

Foster Creek Baptist Church Statement of Faith

(This document is taken from our Ministry Bylaws.)

In the very first description of the New Testament church, the Bible says that they *continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine...* (Acts 2:42). Therefore, doctrine is of paramount importance in the very existence of the church. Since many people claim to believe the Bible and yet believe different things, it is important for churches to clarify what they hold to be true from Scripture. The following comprise the important Scriptural beliefs of this church, its membership and leadership:

A. The Holy Scriptures

We believe that every word of the Holy Scriptures, both the Old Testament and the New Testament (in their original languages before translation), is equally and fully inspired of God. The Holy Scriptures have been kept pure by God's particular care. The Scriptures, being God-breathed, are inerrant and infallible and are therefore the supreme and final authority in every matter they touch upon, as well as the standard for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are the complete, divine, and final revelation of God to man. While guests are welcome to bring a translation of the Bible that they may have, we use the Authorized Version of the Bible (KJV) for our public worship, preaching, teaching, and Scripture memory. We recognize the unique place of the autographs of Scripture and refuse to elevate a translation to the authority of the original manuscripts. We recognize that though other translations might faithfully reflect the original text, there are many that are untrustworthy. Attempting to avoid the confusion that we see in other churches where people frequently find it difficult to follow a preacher using another translation, we uniformly employ the Authorized Version as the standard version for our worship and service. (2 Pet. 1:20-21; Rom. 3:2; Matt. 5:18; Jn. 10:35; Ps. 12:6; 19:7-11; 33:4; 119:128; 2 Tim. 3:15-17)

B. The Godhead

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each is co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and has the same attributes and perfections. (Deut. 6:4; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Jn. 5:6-8; Ex. 3:14; Matt. 28:19; Jn. 1:14-18; 14:10-11; 15:26)

C. The Person and Work of Christ

1. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He lived in sinless perfection in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men. (Jn. 1:1-2, 14; Lk. 1:35; Phil. 2:5-8; Isa. 7:14; 9:6; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4-5)
2. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, substitutionary sacrifice; that He alone was uniquely qualified to secure a successful atonement, and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical and witnessed resurrection from the dead. (Acts 2:21-36; 1 Pt. 1:3-5; 2:21-25; Rom. 3:24-26; Eph. 1:7, 19-20; 1 Cor. 15:3-8)

3. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ bodily ascended to Heaven, is now exalted and reigns at the right hand of God the Father "above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion" where, also as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate. (Jn. 18:36-37; Acts 1:9-11; 2:33-36; Eph. 1:20-23; Rev. 1:5; 3:21; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 9:24; 7:24-27; Rom. 8:34; 1 Jn. 2:1-2)

D. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

1. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Person Who convicts the world of sin in their lives, of the righteousness they lack but need, and of the judgment that is to come; and, that He is the Supernatural Agent in regenerating and baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of their redemption. (Jn. 16:8-11; 3:5; 6:63; Ezek. 36:26-27; Rev. 22:17; 2 Cor. 3:6; 1 Cor. 12:13; Rom. 8:9; Eph. 1:13-14)
2. We believe that He is the divine Teacher Who guides believers into all truth, assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures, and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit, and empowered to walk in obedience to God's Word. (Jn. 16:13; Eph. 1:17-18; 5:18; Gal. 5:16)

E. The Total Depravity of Man

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Every man then is a sinner by nature, by birth and by choice. Because man's entire constitution (his intellect, emotion, and will) has been corrupted by sin, he is of himself utterly unable to remedy his lost condition or receive the things of the Spirit of God. (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3:23; 5:12; Eph. 2:1-3; 4:17-19; Jer. 17:9; 13:23; Rom. 5:6; 1 Cor. 2:14)

F. Salvation

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by divine grace alone and received by faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ alone. Turning away from sin and any reliance upon self for salvation is God's inflexible requirement without which a sinner is certain to perish. Christ's precious blood was shed on Calvary as the only sacrifice God would accept as payment for man's sin and on the sole basis of the merit of Christ's life and death, a sinner is declared righteous, forgiven of all sin, accepted in Christ as a son of God, and qualified for Heaven. Christ provided a successful atonement that is free, full and final. In the salvation of man, the Father chose a people before time began according to the good pleasure of His will, the Son redeems them, and the Holy Spirit regenerates them. We believe that all sins, except blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, are forgivable. (Eph. 2:8-10; Lk. 13:3, 5; Jn. 1:12; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; 2 Pet. 1:1; Eph. 1:4-5, 7; Titus 2:14; 3:5; 1 Jn. 1:9; Matt. 12:31-32)

G. The Perseverance and Assurance of Believers

1. We believe that all the redeemed, those effectually called, justified, and sanctified by God in Christ, are eternally kept by God's power and can never fall from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere in that grace to the end and are secured in Christ forever. (Jn. 6:37-40, 44, 65; 10:26-30; Rom. 8:1; 29-39; 1 Cor. 1:4-8; Phil. 1:6; 1 Pet. 1:4-5; Jude 1:24)

2. We believe that all who truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior and love Him in sincerity, endeavoring to conduct themselves in all good conscience according to His will, may in this life be certainly assured that they are in a state of grace. This assurance of faith is based upon the merit of Christ's earned righteousness imputed to them as revealed in the Gospel, the consequent union with Christ, the inward evidences of the graces of the Holy Spirit, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of adoption. We also believe it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation. This assurance is not a license to live as one pleases, but a proper understanding of one's acceptance before God places upon the believer the obligation to walk in the Spirit and be holy. The logical conclusion of free grace is godliness--the enjoyment of and imitation of Christ now as well as throughout eternity. (Titus 2:11-15; Rom. 13:13-14; 10:3-5; 3:25-28; 1 Jn. 2:3; 3:14, 18-19, 21, 24; 5:13; 1 Jn. 5:4-5; Rom. 5:1-5; 8:11-17)

H. Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience

1. We believe that Christ has purchased for all believers a liberty inherent in the Gospel. It includes freedom from the guilt of sin, from the condemnation that follows guilt, from the wrath of God, and from the severity and curse of God's law. It also includes free access to God and obedience to Him with a childlike love and readiness. (Gal. 5:1, 13; Rom. 8:1-4; Lk. 1:73-75; 1 Cor. 15:56-58; Gal. 3:13-14; Heb. 10:19-22)
2. We believe that God alone is Lord of the conscience. He has set it free from all obligations to receive or obey any such doctrines or demands of men as are in any respect in opposition to His Word or are not contained in it. (Acts 23:1; Rom. 14:4; Jas. 4:12; Matt. 15:9; Acts 4:19; 5:29; 1 Cor. 7:23; Col. 2:20-23)
3. We believe that, to harbor sin's evil desires, or to practice any sin or pursue a lifestyle that is antithetical to the Bible's teaching on pretense of enjoying Christian liberty perverts the main purpose of gospel grace and is to be rejected. (Rom. 6:1-2; Gal. 5:13; 2 Pt. 2:18-21; Titus 2:11-15)

I. The Church

1. We believe the universal church is invisible with respect to the internal work of the Spirit. It consists of the whole number of the elect since Adam who have been, who are being, or who yet shall be gathered into one under Christ, Who is the Church's Head. The Church is the wife, the body, the fullness of Christ Who "fills all in all." (Matt. 16:18; Heb. 12:22-23; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:12-13; 5:23, 25-27, 32; Col. 1:18)
2. We believe that the local church is comprised of people who profess to believe the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, have been born-again, then baptized after being saved, and who render obedience unto God by Christ. (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; Acts 2:41; 15:22, 28-30)
3. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures. (Acts 14:27; 20:17; 28-32; 1 Tim. 3:15; Titus 1:5; Acts 2:42, 46-47; Heb. 10:25)
4. We recognize the observance of the Lord's Supper, as a memorial of Christ's death on the cross, and water baptism by immersion as the two Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the local church. These two ordinances instituted by Christ are not a

means of saving grace. (1 Cor. 11:23-26; 1:13-17; Acts 2:41-42; 8:12, 35-39; 10:47, 48; Matt. 28:19-20)

5. We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or control. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pt. 5:1-4)
6. The role of women in the church - Godly women have played a vital role in the ministry of the local church as clearly shown in the Scripture. God has given them spiritual gifts which are to be utilized in the local church and which serve to enhance the body of Christ in that local assembly. We believe that there is an equality in being and value when it comes to the standing of men and women before God as they are in Christ, yet they have differing roles and so are not assigned the same functions or responsibilities within the local church. God has established the order and qualifications for spiritual leadership in the church with one of these being women are not permitted to exercise spiritual leadership over the men. Therefore, we believe women should not be a teacher of men in any adult setting. They should not lead the church in its worship. We believe God's Word is clear that women are not to serve as elders, bishops, or pastors of a local church nor should they serve in the office of deacon. However, women should use their gifts in teaching women and children and serving in other capacities in the local church. (Rom. 12:4-8; 16:1-16; 1 Cor. 11:3, 7-11; 14:34-37; 1 Tim. 2:11-14; 3:2, 12; Titus 1:5-7; 2:3-8)
7. We believe men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. (1 Tim. 2:11-15; 3:2, 4-5, 12; Acts 6:1-7)

J. The Ministry and Spiritual Gifts

1. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ gives to the Church evangelists and pastor-teachers as gifts to equip the saints for "the work of the ministry." (Eph. 4:11-12)
2. We believe that the Holy Spirit bestows spiritual gifts upon believers for Christian service and for the edification of the Church (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; 1 Pt. 4:10-11)
3. We believe that after Christ's resurrection and the organizational beginning of the local church at Pentecost, the ministry and message of the Apostles were accompanied by sign gifts to confirm the authenticity and accuracy of their message. These sign gifts, such as speaking in tongues and healing, gradually ceased by the time of the completion of the New Testament and were never intended to be the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Spirit. (Acts 2; 1 Cor. 12:28-31; 13:8-10; 14:1-33; 2 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 2:19-22; Heb. 2:3-4)
4. We believe that God hears and answers prayer according to His own will for the healing of the sick and afflicted. (Jas. 5:13-16; 1 Jn. 5:14-15)

K. Missions

We believe that Christ has given to His disciples a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we

must use available means to spread the Gospel in this country and in foreign nations rather than waiting for them to come to us. We believe that this obligation Christ has placed upon every believer is not only to witness by word but also by their lifestyle. (Matt. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15; Jn. 20:21; 2 Cor. 5:20; Lk. 24:46-48; Acts 1:8; Phil. 2:12-16)

L. Giving

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support his local church financially. We believe that God initially established the tithe as a basis for giving, and that every Christian should give sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. (Matt. 23:23; 25:14-30; Prov. 3:9-10; Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; Gen. 14:20; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8 & 9; Eph. 4:28; 1 Jn. 3:17; Mal. 3:8-10)

M. The Lord's Day

We believe the first day of the week is the Lord's Day and by apostolic example and the express teaching of Scripture, is to be observed in worship and spiritual exercises of devotion, both public and private, and in resting. Works of necessity and mercy are permitted on this day. (Matt. 28:1; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Rev. 1:10; Gen. 2:2-3; Ex. 20:8-11; Lk. 13:15-16; Matt. 12:11-12)

N. Separation and Fellowship

1. We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord. God commands His people to separate from all sinful pleasures, practices, and associations, and to refrain from all immodest and immoderate appearances. (1 Tim. 6:1b; Ps. 4:2; Rom. 12:1-2; 14:13; 1 Cor. 6:18-20; 10:31; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 5:2-11; Titus 2:10-14; Jas. 4:4; 1 Jn. 2:15-17)
2. We believe fellowship is vital to any Bible-believing Christian. It is the believer's responsibility to endeavor to maintain the unity of the Spirit but that this unity is not to be at the expense of biblical truth but within the realm of God's divinely revealed truth. (Eph. 4:1-6; Jn. 17:17-23; Rom. 16:17-18; Titus 3:10-11; 2 Jn. 9-11; Rev. 18:4)
3. We believe separation is first positive before it is ever negative. It is thoroughly positive because it is basically a separation unto Christ. Close fellowship with any organization or movement that denies Christ, repudiates His Word, attempts to add or detract from the finished work of Christ and the gospel of justification through faith apart from works, and seeks to maintain close ties with those that do such, is a fellowship that leads one away from Christ. Enjoyment of a relationship with and a jealous safeguarding of a fellowship with our Lord demand a separation from apostasy, fundamental error, and those groups content to walk with or tolerate religious unbelief within their ranks. Every proposed alliance must be considered in the light of our commitment to the Bible's teaching on separation. We stand against any and all philosophies that seek to destroy or undermine the truth of biblical Christianity. (Heb. 13:13; Rom. 1:1-3; 16:17-18; Gal. 1:6-9; Eph. 5:8-11; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15; Titus 3:10-11; 2 Jn. 9-11; Rev. 18:4)

O. **The Second Coming of Christ and the Eternal State**

1. We believe that Jesus Christ will one day literally, visibly, and physically return and His saints will be caught up to meet Him in the air. He then returns with all His saints to earth. The day of His return is unknown to man but will certainly come. (Job 19:25; Matt. 24:36-51, 25:31-34; 1 Cor. 15:23-26; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thess. 1:10, 3:13; 4:13-18; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; Titus 2:13; Rev. 19:11-16)
2. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men: the saved to eternal life and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. (Job 19:25-27; Jn. 5:28, 29; 1 Cor. 15:50-54; Dan. 12:2, 13; Matt. 25:46; Jn. 6:39-40, 44, 54; Rev. 20:12-13)
3. We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious happiness they await their bodily resurrection when both soul and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (Lk. 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; 1 Cor. 15:51-53)
4. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until their resurrection, when with soul and body reunited they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and then shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment. (Lk. 16:19-31; Matt. 25:41-46; Mk. 9:43-48; Rev. 20:11-15)

P. **The Personality of Satan**

We believe that Satan is a literal angelic being, the author of sin and the cause of the Fall of Man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6-7; Gen. 3; Matt. 4:2-11; Jn. 8:44; Isa. 14:12-15; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10)

Q. **Creation**

We believe the Genesis account of creation to be neither allegory nor myth, but a literal, historical account of God's creation of the entire universe in six literal, consecutive, 24-hour days. The triune God, by a free act of His will and for His own glory, without the use of existing materials or secondary causes, brought into being the entire universe immediately and instantaneously by the word of His mouth. Therefore, we reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, Theistic Evolution and any other deviation as unscriptural theories of origin. (Gen. 1-2; Ex. 20:11; Neh. 9:6; Ps. 104:24-27; Isa. 40:21-26; 43:7; Jer. 51:15; Jn. 1:1-5; Col. 1:16-17)

R. **Civil Government**

We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: a) the home, b) the church, and c) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. The home, the church, and the state have their respective, biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. We believe that we must obey civil government unless it requires us to act contrary to our faith at which time we must obey God rather than the state. Believers are to pray for those who occupy positions of civil authority. (Matt. 22:17-21; Acts 5:29; Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-14; Heb. 13:17; Eph. 5:22-24; 1 Tim. 2:1-3; Titus 3:1-2)

S. Human Sexuality

1. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality or pansexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. (1 Thess. 4:1-8; Gen. 2:24; 19:5-7, 13; 26:8-9; Ex. 20:14; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-32; Matt. 5:28; 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21; Heb. 13:4)
2. Sexual intimacy is a wonderful gift of God that is only to be expressed between one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman within the love and boundaries of marriage to each other. (Gen. 2:24-25; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 6:18; 7:1-5; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4).
3. We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. The two distinct, complementary genders individually and together reflect the image of God. Attempts to alter one's sex or appearance by surgery or by hormone therapy or any other means reflect a heart that does not submit to God's good and sovereign right to determine our sex and thus are disapproved of and forbidden by God. (Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1-3; Deut. 22:5; Ps. 139:13-16; Jer. 1:5; Matt. 19:4; Mk. 10:6; 1 Cor. 6:9)

T. Marriage and Family Relationships

1. We believe that marriage and family are sacred institutions ordained by the Lord God Himself from the very beginning of human history for the purpose of representing the profound mystery of the union that exists between Christ and His Church, to produce godly offspring, to provide helpful companionship, and to promote sexual purity and fulfillment. Since God's plan is that marriage is to be a single, exclusive union between one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman until death parts them, any other definition of marriage is invalid, contrary to the clear teachings of the Holy Bible and consequently, against the expressed will of God. (Eph. 5:31-32; Gen. 1:28; 2:18-25; 1 Cor. 7:2-5, 39; Mk. 10:4-12; Rom. 7:2-3)
2. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position and in worth before God, since both are created in God's image but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and in the church. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people and the way His people are to relate to Him. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the Church. The wife is to submit herself to the scriptural leadership of her husband as the Church submits to the headship of Christ. The husband is to be the leader of the home. (Gen. 1:26-28; Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:11-15; Titus 2:1-5)
3. We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. Children are a blessing from God and a heritage from Him. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's plan and pattern for marriage. Parents are responsible to teach their children spiritual and moral values based upon the Bible, and to lead them to make choices based on biblical truth, through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate, loving discipline, including but not limited to

scriptural, corporal correction. Children are to honor and obey their parents. Able-bodied husbands and fathers are to provide for their families. Refusing to do so is a clear violation of their responsibility and of God's command. (Ps. 127:3-5; 128; 139:13-16; Prov. 6:20-22; 13:24; 19:18; 22:6, 15; 23:13-14; 29:15, 17; Eph. 5:21-33; 1 Pet. 3:1-7; Heb. 13:4; Mal. 2:14-16; Col. 3:18-21; Ex. 20:12; Eph. 6:1-4; Deut. 6:4-9; 2 Thess. 3:7-15; 1 Tim. 5:8)

U. **Divorce and Remarriage**

We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce, and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Divorce followed by remarriage is regarded as adultery except on the grounds of fornication. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of the Lord for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor or deacon. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Cor. 7:39; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12)

V. **Abortion**

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living, human being. Abortion, which constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life, is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the emotional or mental well-being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:13-16; Luke 1:31-57; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; Ex. 21:22-25)

W. **Euthanasia**

We believe that the direct taking of human life to relieve pain and suffering is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. Life is a sacred gift from God and must be respected as such. We therefore reject the "right to die" and the so-called "death with dignity" viewpoints as unscriptural positions. (Ex. 20:13; 23:7; Acts 17:28)

X. **Love**

We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or the use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Lk. 6:31; Jn. 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; 1 Jn. 3:17-18; Matt. 5:44-48; 1 Cor. 13:4-8; Titus 3:2; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26)

Y. **Lawsuits Between Believers**

We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or against the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32; Matt. 18:15-17)