**ARTICLES OF FAITH**

**I. The Holy Scriptures**

 We believe in the complete inspiration of the Holy Scriptures in their original languages, by which we understand that the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments were given by Divine inspiration. [II Timothy 3:15-17; II Peter 1:20-21] They comprise the complete and divine revelation of God to man. The Bible inerrantly reveals the will of God concerning us in all things necessary to our salvation, so that whatever is not contained in its pages is not to be required as an article of faith.

**II. The Triune God**

 We believe in one eternal, self-existent, infinite, sovereign God of the universe; that He only is God, the Creator of and Ruler over all things; holy in nature, attributes, and purpose; and that He is Triune in essential being, revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. [Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19; John 1:11; 14:16, 17, 26; II Corinthians 13:14]

**III. Jesus Christ**

 We believe in Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Triune Godhead; that He is eternally one with the Father; that He became incarnate (man, without ceasing to be God) through the intervention of the Holy Spirit and was born of the Virgin Mary, so that He possesses both the complete nature of God and the full nature of man. [Luke 1:31-35; John 1:14]

 We believe that Jesus Christ came to reveal God and redeem sinful men, that He died for our sins, that He truly rose from the dead and took again His body, together with all things necessary for the perfecting of man’s nature, and that He ascended into heaven and is there engaged in intercession for us. The provision for our salvation is fully established by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. [Matthew 28:5-6; Luke 24:36-49; Acts 1:9; I Peter 3:18; Hebrews 7:25]

**IV. The Holy Spirit**

 We believe in the Holy Spirit, Third Person of the Triune Godhead, and of one substance, majesty and glory with the Father and the Son; that He is ever present and efficiently active in and with the Church of Christ, convicting the world of sin, regenerating those who repent and believe, sanctifying believers, and guiding into all truth as it is in Jesus. [John 16:13; Acts 5:3-4; 15:8-9; Romans 8:9-11; II Corinthians 3:17; Galatians 4:6]

**V. Man**

 We believe that man was created by the direct act of God and was made in the moral and spiritual image of God, but through transgression fell and became depraved in nature and sinful in conduct. In his natural state man is sinful and separate from saving grace and therefore stands in need of salvation. [Genesis 1:26-31; 2:21-24; 6:5; Psalm 14:2-3; Romans 3:9-23]

**VI. Original Sin or Depravity**

 We believe that sin and death came into the world through the disobedience of Adam. We believe that sin is of two kinds: original and actual. [Romans 5:12]

 *Original Sin*. We believe that original sin, or inherited depravity, is the corruption of the nature of all the offspring of Adam; therefore, by nature we are fallen from original righteousness, hostile to God and His Law, and utterly unable to remedy our lost condition apart from grace. We further believe that, though its control over the believer is broken, inherited depravity continues to exist in the nature of the regenerate until the heart is fully cleansed by the filling with the Holy Spirit in entire sanctification. [I Corinthians 15:22; Romans 1:18-25; Mark 7:21-23; Psalm 53:3; Ephesians 2:1-3; Romans 5:18-21; Romans 6:6-7; I Corinthians 3:1-3]

 *Acts of Sin.* We believe that acts of sin are committed by morally responsible persons choosing to do what they know is wrong or choosing not to do what they know is required. These acts of sin are therefore not to be confused with shortcomings, infirmities, faults, mistakes, failures, or other such deviations from a standard of perfect conduct which are the residual effects of the Fall. [I John 3:4; James 4:17; Romans 8:26]

**VII. The Atonement**

 We believe that Jesus Christ, by His sufferings, by the shedding of His own blood, and by his meritorious death on the cross, made a full atonement for all human sin. This atonement is the only basis of salvation and it is sufficient for every individual of Adam’s race.

 The atonement is graciously efficacious for the salvation of children in innocency, and for believers who, by reason of accident, illness, or advanced age, have become mentally incapable of intelligent choice. For those who reach the age of accountability and are mentally capable of making a decision regarding their salvation, it is efficacious only when they repent and trust in Christ. [Luke 24:47; John 3:3, 16; Acts 3:18; 4:12; 16:30-31; Romans 5:8, 11; Ephesians 2:13-16; Hebrews 4:12]

**VIII. Free Moral Agency**

 We believe that man’s creation in Godlikeness included the ability to choose between right and wrong, and that thus he was made morally responsible. Through the fall of Adam man became depraved so that he cannot now exercise repentance and faith toward God by his own natural strength and works. [Jeremiah 17:9] But the grace of God through Jesus Christ is freely bestowed upon all men through the atonement, enabling all who will to turn from sin to righteousness, believe on Jesus Christ for pardon and cleansing from sin, and follow good works, pleasing and acceptable in His sight. [Isaiah 55:1; Jeremiah 10:23-24; John 6:44; 7:37; Revelation 22:17]

 We believe that man, though in possession of the experience of regeneration and entire sanctification, may transgress God’s law and fall from grace and apostatize through the free choice of his own will, and unless he repent of his sin, be eternally and hopelessly lost. We do believe, however, that, if such a person repent, he may be restored again to grace. [Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:26; II Peter 2:20-21]

**IX. Repentance**

 We believe that repentance is a sincere and thorough change of the mind in regard to sin, involving a knowledge of personal guilt, sorrow for and confession of sins, and voluntary turning away from sin. Repentance is demanded of all who by act or purpose become sinners against God. The Spirit of God gives to all who will repent the gracious help of penitence of heart and hope of mercy, that they may believe unto pardon and spiritual life. [Matthew 3:2; Luke 13:5; Acts 3:28; 17:30; Romans 3:23; II Corinthians 7:10]

**X. Salvation**

 We believe that God deals with committed sins of repentant men in an initial act of grace that is often called conversion or the new birth. [Matthew 18:3; Acts 3:19]

In this act of salvation God:

✞ **Forgives:** In a personal act, God pardons the offenses that the sinner has committed against Him. [Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13; I John 2:12]

✞ **Justifies**: In a legal act, God grants full pardon of all guilt and completely releases the believer from the penalty of sins committed. [Romans 4:25; 5:1; Galatians 2:16]

✞ **Regenerates**: In a creative act, God spiritually quickens and gives a distinctive spiritual life capable of faith, love, and obedience. . [II Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:1; Titus 3:5; I Peter 1:23]

✞ **Adopts**: In a familial act, God accepts the believer as His child. [Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:5]

✞ **Initially sanctifies**: In a restorative act, God separates us to Himself and begins the process of renewing our hearts and lives as we daily walk with Him. Romans 12:2, Titus 3:5, I Corinthians 6:11, I Corinthians 1:2, I Peter 1:2

**This Salvation is marked by:**

✞ - Loving God and neighbor – I John 4:7, I John 3:14, I John 4:20, I John 5:2

✞ - Walking in all the light – I John 1:7

✞ - Living above the practice of willful sin – Romans 6:1

✞ - Exhibiting the presence of the Holy Spirit – Ephesians 1:13-14, II Corinthians 1:22

**XI. Entire Sanctification**

 We believe that entire sanctification is that act of God, following conversion, by which believers are made free from original sin, through a complete consecration to God. The Spirit-filled believer is thus enabled to love God with an undivided heart.

 [I Thessalonians 3:13; 5:23-24; Titus 2:14]

 It is accomplished by the baptism with the Holy Spirit, and includes in one work of grace the cleansing of the heart from original sin, and the abiding, indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, Who empowers the believer for life and service. [Acts 1:8; 15:8-9]

 **Entire Sanctification**:

* Is provided by the blood of Jesus Christ
* Is received instantaneously by faith.
* Is preceded by total consecration
* Is witnessed to by the Holy Spirit
* Is preceded and followed by growth in grace.

[Hebrews 10:15a; 13:12; Romans 12:1-2; Eph. 3:16-17; James 4:8]

**XII. The Witness of the Spirit**

 The witness of the Spirit is an impression made upon one’s heart by the Holy Spirit in which He directly assures the believer that he has met the biblical conditions for salvation and that the work of grace has been done. We believe that the Holy Spirit thus witnesses to both the conversion and the entire sanctification of the believer. [Romans 8:16; Hebrews 10:15a; I John 5:10a]

**XIII. Growth In Grace**

 We believe that growth in grace is possible and necessary, both before and after entire sanctification, in order to maintain a right relationship with God, and that only “he that endureth to the end shall be saved.” [Matthew 10:22; II Peter 3:18

**XIV. Separation**

 We believe that all those who are saved should live in such a manner as to not bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord. God commands His people to separate themselves from all religious apostasy, worldly and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations, and to refrain from immodest and immoderate appearances. [Leviticus 19:28; Romans 12:1-2; I Corinthians 6:19-20; II Corinthians 6:14; 7:1; I Timothy 2:9; II Timothy 3:1-5; I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11]

**XV. Second Coming of Christ**

 We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will come again. The children of God are admonished to look for the personal coming of Christ with confident hope and with the assurance that, at His appearing, they will become the happy partakers of His glory in the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. [Daniel 7:13-14; Matthew 24:30; Acts 1:11; I Thessalonians 4:15-18; Revelation 22:20]

**XVI. Resurrection, Judgment, Destiny**

 We believe in the resurrection of the dead; that the bodies both of the just and of the unjust shall be raised to life and united with their spirits – "they that have done good, unto the resurrec­tion of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." [John 5:28-29; I Corinthians 15:13, 22-23]

 We believe in future judgment in which every man shall appear before God to be judged according to the choices made and deeds done in this life. [Romans 14:10; II Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:12-13]

 We believe that glorious and everlasting life is assured to all who savingly believe in, and obediently follow, Jesus Christ our Lord. We also believe that those who do not repent and who continue in their sins shall suffer eternally in hell. [Matthew 25:31-46; I Thessalonians 4:17; Luke 16:23]

**XVII. Water Baptism**

 We believe that Christian baptism is an outward act which testifies that the person baptized has trusted in Jesus Christ as his Savior. It is also a declaration that he intends to follow Christ in the obedience which produces holiness and righteousness. [Romans 6:4; Colossians 12:2; I Peter 3:21]

 Because baptism is a symbol of personal faith in Christ, young children may be baptized upon request of parents or guardians, who shall give assurance that the children show evidence of newness of life and that necessary Christian training will be provided for them.

 Baptism may be administered by sprinkling or pouring if necessary, but preferably by immersion.

**XVIII. The Lord's Supper**

 We believe that the Lord’s Supper, or Communion, was instituted by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to remind us of His sacrificial death, which provided our salvation. It is also a promise of His second coming and a symbol of the love that Christian believers should have toward one another. We welcome all who show evidence of true conversion to Christ and love for the brethren to participate in the Lord’s Supper. [Matthew 26:26-28; Luke 22:19-20; I Corinthians 11:23-26]

**XIX. Divine Healing**

 We believe in the doctrine of divine healing for the body through Jesus, the Great Physician, Who is touched by our infirmities and by Whose stripes the sick may be healed. It is the privilege of every child of God to call upon the elders to anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord and pray the prayer of faith for healing. [Isaiah 53:5; John 1:9-34; James 5:14-16]

**XX. The Church**

 We believe that God’s church is composed of all spiritually regenerated believers who have separated themselves from the world and sin, have a living faith in Christ as their personal Savior, and have their names written in the Lamb’s Book of Life in Heaven. [Luke 10:20; Acts 2:46-47]

 We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught in the New Testament, and we believe that the local church is to be autonomous, free of any external authority or control, with regards to doctrine, governance of the congregation, and carrying out of moral, ethical, and biblical obligations. [Acts 13:1-4; 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; I Corinthians 3:16; 5:4-7, 13; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11; I Peter 5:1-4]

**XXI. Creation**

 We believe that for his own glory and by his own decree the triune God created Heaven and earth and all things visible and invisible, animate and inanimate. Recognizing the deplorable implications of evolutionary teaching for human life, sexuality, dignity, and thus for society, we affirm our belief that “in six days the LORD made Heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is.” [Ex. 20:11]

**XXII. Civil Government**

 We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: (1) the home, (2) the church, and (3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His word. God has given each institution specific biblically described responsibilities and has balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. [Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 5:22-24; Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 2:13-14]

**XXIII. Human Sexuality**

 We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that any form of homosexual or lesbian behavior or practice, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God’s gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one’s gender by surgery or appearance. [Genesis 2:24; 19:5 & 13; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; I Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; I Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4]

**XXIV. Marriage**

 We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. [Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:2; I Corinthians 7:10; Ephesians 5:22-23]

 We believe that God disapproves of divorce and intends marriage to last until the physical death of one of the spouses. [Malachai 2:14-17; Matthew 19:3-12; Romans 7:1-3; I Timothy 3:2 & 12; Titus 1:6]

**XXV. Sanctity of Life**

 We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death. Thus we believe that abortion (the intentional termination of a pregnancy) and euthanasia (the willful ending of a human life in order to eliminate suffering) are contrary to the will of God. [Exodus 20:13; 23:7; Psalm 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1 & 5; Jeremiah 1:5]

**XXVI. Giving**

 We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God’s wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to financially support his local church. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully for the support of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of his tithe or offerings once the gift has been made. [Genesis. 14:20; 28:22; Proverbs 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 9:6-7; Ephesians 4:28]

**- - - Statement of Faith Clause - - -**

 This Statement of Faith is not an exhaustive statement of all that we believe or a complete description of our doctrines. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. However, the above Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of Scripture in the areas we have set forth, and therefore is binding upon all members of Faith Mission Church.