

Statement of Faith

Highlands Community Church

All Scripture references are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV)

The Scriptures

We believe the 66 books of the Bible are God's Word, written by human authors under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, so that every word is God-breathed.¹ The Bible is inerrant and infallible in the original manuscripts.² It reveals who God is so that He may be known, trusted, and obeyed.³ All Scripture testifies about Christ who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.⁴ The Bible alone speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and proper conduct.⁵

¹ 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21

² Proverbs 30:5; Matthew 5:18; Titus 1:2

³ 2 Samuel 7:28; Psalm 119:160

⁴ Luke 24:25-27, 44-47; John 5:39

⁵ Micah 6:8; Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:35-36; John 17:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:22

The Triune God

We believe there is one and only one living and true God.¹ He is eternally existent simultaneously in three distinct Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.² Each person is the same in divine nature, divine substance, and divine attributes, equally deserving of worship and obedience.³ The Triune God is the creator and sustainer of heaven and earth.⁴ He is all-present, all-powerful, and all-knowing.⁵ He is infinite, eternal, and unchanging in His being; perfect in wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, beauty, and truth.⁶ God alone is worthy of all glory, honor, power, and praise.⁷

¹ Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-6; 46:9

² Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2

³ John 1:1; 17:5; Acts 5:3-4; Romans 9:5; 2 Corinthians 3:18

⁴ Genesis 1:1; 1 Chronicles 29:11; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 3:9; Revelation 4:11

⁵ Psalm 139:1-4, 7-12; 16; 147:5; Isaiah 40:26; Jeremiah 32:17; 1 John 3:20

⁶ Exodus 3:14; 34:6-7; Leviticus 19:1-2; Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 11:7; 27:4; 90:2; Isaiah 45:19; Malachi 3:6; Romans 11:33-35; Ephesians 2:4-5; 1 Timothy 1:17

⁷ Isaiah 46:5-6

God the Father

We believe God the Father is eternally sovereign over all things.¹ He reigns providentially over creation and history with gracious, tender care, freely working everything together according to the purpose of His will.² Because of His faithful love and according to His glorious wisdom and grace, He planned and predestined the world's redemption in His Son, Jesus.³ By His power, the Father keeps believers secure in Christ forever.⁴

¹ Matthew 10:29; Acts 17:26; Romans 11:36; Ephesians 1:11

² Psalm 145:9; Matthew 5:45; 6:25-34; Mark 13:32; Acts 14:16-17; 1 Corinthians 8:6; James 1:17

³ John 3:16; Acts 1:7; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:3-14; 1 Peter 1:3-5

⁴ John 6:40

God the Son, Jesus Christ

We believe the Lord Jesus Christ is God's promised Messiah, the one and only eternal Son of God.¹ He is the exact representation of God's nature, and all the fullness of God dwells in Him, so that He is Immanuel, God with us.² He is truly God and truly man.³ He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, performed miracles, preached the good news of the Kingdom of God, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.⁴ His death was a vicarious, atoning substitute for sinners, satisfying the wrath of God, that all who believe might be saved through His shed blood.⁵ In

His suffering He provided the model of perfect humility and obedience to the Father.⁶ We believe in His bodily resurrection, which vindicated Him and guarantees eternal hope for our future resurrection.⁷ He conquered sin, death, and the dominion of darkness.⁸ He bodily ascended to the right hand of the Father where He reigns over all things and intercedes for His church.⁹ He will personally and imminently return for His church and with His church to judge the living and the dead.¹⁰

¹ Isaiah 42:1-4; Luke 9:35; John 20:30-31; Acts 2:36; Hebrews 1:1-2

² Matthew 1:22-23; Colossians 1:15-20; 2:9; Hebrews 1:3

³ John 1:1-17; 1 John 4:2

⁴ Matthew 1:20, 23; 4:23; 9:6-8; 12:28; Mark 15; Luke 1:35; John 2:1-11; 4:46-53; 9:1-12; 11:38-44; Hebrews 4:15; 9:14; 1 Peter 2:22-24; 1 John 3:5

⁵ Isaiah 53:5-6; Romans 3:24-25; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 2:17; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 2:2; 4:10

⁶ Philippians 2:5-11; 1 Peter 2:21

⁷ Matthew 28:6; 1 Corinthians 15; Philippians 3:20-21; 1 Peter 1:3

⁸ Colossians 2:15

⁹ Acts 1:9-11; 7:55; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 1:3; 7:24-25

¹⁰ Matthew 24:42-44; John 5:22; Acts 10:42; 17:31; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Revelation 19; 20:11-15

God the Holy Spirit

We believe God the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.¹ He guided the human authors of the Bible to record God's revelation so that all Scripture is God-breathed.² He has been active in every step of God's redemptive plan.³ He glorifies Christ in all that He does.⁴ In the present age, He convicts the world concerning sin, He regenerates sinners, and He baptizes them into the body of Christ, applying Christ's work to believers.⁵ He indwells all believers, illuminates their understanding of God's Word, seals them unto the day of redemption, equips them with spiritual gifts, empowers them to obey God's Word, helps them in their weakness, and conforms them into the likeness of Christ.⁶ Every believer is commanded to be filled with the Holy Spirit.⁷

¹ John 14:16; 15:26

² 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21

³ Genesis 1:2; Exodus 35:31; Numbers 11:25; 1 Samuel 16:13; Matthew 1:18; John 3:5-7; Acts 1:8; 2 Peter 1:20-21

⁴ John 16:14

⁵ John 3:5-7; 16:8; Romans 8:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Titus 3:5

⁶ John 14:17; Romans 8:9, 26, 29-30; 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 2:1-16; 3:16-17; 12-14; Galatians 5:16-26; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 1 Peter 4:10-11

⁷ Ephesians 5:18-20

Humanity's Creation and Fall

We believe that human beings, both male and female, are created in the image and likeness of God.¹ As the pinnacle of God's creation, every person is to be respected and loved from conception until death.² The human race was created in holiness, free from sin and in fellowship with God, but by voluntary choice fell from that holy and happy state.³ Consequently, all humans are now sinners not by constraint but by choice.⁴ We all inherit from Adam a nature inclined towards sin, an environment corrupted by sin, and are subject to God's righteous judgment, deserving eternal condemnation.⁵

¹ Genesis 1:26-30; 9:6; James 3:9

² Psalm 8:3-6; 116:15; 139:13; Matthew 1:20; 22:37-40; Luke 1:41-44; 10:25-37; Romans 12:10; 1 Timothy 5:1-2; James 1:27; 1 Peter 2:17, 4:8

³ Psalm 139:13-14; Romans 3:23

⁴ Romans 3:9-18; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Timothy 1:9-11

⁵ Psalm 51:5; Romans 1:18-32; 2:14-16; 6:23; 5:12-21; Ephesians 2:1-3; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-10

Gender, Marriage, & Sexuality

We believe that God created the human race male and female.¹ The gift of male and female genders is thus part of the goodness of God's creation, and all conduct to adopt a gender different from one's biological sex at conception is sin.² We believe that God has established marriage as a lifelong, exclusive

relationship between one man and one woman.³ It is a covenantal relationship designed by God to symbolize the union between Christ and His church.⁴ All intimate sexual activity outside the marriage relationship, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or otherwise, is contrary to God's design and therefore sin.⁵

¹ Genesis 1:27

² Genesis 1:26-27; Psalm 139:13-14; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

³ Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:3-12

⁴ Ephesians 5:31-32

⁵ Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19-21

Sin

We believe that sin is rejecting or ignoring God in the world He created, rebelling against Him by living without reference to Him, failing to love God and be and do all He requires in His law.¹ It stems from our trust in created things rather than the Creator for our hope and happiness, significance, and security.² It results in death, the disintegration of all creation, and separation from God.³ While humans are capable of many good works because of God's common grace and our own conscience, none of these works can save.⁴ All people need God's salvation, found only in Jesus Christ.⁵

¹ Ephesians 2:1-3; Romans 3:9-18; James 4:17; 1 John 3:4

² Romans 1:18-32

³ Isaiah 59:2; Romans 5:12, 6:23; 8:20-21; Galatians 5:19-21; James 1:14-15; 1 John 1:6

⁴ Romans 2:14-16; 3:20; Ephesians 2:8-9

⁵ John 14:6, 20:31; Acts 4:12; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 1 John 4:14

Salvation

We believe salvation is a gracious work of God to redeem creation from sin and death.¹ Salvation is offered freely in the gospel of Jesus Christ, which was promised in the Old Testament, revealed through Christ's life, death, resurrection, and ascension, and will be fully realized with the final judgment.² All humans can receive God's free gift of salvation through personal repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.³ The saved people of God are united with Christ, born again as new creations, adopted into God's family, forgiven of their sins, justified before God, sanctified for love and good works, and will be glorified in resurrected bodies.⁴ The Holy Spirit is a seal and down payment of these great truths for all believers in Christ.⁵

¹ Titus 2:11-14

² Genesis 3:15; 15:6; Luke 24:44-49; Acts 4:12; 13:38-39

³ John 17:3; Acts 2:21; 16:30-31; Romans 3:23-24; 10:9-15; Ephesians 2:8

⁴ John 1:11-14; 3:3-21; 5:24; Romans 5:8-10; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 6:11; 15:51-58; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:10; Philippians 3:20-21

⁵ Ezekiel 36:27; Ephesians 1:13-14

Baptism & The Lord's Supper

We believe baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two ordinances Jesus gave to the church to visibly proclaim His redeeming work and publicly identify His redeemed people.¹ Baptism is a symbolic washing of a believer into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.² It symbolizes the power of Christ's death and resurrection to cleanse sins once for all, our union with Christ through faith, and our public identification with Christ and His people.³ The Lord's Supper is a symbolic meal that proclaims Christ's redeeming death for sins.⁴ The bread symbolizes the body of Christ; the cup symbolizes the blood of Christ.⁵ The Lord's Supper calls believers to remember God's promises and renews believers' commitment to Christ and His people.⁶

¹ Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 22:14-20; Acts 2:41, 19:4-5; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

² Matthew 28:19-20

³ Acts 2:41; 8:12; Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:27-29; Colossians 2:11-12

⁴ Matthew 26:26-29

⁵ 1 Corinthians 10:16-17

⁶ 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

The Church

We believe there is one holy, universal, apostolic Church — God’s spiritual community made up of all believers in Christ.¹ The Church is the body and bride of Christ, the spiritual family of God, made visible in local churches.² A local church is a congregation of believers who join together to practice the two ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, to worship, to learn and obey the Word, to love one another as Christ loved, to serve and build up one another through exercising spiritual gifts, and to spread the gospel to all peoples.³ A local church is to be led by qualified elders and served by qualified deacons under the authority of Christ, who is the head of the Church.⁴

¹ Matthew 16:15-19; 1 Peter 2:9-10

² Ephesians 2:19-22; 4:15-16; Hebrews 10:24-25

³ Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:42; Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; 12:4-27; Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-14; 1 Peter 1:22-23; 4:10

⁴ Acts 6:3-6; 20:28; Ephesians 1:22-23; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-5

The Eternal State

We believe Jesus will physically return to the earth to judge the living and the dead.¹ At the final judgment, those who have believed the gospel will receive God’s promised salvation and humanity will be restored to life with God, reigning forever with Him in the New Heavens and New Earth, free from the curse of sin, in glorified, resurrected bodies.² Those who have rejected the gospel will be condemned to Hell, the place of everlasting, conscious punishment.³

¹ Matthew 25:31; 46; John 5:28-29; Acts 1:9-11; 10:42; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; Hebrews 9:27-28

² John 14:1-3; Romans 8:18-24; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 3:4; 2 Peter 3:7-13; Revelation 21

³ Matthew 25:46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Revelation 20