

# THE ROCK CHURCH

## STATEMENT OF FAITH AND CONDUCT

### Part A - Belief

#### SECTION 1

**The Bible:** We believe that the Bible is the written Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and completely truthful in all it affirms. It bears witness to Jesus Christ, the Living Word and is infallible in its purposes. While reason, experience, and tradition together with the Bible serve to inform truth and life, the Scriptures are the primary and final authority in the rule of faith and practice.

#### SECTION 2

**God:** We believe in one God, creator of all things, whose self-revelation is in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. These three are one in eternity, deity, and purpose; everlasting, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness.

#### SECTION 3

**Jesus Christ:** We believe in the incarnation and virgin birth of Jesus Christ who came into the world to reveal the Father, and was the reflection of God's glory and the express image of God; that Jesus Christ, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, was the Creator of all things. We further believe that in Christ dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, that He was very God and very Man, and that He is our savior, the one perfect mediator between God and humanity. We acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord over all things in heaven and in earth, and under the earth.

#### SECTION 4

**Christ's Resurrection and Imminent Return:** We believe in Jesus Christ's sinless life, miracles, death, bodily resurrection, and His ascension into Heaven. He will return in power and glory to judge all people. As His return may occur at any moment, the believer's response is joyous expectation, watchfulness, and diligence. We anticipate His return at which time there will be a new heaven and a new earth, a resurrection of those who are lost to eternal death and those who are saved to eternal life, and the enemies of Christ will be subdued and the reign of God will be established.

#### SECTION 5

**The Holy Spirit:** We believe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from God, is being manifested in the Church through the fruit of the Spirit. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are operative in the Church today in order for the Church to experience the fullness of God and are imparted by the Holy Spirit. We believe in the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit that begins at regeneration. The Holy Spirit continually empowers a believer to live a holy life like Christ. The evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit is a person's obedient response to the Word of God, a Christ-like life of holiness, and manifesting the fruit and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

## SECTION 6

**The Creation of Humanity:** We believe that humanity was created by a direct act of God, innocent and morally free with the responsibility to choose between good and evil, right and wrong. All people are created by God and in God's image have the same inherent rights regardless of race, gender, or color.

## SECTION 7

**The Fall of Humanity:** We believe that through disobedience humanity fell from a state of righteousness and holiness into total depravity, a state of sinfulness, unable in their own strength to obtain a right relationship with God and restore God's image within.

## SECTION 8

**Satan:** We believe in the reality and personality of Satan, that Satan was defeated by Christ through His death, burial and resurrection, and that Christ has given authority over the works of Satan to His body, the Church.

## SECTION 9

**Repentance:** We believe that repentance is the result of the convicting work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of non-believers and believers. The conviction of the Holy Spirit, which often accompanies the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, will result in the revelation of one's sinfulness, which should lead to sorrow. Sorrow causes us to turn away from sin and selfishness and to receive faith for change.

## SECTION 10

**Justification:** We believe that repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ results in justification whereby the believer, through faith in the atoning work of Jesus Christ, is accounted as righteous and made free from the guilt and the penalty of their sins.

## SECTION 11

**Regeneration:** We believe that by a new relationship with Jesus Christ, one is born again and is a new creation. With a new life and a new spiritual nature capable of faith, love, and obedience to Christ, the old life is past and the new life is begun.

## SECTION 12

**Sanctification:** We believe that by grace every believer may be sanctified by the Holy Spirit, subsequent to regeneration, through faith in the atoning blood of Christ, whereby they are cleansed in that moment of inward sin and empowered for service. The resulting relationship of righteousness and purity is attested by the Holy Spirit and maintained by faith and obedience enabling the believer to love God with all their heart, soul, strength, and mind. This work causes believers not to be conformed to this world and prepares them for greater growth in grace.

## SECTION 13

**Restoration:** We believe in divine restoration to the image of God for the whole person. This restoration was obtained through the atonement in Christ's sacrificial death and, by faith, brings healing and wholeness in mind, body, soul, and spirit. Although Christians may grieve the Holy Spirit without returning to the dominion of sin, God's grace is sufficient for those who humbly repent, accept the correction of the Holy Spirit, trust the advocacy of Jesus, and mend their relationships.

## SECTION 14

**Baptism:** We believe that water baptism is a sacrament, commanded by our Lord Jesus, administered to those walking in the new covenant of grace. It is a declaration of their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.

## SECTION 15

**The Lord's Supper:** We believe that the Lord's Supper is a sacrament, a means of divine grace, commanded by our Lord Jesus. To those who rightly, worthily, and with faith receive it, the bread and the cup is a partaking of the body and blood of Christ. Though Christ is truly present, no change is effected in the elements that are never to be considered objects of worship. This sacrament unites believers with Christ and one another as the Body of Christ.

## SECTION 16

**Faith and Works:** We believe that faith without works is dead. Faith results in an accompanying and corresponding action. Personal holiness and social holiness are essential to a living, active faith. Right practice is as important as right belief.

## SECTION 17

**The Church:** The Church is the Body of Christ in the world. In worship the Church comes together to meet the holy God and to respond in obedience and love. In witness, the Church makes known the good news of Christ throughout the local community and to the ends of the earth, calling the lost to repentance and faith. In making disciples, believers are brought into the body and equipped for service to Christ. In fellowship, redeemed people experience their oneness in Christ. In service, the Church corporately cares for the needs of its own and others. The Body of Christ may corporately be formed in specific geographic areas in what is referred to as local churches. These local churches are manifestations of the larger Body of Christ and reflect through their various traditions and history the nature of discipleship and growth for their members toward Christ-likeness.

## Part B - Practice

### SECTION 1

**Worship:** Christians are called to the regular practice of public worship first for glorifying God, and for the edification and salvation of people. Worship should be in the language of the people and should guard against centering upon personality, performance, or object, instead calling those participating to draw near to God with their whole being.

### SECTION 2

**Financial Giving:** Scriptures provide a pattern for financial support of the Church through tithing a tenth part, which should be expected of all believers. Special offerings, as one is able and compelled, provide a means to meet specific needs as well as to express love for God, and to obey the command to care for the poor. Giving tithes and offerings should be practiced continually by all believers and are outward expressions of the unity of the church as it joins together in support of the work of God in the world.

### SECTION 3

**Benevolence:** Scriptures are clear concerning helping those in need. We are encouraged to do good to all people as we have opportunity. This is true for the local church as an organization as well as for the individual members of the church. Therefore, we endeavor to share our material goods with those in need and minister to them to the best of our abilities.

### SECTION 4

**Marriage and Family:** At creation God instituted marriage for the well being of humanity and procreation. Marriage is an institution of God described singularly as the lifelong and exclusive union of one man and one woman in a faithful relationship that the Scriptures call “one flesh.” This covenant signifies to us the mystery of the union between Christ and his Church. Marriage is the only proper setting for sexual intimacy. Scriptures require purity before and faithfulness within marriage. A healthy marriage should provide a loving, life-giving context for raising children in the fear and instruction of the Lord. It is the foundation of the family, the basic structure of human society.

### SECTION 5

**Diversity:** God has made every person imprinted with God’s own image and worthy of dignity, respect, and honor. In that image, we find unity in Christ. The diversity of ethnicity, gender, age, and station affords believers opportunity to extend the love of God to all people irrespective of their differences. The segmentation of society resulting in racism, sexism, elitism or any other type of discrimination is contrary to the heart of God and God’s desire for people. Disciples of Jesus endeavor to bring God’s justice to all, advocating especially for those who are impacted by the sinful forces of prejudice wherever it is found.

### SECTION 6

**Guidance and Biblical Counsel:** The church which is alive to God has spiritual resources for those seeking help. The chief resources are the renewing power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God both written and living, prayer and sacraments, counsel and support, and Christian community. Through the church’s ministry, God can bring healing and reconciliation. Such care and nurture of people is offered in programs through the wisdom, counsel, and support of those within the church that are gifted and mature in faith.

### SECTION 7

**Discipline:** We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking God’s mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. We believe that every person is to be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity, and that hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed towards any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the spirit of this church. It is within this context and with this mindset that church discipline is to be conducted. Discipline of believers in truth and love, in a spirit of meekness and confidentiality provides for the restoration of the one subject to the discipline and hence the strengthening of the church.