

Statement of Faith MPRBC

IV ARTICLE- STATEMENT OF FAITH

This "Article of Faith" (1920) reaffirmed for Mount Pleasant Road Baptist Church (1922) and adopted by The Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada at its Organizational Convention (October 21, 1953) and was endorsed by the church at that time.

We believe in the Being and unity of God, the existence of three equal Persons in the Godhead; the divine inspiration of the Old and New Testaments; the total depravity man, election according to the foreknowledge of God; the divinity of Christ and the all sufficiency of His atonement through the shedding of His blood; justification by faith alone; in the righteousness of Christ; the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration and sanctification; perseverance of the saints; the second and glorious appearance of our Lord and Saviour; the resurrection of the dead; the judgment; the punishment of the wicked; and the blessedness of the righteous, both everlasting; the immersion of believers in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the only water baptism; the Lord's Supper, a privilege peculiar to baptized believers; a church, a company of baptized believers voluntarily associated in and assembling in one place for the observance of the Christian ordinances, the ministry of the Word for mutual edification and sympathy, the maintenance and propagation of these doctrines, and especially the spreading of the gospel of Christ in all lands; the Word of God a complete and infallible rule of faith and practice; and the obligation of every intelligent creature to believe the record which God has given us of His Son.

- 1. THE TRINITY:** We believe in one and only true living God, Creator of all, holy, sovereign, eternal, and of infinite power, wisdom, goodness, and righteousness. He is a loving Creator and preserver of all things (Gen. 1:1, Jer. 10:10; 1 Tim. 1:17), existing in three equal Persons, the Father (God), the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit: three Persons of one substance with identical qualities and attributes (John 1:1f; 4:24, 5:18; 10:30).
- 2. GOD THE FATHER:** The first Person of the Trinity is called the "Father." Though the term "Father" may applied to the Triune God in some places in Scripture (1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 3:14-15), it does refer in other cases particularly to the first Person of the Trinity in relation to the Son (John 1:14-18) and to spiritual children (Exod. 4:22; Matt. 5:45; 6:6-15; Rom. 8:16; 1 John 3:1).
- 3. THE SON OF GOD (CHRIST):** We believe in the absolute and essential deity of Jesus Christ, God's only Son, in His eternal existence with the Father in pre-incarnate glory, who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin, Mary. We believe in His sinless life, substitutionary death, atoning blood, bodily resurrection, triumphant ascension, mediatorial ministry, and personal return: Christ was both fully man and fully God. He walked our earth, suffered at the hands of men, was crucified, died, and buried as a sacrifice for the sins of all men and women believers. The purpose was to restore our relationship to God which is broken by sin (disobedience) (Luke 1:27; 31:35, 1 John 3:16; Rom. 5:10; Eph. 5:2). Christ rose from the dead and ascended into heaven in full victory over Satan and sin. He now intercedes for the body of believers to God the Father (Matt. 28:5-9; Luke 24:4-7).

Jesus said "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." **John 11:25-26**

4. **THE HOLY SPIRIT:** We believe in the absolute and essential deity and personality of the Holy Spirit who convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; who regenerates, sanctifies, illuminates, and comforts those who believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God: the Holy Spirit as the third Person of the Trinity lives within us who believe in the Son, giving us the power to live a holy life and guiding us to the truth (Rom. 8:9; Gal. 4:6).

5. **THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE:** We believe that the Bible is the complete word of God; that the sixty-six books as originally written, comprising the Old and New Testaments were verbally inspired by the Holy Spirit and were entirely inerrant (free from error or failure of basic contents and meaning in the original manuscripts); that the Bible is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice and the true basis of Christian union: The Bible contains all the necessary truth to lead men and women into salvation (Ps. 19:7; John 17:17; Rom. 15:4; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:15-17).

6. **SATAN:** We believe that God created innumerable holy angels in order to worship Him, serve Him and minister to the rest of His creation. One of the chief angels, known as Lucifer, rebelled against God with a host of fallen angels. We believe that Satan exists as an evil personality, the originator of sin, the archenemy of God and man. Satan, the prince of the fallen angels or demons (Matt. 12:24; John 8:44) was originally created holy and beautiful, but because of his sinful pride was cast out of heaven and sentenced to hell (2 Pet. 2:4).

7. **MAN:** We believe that man was divinely created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27); that he sinned, becoming guilty before God, resulting in total depravity, thereby incurring physical and spiritual death: Because of Adam's sin (disobedience) man inherits a corrupt nature that inclines him to do wrong (Gen. 3:6; 6:5; Rom. 5:12). Man is not capable of achieving a life without sin on his own (Prov. 20:9; Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16). Because man is created in God's own image, we have a 'God-likeness' which includes knowledge between right and wrong, the conscience, the ability to choose which course we will take and the responsibility for our actions, or our choices (Josh. 24:15; 1 Kings 20:40; John 7:17).

8. **SALVATION:** We believe that salvation is by the sovereign, electing grace of God; that by the appointment of the Father, Christ voluntarily became flesh, lived, suffered a vicarious expiatory and propitiatory death; that justification is by faith alone in the all-sufficient sacrifice and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and that those whom God has effectually called shall be divinely preserved and finally perfected in the image of the Lord: Christ died on the cross to mend the broken relationships which were caused by man's sin of disobedience. This severed relationship between God and man may be restored into perfect harmony through belief in Jesus Christ by faith, and not on the basis of our works (Gal. 5:4, 5; Eph. 2:8, 9). This belief and faith in Jesus Christ, is given by God Himself, recognizing Him as Lord and Saviour, gives men and women the free gift of eternal life (John 1:29; 3:16; 1 Cor. 5:7; Eph. 5:2; 1 Pet. 1:19). After receiving salvation by faith through belief in Jesus Christ, the 'born-again' (John 3:3) believer may live free from the judgment of God, by living a life according to the teaching of the Scriptures and trusting the Holy Spirit for the power to live a holy life according to God's Word.

Jesus said "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." **John 11:25-26**

9. **GOD'S PURPOSE OF GRACE:** We believe that election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is a glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility. All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. We believe that after we have experienced regeneration it is possible to fall into sin through neglect and temptation, for in this life there is no such height or strength of holiness from which it is impossible to fall. Whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the cause of Christ, and temporal judgments on themselves. Yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (Jude 24, Heb. 7:25).

10. **REPENTANCE AND FAITH:** We believe that repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favour with God. But by the grace of God, one who has fallen into sin may, by confession and true repentance, find forgiveness and restored fellowship with God (Matt. 18:21,22; 1 John 1:9; 2:1, 24-25).

11. **GOOD WORKS:** We believe that even though men and women cannot receive salvation by good works, their good works are still pleasing to God and show evidence of a true faith in God, and Jesus as Lord of the believer's life (Matt. 5:16; 7:16-20; Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16; James 2:18, 22).

12. **SANCTIFICATION:** We believe that sanctification is the work of God and the power of the Spirit, making the believer pure in heart and totally committed and dedicated to God. This work is both instantaneous at the point of conversion and gradual (or progressive) continuing throughout life. Sanctification is both individual and corporate in its effect. It begins when a person is saved and involves a process when the believer is convicted of a lukewarm Christian life and looks to Christ with a total commitment and dedication to 'Christ-like' living. There is no black and white time-line involved; for we are all individual in God's sight. For all believers sanctification is the will of God (1 Thess. 4:3). Sanctification is the continuing growth of a believer renouncing the desire to live for self and desire to live totally for the glory of God. It is the empowering by the Holy Spirit, which allows us to be able to live a life of holiness. This does not mean perfection of the believer, but a continuing purity of heart, soul, and mind (Deut. 30:6; Luke 1:74-75; Acts 15:8-9; 1 Cor. 6:11; Eph. 4:13, 24; 1 Thess. 4:3, 7; James 4:8).

13. **GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT:** We believe that the Holy Spirit has given spiritual gifts to all believers for the purpose of building up the body of Christ and bringing glory to God. The gifts are to be exercised in love and emphasize the need for unity (1 Cor. 12:4, 11, 18, 21-25; Eph. 4:11-16). Mount Pleasant Road Baptist Church believes

in the miraculous use of languages and the interpretation of languages only in its biblical and historical setting. The languages were unknown to the speaker, but known by the hearers (Acts 2:4-8). We believe that while the New Testament does not teach that the sign gifts (public speaking in tongues, prophecy, interpretation of tongues, healing) have necessarily ceased, they are not normative for today (1 Cor. 14). Therefore it is contrary to the teaching of God's Word, as understood by our church, to teach that speaking in an unknown tongue, or the gift of tongues, is the evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22). The unity of the body of Christ is of utmost importance. Therefore, only a language readily understood by the congregation is to be used in public worship (1 Cor. 12:1; 14:40). We believe that the Word of God is all-sufficient for the Christian and the church for direction, edification and application. Therefore, we do not believe that any further form of direct revelation is required (2 Tim. 3:16).

14. **FUTURE THINGS:** We believe in the personal, visible, bodily, and glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ (the second coming) according to His promise; in the resurrection of the just and unjust; in the eternal blessedness of the redeemed (heaven) and in the judgment and conscious, eternal punishment of the wicked (hell). God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. The time of His return is unknown, but could occur at any moment. This is the glorious hope of all God's children (John 14:1-3, 1 Thess. 4:13-18; James 5:7-8; Rev. 22:12, 20).

15. **EVANGELISM AND MISSIONS:** We believe that it is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavour to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by personal effort and by all other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

16. **THE LOCAL CHURCH:** We believe that a church is a company of baptized believers, called out from the world, separated unto the Lord Jesus, voluntarily associated for the ministry of the Word; the mutual helpfulness and edification of its members; the propagation of the faith to the ends of the earth; and the observance of the ordinances. We believe a local church is a sovereign, independent body with no ecclesiastical authority higher than itself, exercising its own divinely awarded gifts, precepts and privileges under the Lordship of Christ, the great Head of the church. We believe that its officers are pastors and deacons.

17. **ORDINANCES:** We believe that there are only two (2) ordinances for the church regularly observed in the New Testament in the following order: (1) Baptism, which is the immersion of the believer in water, whereby he obeys Christ's command and sets forth His identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. (2) The Lord's Supper, which is the memorial wherein the believer partakes of the two elements, bread and wine which symbolize the Lord's body and shed blood, proclaiming His death until He come.

18. **THE LORD'S DAY:** *We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day and that, in a special sense it is an appointed day for worship and spiritual exercise.*

19. **THE CHURCH AND THE STATE:** *We believe in the separation of church and the state.*

20. **MARRIAGE AND THE HOME:** *We believe that the home was the first institution God established for man; that marriage is a sacred relationship between one (1) man and one (1) woman for life to the exclusion of all others. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity should be engaged in outside of the marriage of a man and a woman; and that any form of sexual activity outside the boundaries of marriage are a sinful perversion of God's gift of sex (Gen. 2:24, 19:5, 13; Lev. 18:6-30; Matt. 19:4-6; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1, 6:9-10; 1 Thess. 4:18; Heb. 13:4).*