall of Adam, man lost his ability, apart from God's grace,² to will and to do those things necessary for a right relationship with God;³ however, he is still accountable to God for obedience to all of His commands.⁴ Man has not lost his ability to make decisions,⁵ but left to himself, he acts only in accordance with his fallen, sinful nature.⁶

10-2 Only by God's infinite grace can man will or do anything necessary to his salvation.⁷ By that grace, God saves those men whom He causes to will and to do good;⁸ however, He does this without nullifying man's ability to act responsibly.⁹

1 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (Gen. 2:16,17).

2 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind (Eph. 2:1-3).

3 No one understands; no one seeks for God. (Rom. 3:11). Those who are in the flesh cannot please God (Rom. 8:8).

4 He will render to each one according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek (Rom. 2:6-10). The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30).

5 For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. –I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live (Deu. 30:11,19).

6 As it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one" (Rom. 3:10,12). Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Then also you can do good who are accustomed to do evil. (Jer. 13:23). (See also footnote 2.)

7 So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy (Rom. 9:16).

8 Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures (James 1:18). But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God (John 1:12-13).

9 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure (Phil. 2:12,13).

Article 11 – Election

11-1 Election is a free act of the sovereign God in which from eternity past,¹ for reasons known only to Himself,² and apart from any foreseen faith and/or goodness found in man,³ He graciously chose from among the fallen mankind a people unto salvation, that they might be conformed to Christ's image.⁴ Those so chosen, He redeemed by His Son⁵ and seals by His Spirit.⁶

1 Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. –In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will (Eph. 1:4,11).

2 All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him (Mat. 11:27).

3 Who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began (2Tim. 1:9). For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified (Rom. 8:29-30).

4 Until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:13).

5 But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth (2Thes. 2:13).

6 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13).

Article 12 – Salvation

12-1 Salvation is a monergistic work of God¹ in which He reconciles fallen men to Himself,² ultimately removes the consequences of the curse,³ and bestows upon His redeemed Creation⁴ the riches of His grace, all to His glory.⁵

12-2 Salvation is offered in the gospel to all men⁶ and is accomplished in all the elect.⁷ It is received by grace through faith and the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit,⁸ apart from works or human merit.⁹ Salvation centers in a person, Jesus Christ, and receiving Him¹⁰ includes the remission of sins on the grounds of His shed blood on the cross,¹¹ the imputation of His perfect righteousness,¹² the receiving of the Holy Spirit,¹³ and the impartation of eternal life.¹⁴

1 Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them (Heb. 7:25). (See also Eph. 2:4-5, 8-9.)

2 And through him to reconcile to himself all things (Col. 1:20). For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life (Rom. 5:10).

3 No longer will there be anything accursed (Rev. 22:3a).

4 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience (Rom. 8:18-25).

5 "I, I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins" (Isa. 43:25).

6 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

7 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out (John 6:37). No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day (John 6:44). Since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him (John 17:2). And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed (Acts 13:48).

8 And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment (John 16:8).

9 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast (Eph. 2:8,9).

10 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God (John 1:12).

11 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace (Eph. 1:7).

12 And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption (1Cor. 1:30).

13 Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him (Rom. 8:9b).

14 And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life (1Jn. 5:11,12).

Article 13 – Repentance

13-1 Repentance unto life is a gift of God¹ and a voluntary act of the regenerate man,² accomplished by the convicting power of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. Repentance consists in a knowledge of sin,³ a sense of guilt and corruption that results in the confession and forsaking of sin and a turning to God⁴ that results in loving, obedient service.⁵

1 Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance (Rom. 2:4)? When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life" (Acts 11:18). Correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth (2Tim. 2:25).

2 And that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem (Luke 24:47). The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30).

3 And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment (John 16:8).

4 For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God (1Thes. 1:9).

5 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them (Eph. 2:10). Remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ (1Thes. 1:3).

Article 14 – Regeneration

14-1 We believe that in a free act of righteous grace, God justifies the ungodly by faith alone apart from works,¹ pardoning their sins,² and reckoning them as righteous and acceptable in His presence.³ Faith is thus the sole instrument⁴ by which we, as sinners, are united to Christ, whose perfect righteousness and satisfaction for sins is alone the ground of our acceptance with God.⁵ This acceptance happens fully and permanently at the first instant of justification.⁶ Thus, the righteousness by which we come into right standing with God is not anything worked in us by God, neither imparted to us at baptism nor over time, but rather is accomplished for us, outside ourselves, and is imputed to us.

14-2 Nevertheless, we believe that the faith, which alone receives the gift of justification, does not remain alone in the person so justified, but produces, by the Holy Spirit,⁷ the fruit of love⁸ and leads necessarily to sanctification.⁹ This necessary relation between justifying faith and the fruit of good works gives rise to some Biblical expressions which seem to make works the grounds or means of justification;¹⁰ but, in fact, simply express the crucial truth that faith that does not yield the fruit of good works is dead, being no true faith.¹¹

1 He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:5-7). For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law (Romans 3:28). For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:23-24). Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness (Romans 4:4-5). We know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified (Galatians 2:16). Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1). So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith (Galatians 3:24). You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace (Galatians 5:4). I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith (Philippians 3:8-9).

2 Just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin” (Romans 4:6-8).

3 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21). [May I] be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith (Philippians 3:9). But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction (Romans 3:21-22).

4 For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law (Romans 3:28). Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness (Romans 4:4-5). See note 157.

5 Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous (Romans 5:18-19). For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21). ...and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith (Philippians 3:9). “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall

reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness'" (Jeremiah 23:5-6).

6 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1).

7 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law (Galatians 5:22-23).

8 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love (Galatians 5:6). The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith (1 Timothy 1:5). We heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel (Colossians 1:4-5). We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death (1 John 3:14). Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. . . . If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen (1 John 4:8, 20). We have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him (1 John 4:16).

9 But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth (2 Thessalonians 2:13). [I send you] to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me (Acts 26:18). To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power (2 Thessalonians 1:11; see also 1 Thessalonians 1:3). So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead (James 2:17). For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead (James 2:26). He made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith (Acts 15:9). By this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him (1 John 2:3-4). Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him (1 John 5:1).

10 Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14). For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God (Romans 8:13-14). Envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:21). For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up (Galatians 6:8-9). Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment (John 5:28-29). Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart (Matthew 18:34-35). Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"—and he was called a friend of God. You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way (James 2:21-25)?

11 So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? . . . For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead (James 2:17-20, 26).

Article 15 – Justification

15-1 Justification is the act of God's grace whereby the sinner is declared righteous solely through faith¹ in the redemptive work of Christ.² By this action, the righteousness of Christ is imputed,³ sin is pardoned, and the sinner is restored to divine favor.⁴

1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God (Rom. 5:1,2). And by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses (Acts 13:39).

2 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us (Rom. 8:33,34).

3 Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men (Rom. 5:18). For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2Cor. 5:21).

4 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon (Isa. 55:7).

Article 16 – Sanctification

16-1 Sanctification is a progressive work of the Holy Spirit in the believer¹ that purifies the life² and conforms the whole man to the image of Christ as the Word of God is believed and obeyed.³ It begins at regeneration,⁴ continues throughout the believer's life⁵ on earth, and reaches its completion at the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ.⁶

1 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit (2Cor. 3:18).

2 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality (1Thes. 4:3).

3 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth (John 17:17).

4 And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God (1Cor. 6:11).

5 And to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. (Eph. 4:24,26,27).

6 Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1Thes. 5:23).

Article 17 – Perseverance of the Saints

17-1 Salvation is the work of God, from its commencement to its consummation.¹ Those regenerated by the Word of God through the work of the Holy Spirit become partakers of the divine nature.² They are preserved by the power of God³ so that they shall never totally or finally fall away,⁴ but shall persevere unto the end.⁵

1 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified (Rom. 8:29,30).

2 By which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire (2Pe. 1:4).

3 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:6). Who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1Pe. 1:5).

4 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand (John 10:27-29). Who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (1Cor. 1:8). They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us (1Jo. 2:19).

5 But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one. And we have confidence in the Lord about you, that you are doing and will do the things that we command (2Thes. 3:3,4).

Article 18 – The Church

18-1 The Church is the body of which Christ is the head.¹ All those redeemed by His blood² and born of His Spirit are members of that body and are in mystical union and communion with Christ³ and fellow believers.⁴ The Church is universal and local, visible and invisible. The visible Church consists of all those professing faith in Christ. The invisible Church is composed of all those born of the Spirit.⁵

18-2 The purpose of the Church is to worship God,⁶ to edify the saints,⁷ and to evangelize the world.⁸

18-3 Christ, as the Head of the Church, administers the affairs of His body through overseers chosen by Himself and confirmed by the Elders.⁹

18-4 A properly constituted local Church must include the ministry of God's Word, the observance of the ordinances, the oversight by elders,¹⁰ and the exercise of discipline.¹¹ The overseers of the Church are to be prayed for, obeyed, and honored.¹²

1 And he is the head of the body, the church (Col. 1:18a).

2 Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot (1Pe. 1:18,19).

3 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin (Rom. 6:5,6).

4 I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment (1Cor. 1:10).

5 For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit (1Cor. 12:13).

6 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:23,24). You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. –But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light (1Pe. 2:5,9).

7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills (1Cor. 12:7,11).

8 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age (Mat. 28:19,20).

9 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ (Eph. 4:11,12).

10 Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." (1Pe. 5:2,3,5).

11 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector (Mat. 18:17).

12 Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. Greet all your leaders and all the saints (Heb. 13:7,17,24a).

Article 19 - The Evangelistic Mission of the Church

19-1 The Church has been commissioned by Jesus Christ to preach the gospel to all nations.¹ Each particular Church and every believer bears responsibility for this commission.²

19-2 God has clearly revealed in the Gospel the only way of salvation sufficient for and applicable to the whole lost race of mankind.³ He bids that the Church – with urgency, compassion, and persuasion – proclaim the gospel to all people and invite them to believe.^{4,5}

19-3 It is the duty and privilege of everyone who hears the gospel to repent and receive its merciful provisions.⁶ Those who do are saved,⁷ and those who continue in impenitence and unbelief incur aggravated guilt and perish by their own fault.⁸

1 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Mat. 28:19,20). But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8).

2 But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect (1Pe. 3:15).

3 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world (1Jo. 2:2).

4 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1Tim. 2:3,4).

5 All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God (2Cor. 5:18-20).

6 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30). For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Rom. 10:13).

7 And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household" (Acts 16:31). Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life (John 5:24).

8 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him (John 3:36). No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish (Luke 13:3). But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed (Rom. 2:5).

Article 20 – Ordinances

20-1 Baptism. Water baptism,¹ the immersion of the believer, is a visible testimony to the work of regeneration² and a mark of identification and union with Christ.³ It has no saving or cleansing power, but it is the answer of a good conscience before God; hence, it should be administered only to those who have, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, realized the forgiveness of sins and possess the assurance of acceptance with God.

20-2 The Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the New Testament,⁴ in which, by the giving and receiving of bread and wine, according to the appointment of Jesus Christ, His death is proclaimed.⁵ Those who worthily partake in this remembrance of Him feed upon Him to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace,⁶ have their union and communion with Him confirmed, and testify and renew their thankfulness and commitment to God⁷ and their mutual love and fellowship each with the other as members of the same mystical body.⁸ The Scriptures direct that each one spiritually examine himself before partaking of the bread and the cup "until He comes."⁹

1 And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?" (Acts 8:36).

2 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls (Acts 2:41).

3 "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Mat. 28:19,20). Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3,4). In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead (Col. 2:11,12).

4 And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood (Luke 22:19,20).

5 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes (1Cor. 11:26).

6 For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him (John 6:55,56).

7 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons (1Cor. 10:21).

8 Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread (1Cor. 10:17).

9 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes (1Cor. 11:26).

Article 21 – The Lord's Day

21-1 The first day of the week has been recognized by the Church as the Lord's Day since apostolic times.¹ We believe, therefore, that it ought to be observed by all believers, voluntarily and in love,² as a day set apart as holy to the Lord for the corporate worship of God,³ remembrance of the resurrection of our Lord from the dead, and fellowship and mutual encouragement of the saints.⁴

1 Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb...On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." (John 20:1, 19). On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight (Acts 20:7). On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper so that there will be no collecting when I come. (1 Cor. 16:2).

2 One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind (Rom. 14:5). For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. (Gal. 5:13).

3 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (Heb. 10:23-25)

4 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers (Acts 2:42). Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ (Eph. 5:15-21). Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. (Col. 2:16).

Article 22 – The Edification of the Body and Spiritual Gifts

22-1 The purpose of the church is to glorify God¹ by building itself up in the faith,² by instruction of the Word,³ by fellowship,⁴ by keeping the ordinances⁵ and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world.⁶

22-2 We teach the calling of all saints to the work of service.⁷

22-3 We teach the need of the church to cooperate with God as He accomplishes His purpose in the world. To that end, He gives the church spiritual gifts. He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry,⁸ and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the Body of Christ.⁹

22-4 We teach that there were two kinds of gifts given the early church: miraculous gifts of divine revelation and healing, given temporarily in the apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the apostles' message;¹⁰ and ministering gifts, given to equip believers for edifying one another. With the New Testament revelation now complete, Scripture becomes the sole test of the authenticity of a man's message; and confirming gifts of a miraculous nature are no longer necessary to validate a man or his message. Miraculous gifts can even be counterfeited by Satan.¹¹ The only gifts in operation today are those non-revelatory equipping gifts given for edification.¹² We teach that no one possesses the gift of healing today, but that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith and will answer in accordance with His own perfect will for the sick, suffering, and afflicted.¹³

1 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:21)

2 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. (Ephesians 4:13-16)

3 and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also (2 Timothy 2:2), Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15) All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

4 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved (Acts 2:47). that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ (1 John 1:3).

5 And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." (Luke 22:19). And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are

far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers (Acts 2:38-42).

6 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (Matthew 28:19). But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8). And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers (Acts 2:42).

7 Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain (1 Corinthians 15:58). to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:12). "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done." (Revelation 22:12).

8 But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, (Ephesians 4:7-12).

9 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness (Romans 12:5-8). Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way (1 Corinthians 12:4-31). As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen (1 Peter 4:10-11).

10 how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard, while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will (Hebrews 2:3-4). The signs of a true

apostle were performed among you with utmost patience, with signs and wonders and mighty works (2 Corinthians 12:12).

11 So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love. Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit. On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church. Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up. Now, brothers, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching? If even lifeless instruments, such as the flute or the harp, do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is played? And if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle? So with yourselves, if with your tongue you utter speech that is not intelligible, how will anyone know what is said? For you will be speaking into the air. There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning, but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me. So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church. (1 Corinthians 13:13-14:12). It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people, 14 and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived (Revelation 13:13-14).

12 Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness (Romans 12:6-8).

13 And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.' For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, Though I neither fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.'" And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge says (Luke 18:1-6). The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Get up, take up your bed, and walk." And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked (John 5:7-9). Though if I should wish to boast, I would not be a fool, for I would be speaking the truth; but I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong (2 Corinthians 12:6-10). Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working (James 5:13-16). And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him (1 John 5:14-15).

Article 23 – Civil Government

23-1 God ordained and instituted civil government¹ for the welfare of society, to promote and to protect the good, and to restrain and punish the evil.² It is the duty of Christians to pray³ for those in authority, to render due loyalty,⁴ respect, and obedience⁵ to them, and to pay taxes and customs demanded of them. Where demands of civil law militate against the supreme and higher law of God, Christians should obey God rather than man.⁶

1 The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, the decision by the word of the holy ones, to the end that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of men' (Dan. 4:17).

2 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval (Rom. 13:1-3).

3 First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way (1Tim. 2:1,2).

4 Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good (1Pe. 2:13,14).

5 Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work (Titus 3:1).

6 But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge" (Acts 4:19). But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

Article 24 – Death, Resurrection, and the Coming of the Lord

24-1 We believe that when Christians die they are made perfect in holiness,¹ are received into paradise,² and are taken consciously into the presence of Christ, which is more glorious and more satisfying than any experience on earth.³

24-2 We believe in the blessed hope⁴ that at the end of the age, Jesus Christ will return to this earth personally,⁵ visibly,⁶ physically,⁷ and suddenly⁸ in power and great glory;⁹ and that He will gather His elect,¹⁰ raise the dead,¹¹ judge the nations, and establish His kingdom.¹² We believe that the righteous will enter into the everlasting joy of their Master,¹³ and those who suppressed the truth in unrighteousness¹⁴ will be consigned to everlasting conscious misery.¹⁵

24-3 We believe that the end of all things in this age will be the beginning of a never-ending, ever-increasing happiness in the hearts of the redeemed, as God displays more and more of His infinite and inexhaustible greatness and glory for the enjoyment of His people.¹⁶

1 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect (Hebrews 12:22-23).

2 And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise." (Luke 23:43).

3 I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better (Philippians 1:23; cf. 2 Corinthians 5:1-9; Revelation 6:9-11. On the issue of whether Paul conceives of the body and soul as separable, see 2 Corinthians 12:2-3).

4 [We are] waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13).

5 And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." (Acts 1:9-11).

6 But he remained silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" And Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven" (Mark 14:61-62).

7 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself (Philippians 3:20-21). See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it before them (Luke 24:39-43). See note 4.

8 For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While

people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape (1 Thessalonians 5:2-3).

9 And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory (Luke 21:27).

10 He will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other (Matthew 24:31).

11 For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17).

12 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power (1 Corinthians 15:22-24). I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom (2 Timothy 4:1). You are those who have stayed with me in my trials, and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke 22:28-30).

13 You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore (Psalm 16:11). His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' (Matthew 25:23). These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life (Matthew 25:46). And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life (Matthew 19:29). For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16). For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23). Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy... be glory...forever. Amen (Jude 24-25).

14 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth (Romans 1:18).

15 of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt (Daniel 12:2). His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire (Matthew 3:12; see also 18:8; 10:28; 12:32; 25:41, 46; 26:24; Mark 3:29; 9:43-48; Luke 16:26; Jude 12-13). They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might (2 Thessalonians 1:9). And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name (Revelation 14:11; see also 19:3; 20:10).

16 [God] raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:6-7). You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore (Psalm 16:11). For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known (1 Corinthians 13:12). But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Corinthians 2:9).

Article 25 – The Judgments

25-1 The Scriptures enumerate several judgments that differ in time, place, subjects, and results. All judgment has been entrusted to the Son by the Father.¹

25-2 Through the death of Christ on the cross, the believer's sins have been judged, and he has passed from death unto life.² In no case do the redeemed come again into judgment concerning their eternal destiny. Each saint, however, will be required to give an account before the judgment seat of Christ regarding his works and conduct.³

25-3 The unregenerate will be judged, condemned, and banished to eternal damnation in the lake of fire.⁴

1 The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son (John 5:22).

2 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life (John 5:24).

3 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1). For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil (2Cor. 5:10).

4 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:11-15).

Article 26 - The Kingdom of God

26-1 God is the almighty Sovereign who reigns eternally over all His creation.¹ His kingdom triumphs forever according to His will. Even the sinful rebellion of mankind cannot defeat Him but instead serves and glorifies Him.²

26-2 God's plan, demonstrated throughout human history, has been to reveal His kingship on earth by delegating kingly dominion to human beings as His image bearers.³ Through Adam's fall, the exercise of this dominion has been corrupted, and man needs redemption in order to glorify God and reign in accordance with His will. As the Last Adam, Jesus in His humanity manifests the proper vice-regency of the kingdom of God for the purpose of redemption and restoration, which will ultimately usher in the glorious kingdom for which creation was destined.⁴ Thus, the kingdom of God is advanced in Jesus' life, death, resurrection, ascension, and His present reign.⁵ Acknowledging this reign, Christians confess Christ as Lord and willingly submit to His rule in their personal lives and welcome His authority over all creation.⁶

26-3 When Christ has subdued all enemies, including death, He will present the kingdom to His Father.⁷ The triune God will preside over a new heaven and a new earth, and the people of God will dwell with Him forever.⁸ All prophecies of Scripture will have been fulfilled. God's eternal kingship, having been established and vindicated by the royal exercise of the Son's authority, will at that time be present and manifest in full glory over all creation forever and ever.⁹

1 The LORD has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all (Psa. 103:19). His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation" (Dan. 4:34).

2 The LORD works out everything for his own ends – even the wicked for a day of disaster (Prov. 16:4). Surely the wrath of men brings you praise, and with the remainder of wrath you arm yourself" (Psa. 76:10).

3 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground" (Gen. 1:26).

4 For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ (Rom 5:17). The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Rom. 8:19-21).

5 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone (Heb. 2:9). For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, "The Lord said to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet'" (Acts 2:34-35). But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last forever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom" (Heb. 1:8).

6 If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved (Rom. 10:9-10). Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven (Matt. 6:10).

7 I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. ... On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS (Rev. 19:11,16). He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore (Isa. 2:4). With righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked (Isa. 11:4).

8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery (Psa. 2:8-9). Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death (1 Cor. 15:24-26).

9 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away (Rev. 21:1). No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever (Rev. 22:3-5).

Article 27 - The Eternal State

27-1 There are two final, eternal destinies for man: heaven for the righteous and penitent, and hell for the unrighteous and impenitent.¹ At the great white throne judgment, all enemies of God will be consigned to the place of eternal conscious punishment, from which there is no escape.² The new heavens and the new earth shall be created³ as the final state in which the righteous shall dwell forever in the presence of God.⁴

1 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life (Mat. 25:46).

2 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:11-15).

3 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells (2Pe. 3:10-13).

4 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God (Rev. 21:3).