



WHAT WE TEACH

Christ Church of Elizabeth is committed to the person of our Lord Jesus Christ and to the authority of the Bible over all areas of our lives. In short, we are Christ centered and Bible based.

One of the central ministries of this local church is to proclaim Christ through biblical exposition for the purposes of exalting God, inspiring worship, converting sinners, encouraging saints, convicting of sin, and instructing all in righteousness. As such, this document summarizes the basic doctrinal content of our biblical proclamation. It is, quite literally, what we teach.

This document is distinct from our Statement of Faith in both purpose and content. Its purpose is to express the doctrines the elders and other teachers will uphold in their public presentation of the word of God. As such, its content is necessarily more detailed and particular than our Statement of Faith. It serves as a standard for our elders' beliefs but not necessarily for our other church members'.

Not everything in this document is of equal weight. Some is central and essential; some is less so. In fact, not everything in this affirmation must be believed for salvation or for membership at this church. We do ask, however, that our members highly respect these doctrinal positions and work to maintain the unity of our church.

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Adopted and revised by the elders of CCE 2025

CHRIST CHURCH OF ELIZABETH
Elizabeth, Colorado

I. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

- The Bible is God's written revelation to man, and the sixty-six books of the Christian Scriptures constitute the complete Word of God (1 Cor 2:7-14; 2 Pt 1:20-21).
- Every word of the Bible is infallible, inspired, and absolutely inerrant in the original documents (Jn 10:35; 2 Tim 3:16).
- The Bible provides the only infallible rule for faith and practice and is the final authority in the life of the church and the believer (Mt 5:18; 24:35; Jn 10:35; 16:12-13; 17:17; 1 Cor 2:13; 2 Tim 3:15-17; Hb 4:12; 2 Pt 1:20-21).
- The Word of God has a dual authorship. The Holy Spirit supernaturally guided human authors, using their individual personalities and writing styles, so that they composed and recorded God's word to man (1 Cor 7:40b, 2 Pt 1:20-21; 2 Tim 3:16).
- While there may be several applications of any given passage of Scripture, there is but one true interpretation (Jn 7:17; 16:12-15; 1 Cor 2:7-15; 1 Jn 2:20).
- Jesus Christ is the central character of the Scriptures, and every text finds its ultimate meaning and fulfillment in Him (Lk 24:25-27, 44-45; Jn 5:46).

II. GOD

- There is but one living and true God (Dt 6:4; Is 45:5-7; 1 Cor 8:4), an infinite all-knowing Spirit (Jn 4:24, 1 Chr 28:9), who is perfect in all His attributes (Dt 32:4, Mt 5:48).
- God is one in essence but exists eternally in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each equally deserving worship and obedience (Mt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14).

God the Father

- God the Father, the first person of the Trinity, is the creator of all things (Gen 1:1-31; Eph 3:9).
- His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with humankind. As Creator, He is Father to all mankind (Eph 4:6), but He is a spiritual Father only to believers (Rom 8:14; 2 Cor 6:18).
- As the only absolute and omnipotent ruler in the universe, the Father is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Ps 103:19; Rom 11:36). He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (1 Chr 29:11; Dan 4:34-35).
- The Father orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Ps 145:8-9; 1 Cor 8:6). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Eph 1:11; Is 43:13). In His sovereignty He is neither author nor approver of sin (Hab 1:13; Jn 8:38-47), and He holds humans accountable for their actions as intelligent and responsible moral creatures (1 Pt 1:17).

- The Father has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own (Eph 1:4-6). At that point in time when they are drawn to Him by His Spirit, He justifies them and adopts them into His own family (Jn 1:12; Rom 8:15; Gal 4:5; Hb 12:5-9).

God the Son

- Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, possesses all the divine excellencies, and in these He is coequal, consubstantial (having the same substance or essential nature), and coeternal with the Father (Jn 10:30; 14:9).
- The Son was the agent of creation, and through the Son all things continue in existence and operation (Jn 1:3; Col 1:15-17; Hb 1:2).
- Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity in indivisible oneness (Mic 5:2; Jn 5:23; 14:9-10; 17:11, 21; Col 2:9).
- Jesus Christ is the center of history and of all the Scriptures (Lk 24:27; Jn 5:39-40).
- In the incarnation, the Son surrendered the prerogatives of deity but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind. Rather, He accepted all the essential characteristics of humanity and so became the God-Man (Phil 2:5-8; Col 2:9). The mechanism God used to bring about the incarnation was the virgin birth (Is 7:14; Mt 1:23,25; Lk 1:26-35).
- The purposes of the incarnation were to reveal God, to redeem people, to fulfill all God's promises, and to rule over God's kingdom (Ps 2:7-9; Is 9:6-7; Jn 1:29; Phil 2:9-11; Hb 7:24-26; 1 Pt 1:18-19). Jesus Christ accomplished the redemption of His people through His bloodshed and sacrificial death on the cross. His death was voluntary, substitutionary, propitiatory (appeasing the wrath of God against sin), and redemptive. It effectively delivers all who believe from sin, death, and the wrath of God (Jn 10:15; Rom 3:24-25; 5:8; 1 Pt 2:24).
- In the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son, gave proof that He accepts the atoning work of His Son on the cross, ensured the justification of all who believe, and provided a guarantee of the future resurrection of all believers (Jn 5:26-29; 14:19; Ro 1:4; 4:25; 6:4-11; 1 Co 15:20-23).
- Jesus' resurrection was a true, bodily resurrection, not symbolic, figurative, or mythological (Mt 28:6; Lk 24:38-39).
- Following His resurrection, Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He now mediates as our Advocate and High Priest and reigns over the nations as the promised Messianic King (Acts 2:32-33; Rom 8:34; Hb 7:25; 9:24; 1 Jn 2:1; Ps 110:1; 1 Cor 15:25).
- Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth, the dead will be raised, and Christ will judge all people in righteousness (Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thes 4:13-18; Rev 20).

- Jesus Christ is the one through whom God will judge all mankind (Jn 5:22-23), including believers (2 Cor 5:10) and unbelievers (Mt 25:31-46).

God the Holy Spirit

- The Holy Spirit is a divine person, possessing all the attributes of personality and deity, including intellect (1 Cor 2:10-11), emotion (Eph 4:30), will (1 Cor 12:11), eternity (Hb 9:14), omnipresence (Ps 139:7-10), omniscience (Is 40:13-14), power (Rom 15:13), and truthfulness (Jn 16:13). In all the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son (Mt 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; 28:25-26; 1 Cor 12:4-6; 2 Cor 13:14; Jer 31:31-34 with Hb 10:15-17).
- It is the work of the Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind. Samples of the Spirit's sovereign activity include creation (Gen 1:2), the incarnation (Mt 1:18), the inspiration of Scripture (2 Pt 1:20-21), the many aspects of salvation (Jn 3:5-7).
- A unique work of the Spirit began at Pentecost when He came from the Father as promised by the Son (Jn 14:16-17; 15:26). The broad scope of His activity today includes convicting the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment; glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ; and implementing Christ's work of redeeming the lost (Jn 16:7-15; Acts 1:5; 2:4; Rom 8:26-27; 2 Cor 3:17-18; Eph 2:22).
- The Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign agent in regeneration, baptizing every believer into the body of Christ at salvation (1 Cor 12:13). The Spirit also seals believers unto the day of redemption, indwells, sanctifies, instructs, and empowers them for service (Rom 8:9-11; 2 Cor 3:6; Eph 1:13).
- Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Spirit from the moment of salvation, and it is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with the Spirit (Jn 16:13; Rom 8:9; Eph 5:18; 1 Jn 2:20,27). The evidence of being filled with the Spirit is seen in heartfelt singing, constant thankfulness, mutual submission, and natural fruit bearing (Gal 5:16-26; Eph 5:18-21).
- The Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church. He draws attention to neither Himself nor the gifts through ostentatious displays; rather, He distributes and empowers the gifts for the purposes of glorifying Christ and strengthening the church (Jn 16:13-14; 1 Cor 12:1-11; Eph 4:7-10).

III. HUMANITY

- Humankind was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness. Mankind was created free of sin, with a rational nature, volition, and moral responsibility to God (Gen 2:7,15-25; Jas 3:9).
- God created humanity for His glory (Is 43:7,21; Col 1:16; Rev 4:11).
- In Adam's disobedience to the word of God, humanity lost its innocence, incurred the penalty of death, became subject to the wrath of God, and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of seeking God or doing anything that would merit salvation (Ps 15:1-3 compare to Rom 3:9-18). With no recuperative

powers to enable the race to recover itself, humanity is hopelessly lost. Humankind's salvation is thereby wholly of God's grace through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ (Gen 2:16-17; 3:1-19; Jn 3:36; Rom 3:23-24; 6:23; 1 Cor 2:14; Eph 2:1-9; 1 Jn 1:8).

- Because of Adam's position as representative head of the race, a nature corrupted by Adam's sin has been transmitted to all people of all ages, Jesus Christ being the only exception. All people are thus sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration (Ps 14:1-3; Jer 17:9; Rom 3:9-18,23; 5:10-12).

IV. SALVATION

- Salvation is wholly of God by grace, on the basis of redemption by Jesus Christ, the merit of His shed blood, and not on the basis of human merit or works (Jn 1:12; Eph 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Pt 1:18-19).
- On the basis of the value and effectiveness of the death of Jesus Christ, the believing sinner is freed from the penalty (Ro 8:1), the power (Ro 6:6), and one day the very presence of sin (Ro 8:29).
- At the moment of conversion, God declares believing sinners righteous, gives them eternal life, and adopts them into His family (Jn 5:24; Rom 5:8-9; 2 Cor 5:14-15; 1 Pt 2:24; 3:18).

Election

- Election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He would graciously save (Rom 8:28-30; Eph 1:4-11; 2 Thes 2:13; 2 Tim 2:10; 1 Pt 1:1-2).
- Election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of people to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord (Ez 18:23,32; 33:11; Jn 3:18-19, 36; 5:40; Rom 9:22-23; 2 Thes 2:10-12; Rev 22:17).
- Nevertheless, since sovereign grace includes the means of receiving the gift of salvation (i.e., faith and repentance) as well as the gift itself, election is certain to result in what God determines. All whom God elects for salvation will come to Him in faith, and all who come in faith He will receive (Jn 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48; Jas 4:8).
- Election is not related to any initiative of sinful people, nor to God's anticipation of what they will do in their lifetime. It is solely dependent on His sovereign grace and mercy (Rom 9:15-16; Eph 1:4-7; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Pt 1:2).
- Election is not an abstract expression of impersonal sovereignty. While God is fully sovereign, He exercises His sovereignty in harmony with His other attributes, especially His omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, faithfulness, grace, and love (Rom 9:11-16). His sovereignty expresses His will in a manner totally consistent with His character (Mt 11:25-28; 2 Tim 1:9).

Regeneration

- Regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit whereby He imparts the divine nature and divine life to the elect sinner (Jn 3:3-7; Titus 3:5). It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Spirit through the instrument of the word of God (Jn 5:24), whereby the repentant sinner is enabled by the Spirit to respond in faith to the divine offer of salvation.
- At God's preappointed time and in His preappointed way, regeneration occurs when the Spirit overcomes sinners' rebellion, opens their blind eyes, breathes life into their dead spirit, and removes their heart of stone and replaces it with a heart of flesh, thus enabling them to come to God through Jesus Christ (Ez 36:26; Eph 2:1-5).
- Genuine regeneration is manifested by fruits of repentance (Lk 3:8), as demonstrated in righteous attitudes and conduct (1 Cor 6:19-20; Eph 2:10). Good works will be experienced to the extent that believers submit to the Holy Spirit in their lives through faithful obedience to the word of God (Eph 5:17-21; Phil 2:12b; Col 3:16-17; 2 Pt 1:4-10). This obedience causes believers to be increasingly conformed to the image of Jesus Christ (2 Cor 3:18), culminating in their glorification at Christ's return (Rom 8:17; 2 Pt 1:4; 1 Jn 3:2-3).

Justification

- Justification is a judicial act of God (Rom 8:33) whereby He declares righteous those who repent of their sins (Lk 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; Rom 2:4; 2 Cor 7:10; Is 55:6-7), express faith in Jesus Christ, and confess Him as their Lord (Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 12:3; 2 Cor 4:5; Phil 2:11).
- This declaration of righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of the individuals themselves (Rom 3:20; 4:6). Instead, it operates on the principle of imputation—i.e., charging the sinner's sin to Christ (Col 2:14; 1 Pt 2:24) and Christ's righteousness to the sinner (1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:21). By this means God is both "just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Rom 3:26).

Sanctification

- Every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God by justification and is therefore declared to be holy and identified as a saint. This sanctification is positional and instantaneous, and it is distinct from progressive sanctification. Positional sanctification is entirely a work of God; and it concerns believers' standing before God, not their present walk or condition (Acts 20:32; 1Cor 1:2,30; 6:11; 2 Thes 2:13; Hb 2:11; 3:1; 10:10,14; 13:12; 1 Pt 1:2).
- Progressive sanctification is the cooperative work of God and believers by which Christians are increasingly conformed to Jesus. Through the power of the gospel, faith in God's promises, obedience to the word of God, and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, believers are able to live a life of increasing holiness and conformity to the will of God (Jn 17:17, 19; Rom 6:1-22; 2 Cor 3:18; 1 Thes 4:3-4; 5:23-24).
- Progressive sanctification is not optional for the Christian. All believers should be separated from sin and devoted to Jesus Christ (2 Thes 1:11-12; Hb 12:1-17). The Christian life is a life of obedience and a continual pursuit of holiness (Rom 12:1-2; 2 Cor 7:1; Hb 12:14; Titus 2:11-14; 1 Jn 3:1-10).
- Every believer is thus engaged in continuous conflict—the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh. While God has made more than adequate provision for victory through the power of the Spirit and the gospel, the struggle against sin remains with believers all through their earthly life. Any claim to the complete removal of sin in this life is unscriptural (Gal 5:16-25; Eph 4:22-24; Phil 3:12; Col 3:9-10; 1 Pt 1:14-16; 1Jn 1:8-9; 3:5-9).

The Obedience of Faith

- Faith is a gift from God (Phil 1:29; Eph 2:8-10), and it is of such a dynamic quality that it inevitably produces works of obedience, motivated by love (Gal 5:6). Faith which produces no works is not saving faith (Jas 2:14).
- In its essence, faith looks forward expectantly to all that God promises to be and do for us in Christ (Hb 11:1). Faith's sanctifying power comes into operation when believers trust the promises of God rather than deceitful offerings of temptation (Acts 26:18; 2 Cor 3:18; 2 Thes 2:13). Faith glorifies God by demonstrating that He is more satisfying than any pleasure promised by sin.
- The life of faith and obedience is a life of joy for the believer. All people instinctively long for joy. Christians are those who, by God's grace, have discovered that God is the only source of satisfying and enduring joy (Ps 16:11; 36:7-9). The glory of God and the joy of His people thus always coincide (Is 49:3-6; Jn 13:31-32; 14:13; Ro 15:8-9; Ep 1:12; 2:4-7; 1 Pt 4:11; Rev 5:9-14).

Security

- All believers are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever.

- God will so work in His people that every one of them will inevitably persevere to the end and be saved (Jn 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom 5:9-10; 8:1,31-39; 1 Cor 1:4-8; Eph 4:30; Hb 7:25; 13:5; 1 Pt 1:5; Jude 1:24-25). Thus, no child of God will ever be lost (Rom 8:29-30).
- Perseverance in faith is the ultimate test of one's standing in Christ. Those who profess to know Christ but do not continue following Him call their original profession into question (Hb 3:14; 6:4-9; 1 Jn 2:19)
- Believers are granted personal assurance of their salvation through the testimony of the Spirit (Rom 8:16), when their lives reflect obedience to God's word (1 Jn 2:3-4), love for God's people (1 Jn 4:7-8), and a sustained commitment to the gospel (1 Cor 15:1-2) and basic Christian doctrine (Col 1:22-23). God's Word forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion for sinful living and carnality (Rom 6:15-22; 13:13-14; Gal 5:13; Titus 2:11-14).

V. THE CHURCH

- The Bible speaks of the church in exalted and instructive terms: the body of Christ (Eph 1:22-23; 1 Cor 12:12; Rom 12:4-5), the household and family of God (Eph 2:19; 1 Tim 3:15), the temple of God (Eph 2:20-22), and the bride of Christ (2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:32; Rev 19:6-8).
- All who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately baptized by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body (1 Cor 12:12-13), of which Christ is the head (Eph 1:22; 4:15; Col 1:18).
- The Scriptures acknowledge both a universal/invisible aspect and a local/visible aspect to the church (e.g., Eph 5:32, cf. 2 Cor 11:2). The vast majority of the time the term "church" is used, however, it refers to a particular group of Christians who assemble together—i.e., a local church.
- A local church is a community of people who 1) profess and give evidence that they have been saved by grace through faith in Christ and 2) have committed themselves to Christ and to one another for specific, divinely ordained purpose and functions.
- The purpose of the church is to glorify God (Eph 3:21) by proclaiming and practicing the gospel. The functions or ministries of our church which proclaim and practice the gospel include preaching; the ordinances; worship gatherings; fellowship, mutual service, and care among the members; evangelism and mercy ministry toward those outside; and the ministry of personal soul care and equipping from the elders to the members.
- Christ is the supreme authority for the church (1 Co 11:3; Ep 1:22; Col 1:18). The church's leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed by God and regulated through His word.
- The two church offices which serve under Christ and each congregation are elders (also called bishops, shepherds, overseers, and pastors; cf. Acts 20:28; Eph 4:11) and deacons, both of which have specific qualifications (1 Tim 3:1-13; 2

Tim 2:24-25; Titus 1:5-9). The office of elder and the ministry of preaching are limited to men. The office of deacon and all other ministries are open to both men and women.

- Elders are made by the Holy Spirit and recognized or received by the congregation (Acts 20:28). They oversee and lead as servants of Christ (1 Pt 5:2-4) and therefore possess His authority for directing the church's affairs (1 Tim 5:17-22; Hb 13:17). Yet their leadership must emulate Christ in His humility, gentleness, and service (1 Thes 2:3-8).
- Church membership means commitment—commitment to our church's doctrinal statement, commitment to the other members, and commitment to follow our elders as they follow Christ.
- Church members are mutually accountable to each other. Members who persist in open, unrepentant sin expose themselves to the threat of church discipline and jeopardize their good standing in the church (Mt 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Cor 5:1-13; 2 Thes 3:6-15; 1Tim 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16)
- The local church is free from any external authority or control—free to govern itself and free from interference from outside individuals or organizations. Nonetheless, true churches ought to cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith (Phil 4:10-15; Titus 1:5; 3 Jn 1:5-8).
- The Holy Spirit empowers the church members with spiritual gifts. Certain gifts are *people*—those appointed to equip the saints for the work of the ministry (Eph 4:7-12). Other gifts are *abilities*—unique skills or capacities distributed to each member according to the Spirit's pleasure for building up and serving the other members of the body (Ro 12:5-8; 1 Co 12:4-31; 1 Pt 4:10-11).
- The two church ordinances are baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- Christian baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36-39) is the solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer showing his/her faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior and his/her resultant union with Christ in death to sin and resurrection to new life (Rom 6:1-11). Baptism is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible body of Christ (Acts 2:41-42; 1 Cor 12:13).
- The Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of Christ's death and is to be observed regularly by the church until He returns. Participation in the Lord's Supper should be preceded by solemn self-examination (1 Cor 11:28-32). Whereas the elements of Communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ, the Lord's Supper is nevertheless actual communion with the risen Christ who is present in a unique way, fellowshiping with His people (1 Cor 10:16). Our church celebrates the Lord's Supper weekly.

VI. ANGELS

- Angels are created beings and are therefore not to be worshipped. Although they are a higher order of creation than man, they are created to serve God and to minister to people (Lk 2:9-14; Hb 1:6-7,14; Rev 5:11-14; 19:10; 22:8-9) .

- Satan was formerly one of the holy angels and became the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator (Is 14:12-17; Ez 28:11-19), by taking numerous angels with him in his fall (Mt 25:41; Rev 12:7-10), and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Adam and Eve (Gen 3:1-15).
- Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and people (Is 14:13-14; Mt 4:1-11; Rev 12:9-10). He is the prince of this world (Eph 2:2); but he has been resoundingly defeated by Jesus Christ through His sinless life, His atoning death, and His glorious resurrection (1 Cor 15:54-57; Col 2:15; Hb 2:14). He shall someday be eternally punished in the lake of fire (Rom 16:20; Rev 20:10).

VII. LAST THINGS (ESCHATOLOGY)

Death & Resurrection

- Physical death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness (Rev 6:9-11).
- The soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ (Lk 23:43; Phil 1:23; 2 Cor 5:8), awaiting the final resurrection when soul and body will be reunited forever (Phil 3:21; 1 Cor 15:35-44, 50-55).
- The soul of the unsaved is kept under punishment until the final resurrection (Lk 16:19-26; Rev 20:13-15), when soul and body will be reunited (Jn 5:28-29).

Culmination

- God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth, the dead will be raised, and Christ will judge all people in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous will receive their resurrected and glorified bodies, will receive their reward, and will dwell forever with the Lord.
- The elements of this earth will be dissolved (2 Pt 3:10) and replaced with a New Heaven and a New Earth in which only righteousness dwells (Eph 5:5; Rev 20:15; 21:27). The New Jerusalem will come down out of heaven (Rev 21:2) and the saints will dwell with God and enjoy fellowship with Him and with each other forever (Jn 17:3; Rev 21:1-27; 22:1-21). Our Lord Jesus Christ will deliver up the kingdom to God the Father (1 Cor 15:24-28), that in all spheres the triune God may reign forever and ever (1 Cor 15:28).

Blessed be his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory! Amen and Amen!

Psalm 72:19