



West Side Church Articles of Faith

I. The Scripture

We believe the sixty-six books of the Holy Bible are verbally inspired and the product of Spirit-controlled men. This Holy Bible is inerrant as originally written, and the complete revelation of God's perfect will, the ultimate truth for salvation, the only infallible guide of faith and practice, and the final authority in all matters to which it speaks. 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21

II. God – The Trinity

We believe in one Sovereign God, Creator and Sustainer of all things, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These are equal in every divine perfection and they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence and redemption. Deuteronomy 6:4; Daniel 4:17; Matthew 28:19

A. God the Father:

We believe in God the Father: an infinite, personal Spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of humanity, hears and answers prayer, saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ, and that He is worthy of all honor, confidence and love. Psalms 90:2; 100:5; Matthew 7:7-8; Romans 11:33-36; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Revelation 4:11

B. God the Son:

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's eternal Son, who has precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfection as God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. We believe further that He is not only fully God, but fully man, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. We also believe in His sinless life, His substitutionary atonement, His bodily resurrection from the dead, His ascension into heaven, His priestly intercession on behalf of His people, and His personal, visible return from heaven. Matthew 1:18; Luke 24:6-7; Philippians 2:5-11; Hebrews 1:3; 4:14-15; 7:25; 1 John 4:10; Revelation 19:11-16

C. God the Holy Spirit:

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; who was active in creation and who glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He is also called Counselor and convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment. He bears witness to the truth of the gospel, and is the agent of the new birth. He intercedes for believers as well as seals, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and empowers believers for godly living and service. Genesis 1:2; John 14:16-17; 16:5-15; Romans 8:9-11; 1 Corinthians 3:16

III. Angels, Satan and Demons

We believe angels are created beings and are therefore not to be worshiped. They were created to worship and serve God, and minister to the saints. We believe that Satan is a created angel who incurred the judgment of God by rebelling with the demonic host against their Creator. He introduced sin and evil to mankind in the Garden of Eden and is the enemy of God and man, the prince of this world, and the god of this age who tempts and deceives mankind, blinds unbelievers, and accuses the saints before God. He has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire.

Genesis 3:1-5; Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:15; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 6:11-12; Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 1:14; Revelation 5:11; 12:10; 20:10

IV. Humanity

We believe God created man in His own image, male and female, and that they enjoyed fellowship with Him in innocence. Man fell from this sinless state by voluntary transgression and was separated from God. In consequence all mankind are sinners by both birth and choice and are under just condemnation without defense or excuse. Genesis 1:26-28; 3:1-6; Romans 1:18; 5:12-14

V. Salvation

A. Atonement for Sin

We believe the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace, through the one mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus, God's Son. Appointed by the Father, He freely took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin. He perfectly obeyed the divine law. In His death on the cross Christ, the Lord bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, made a full and vicarious atonement for sin through a voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust. Having then risen from the dead, He ascended into heaven becoming High Priest interceding for the saints. He thus is in every way qualified to be a suitable, compassionate, and all-sufficient Savior. 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Hebrews 2:17; 4:15; 1 Peter 2:24

B. Grace in the new Creation

We believe that in order to be saved sinners must be born again. This new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus and is instantaneous when the one dead in sin is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the gracious gift of God. This spiritual regeneration is by the power of the Holy Spirit, influencing us through divine truth and securing our voluntary obedience to the gospel through faith in Jesus Christ our Savior. This new creation of God produces genuine repentance, faith and newness of life. John 3:3-7, 16; Romans 10:9; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

C. Justification

We believe the great gospel blessing which Christ secures for those who believe in Him through faith is justification which includes reconciliation with God, a pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life. This justification is not a result of any works of righteousness we have done or could do, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood through which His righteousness is credited to us by God's grace. Romans 3:28; 4:22-25; 5:1, 9; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8-9

We believe faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation. John 1:12-13.

We believe all who are truly born again are kept by God the Father for Jesus Christ.
John 10: 27, 29

D. The Righteous and the Wicked

We believe those who are saved by grace through faith are justified through the Lord Jesus Christ, are being sanctified by the Spirit of God, are truly righteous in God's sight, and are raised to eternal life. All others who continue unrepentant and in unbelief are wicked in His sight, are under the curse and are raised to eternal punishment.
Matthew 25:46; John 3:36; 1 Corinthians 6:10

VI. Christian Living

We believe the Holy Spirit works in every area of the believer's life toward holiness. This life-long maturing process called sanctification, includes obedience to the commands to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, to love others as ourselves, and to seek to lead the lost to salvation in Christ. The Holy Spirit works in our lives through personal regular prayer, the study of God's Word, fasting, worship, ministry and the close fellowship, and wise counsel of other believers. We believe the goal of sanctification is to conform believers to the image of Christ producing Christian unity, good works, the fruit of the Spirit, and the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit. Mark 12:30; Romans 8:29; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 2:10; 1 Peter 4:10; 1 John 2:3-6

VII. The Church

We believe a local church is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word without regard to race, gender, culture or socioeconomic status.

We believe its government is vested in the body of believers who compose it, and that its leaders are pastors, elders, deacons, and deaconesses whose qualifications and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures.

We believe the true mission of the church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all nations. Missionary efforts on the part of all believers rest upon the spiritual necessity of the lost for a regenerated life

We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government, and that the one and only Lord of the church is Christ through the Holy Spirit; and that it is scriptural for churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and spreading the gospel.

We believe on all matters of membership, policy, government, discipline and benevolence, the will of the local church is final, and is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical or political body. Psalms 67:1-2; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; 2:41-42; 1 Timothy 3:1-13

A. The Ordinances of Baptism & The Lord's Supper:

We believe Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water to symbolically show forth our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior, which has resulted in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life. We believe baptism is a prerequisite to the responsibilities and privileges of church membership. Acts 8:26-39

We believe the Lord's Supper is the remembrance of His death until He comes, and should always be preceded by solemn self-examination. 1 Corinthians 11:23-29

B. Cooperation and Affiliation:

We believe that each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. We recognize and sustain the obligations and privileges of mutual cooperation with others of like-minded faith. We will not affiliate with any organization, which does not hold the first five of these Articles of Faith. 1 John 4:1-3

VIII. Civil Government

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society; that civil authorities are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed, except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming King of the kings of the earth. 2 Chronicles 20:6; Acts 5:29; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-2

IX. The Last Things

We believe in the return of Christ to rapture His church from this earth, the bodily resurrection of the saints, and His personal, bodily second coming to earth when He will judge the wicked and establish His millennial reign on the throne of David, after which God will create a new heaven and earth. 1 Corinthians 15:50-56; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 19:11-16; 20:4-6