

What We Believe

Doctrinal Statement of Faith Church of Sellersville (updated Dec 2024)

The Holy Scriptures

We believe that the Bible is God's written revelation to ¹man. The sixty-six books of the Bible were given to us by the Holy Spirit and are in their entirety the plenary (equal in all parts) Word of God (1 Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:20-21). We believe that the Word of God is verbally inspired (2 Timothy 3:16) and inerrant in its original documents. The Bible is therefore the only infallible rule of faith and practice (Matthew 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12-13; 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12).

The Trinity

We believe there is only one living and true God who exists eternally in three Persons (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; 1 Corinthians 8:4). God is an infinite, all-knowing Spirit (John 4:24), perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, and three in Persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14). All three Persons of the Godhead equally deserve worship and obedience.

God the Father. We believe that God the Father is the first Person of the Trinity. According to His will and through His Son, He created and sustains all things (John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2; Genesis 1:1-31). God the Father is the only absolute, omnipotent ruler in the universe, and He remains sovereign over all creation (Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:36). For the sake of His own glory, He has decreed all things that come to pass (Ephesians 1:11). The Father has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His children (Ephesians 1:4-6). He therefore calls and saves from sin all who repent and turn to Him. He adopts as His own all who come to Him through faith in Jesus Christ and upon adoption, becomes their Father (John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5-9).

God the Son. We believe that Jesus is the second person of the Trinity and possesses all the divine attributes of God. He is coequal and coeternal with the Father and Spirit (John 10:30; 14:9).

We believe that in the incarnation the eternal Son humbled Himself by taking on full human nature yet without sin. He did so without altering His divine nature or surrendering any of the divine attributes (Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26).

We believe that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary (Luke 1:35) and thereby possesses the whole, perfect, and distinct natures of both the divine and the

¹ Man – in this document, “man” means mankind (i.e. men, women, children).

human. He is fully God and fully human yet one person in Christ, and as such He serves as the only mediator between God and man.

We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption from sin and death through the shedding of His blood and His sacrificial death on the cross. His death was substitutionary and ²propitiatory (John 10:15; Romans 3:24-25; 5:8; 1 Peter 2:24).

We believe that based on the ³efficacy of Jesus' death the believing sinner is freed from the penalty and power of sin and is declared righteous and adopted into the family of God (Romans 3:25; 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18).

We believe that Jesus' literal, physical resurrection from the dead makes sure our justification. Following His resurrection, He ascended into heaven where He is seated at the right hand of the Father and where He mediates as our Advocate and High Priest (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:38-39; Acts 2:30-31; Romans 4:25; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1).

God the Holy Spirit. We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the divine Trinity who possesses all the attributes of God. The Holy Spirit is coequal and ⁴consubstantial with the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; Hebrews 10:15-17).

We believe that the Holy Spirit is working to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind. We recognize His sovereign activity in creation (Genesis 1:2), in the incarnation (Matthew 1:18), in the written revelation (2 Peter 1:20-21), and in the work of salvation (John 3:5-7, 16:8-11).

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign agent in the regeneration and baptism of all believers into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). The Holy Spirit also indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers for service, and seals all believers unto the day of redemption (Romans 8:9; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13). He is the promised Counselor, Teacher, and Comforter (John 14:16).

We believe that the Holy Spirit is sovereign in bestowing spiritual gifts which are to be used for the perfecting of the saints and the building up of the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12; Romans 12:3-8).

Mankind

We believe that man was directly created by God in His image and likeness to glorify God and have fellowship with Him. Adam was created free of sin with intelligence, volition, and moral responsibility to God (Genesis 1:26-27, 2:7, 15-25; James 3:9).

We believe that because of Adam's original sin of disobedience to God, man lost his innocence, incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death, and became subject to the just wrath of

² Propitiation – the act of appeasing or turning aside of wrath: satisfying the righteous demands of a holy God.

³ Efficacy – the power to produce a desired or intended effect or result.

⁴ Consubstantial – of the same substance or essence (used specifically of the three persons of the Trinity).

God (Romans 5:12-14). Man is incapable of saving himself and is hopelessly lost. Because of Adam's sin, all men are born into sin (Genesis 2:16-17; John 3:36; Romans 3:23; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 15:21-22 Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14; 1 John 1:8).

Salvation

We believe that salvation is wholly by grace through faith and is based on the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. Salvation is secured on the merit of His shed blood and is not based on human merit or works (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

Justification. We believe that justification is an act of God (Romans 8:33) by which He declares righteous those who through faith in Christ repent of their sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10) and trust only in the work of Christ for salvation. Justification involves the imputation⁵ of our sins to Christ (Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24) and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us (Romans 4:5-8; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

Regeneration. We believe that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and spiritual life are given to a believing sinner (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5). This work is instantaneous. It is accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit through the proclamation of the Word of God (John 5:24) when the repentant sinner responds in faith to the divine call to salvation. Regeneration begins the process of sanctification. The resulting good works are the proper evidence and fruit of regeneration (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 2:10). This fruit of regeneration will be experienced to the extent that the believer submits to the control of the Holy Spirit and faithfully obeys the Word of God (Ephesians 5:17-21; Philippians 2:12b; Colossians 3:16; 2 Peter 4:1-10).

Perseverance of the Saints. We believe that all the redeemed are kept by God's power and are thus secure forever (John 6:37-40, 10:27-30; Philippians 1:6).

The Church

We believe that all who have received the gift of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ are placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body, the church (1 Corinthians 12:12-13), of which Christ is the Head (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; Colossians 1:18). The mission of the church is to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:18-20). Upon being placed by the Holy Spirit into the universal body, we believe that all Christians should join the fellowship of a local body where the mission of Christ is carried out, mutual care and edification is experienced, and accountability is practiced (Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 12:21-26; Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:12-13; Acts 2:41).

⁵ Setting to one's account or reckoning something to a person: attributing something to a person.

We believe elders (also called bishops, pastors, and pastor-teachers - Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11) and deacons should serve under Christ as the Biblically-designated leaders of the church. Both elders and deacons must be men who meet the Biblical qualifications found in 1 Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-5.

We believe that two ordinances have been committed to the local church: Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:38-42). Christian baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36-39) is the visible, outward testimony of a believer's faith in Christ, his union with Him in death to sin, and his resurrection to a new life (Romans 6:1-11). Baptism represents Christ's New Covenant sign of His relationship and identification with the believer and serves as a picture of God's promise that we are His forever (Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12; Galatians 3:27; 1 Peter 3:21; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Ephesians 1:13-14).

We believe that the Lord's Supper (also called communion) is the commemoration and proclamation of the Lord's death until He comes (1 Cor. 11:23-26). Prior to partaking of the elements of communion, a believer must solemnly examine himself and the body of Christ so as to not partake unworthily (1 Corinthians 11:27-32). While the elements of communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ, we also believe that participation in the Lord's Supper is an actual communion with the risen Christ (1 Corinthians 10:16).

Last Things

We believe in the personal, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ to the earth (I Thessalonians 4:16; Titus 2:13).

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men. The saved will be resurrected to eternal life (John 6:39; Romans 8:10-11, 19-23; 2 Corinthians 4:14), but the lost will be resurrected to judgment and everlasting punishment (Daniel 12:2; John 5:29; Revelation 20:13-15).

We believe God will usher in a new heaven and a new earth after the final judgment (Revelation 20:11-15) where only righteousness will be present (Ephesians 5:5; Revelation 20:15), and only the Redeemed will dwell with Him for eternity (Revelation 21-22).

Authority of the Doctrinal Statement

The Doctrinal Statement does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Doctrinal Statement accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and is therefore binding upon all members.