

Statement of Faith

FAITH

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Our Faith

A TRIUNE GOD

(God the Creator; Jesus Christ the Redeemer; the Holy Spirit the Sustainer)

We believe in the triune God. There is but one living and true God, everlasting, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the maker and preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in unity of the Godhead, there are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We understand that the triune, transcendent nature of God is eternally relational. The three persons are mutually, reciprocally related; there is no hierarchical relationship among the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Because we are created in the image of God, we are called to be in relationships that reflect the mutual, reciprocal, interdependent and loving relationships that characterize the Triune nature of God. Just as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit respect the integrity of each aspect of the Godhead, we are to respect the integrity and uniqueness of each human being.

Scripture

We believe Scripture is the unique and irreplaceable witness to the liberating and reconciling activity of God in the

history of Israel and supremely in Jesus Christ. Since Scripture is the primary source and criterion for Christian doctrine, we recognize Scripture as a record of our understanding of God's revelation to us and our testimony to that revelation. Through Scripture, the living Christ meets us in the experience of redeeming grace. We are convinced that Jesus Christ is the living Word of God in our midst in whom we trust life and death. We value Scripture as God's gift to the church to be read for our instruction and comfort. Taking Scripture seriously means recognizing its transparency, expecting to see beyond the mere text to the mysterious present. We believe Scripture is the revelation of God to an imperfect humanity. While God's revelation is perfect, our understanding is not. We always bring our own history, culture, and personality to our interpretation of Scripture. We strive to seek God's truth in the Biblical text by understanding the cultural context in which the text was written, while simultaneously striving to discover the truth of God's revelation for this generation of believers. Scripture is thus authoritative not in itself but as it functions in the beloved community of faith by the power of the Holy Spirit to create a liberating and renewing relationship with God through Christ.

ORDINANCES – Baptism and Holy Communion (“Visible signs of invisible grace”—Augustine) We believe the ordinances are dramatic signs of the grace of God and are effective not in themselves but only as they are received by faith. The ordinances are not so much something done to us as something that we do: we repent, we confess our faith; we vow to be faithful. The purpose of the sacraments is to give people the chance to bear public witness to their faith.

Baptism...

We believe Christian baptism is our initiation into the Christian life. It marks the beginning of the journey of faith and discipleship that lasts throughout one's life. It is one's

initiation into covenant community, and under the power and direction of the Holy Spirit, the church nurtures those who are made a part of it. The event of baptism thus marks the beginning of the Christian's participation in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. It signals one's death to an old way of life and one's birth to a new life in Christ. We believe baptism is not only a sign of profession and the mark of difference whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration or the new birth. In that we do not believe in rebaptism (once baptized, always baptized), we accept by transfer, baptized persons from other Christian denominations, regardless of the mode of baptism used or the age at which it was administered.

The Father...

We believe in the one true, holy and living God, Eternal Spirit, who is Creator, Sovereign and preserver of all things visible and invisible. God is infinite in power, wisdom, justice, goodness and love, and rules with gracious regard for the well-being and salvation of persons, to the glory of God's name. We believe the one God reveals God's self as the Trinity; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, distinct but inseparable, eternally one in essence and power.

The Son...

We believe in Jesus Christ, truly God and truly man, in whom the divine and human natures are perfectly and inseparably united. Jesus Christ is the eternal Word made flesh, the only begotten Son of the Father, born of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. As ministering Servant, Jesus Christ lived, suffered and died on the cross. He was buried, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven to be with the Father, from whence He shall return. He is eternal Savior and Mediator, who intercedes for us, and only by Him, we shall be judged.

The Holy Spirit...

We believe in the Holy Spirit who proceeds from and is one in being with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is the life sustaining force that moves us into communion with God, and with one another, and is the active ingredient that has propelled humanity throughout history to glorify and preserve the goodness of God. It is the Holy Spirit that makes God relational and dynamic. God could not create and Jesus could not redeem without the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit leads people through faithful response to the gospel into the fellowship of the Church. The Holy Spirit comforts, sustains and empowers the faithful and guides them to all truth. We must therefore allow the Holy Spirit to dwell within us so that we may energize the beloved community of faith in our Christian responsibility to transform the world.

Holy Communion

We believe the Lord's Supper is the sacrament of the sustaining of Christian life by God's grace; it is the sacrament of growth, nourishment and our active participation in Christian life, and it marks God's continued sharing of life and love that gives strength to the new community and motivates it for service to the world. We believe the Lord's Supper gathers together the past, the present, and the future

of God's creative and redemptive work. It is a vivid reminder of Christ's salvific death and resurrection and also of all of God's lavish gifts in the creation and preservation of the world. But for the community of faith, Christ is no mere memory: he makes himself present here and now through the breaking and eating of the bread and the pouring and drinking of the wine and those who partake of this meal is made one community in him. The Lord's Supper shall be understood therefore as anticipation, in the midst of present suffering, of the coming joy of the messianic reign of justice, freedom, and peace. It is a concrete sign and seal of God's promise of a new, liberated, and reconciled humanity in a new heaven and a new earth.

Prevenient Grace

We believe and acknowledge God's prevenient grace, the divine love that surrounds all humanity and proceeds all our conscious impulses. We believe Grace is a gift from God; it is God's unmerited favor. Grace is God giving God's self to humanity freely, which is best exemplified in the gift of Jesus Christ. God's relationship towards us surpasses any relationship we have towards God, which is why we can never earn or deserve grace. God's grace also awakens in us an earnest longing for deliverance from sin and death and moves us toward repentance and faith.

JUSTIFICATION AND ASSURANCE

We believe God reaches out to the repentant believer in justifying grace with accepting and pardoning love. We believe that a decisive change in the human heart can and does occur under the prompting of grace and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In justification we are, through faith, forgiven of our sins and restored to God's favor. This righting of relationship by God through Christ calls forth our faith and trust as we experience regeneration, by which we are made new

creatures in Christ.

SANTIFICATION AND PERFECTION

We believe sanctification is the work of God's grace through the Word and the Spirit, by which those who have been born again are cleansed from sin in their thoughts, words and acts, and are enabled to live in accordance with God's will, and to strive for holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

JOY OF GIVING

We believe and wholly accept the system of proportionate, systematic, and voluntary giving as set forth in the New Testament. The tithe, however, is strongly commended and urged upon all members as a basis for the beginning of our Church support.

SERVICE TO THE WORLD

We believe that personal salvation always involves Christian mission and service to the world. By joining heart and hand, we assert that personal religion, evangelical witness, and Christian social action are reciprocal and mutually reinforcing. Scriptural holiness entails more than personal piety; love of God is always linked with love of neighbor, a passion for justice and renewal in the life of the world.

SERVICE TIMES

Sundays at 9:30 and 11:00

Worship Center.

8:15am Pastor's Class

Church Hall**LOCATION**

Sundays at 9:30 and 11:00

17500 Indian Head Hwy

Accokeek, MD 20607
