

Articles of Faith

This constitutes the Articles of Faith of Faith Church of Lafayette, Inc., and Members of Faith Church shall agree that they wholeheartedly believe the following:

I. Of the Scriptures,

We believe that the Holy Bible as originally written was:

- (a) verbally inspired and the product of God through Spirit-controlled men. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:19-21; Acts 1:16, 28:25)
- (b) and is Truth without admixture of error. (Psalm 119:105, 130, 160; Luke 24:25-27, 44, 45; John 17:17)
- (c) and shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man; the true center of Christian union and the supreme authority by which all human conduct, creed and opinions should be tried. And, that man in his relationship with God must move from truth to experience and not from experience to truth. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17; Matthew 7:21-23; Psalm 119:89; Proverbs 30:5, 6; Romans 3:4; 1 Peter 1:23; Revelation 22:19; John 12:48; Isaiah 8:7-11; John 1:45-47; John 5:39)

(Explanatory)

- 1. By "THE HOLY BIBLE" we mean that collection of sixty-six books from Genesis to Revelation which, as originally written, does not only contain and convey the Word of God, but is the very Word of God.
- 2. By "INSPIRATION" we mean that the books of the Bible were written by Holy Men of Old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be.

II. Of the True God,

We believe:

- (a) that there is only one living and true God, infinite in every excellence, Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth, inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all worship, confidence and love. (Exodus 15:11, 20:2, 3; Revelation 4:11)
- (b) that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in every Divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices. (Matthew 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; Ephesians 2:18; 2 Corinthians 13:14)
- (c) in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Concerning Him, we believe:
 - (1) in His Absolute Deity, that He was Divine as no other man can be, being Very God of Very God, existing for all eternity and co-equal with the Father and the Spirit. (John 1:1-3; Colossians 2:8-10; Hebrews 1:2, 3, 8; Micah 5:2)
 - (2) that in His voluntary humiliation He did not lay aside His Deity. (Matthew 1:21-23, 28:1-6; Mark 14:61, 62; John 10:30, 32, 33, 14:9, 20:28; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Colossians 1:15-17; 1 John 1:1, 2, 5:20)
 - (3) that at His incarnation He was miraculously begotten of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary as no other man was or can ever be born. (Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; John 1:14)

(Our Lord Jesus Christ's WORK in Atonement is seen in section VI.)

(d) Of the Holy Spirit,

We believe:

- (1) that He is a Divine Person, equal with God the Father and the Son, and of the same nature. (John 14:16, 17, 26; Matthew 28:19; Hebrews 9:14)
- (2) that He was active in creation. (Genesis 1:1-3)
- (3) that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled. (2 Thessalonians 2:7)
- (4) that He convicts of sin, of judgment and of righteousness. (John 16:8-11)
- (5) that He bears witness to and empowers the truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony. (John 15:26, 27; Acts 5:30-32)
- (6) that His purpose in this age is to glorify the Son.
- (7) that He is the agent of the New Birth. (John 3:5, 6)
- (8) that He indwells, seals, baptizes, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps believers until the day of redemption. (Ephesians 1:13, 14, 4:30; John 14:26, 16:13; Acts 11:16; Romans 8:9, 14, 16; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2; Romans 8:26, 27)
- (9) that He never depreciates the completeness that is in Jesus Christ by exalting anyone or anything above or as an addition to Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:3; Colossians 2:10)
- (10) that He gives to the believer at salvation, gifts of service according to His will (1 Corinthians 12:11) and to be used only for the edification of the body. (1 Corinthians 13:5b; Ephesians 4:16)

III. Of the Devil, or Satan,

We believe that Satan is a distinct personality who:

- (a) was once holy and enjoyed heaven's honors, but, through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell. (Isaiah 14:12-13; Ezekiel 28:15-17)
- (b) drew after him a host of angels. (Revelation 12:9; Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4; John 14:30)
- (c) is now the malignant prince of the power of the air, and the unholy god of this world. (1 Thessalonians 3:5; Matthew 4:1-3)
- (d) is man's great tempter. (1 Peter 5:8)
- (e) is the enemy of God and His Christ. (Zechariah 3:1-2; 1 John 3:8; Matthew 13:25, 37-39; Luke 22:3, 4)
- (f) is the accuser of the Saints. (Revelation 12:10)
- (g) is the author of all false religions, the chief power promoting the present apostasy. (2 Corinthians 11:13-15; Mark 13:21, 22)
- (h) is the lord of the Anti-Christ. (1 John 4:3; 2 John 7; 1 John 2:22)
- (I) is the author of all the powers of darkness. (Revelation 13:13, 14; 2 Thessalonians 2:8-11)
- (j) although powerful and to be respected, is not omniscient, omnipotent, nor omnipresent and cannot overcome the believer who is submitting in obedience to Jesus Christ and His Word in Faith. (James 4:7; 1 John 4:4)
- (k) is destined to find defeat at the hands of God's Son, through His death on the cross (Genesis 3:15; Revelation 19:11, 16, 20; Revelation 12:7-9; 20:1-3), and is destined to the

judgment of an eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for him and his angels.
(Revelation 20:10-15; Matthew 25:41)

IV. Of the Creation,

We believe in the Genesis account of creation, and:

- (a) that it is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically or figuratively. (Genesis 1:1; Exodus 20:11; Acts 4:24; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 11:3; John 1:3; Revelation 10:6; Romans 1:20; Acts 17:23-26; Jeremiah 10:12)
- (b) that man was created directly by God and in God's own image and after His own likeness. (Genesis 1:27; 1 Corinthians 11:7)
- (c) that man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species, or development through long periods of time from lower to higher forms. (Genesis 2:7, 21-23; John 1:3)
- (d) that all animal and vegetable life was created directly and to reproduce "after its own kind." (Genesis 1:11, 24; Colossians 1:16, 17)

V. Of Man and His Fall,

We believe:

- (a) that man was created in innocence. (Genesis 1:27)
- (b) that by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state. (Genesis 3; Romans 5:12, 19)
- (c) that consequently, all men are now sinners by inheritance from Adam and by individual choice and until regenerated are dead in sin. (Ephesians 2:1-3; Romans 3:10-13)
- (d) that all men are by nature utterly void of the righteousness required by the law of God, and definitely inclined to evil. (Romans 3:11; Galatians 3:22; Ephesians 2:1-3; Psalm 40:12)
- (e) that man is under just condemnation without defense or excuse. (Romans 3:9-20, 23; Romans 1:19, 20, 2:1, 12-15)
- (f) that man's only hope of eternal life is through redemption in Jesus Christ. (John 3:3, 5; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:8, 9; Galatians 3:26)

VI. Of Christ's Atonement For Sin,

We believe:

- (a) that the salvation of sinners is wholly of God's grace; and (Ephesians 2:8, 9; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24, 25) through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who by appointment of the Father, voluntarily took upon Him the form of a man, was tempted in all points as we are yet without sin in nature or deed, honored the Divine Law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins. (John 3:16; Matthew 18:11; Philippians 2:7, 8; Hebrews 2:14, 4:15; Romans 3:25; 1 John 4:10; Isaiah 53:6; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
- (b) that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a Martyr, but was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust, Christ, the Lord, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree. (John 10:18; Philippians 2:8; Galatians 1:4; 1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:11; Hebrews 12:2; 1 Peter 3:18)
- (c) that, having risen bodily from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven and uniting in His Wonderful Person the tenderest sympathies with Divine Perfection, He is in every way the suitable, compassionate, all sufficient Savior and the mediator for His believer priests. (Isaiah 53:12; Hebrews 7:25, 9:12-15, 10:10, 12, 14, 18; 1 John 2:2)
- (d) that the blessings of this atonement are given to all who believe from the heart and confess to God this Lord and Savior as his own Lord and Savior. It is the immediate duty of man to obey the command to accept this offer of mercy. (Acts 17:30; Romans 10:8, 9, 10)

VII. Of Salvation By Grace,

We believe:

- (a) that in order to be saved, all men must be born again. (John 3:3; Galatians 3:26)
- (b) that the new birth is a New Creation in Christ Jesus. (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- (c) that it is instantaneous, and not a lengthy process. (John 3:5-7; Acts 16:30-33)
- (d) that in the new birth, the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made partaker of the Divine Nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God. (2 Peter 1:4; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1, 4-9; Colossians 2:13; Titus 3:5)
- (e) that the new creation is brought about in a manner above comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of The Holy Spirit in connection with Divine Truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience by faith in the Gospel. (John 1:12, 13, 3:8)
- (f) that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith in the finished work and Person of Jesus Christ and newness of life. (Romans 10:8-10; 1 John 5:1-5)

VIII. Of Justification,

We believe that the great gospel blessing, which Christ secures to such as believe in Him, is justification, and:

- (a) that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on the basis of Christ's righteousness and atonement. (Acts 13:39; Isaiah 53:11; Romans 5:1, 9, 8:1)
- (b) that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness, which we have done or ever will do, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood is His righteousness imputed to us. (Titus 3:5-7; Romans 4:24, 25, 5:1, 17; Galatians 3:11)

IX. Of the Freeness of Salvation,

We believe:

- (a) in God's electing grace. (1 Thessalonians 1:4; Colossians 3:12; 1 Peter 1:2)
- (b) that salvation is freely offered to all by the Gospel. (Romans 10:9-13; Revelation 22:17)
- (c) that it is the immediate duty of all to accept this salvation by whole-hearted, penitent, and obedient faith. (John 3:15-18; 1 Timothy 1:15; Acts 2:37-41; Romans 10:8, 9)
- (d) that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the Gospel—rejection that brings upon man the condemnation of God's wrath. (John 3:18, 36; Romans 1:18, 20, 2:1, 4, 5)

X. Of Repentance and Faith,

We believe that repentance and faith:

- (a) are inseparable graces. (Mark 1:15)
- (b) are solemn obligations. (Acts 20:21)
- (c) are wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God who convicts the believer of guilt, danger, helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, so that the believer turns to God with unfeigned contrition, and confesses to God his wholehearted faith in the work and person of the Lord Jesus Christ as his all sufficient Savior. (Acts 2:27, 28; Romans 10:9-13)

XI. Of Sanctification,

We believe that Biblical Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, the believer is set apart from sin, unto Christ, and has three aspects:

- (a) the believer has been set apart positionally before God the moment he believes.
(1 Corinthians 1:30, 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 10:10, 14)

- (b) the believer is being set apart progressively in his walk day by day as he grows in grace toward the likeness of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit in the continual use of the appointed means, especially the Word of God, self-examination, watchfulness, prayer and yielding to the Spirit through Biblical change. (John 17:17; Romans 8:13; 2 Peter 3:18; Romans 8:28, 29a; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Timothy 4:7b; Hebrews 5:12-14; 1 John 3:3; Romans 12:1, 2; Ephesians 4:22, 24)
- (c) the believer is to be set apart prospectively from the very presence of sin when his sanctification is completed at the coming of Christ for the church. (1 John 3:2; 1 Thessalonians 3:13, 5:23)

XII. Of the Security of the Believer or Perseverance of the Saints,

We believe this is the design of God's Divine Plan:

- (a) that every person, immediately upon acceptance of Christ as personal Savior and Lord, receives eternal life and is made at once a Son of God, and (1 John 5:11-13; John 1:12)
- (b) that believers are kept by the power of God through faith, are kept in a state of grace, and are eternally secure apart from any human works.
- (c) that such only are believers who endure to the end. (Philippians 1:6; John 8:31; Revelation 21:7, 8; Ephesians 2:10)
- (d) that the believers' persevering attachment to Christ and His own and their growth in the likeness of Christ are God's marks that distinguish them from superficial professors. (Romans 8:28, 29a; John 14:21-23; John 10:27-29; 1 John 2:19; 5:1-3; John 13:34, 35; Ephesians 2:10, Titus 2:11-13; James 2:14-20)

XIII. Of the Church,

We believe:

- (a) that the church universal is a New Testament institution, established by Jesus Christ, who is its sole Head; revealed through the apostles; empowered and perpetuated by the Holy Spirit; His "body" for service and His "bride" for glory. The church universal began with the New Testament Saints at Pentecost and will be consummated at the coming of Christ in the Rapture. (Matthew 16:18; Acts 1:8, 2:1-13, 41-47, 15:14; Ephesians 1:22, 23, 3:21, 5:23-32; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
- (b) that the church universal is manifested through the local church, which is:
 - (1) a congregation of baptized believers, associated together by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel. (Acts 2:41, 42)
 - (2) observing the ordinances of Christ. (1 Corinthians 11:2)
 - (3) governed by His laws. (Ephesians 1:22, 23)
 - (4) exercising the gifts, responsibilities and privileges invested in them by His work. (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:4, 8:11)
- (c) that its scriptural offices are those of pastors, elders or bishops, and deacons whose qualification, claims, and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures. (Acts 14:23, 6:5, 6, 15:23, 20:17-28; 1 Peter 5:1-4; 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 8-13)
- (d) the true mission of the church is expressed in the New Testament and abbreviated in Matthew 28:19, 20 and Ephesians 4:11-16.

- ..To make individual disciples.
 - ..To baptize them into a properly organized and functioning local church.
 - ..To teach them to obey His Word as He has commanded. This includes assisting parents in teaching truth.
- (e) that the local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only superintendent is Christ, through the Holy Spirit's direction by the Word. (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 5:23, 24; 1 Peter 5:1-4)
 - (f) that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel and that each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. (Acts 15:22; Jude 2, 3; 2 Corinthians 8:23, 24; 1 Corinthians 16:1-3)
 - (g) that on all matters of membership, of policy, of government, of discipline, and of benevolence, the will of the local church following the Word of God is final. (Malachi 3:10; Leviticus 27:32; 1 Corinthians 5:11-13)

XIV. Of the Ordinances,

- (a) We believe that Christian baptism is:
 - (1) the immersion in water of a believer. (Acts 8:36-39; Matthew 3:6; John 3:23; Romans 6:4, 5; Matthew 3:16)
 - (2) in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19)
 - (3) to show forth in a solemn testimony and picture of our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life. (Romans 6:3, 5; Colossians 2:12)
- (b) We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of our Lord's death until He comes, by the sacred use of broken bread and the freshly pressed juice of the vine as symbols of the price He paid for us. This commemoration should be preceded always by solemn self-examination. (1 Corinthians 11:23-28)

XV. Of the Righteous and the Wicked,

We believe that:

- (a) there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked. (Galatians 3:22, 26; Genesis 18:23; Romans 6:17, 18; 1 Peter 4:18; Proverbs 11:31)
- (b) only those who through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified or set apart by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in their standing before God. (Romans 1:17; 1 Corinthians 15:22; John 5:24; Romans 3:22-24, 4:22-24; Ephesians 1:6, 7)
- (c) all who continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and are under the curse. (1 John 5:19; Galatians 3:10; Romans 6:23, 7:5)

- (d) this distinction holds among men both before and after death, in the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost. (Matthew 25:34, 41, 46; Luke 9:26, 16:25, 26; John 8:21; Romans 6:23; Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 20:10-15)

XVI. Of Civil Government,

We believe:

- (a) that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society. (Romans 13:1-7; 2 Samuel 23:3; Exodus 18:21, 22)
- (b) that government officials are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed: (Matthew 22:21; 1 Timothy 2:1, 2; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13, 14, 17; Daniel 1:8-15) except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, (Acts 4:19, 20, 5:29; Daniel 3:17, 18, 6:10, 11) who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the Kings of the earth. In this connection we stand firmly for the separation of the church and state. (Matthew 10:28, 22:21, 23:10; Revelation 11:16; Philippians 2:10, 11; Psalm 72:11)

XVII. Of Marriage, Family, and Sexuality

We believe:

- (a) that marriage was created by God and is a holy and divinely established covenant between one man and one woman to be a representation of the relationship between Jesus Christ and His church. Marriage is the bond that joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:4-6; Mark 10:6-9; Eph. 5:31; Heb. 13:4)
- (b) that the roles of husband, wife, parent, and child are clearly defined in Scripture. (Ephesians 5:21-6:4; Colossians 3:16-21; 1 Peter 3:1-7)
- (c) that sexual relationships are sacred and fulfilling only within the bonds of marriage, and are condemned outside the marriage relationship. God created sexual intimacy to be enjoyed exclusively between one man and one woman who are married to one another. Sexual intimacy outside the marriage relationship is sinful and offensive to God and any form of sexual immorality, including but not limited to adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography, prostitution, pedophilia, premarital sexual intimacy, cross dressing, sexting, or any attempt to change one's gender, or disagree with one's biological gender, is sinful and offensive to God. We also believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 7:3, 4; Hebrews 13:4)
- (d) that children are a blessing of God and the responsibility for them rests solely upon the parents and they are to be brought up in loving, structured control and conscientious instruction in the truths of God and His principles of life. (Psalm 127:3; Ephesians 6:4; Deuteronomy 6:6, 7; Psalm 78:4-7; Proverbs 22:6; Proverbs 17:6)
- (e) that God created humanity male and female as part of His original good creation. While we would not minimize the struggles that some experience with gender identity, that God created humanity with specific gender identity and that He continues this process through biological reproduction; that genotypic gender, and not feelings, determines gender identity; and that God makes no mistakes. (Numbers 23:19; Psalms 145:17; Isaiah 46:9-10; Gen. 1:26-28; Deut. 22:5)

- (f) that regardless of a person's views on these matters, every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, and proper respect and dignity. Hateful and harassing speech, behavior or attitudes contrary to and defined by Scripture directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with the doctrines or practices of Faith Church. (Romans 12:9-21; Ephesians 4:29-5:2; Matt. 7:12)
- (g) that in order to preserve the function, integrity and purity of Faith Church as a local body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to Faith Church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Faith Church and/or any of its ministries in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, must agree with and abide by this Statement on Marriage & Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.
- (h) that, as a policy, Faith Church pastors shall only officiate in ceremonies that are consistent with this statement.

XVIII. Of the Sanctity of Life,

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. This affirmation does not suggest that we oppose capital punishment or just war. (Psalm 139; Genesis 9:5-6; Matthew 26:52; Romans 13:1-4)

XIX. Of the Resurrection, Return of Christ, and Related Events,

We believe in and accept the sacred Scriptures upon these subjects at their full and face value. These beliefs include:

- (a) Christ's bodily resurrection from the tomb. (Matthew 28:6, 7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; 1 Corinthians 15:4-8; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2-6; Acts 2:24, 32, 3:15, 4:2; Romans 4:25)
- (b) His ascension to the Father's right hand. (Acts 1:9, 11; Luke 24:51; Mark 16:19; Hebrews 10:12)
- (c) His present high Priesthood. (Hebrews 4:14-16; Hebrews 7:24, 25, 8:6; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1)
- (d) His future appearing in the air to receive His saints. (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17; Acts 1:11; Hebrews 9:28)

- (e) the resurrection of the righteous dead. (1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 15:52)
- (f) the physical change of the living in Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:17; Philippians 3:20, 21)
- (g) the believer's response to God's Word will be evaluated at the Judgment Seat of Christ for reward or loss. (2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; Romans 14:10; 2 Timothy 4:8; Revelation 22:2)
- (h) Christ's bodily return to the earth to reign from the throne of David. (Pre-Millennial) (Matthew 24:29-32; Luke 1:32; Isaiah 9:6, 7; Acts 2:29, 30; 1 Corinthians 15:25; Isaiah 32:1, 11:4, 5; Psalm 72:8; Revelation 20:1-4, 6)
- (i) the White Throne Judgment of the unsaved, and the new heaven and the new earth. (Revelation 20:11-15, 21:1, 2)

These articles of faith do not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe.