

HOPE CHURCH

Toronto North

STATEMENT OF FAITH

Adapted from the 1853 New Hampshire Confession of Faith

TOGETHER WITH THE CHURCH IN ALL AGES,

We believe and confess the teachings contained in the Apostles Creed, Nicene Creed, Athanasian Creed and Chalcedonian Definition as faithful summations of Biblical truth.

FURTHERMORE,

I. The Scriptures

We believe the Bible, consisting of the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament, was written by people who were divinely inspired, and that it is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction. God is its author, salvation is its purpose, and truth, without any mixture of error, is its content. Scripture reveals the principles by which God will judge us. Therefore, it is now, and will be to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union and the only sufficient, certain and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience.

[2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Tim 3:15; Prov 30:5-6; Rom 2:12; 1 John 4:1]

II. The True God

We believe that the Lord our God is one, the only living and true God. He is self-existent and infinite in being and perfection. His essence cannot be comprehended by anyone but him. He is a perfectly pure spirit. He is invisible and has no body, parts, or passions. He alone has immortality, dwelling in light that no one can approach. He is unchangeable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, in every way infinite, absolutely holy, perfectly wise, wholly free, completely absolute. He works all things according to the counsel of his own unchangeable and completely righteous will for his own glory. He is most loving, gracious, merciful, and patient. He overflows with goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin. He rewards those who seek him diligently. At the same time, he is perfectly just and will certainly not clear the guilty.

[1 Cor 8:4,6; Deut 6:4, Jer 10:10; Isa 48:12, Exod 3:14, John 4:24, 1 Tim 1:17; Deut 4:15-16, Mal 3:6, 1 Kings 8:27; Jer 23:23, Ps 90:2, Gen 17:1, Isa 6:3, Ps 115:3; Isa 46:10, Prov 16:4; Rom 11:36, Exod 34:6-7; Heb 11:6, Neh 9:32-33, Ps 5:5-6, Exod 34:7; Nah 1:2-3]



III. The Trinity

We believe the Scriptures reveal that the one God eternally exists in three distinct persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three have the same substance, power, and eternity, each having the whole divine essence without this essence being divided. The Father is not derived from anyone, neither begotten nor proceeding. The Son is eternally begotten of the Father. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. All three are infinite and without beginning and are therefore only one God, who is not to be divided in nature and being. To know, love, and enjoy God the Trinity forever is the supreme end of man and the greatest gift of the gospel.

[1 John 5:7; Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14; Exod 3:14; John 14:11; 1 Cor 8:6; John 1:14,18; John 15:26; Gal 4:6, John 17:3]

A. God The Father

God the Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is truly Father to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all people.

[Gen 1:1; 2:7; Exod 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11; 20:1; Lev 22:2; Deut 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chron 29:10; Ps 19:1-3; Isa 43:3,15; 64:8; Jer 10:10; 17:13; Matt 6:9; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Rom 8:14-15; 1 Cor 8:6; Gal 4:6; Eph 4:6; Col 1:15; 1 Tim 1:17; Heb 11:6; 12:9; 1 Pet 1:17; 1 John 5:7]

B. God The Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, truly God, truly man, in whose Person is achieved the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission.

[Gen 18:1; Ps 2:7; 110:1; Isa 7:14; Isa 53:1-12; Matt 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Rom 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Cor 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Cor 5:19-21; 8:9; Gal 4:4-5; Eph 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Phil 2:5-11; Col 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thes 4:14-18; 1 Tim 2:5-6; 3:16; Tit 2:13-14; Heb 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Pet 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Rev 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16]



C. God The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son. He inspired holy people of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables people to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts people of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls people to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

[Gen 1:2; Jud 14:6; Job 26:13; Ps 51:11; 139:7; Isa 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matt 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Rom 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Cor 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Gal 4:6; Eph 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thes 5:19; 1 Tim 3:16; 4:1; 2 Tim 1:14; 3:16; Heb 9:8,14; 2 Pet 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Rev 1:10; 22:17]

IV. Creation

We believe that in the beginning God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit was pleased to create the world and all things in it, both visible and invisible, and all very good. He did this to manifest the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness. Though presently subject to futility due to the fall of man and judgment of God, creation looks with eager expectation to the final redemption of the church of God, upon which it will enjoy the glory of new creation.

[John 1:2-3; Heb 1:2; Job 26:13; Rom 1:20; Col 1:16; Gen 1:31; Rom 8:20-23]



V. Humanity And The Fall

We believe humanity is the special creation of God, made in his own image and thereby worthy of honor, respect, and protection, from conception till death. God created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender, which accords with a person's biological sex as male or female, is thus part of the goodness of God's creation to be embraced with gratitude and worship. The gift of marriage, designed by God for His glory and for a husband and wife's enjoyment of companionship, sexual intimacy, and procreation, consists in the union of one man and one woman in life-long covenantal commitment, which models the way God relates to His people. God designed sexual intimacy to be expressed and consummated exclusively within the bounds of this one-flesh marital union.

God created the human race in holiness under his law. By voluntary transgression, however, humanity fell from that holy and happy state. As a result, all people now sin, not by external compulsion, but by nature and by choice, and are alienated from God. Therefore, all of mankind is in desperate need of the Savior who saves from God's righteous wrath.

[Gen 1:27-28; Gen 1:31; Mal 2:14; Prov 5:18; Eccl 7:29; Acts 17:26-29; Gen 2:16-17; Gen 3:6-24; Rom 5:12; Rom 5:15-19; Ps 51:5; Rom 8:7; Isa 53:6; Gen 6:12; Rom 3:9-18; Eph 2:1-3; Eph 5:31-32; Rom 1:18, 32; Rom 2:1-16; Gal 3:10; Matt 19:4-6; Matt 20:15; Ezek 18:19-20; Rom 1:20; Rom 3:19; Gal 3:2 1 Cor 6:9-20; 7:3-5]

VI. God's Purpose Of Grace

We believe election is the eternal purpose of God according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners. Election is perfectly consistent with real human agency and includes all the means necessary to achieve God's purpose. It is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, which is infinitely free, wise, holy, and unchangeable. Election completely rules out boasting and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and the active imitation of his free mercy. It encourages the greatest possible exercise of human responsibility. The election of individuals to life may be confirmed by its effects in everyone who truly believes the gospel. Election is a foundation of Christian assurance, and confirming our election deserves our greatest diligence.

[2 Tim 1:8-9; Eph 1:3-14; 1 Pet 1:1-2; Rom 11:5-6; John 15:16; 1 John 4:19; 2 Thess 2:13-14; Acts 13:48; John 10:16; Matt 20:16; Acts 15:14; Ex 33:18-19; Matt 20:15; Eph 1:11; Rom 9:23-24; Jer 31:3; Rom 11:28-29; Jas 1:17-18; 2 Tim 1:9; Rom 11:32-36; 1 Cor 1:26-31; Rom 3:27; Rom 4:16; Col 3:12; 1 Cor 3:5-7; 1 Cor 15:10; 1 Pet 5:10; Acts 1:24; 1 Thess 2:13; 1 Pet 2:9; Luke 18:7; John 15:16; 1 Thess 2:12; 2 Tim 2:10; 1 Cor 9:22; Rom 8:28-30; John 6:37-40; 1 Thess 1:4-10; Isa 42:16; Rom 11:29; 2 Pet 1:10-11; Phil 3:12; Heb 6:11]



VII. The Way Of Salvation

We believe the salvation of God's people is completely by grace, through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God. By the appointment of the Father, he freely took to himself our nature but without sin. He honored the divine law by his personal obedience and made a full atonement for our sins by his substitutionary death, satisfying God's wrath. He rose from the dead and is now enthroned in heaven. Jesus, the Son, unites in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections and, as such, is qualified in every way to be a suitable, compassionate, and all-sufficient Savior.

[Eph 2:3; Matt 18:11; 1 John 4:10; 1 Cor 3:5-7; Acts 15:11; John 3:16; John 1:1-14; Heb 4:14; Heb 12:24; Phil 2:9, 14; 2 Cor 5:21; Isa 42:21; Phil 2:8; Gal 4:4-5; Rom 3:21; Isa 53:4-5; Matt 20:28; Rom 4:25; Rom 3:21-26; 1 John 2:3; 1 Cor 15:1-3; Heb 9:13-15; Heb 1:8; Heb 1:3; Col 3:1-4; Heb 7:25; Col 2:18; Heb 7:26; Ps 89:19; Ps 34:1-22]

VIII. Grace In Regeneration

We believe sinners must be regenerated, or born again, in order to be saved. Regeneration consists of God's work producing a holy inclination in the mind, will and affections. It is accomplished in a way that is beyond our comprehension. It is carried out by the power of the Holy Spirit using divine truth to obtain our voluntary obedience to the gospel. The proper evidence of regeneration appears in the holy fruits of repentance, faith, and newness of life.

[John 3:3; John 3:6-7; 1 Cor 3:14; Rev 14:3; Rev 21:27; 2 Cor 5:17; Ezek 36:26; Deut 30:6; Rom 2:28-29; Rom 5:5; 1 John 4:7; John 3:8; John 1:13; Jas 1:16-18; 1 Cor 1:30; Phil 2:13; 1 Pet 1:22-25; 1 John 5:1; Eph 4:20-24; Col 3:9-11; Eph 5:9; Rom 8:9; Gal 5:16-23; Eph 3:14-21; Matt 3:8-10; Matt 7:20; 1 John 5:4, 18; Eph 2:1-10]

IX. Repentance And Faith

We believe repentance and faith are sacred duties as well as inseparable graces. They are produced in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God, who convinces us of our guilt, danger, helplessness, and the way of salvation by Christ. And they consist in turning to God with genuine sorrow, confession, and a petition for mercy; a commitment to walk before God so as to please Him in all things; heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as Prophet, Priest and King; and relying on him alone for justification and eternal life.

[Mark 1:15; Acts 11:18; Eph 2:8; 1 John 5:1; John 16:8; Acts 2:37-38; Acts 16:30-31; Luke 18:13; Luke 15:18-21; Jas 4:7-10; 2 Cor 7:11; 1 Cor 10:12-13; Ps 51:1-19; Rom 10:9-11; Acts 3:22-23; Heb 4:14; Ps 2:6; Heb 1:8; Heb 7:25; 2 Tim 1:12]



X. Justification

We believe one of the great gospel blessings that Christ secures to those who believe in him is justification. Justification includes the pardon of sin, righteous standing before God and his people, and the promise of eternal life founded on principles of righteousness. It is not given because of any works of righteousness we have done but only through faith in the Redeemer's blood. By virtue of this faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us by God. Justification immediately brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God.

[John 1:16; Eph 3:8; Acts 13:39; Isa 53:11-12; Rom 5:1-2; Rom 5:9; Zech 13:1; Matt 9:6; Acts 10:43; Rom 5:17; Titus 3:5-7; 1 Pet 3:7; 1 John 2:25; Rom 5:21; Rom 4:4-5; Rom 6:23; Phil 3:7-9; Rom 5:19; Rom 3:24-26; Rom 4:23-25; 1 John 2:12; Rom 5:3; Rom 5:11; 1 Cor 1:30-31; Matt 6:33; 1 Tim 4:8]

XI. Adoption

We believe God has granted that all those who are justified would receive the grace of adoption, in and for the sake of his only Son Jesus Christ. By this they are counted among the children of God and enjoy the freedom and privileges of that relationship. They inherit his name, receive the spirit of adoption, have access to the throne of grace with boldness, and are enabled to cry "Abba, Father!" They are given compassion, protected, provided for, and sanctified by him as a father. Yet they are never cast off but are sealed for the day of redemption and inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation.

[Eph 1:5; Gal 4:4, 5; John 1:12; Rom 8:17; 2 Cor 6:18; Rev 3:12; Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6; Eph 2:18; Ps 103:13; Prov 14:26; 1 Pet 5:7; Heb 12:6; Isa 54:8, 9; Lam 3:31; Eph 4:30; Heb 1:14; 6:12]

XII. The Freeness Of Salvation

We believe the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel. It is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a heartfelt, penitent, and obedient faith. Nothing prevents the salvation of any sinner, but his own voluntary rejection of the gospel, a rejection that aggravates a sinner's judgment.

[Isa 55:1; Rev 22:17; Rom 16:25-26; Mark 1:15; Rom 1:15-17; John 5:40; Matt 23:37; Rom 9:32; Prov 1:24; Acts 13:46; John 3:19; Matt 11:20; Luke 10:27; 2 Thess 1:8]



XIII. Sanctification

We believe sanctification is the process by which we are made partakers of God's holiness, according to his purpose. Sanctification is a progressive work. It begins in regeneration and continues in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit and by God's appointed means. These means include the word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, prayer, and the oversight and fellowship of the visible church.

[1 Thess 4:3; 1 Thess 5:23; 2 Cor 7:1; 2 Cor 13:10; Phil 3:12-16; 1 John 2:29; Rom 8:5; Eph 1:4; Prov 4:18; 2 Cor 3:18; Heb 6:1; 2 Pet 1:5-8; John 3:6; Phil 1:9-11; Eph 1:13-14; Phil 2:12-13; Eph 4:11-12; 1 Pet 2:2; 2 Pet 3:18; 2 Cor 13:5; Luke 11:35; Luke 9:23; Matt 26:41; Eph 6:18; Eph 4:30]

XIV. The Perseverance Of Saints

We believe all genuine believers endure to the end. Though they may fall through neglect and temptation into sin of varying degree, the genuine believer engages in ongoing repentance. Their persevering obedience to Christ and attachment to his people are the primary marks distinguishing them from superficial professors. A special providence watches over their welfare, and they are kept by the power of God through faith to salvation.

[John 8:31; 1 John 2:27-28; 1 John 3:9; 1 John 5:18; 1 John 2:19; John 13:18; Matt 13:20-21; John 6:66-69; Job 17:9; Rom 8:28; Matt 6:30-33; Jer 32:40; Ps 121:3; Ps 91:11-12; Phil 1:6; Phil 2:13; Jude 24:25; Heb 1:14; 2 Kgs 6:16; Heb 13:5; 1 John 4:4]

XV. A Gospel Church

We believe a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, joined together by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel. A visible church observes the ordinances of Christ, submits to his word, and exercises the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his word. The only scriptural officers of the church are elders (also called overseers or pastors) and deacons, whose qualifications and duties are defined in the letters to Timothy and to Titus.

[1 Cor 1:1-3; Matt 18:17; Acts 5:11; Acts 8:1; Acts 11:21-23; 1 Cor 4:17; 1 Cor 14:23; 1 Tim 3:5; Acts 2:41-42; 2 Cor 8:5; Acts 2:47; 1 Cor 5:12-13; 1 Cor 11:2; 2 Thess 3:6; Rom 16:17-20; 1 Cor 11:23-24; Matt 18:15-20; 1 Cor 5:6; 2 Cor 2:17; 1 Cor 4:17; Matt 28:20; John 14:15; John 15:12; 1 John 4:21; John 14:21; 1 Thess 4:2; 2 John 6; Gal 6:2; Eph 4:7; 1 Cor 14:12; Phil 1:1; Acts 14:23; Acts 15:22; 1 Tim 3; Titus 1]



XVI. Baptism And The Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is a solemn and beautiful emblem that declares our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior as well as our union with him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life. Baptism is a prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and the Lord's Supper. We likewise believe that the Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby the members of the church, following earnest self-examination, use bread and the cup in a sacred manner to commemorate together the dying love of Christ. The ordinances belong to the gathered church, marking off believers from unbelievers and making the church visible on earth.

[Acts 8:36-39; Matt 3:5-6; John 3:22-23; John 4:12; Matt 28:19-20; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:12; Acts 16:32-34; Acts 18:8; Acts 10:47-48; Gal 3:26-28; Rom 6:4; Col 2:12; 1 Pet 3:20-21; Acts 22:16; Acts 2:41-42; 1 Cor 11:26; Matt 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20; 1 Cor 11:28; 1 Cor 5:1-8; 1 Cor 11:17-32; John 6:26]

XVII. Civil Government

We believe civil government exists by divine appointment for the benefit and good order of human society. Government officials are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed. The principle exception is for matters contrary to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Lord of the kings of the earth.

[Rom 13:1-7; Deut 16:18; 2 Sam 23:3; Ex 18:23; Jer 30:21; Matt 22:21; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet 2:13; 1 Tim 2:1-4; Acts 5:29; Matt 28:1-20; Dan 3:15-18; Dan 6:7-10; Acts 4:18-20; Matt 23:10; Rom 14:4; Rev 19:16; Ps 72:11; Ps 2:1-12; Rom 14:9-13]

XVIII. The Final Judgment And The World To Come

We believe only those who are justified by faith in the name of the Lord Jesus and sanctified by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in his judgment. The end of the world is approaching and at the last day, Christ will descend from heaven and raise the dead from the grave to final judgment. A public separation will then take place, in which the unrighteous will be justly assigned to eternal punishment and the righteous to eternal life and joy.

[1 Pet 4:7; 1 Cor 7:29-31; Heb 1:10-12; Matt 24:35; 1 John 2:17; Matt 28:20; Matt 13:39-40; 2 Pet 3:3-13; Acts 1:11; Rev 1:7; Heb 9:28; Acts 3:21; 1 Thess 4:13-18; 1 Thess 5:1-11; Acts 24:15; 1 Cor 15:12-58; Luke 14:14; Dan 12:2; John 5:28-29; John 6:40; John 11:25-26; 2 Tim 1:10; Acts 10:42; Matt 13:49; Matt 13:37-43; Matt 24:30-31; Matt 25:31-46; Rev 22:11; 1 Cor 6:9-10; Mark 9:43-48; 2 Pet 2:9; Jude 7; Phil 3:19; Rom 6:23; 2 Cor 5:10-11; John 4:36; 2 Cor 4:18; Rom 3:5-6; 2 Thess 1:6-12; Heb 6:1-2; 1 Cor 4:5; Acts 17:31; Rom 2:2-16; Rev 20:11-12; 1 John 2:28; 1 John 4:17; 2 Pet 3:11-12]