

Bedford Community Church: Our Statement of Faith

The Holy Scriptures

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament in every word and part (verbal and plenary) to be the complete, God-breathed (inspired) Word of God without error in its original manuscripts (inerrant and infallible); and are therefore the final authority for Christian life and faith. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament are the complete and divine revelation of God to Man and shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical historical meaning. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Matthew 4:4, 5:18; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Ephesians 3:2-5)

The Godhead

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each eternal in being, identical in nature, equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 14:10,26)

The Person and Work of Christ

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is true God and true man, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2,14; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-8) He died on the cross a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. Further, He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, where at the right hand of God the Father, He is now our High Priest and Advocate. (Acts 2:18-36; Romans 3:24-25; 1 Peter 2:24; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:3-5, Acts 1:9-10; Hebrews 9:24; 7:25; Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1-2)

The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and during this age to convict men, regenerate the believing sinner, indwell, guide, instruct and empower the believer for godly living and service. (John 16:8-11; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Eph 1:13-14)

We believe that He is the Divine teacher who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures and that He indwells all who confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. (Ephesians 1:17-18; 5:18; 1 John 2:20,27).

We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the

assembly in order that they can do the work of the ministry. We acknowledge that some spiritual gifts, such as tongues, are viewed differently by various churches and individuals. It is our practice not to encourage the use of such gifts in any public forum associated with this church. It is not our desire to judge any church or individual, based upon the use or non-use of such gifts, but rather, to provide a consistent, unified, and orderly arena for worship throughout our body. (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12 4-11, 28; Ephesians 4:7-12)

Universality of Mankind's Sin

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God; and, that man is morally corrupt, and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. The results of sin are manifested in physical death (bodily degeneration) and spiritual death (alienation from God). (Genesis 1:26-27, 3:1-24; Romans 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Ephesians 2:1-3; 4:17-19; 1 John 1:8)

Salvation

We believe that Christ's sacrifice of His life for ours (substitutionary sacrifice), satisfies God's holy anger against sin and provides intercession before the Father on our behalf. As children of God, we therefore experience a restored relationship with God (salvation) because of His unconditional love for us (grace) whereby God has declared us innocent (justification) so that we might become more like him (sanctification) until glory (glorification). We believe that only those who receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord are born of the Holy Spirit, and thus become children of God. (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Hebrews 7:25; Romans 10:9-11)

Ordinances

We believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances (remembrances in symbols) to be observed by the church during the present age. The Lord's Supper is a memorial in symbols helping us remember the death of Christ. Baptism is an identification symbol demonstrating a desire to be recognized as a follower of Jesus Christ. These symbols are not to be regarded as means of salvation. (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 18:18; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

Angels

We believe God created beings called angels and that some of these rebelled (demons) and are led by Satan. These evil angels seek to sabotage God's purposes, but their doom is certain. Faithful angels serve God and minister to His followers. (Psalm 91:11, 103:20; Mark 13:27; Hebrew 1:14; 1 Peter 1:12, 3:22; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6)

The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers

We believe that all those who through faith have truly believed in Jesus Christ are saved and since they are kept by God's power are thus secure in Christ forever. (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 8:1, 38-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; 1 Peter 1:4-5; Ephesians 1:13-14)

The Church

We believe that the universal Church of Jesus Christ is composed of all such persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit and are united together in the body of Christ of which He is the Head. (John 14:6; Colossians 1:18; Romans 12:4; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:25, 5:30)

We believe that only those who are thus members of the universal Church of Jesus Christ, as evidenced by a personal relationship with Jesus, shall be eligible for membership in the local church.

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Lord and Head of the Church, and that every local church has the right under Christ to decide and govern its own affairs. (Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18)

Second Coming of Jesus Christ

We believe in the personal, bodily, and imminent return of our Lord Jesus Christ and that this event has a vital bearing on the personal life and service of the believer. (Matthew 24:30-31; Titus 2:11-14; Philippians 1:6,10; 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17, 5:1-3)

Resurrection of the Dead

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead; of the believer to everlasting blessedness and joy with the Lord, of the unbeliever to judgment and everlasting conscious punishment. (John 11:25; Matthew 22:30-32; Luke 23:43; Romans 1:4; 1 Corinthians 15:12-57)

Human Sexuality

We believe that sexuality is a wonderful gift from God intended for the procreation of the human race, expressed intimacy, and physical and emotional pleasure. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman, and that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. Any member or employee of the church involved in any of the above behavior, or other behavior described as destructive by the scriptures, may be removed from membership or terminated from

employment. (Genesis 2:24; 19:5,13; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9, 12-20; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4; Song of Solomon; Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:13; Titus 3:10)

We believe that a Christian marriage, honoring in the eyes of God, is the joining of one man and one woman who are both believers in Jesus Christ. (Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:10; 2 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 5:22-23)

Divorce and Remarriage

We believe that God "hates" divorce and desires married partners to resolve conflict in a manner corresponding to the teachings of scripture. (Genesis 2:24; Malachi 2:16; Ephesians 4:26; Matthew 15:18-20; 1 Corinthians 7:8-11)

We believe that because of man's sinfulness and his hard-hearted nature, there may arise circumstances where divorce may be acceptable, although not desirable. These exceptions, such as adultery and abandonment, are not to be viewed as escape clauses to avoid God's judgment, but rather as a commentary on the true nature of man's heart. (Matthew 19:3-9; 1 Corinthians 7:12-16)

We believe that divorce creates consequences that may hinder an individual's ability to serve within a local church body. It is imperative, however, to evaluate the circumstances of an individual's divorce, discerning character, spiritual maturity at time of divorce and specific circumstances leading to the divorce, to determine an individual's ability to lead or govern within this church. (1 Timothy 3:2-5, 12; Titus 1:6)

We believe that remarriage is permissible following the death of a spouse. If the widowed person desires to remarry, he or she is instructed in Scripture to only marry another person who is a believer in Jesus Christ. Remarriage may also be permissible following a divorce, and such marriage, if performed by any member of this church, should be done so in consideration of the above principles regarding the circumstances of the divorce. (1 Corinthians 12:39)

Abortion

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teachings that abortions of pregnancies because of birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the mental well being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Psalm 51:5; 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1,5; Jeremiah 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

Missions

We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all people so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we must use all available means to bring the gospel first to our own community, then our region, country, and finally to the foreign nations. (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:20)

Giving

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support their local church financially. We believe that God has established the principle of regular, consistent giving based upon a percentage of our income. This giving principle is regarded by God as a basis for giving, but every Christian should consider giving other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to support the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. (Genesis 14:20; Proverbs 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7; Galatians 6:6; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17; Malachi 3:10)