



- A Statement of Faith -
Adopted by
The Vestry of The Church of the Cross
October 22, 2015

The Church of the Cross (The Parish) is an Anglican church in Bluffton, South Carolina, in communion with the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina (The Diocese). We are committed to our Mission, "Rooted in the Past, Sheltering the Present, Reaching Out to the Future, Empowered by the God of the Ages" and Vision, "To be followers of Jesus committed to transforming lives in His power and for His glory."

As such, we ascribe to the following as our core doctrine:

_____ A belief in the Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit; three distinct persons co-equal in glory and co-eternal in majesty and of one substantial Godhead, such that there are not three gods but one God.

_____ A belief in the Holy Scriptures as divine revelation, trustworthy, carrying the full measure of His authority, containing all things necessary to salvation, and to be submitted to in all matters of faith and practice of life.

_____ A belief in the One Savior of mankind, Jesus Christ, who in His person is both fully God and fully man; of one substance with the Father as regards His Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards His manhood.

_____ A belief in the perfect obedience of Christ; His true and actual suffering, his substitutionary and atoning death on the cross, and His bodily resurrection and ascension as the only means given for our salvation and reconciliation with God.

_____ A belief in faith alone as the only grounds for the merits of Christ being imputed to us for our justification before God (justification by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone), leading to good works empowered by the Holy Spirit.

_____ A belief in the consummate return of Jesus Christ in glory to judge the living and the dead, and a belief in the bodily resurrection of the dead and their entrance into either eternal damnation or everlasting blessedness.

_____ A belief in the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church as those souls that have been redeemed entirely by the work of Christ and called out of bondage into freedom, out of darkness into light, out of error into truth, out of death into eternal life.

_____ A belief that historic Anglican polity organizes the visible Church under the offices of Bishop, Presbyter and Deacon. Furthermore, the Church exists to worship the Triune God and to lift up the Savior Jesus Christ before all people through the faithful preaching and teaching of the Gospel, through prayer, and through the faithful administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Holy Communion or the Eucharist).

_____ A belief in the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds as accurate representations of the essence of the Christian faith, and affirmation of the (39) Articles of Religion as a coherent and concise expression of Anglican doctrine.

Further;

_____ We believe Christians are called beyond mere membership to the lifelong journey of discipleship, learning to faithfully live what God has revealed about us.
(Matthew 7:24-29, Mark 8:34-36, Galatians 5:22)

_____ We believe all people are created in the image of God, who wonderfully and immutably creates each person as genetically male or female. These two distinct complementary genders reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is in conflict with this created-ness and is inconsistent with our beliefs.

_____ In the Church, we believe marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in Holy Matrimony, a single, exclusive, lifelong union, as delineated in Scripture (Genesis 2:18-25; Mark 10:1-9). This signifies to us the mystery of the union between Christ and his Church, reconciling and re-uniting two complements. God's good intention for us is that sexual intimacy is to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4.) For the blessing and protection of the bond of marriage, our families, and particularly our children, God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

_____ Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as His covenant relationship between a man and a woman, the Parish (like the Diocese) will only recognize and solemnize a marriage that is between a man and a woman. Further, the clergy and staff of the Parish (like the Diocese) shall only serve in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. The facilities and property of the Parish (like the Diocese) shall only host weddings between one man and one woman.

_____ We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

_____ We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of the Diocese.

Finally;

This statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible is the trustworthy Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of humankind. For purposes of the Parish's and the Diocese of South Carolina's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Bishop is the final interpretive authority on matters of doctrine and their application.

We are committed to biblical and classical Anglican Christianity. We celebrate and stand for the unchanging truth of the gospel as centered in the grace of Jesus Christ, in the gift of biblical revelation, and the moral vision expressed in historic, Anglican Christianity.

I understand that in order to preserve the function and integrity of The Church of the Cross as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Parish's members and the community, it is imperative that all persons who serve as leaders, agree to abide by its *Statement of Faith*. (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22.)

I have reviewed the statements above as indicated by my initials before each of them, and agree to be governed by all the provisions herein.

Name _____ Signature _____

Date _____