**CORE BELIEFS**

*With other Christians throughout the ages, we proclaim traditional Christian beliefs that are rooted in Scripture and expressed by the Apostles' Creed and other early Church affirmations. Specifically, you will find our preaching and teaching is based on the following core beliefs:*

The sole basis of our belief is the Bible, God’s word of grace. We believe all Scripture is uniquely God-inspired and is our sufficient and final authority on all matters of faith and practice. *Proverbs 30.5-6; Matthew 4.4; II Timothy 3.16-17.*

We believe that there is one true God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God created the universe and all things in it, manifesting the glory of His power, wisdom, holiness, and love. God is the Author of life and the Source of all grace, and He is working throughout history to fulfill His plan for creation. *Genesis 1.1; Psalm 139.7-10; Matthew 28.19; II Corinthians 13.14.*

We believe that human beings were created in the image of God and were designed to love and serve Him. By sinfully rebelling against God’s will and going their own way, fellowship with God was broken and the image of God was marred in them. As a result, human effort cannot achieve or earn a right relationship with God; God’s saving grace is necessary. *Genesis 1.26; Romans 1.18-23; Romans 3.23; Ephesians 2.8-9.*

Through prevenient grace, God initiates reconciliation with humanity and convicts individuals of sin, enabling a response to His outreaching love by accepting His offer of salvation by faith. *I John 4.19; John 16.5-11; John 3.16; Romans 5.8.*

Through justifying grace, God forgives and regenerates all who trust in Jesus Christ, God’s incarnate Word and virgin-born Son, who perfectly reveals God the Father to us. He lived a sinless life and died on a cross for the sins of all, taking on Himself the punishment for sin. He rose from the dead and ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He intercedes for us. Believers in Christ are adopted as children of God and begin to live a holy life through faith in Christ. *John 1.14; Colossians 1.15-20; Philippians 2.5-11; I Corinthians 15.3-8; Isaiah 53.1-6, 12.*

Through sanctifying grace, the Holy Spirit brings spiritual growth in the believer’s life and makes possible wholehearted love for God and for others. The inward witness of God’s Spirit with their spirits, along with the gracious promises of God’s Word and the fruit of the Spirit in their lives, assures believers that they are children of God. The Holy Spirit equips believers with gifts for ministry in the Church and witness in the world. *II Thessalonians 2.13; Romans 8.15-16; Ephesians 4.11-16.*

The Church is God’s community of grace, composed of all who trust in Jesus Christ as Son, Savior, and Lord. As Christ’s body, the church is visible in the world wherever believers, in faithful obedience and unity, hear the Word, receive the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, and live as Christian disciples. The Church exists to glorify God, to make disciples of Jesus Christ, and to offer transformational service to the world through the power of the Holy Spirit. *Matthew 16.18; Acts 2.46-47; I Corinthians 12.12-13; Ephesians 1.22-23.*

Grace will ultimately triumph in the return of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of all persons, the final judgment, and God’s glorious victory over sin and all evil. For followers of Christ, a new heaven and a new earth, with eternal unbroken fellowship with God, is the great promise of grace! *I Corinthians 15.24-28; II Thessalonians 1.5-10; Revelation 21.1-4.*