

ARTICLES OF FAITH

THE TRIUNE GOD

We believe that there is one, and only one, True and Living God; that in the Unity of the God-head there are three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 1:23, Matthew 7:11, Matthew 28:19, John 17, Acts 1:8)

SCRIPTURES

We believe that God inspired the writers of the Holy Bible, and it is the standard by which all human conduct and creeds should be tried. We believe Jesus Christ to be the example by which the Bible should be interpreted and applied. (John 1:1, II Timothy 3:15-17)

THE FALL OF HUMANITY

We believe that humanity was created in God's image. But, by voluntary transgression, all humanity fell from that holy and sinless state; therefore, the consequences are that all humanity experiences sinfulness and lives under the condemnation of eternal ruin. (Genesis 1:27, Romans 3:23, Romans 5:12)

THE WAY OF SALVATION

We believe that the salvation of sinners is only by God's grace through the atoning birth, life, death and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. There is no other way to salvation except through Jesus Christ. (John 14: 6, Acts 4:12, Ephesians 2:8, Isaiah 53:4-5, Hebrews 7:25)

JUSTIFICATION

We believe that through justification the perfect righteousness of God is given to those who believe in Christ Jesus. (Acts 13:39, Romans 3:22, Romans 5:12)

THE GIFT OF SALVATION TO ALL

We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all people by the acceptance of the Gospel, and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinners except their own rejection of the Gospel. (Isaiah 55:1, John 3:16)

GRACE IN REGENERATION

We believe that sinners are saved, or born again, through the work of the Holy Spirit. (John 3:3, II Corinthians 5:17)

REPENTANCE AND FAITH

We believe that repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace, accomplished in our lives by the regenerating Spirit of God, and are essential steps in salvation. (Mark 1:15, Romans 10.9)

GOD'S PURPOSE AND ELECTION

We believe that God elects through the person and work of Jesus Christ to save sinners through regeneration and sanctification in order to achieve the eternal purpose of God. Belief is consistent with the free will and choice of humanity. (Romans 8:28-31, II Peter 1:10-11)

SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is a progressive experience by which each believer receives God's holiness, and that this process begins in regeneration. (I Thessalonians 4:3-4, Philippians 2:12-13)

THE PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS

We believe that believer's salvation is eternal, and they are kept by the power of God through faith in Jesus Christ. (John 10:28-30, Romans 8:38-39, II Timothy 1:12)

GOSPEL CHURCH

We believe that the church of Jesus Christ consists of congregations of baptized believers bound together in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel, and Jesus committed the ministry of His Gospel to His Church. (Acts 2:41-42, Matthew 28:20)

BAPTISM

We believe that Christian baptism is for believers only. While we accept members who have experienced believer's baptism through modes other than immersion, we practice believer's baptism as the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The believer in faith identifies with the baptismal testimony of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Believer's baptism is a prerequisite to church membership in the congregation. While we hold baptism by immersion to be a symbolic theological experience, not an organizational requirement, we offer all new members joining Shades Crest from other Christian traditions the opportunity to follow Christ in baptism by immersion. (Romans 6:4, Matthew 28:19)

THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe the solemn act of the Lord's Supper testifies to Jesus' redemptive work on the Cross and to his future return. In faith, the believer identifies with this testimony. We believe that the Lord's Supper should be open to all members of the body of Christ. (I Corinthians 11:24-26)

THE LORD'S DAY

We believe that Sunday, the first day of the week, is sacred as the Lord's Day, a weekly celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is to be sacred for religious purposes. (Exodus 20:8 Acts 20:7)

STEWARDSHIP

We believe that God is the source of all blessings, both spiritual and temporal. While we are under obligation to serve God with our time, talents, and material possessions; our motivation must be love.

We; therefore, believe that because of our love for our Redeemer we should practice the biblical principle of tithing and contribute cheerfully, regularly, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Gospel. (Genesis 1-2, Malachi 3:10, I Corinthians 13, II Corinthians 9:7, Philippians 2:3-4)

EVANGELISM AND MISSIONS

We believe that missions are the work of God through the church to extend the gospel in word and deed to all people. It is the duty and privilege of every Christian to engage in making disciples of everyone, and we are expressly commanded by the teachings of Christ to constantly seek to win the lost. Therefore, we believe that not only our personal witness is required but also our prayers and our financial support of the church program in its total mission effort. (Matthew 22:37-40, Matthew 28:19-20, Luke 4:18-19, Acts 1:8)

CHRISTIAN HOPE

We believe that following death there is a judgment for every person and that Christ is the judge who fixes forever the final state of all humanity in Heaven or Hell. Through Christ, God gives eternal hope to all who follow Him in obedience. (Matthew 11:21-25; 12:35-37; 13:47-49; 25:31-46; John 3:16; 5:21-23; 16:7-9; Acts 1:11; 24:15; Hebrews 9:26-28)