

# THE BASIC TENETS OF FAITH

Summit is a creedally orthodox church that holds to the basic tenets of the faith. The creeds date back to the early days of the church and articulate foundational theological truths that have been central to the church from the very beginning. These are the same truths that are central to us.

Summit is not affiliated with any particular denomination, yet we stand in unity with the numerous denominations that cling to the truths as articulated by these creeds. We like to say around here, "There are few theological hills that we will die on." Our goal is to major on the majors, focusing on the central truths of the faith we all agree on and on the mission of God that unites us in a common purpose.

## The Apostles' Creed

(3rd-4th Century A.D.) English translation from the Book of Common Worship (2000).

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended into hell. On the third day He rose again; He ascended into heaven, He is seated at the right hand of the Father, and He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

## The Nicene Creed

(A.D. 325; revised at Constantinople A.D. 381)

English Language Liturgical Commission Translation

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through Him all things were made. For us and for our salvation He came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate; He suffered death and was buried. On the third day He rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father [and the Son], who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

# STATEMENT OF FAITH

We at Summit Church Believe That:

**God** is the one and only (Deuteronomy 6:4) all-knowing (Romans 16:27, 11:33-34), all-loving (1 John 4:8,16), and all-powerful (Exodus 6:3) Being, who is the Creator (Genesis 1:1) and Sustainer (Romans 11:36) of the universe. The Godhead exists eternally in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (John 3:16, John 15:26). God has always existed, with no beginning or end (Revelation 22:13), and is wholly self-sustaining (Acts 17:24-25).

**Humanity** was created by God in His image (Genesis 1:27). Sin (rebellion against the will of God) has entered the world (Genesis 3:1-7) and marred the image of God in us and our ability to recognize Him in the world around us (Romans 8:5-9). We believe in the depravity of mankind and our need for a savior (Romans 3:23). The grace of God comes through faith in Christ, and salvation comes in being reconciled to God through Christ (Ephesians 2:8, Colossians 1:15-20). As this happens, followers of Christ are again made in God's image as they become more like Christ, for His sake and the sake of the whole created order (Philippians 2:3-4).

**Jesus Christ** is the Son of God (John 3:16), who was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:26-35). He was both fully God and fully human (Philippians 2:6-7, Colossians 1:15-20). He taught by word and example, sign and wonder, the way of love for God and neighbor, stranger and enemy, outcast and alien (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John). He paid the penalty of our sins through His work on the cross (Romans 3:25); He suffered on the cross (Mark 8:31), died (Luke 23:53), rose again (Luke 24:1), ascended to heaven (Luke 24:51), and is alive sitting at the right hand of the throne of God (Mark 16:19, Acts 7:55). By His Spirit, He continues to work in the lives of those who follow Him to accomplish His purposes (John 14:26, Ephesians 1:11).

**Salvation** comes by the grace of God through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 10:9), and is both an eternity-altering instant, and a life-long process (Philippians 2:12). God's salvation is personal and extends to all the created order (Romans 8:19-21).

**The Kingdom of God** is at hand. This message, which was central to Jesus' teaching, means that every moment is pregnant with the possibility of God's reality breaking into and transforming ours (Mark 1:15). This reality of new life in Christ for believers is attested to by the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:18) and the "fruit" believers bear (John 15:5-8) as they become fully devoted followers of Christ. They will enjoy never-ending life in communion with Christ and the family of God in the midst of a redeemed creation (Revelations 22:1-5). Christ will come again (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17). We believe in bodily resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:12-49), final judgment (Matthew 25:31-33), and eternal destination (Matthew 25:41-46), either with God or separated from Him; both heaven and hell do exist.

**Believer's Baptism** is a crucial outward act of one's inward confession of faith and acceptance of Christ as Savior (Matthew 28:19). It serves as a real and tangible channel marker in the lives of believers, showing that they are members of the body of Christ, and helps to anchor them in their faith. It is symbolic of Christ's death and resurrection and also the washing away of our sins (Romans 6:4-7). Likewise, it is a sign to the community of the decision the believer has made. While baptism is important in the life of a believer, it does not gain one's salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9). Although many modes of baptism are used, we believe that submersion is the most appropriate mode, in that it mimics most closely the actions of which baptism is symbolic. Christ led by example in that He, too, was baptized (Matthew 3:13).

**Communion** is taken in obedience to Christ's command (Luke 22:19). It serves as a reminder of His work on the cross: His body that was broken and His blood that was shed for our salvation (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). It is also a meal that looks forward to the time we will share perfect communion with Him in His Father's Kingdom (Matthew 26:29). It is to be partaken by believers, and is openly offered to those who desire to be a part of the body of Christ. Although it is an integral part of the life of a Christ-follower, it does not gain one's salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9).

**The Bible** is divinely inspired and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16). The Holy Scriptures are made up of the Old and New Testaments. The Holy Spirit preserves God's word in the church today and speaks God's truths through it (John 14:16). The Scriptures are the normative means in which God reveals Himself to the church and this world (Isaiah 55:10-13, Romans 12:1-2). We believe the Bible is authoritative in our lives in all ways to which it speaks.

**The Holy Spirit** is the Spirit (Ruach/Pnuema) of God in the third person of the Trinity. He was present and active in creation and is eternal in being (Genesis 1:2). He glorifies Jesus Christ, convicts the world of sin, and regenerates and converts sinners (John 14:16-17). He indwells, guides, instructs, and empowers the believer for godly living and service (John 16:13, Galatians 5:22-23), and He seals and keeps them until the Lord comes (Ephesians 4:30). He bestows spiritual gifts for the sake of the body of Christ. The practice of any gift in any gathered body shall be in keeping with the Scripture (1 Corinthians 12:7, 14:40).

**The Church** is a body of believers in Jesus Christ (Romans 12:5, Ephesians 4:4-6), who are called to truth through worship together (John 4:23) and are built up (Hebrews 10:25) as they are sent out to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, in word and deed, to the world around them (Matthew 28:18-20).