

# Statement of Faith

## Introduction

The aim of this statement is to embrace and proclaim essentials of our faith in order to provide stability for *Grace Church Bellingham*. We do not believe everything here is of equal weight nor must all be believed in order to be saved. We welcome conversation and further study of the Scriptures in these areas, in order that we might grow in our understanding as well as in our relationships with each other.

## The Bible

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God, without error in the original writings, and of supreme and final authority in faith and life.

## God

We believe in one God, creator of all, holy and loving, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons equal in essence and attributes: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

## People

Mankind was created by God in his image, but man voluntarily sinned and separated himself from God. Consequently all people choose sinfulness, are completely unable to be morally perfect before God, and are therefore unable to earn salvation in any way.

## Final Judgment

God is grieved over our rebellion and has promised a bodily resurrection of the dead for judgment and everlasting punishment for our sin.

## Jesus Christ

God loved mankind so much he sent His Son Jesus Christ, who voluntarily lived a sinless life and was crucified for our sins in our place. Jesus was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born to a virgin named Mary and is fully God and fully man. He was physically raised from the dead and he rose into heaven, where he lives as an advocate and intercessor for us.

## Salvation

God saves men by convicting them of sin through the Holy Spirit and turning them from sin to faith in Jesus' all-sufficient sacrifice for them. Thus through faith in Christ alone they are justified by God's grace, never by their merit, forgiven of their sin and given Jesus' perfect righteousness, and united with him forever.

## The Holy Spirit

All who are saved are born again of the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God, a relationship which is eternally secure. In this new birth the Holy Spirit gives sinners a new nature which produces the fruit of love and ongoing growth in holiness and Christlikeness. He then lives inside the believer, teaching, comforting and guarding them until the return of Christ.

## The Church

All who have been united to Jesus by the Holy Spirit make up the church. Local churches are essential as God's means of encouraging and building each believer in community. We believe the head of the church, Jesus Christ, gave two ordinances: water baptism, portraying the believer's union with Him, and the Lord's Supper, commemorating His death on our behalf until he returns.

## The Believer's Future

We wait eagerly for Jesus' personal, physical return at any time. Believers who die before his return are immediately in his presence and will be bodily resurrected,