



**SOVEREIGN GRACE FAMILY CHURCH  
STATEMENT OF FAITH**

**ADOPTED January 24, 2010**

**AMENDED January 5, 2020**

## ***Statement of Faith***

### **I. One God**

*We believe in an eternal God who freely created, not out of necessity or need, but because He willed to do so, all of existence (time, space, matter) out of nothing (ex nihilo) in six literal days and that He continues to act within the creation in varying degrees to order and direct His universe in every detail. He has chosen to reveal Himself within the limits of His Word. We can know God, but we cannot know Him fully.*

*We Believe in One God, sovereign, holy, just, good, gracious, merciful, infinite, loving, longsuffering, immutable, incomprehensible, eternal, almighty, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and perfect in every aspect of His nature and character.*

*We believe in the unity (simplicity) of the Godhead, not made of parts or complex, in One God who exists eternally in Three Persons of one substance, and power: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit – all of whom are fully God, all of whom are equal.*

*We believe that God is the one and only Supreme Sovereign who has both the power and the right to do whatever He wants, whenever He wants, however He wants, to whomever He wants. We believe that He is not influenced or manipulated by anyone under His authority. He has decreed a plan from eternity and whatever He has planned will happen and whatever He has not planned will not happen. The goal of everything that happens is God's own glory.*

### **II. God the Father**

*We Believe God the Father is the Eternal and Sovereign Creator of heaven and earth. He rules over all creation in His divine providence and sovereignty, and as such, His plans and purposes decreed from all eternity cannot be thwarted. We believe that God the Father, motivated by nothing but the counsel of His own will, mercy, grace, and love, implemented a perfect plan to save a multitude of imperfect sinners from every nation, tribe, and tongue, by sending His perfect Son to perfectly accomplish their salvation.*

### **III. Jesus Christ**

*We Believe Jesus Christ is one person with two distinct natures, being fully God and fully man, perfect in nature, teaching, and obedience. We believe that Jesus Christ is God the Son, eternally begotten, not made, without beginning, being of one essence with the Godhead.*

*We believe in His virgin birth; in His sinless life; in His miracles; and that He voluntarily atoned for the sins of His people by dying on the cross as a substitute for sinners, as a sacrifice for sin, and as a propitiation of the wrath of God toward sinners, thus satisfying divine justice and accomplishing salvation for all those whom the Father has given Him.*

*We believe that Jesus Christ is the mediator of the new covenant between God and His elect and serves as our Prophet, Priest, and King. As Prophet He makes God known; as Priest He reconciles us to God through His atoning work; as King He subdues, and draws us to God and preserves us for eternity.*

*We believe that He rose bodily from the dead and ascended bodily into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God the Father where He ever lives to make intercession for His people and from where He rules over this age. We believe that someday, at the end of this age, He will return in power and glory to usher in the resurrection, the final judgment, and the eternal kingdom.*

#### **IV. The Holy Spirit**

*We Believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who unites believers to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ by perfectly applying the redemption perfectly wrought by Christ for His sheep, bringing about the new birth, and bestowing to them the gifts of saving faith and repentance from sins. By means of the Holy Spirit, Jesus baptises each believer into the spiritual body of Christ. The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, and regenerates, indwells, empowers, comforts, leads, guides, teaches, and sanctifies believers. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He seals the believer until the day of final redemption. He enlightens and empowers the believer in worship, evangelism, and service. The Holy Spirit is to be worshipped as God the Third Person of the Trinity.*

#### **V. The Holy Bible**

*We Believe and accept the Holy Bible, including the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament, to be the inspired, complete, infallible and inerrant Word of God, such that, to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God. God's Word is itself truth and, in the original manuscripts, does not affirm anything that is contrary to fact.*

*We believe its teachings are clear and able to be understood through proper exegesis and hermeneutics. The Scriptures are to be understood in their original historical, grammatical, and literary context and interpreted literally, figuratively, typologically, spiritually, theologically, and Christologically.*

*We believe the Scriptures are necessary for knowing the gospel, for maintaining spiritual life, and for knowing God's will and contain everything that God intended His people to know. The Scriptures are, therefore, the only infallibly authoritative rule and guide of all Christian life, practice, and doctrine.*

*We believe the Bible is God's revelation of the history of the universe and answers life's questions of where we came from, where we are going, and what is the purpose of life.*

#### **VI. Man**

*We believe Man was created by the special act of God, in the image of God, male and female, and is the crowning work of His creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by God with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. All mankind participated in Adam's fall from his original sinless state and is thus lost in sin and totally helpless. That historic fall brought all men under divine condemnation. Man's nature is corrupted, and he is, therefore, totally unable to please God without first being regenerated and renewed by the Holy Spirit. It's not that man cannot choose God, as though some external thing is preventing him from exercising his choice, but that he will not choose God because his desires incline him against that choice. In other words, when fallen man exercises his freedom to do what he wants to do he will always choose against God. Man sins because he is a sinner.*

*We believe the Bible teaches that men and women are of equal worth, dignity, and equally responsible before God (ontological equality). The Bible also teaches that men and women have different roles to play in society, the family, and the church. These roles do not compete but complement each other.*

*We believe that marriage is a human relationship instituted by God between one man and one woman united by covenant and sexual union for life (Genesis 2:23 – 24; Malachi 2:14 – 16; 1 Corinthians 7:39) that symbolically sets forth the relationship between God and His people (Ephesians 5:21 – 33; Isaiah 54:5; Hosea 2:14 – 23; Ezekiel 16; Jeremiah 3:20). We believe a believer is not to marry an unbeliever nor is a believer to seek a divorce (2 Corinthians 6:14 – 15; 1 Corinthians 7:10 – 13).*

## VII. The Way of Salvation

*We believe that God is sovereign in salvation. Salvation is an event and a process in which people are brought into a right relationship with God. In man's fallen state he will not, in any sense, choose to follow God so God rescues him from his rebellion by sovereignly changing his nature and re-inclining his will and heart. This act of God is an act of mercy and grace that man does not deserve, cannot earn, nor is entitled to receive. God does not do this for every person but elects those who will be saved. Those who by repentance and faith have believed in their heart that Jesus Christ is Lord are justified by God and become children of God and receive eternal life. At death, their souls depart to be with Christ in conscious blessedness, and at the second coming of Christ their bodies shall be raised, transformed into the likeness of the body of Christ Jesus, and united with their souls for all eternity.*

## VIII. Atonement

*We believe that by His perfect obedience to God and by His suffering and sacrificial death as the perfect Lamb of God, Jesus Christ obtained forgiveness of sins and the gift of perfect righteousness for all who trust in God through Christ. We believe that Christ, through living a perfect life and dying in our place as a propitiatory and substitutionary atonement for us, the just for the unjust, absorbed our punishment and appeased the wrath of God against us. We believe that Jesus was the ransom price paid to redeemed believers from their bondage to sin thus removing the power of sin over us and reconciling us to God. We believe that Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world, not effectively for all, without exception – for then all, without exception, would be saved – but rather potentially for all without distinction and for the elect definitely.*

## IX. Regeneration

*We believe that regeneration is the supernatural act of God alone, by the Holy Spirit, whereby He awakens or regenerates the dead spirit of a person, restoring the ability to respond to and have a relationship with Him. We are saved by free grace, not by free will. At one moment we are spiritually dead, and then at the next moment we have new spiritual life from God. This change in life will become evident over time in patterns of behaviour and desires that are pleasing to God.*

## X. Conversion

*We believe that conversion is our willing response to the gospel call, in which we repent of our sins and place our trust (faith) in Christ alone for salvation. God's call to repentance is both effective and irresistible.*

*We believe **repentance** is the response to the regenerating and convicting work of the Holy Spirit where sinful man is made aware of the evil of his sin. He humbles himself with godly sorrow, detesting sin, and abhorring self, with a purpose and endeavour to walk before God to please Him in all things. It is a change in disposition and attitude toward sin and Christ. You don't ever want to sin again, and you want to obey Christ. It is important to realise that mere sorrow for one's actions, or even deep remorse over one's actions, does not constitute genuine repentance unless it is accompanied by a sincere decision to forsake sin that is committed against God.*

*We believe saving **faith** is the belief in and understanding of the facts of the gospel. It includes a conviction that the facts are true, especially the fact that I am a sinner in need of salvation and that Christ alone has paid the penalty for my sin and offers salvation to me. It also includes awareness that I need to trust in Christ for salvation and that He is the only way to God, and the only means provided for my salvation. To place my trust in Christ is something done with my heart. Although I may pray a prayer of repentance and trust, it is not the prayer that saves, but God, through the blood of Christ, that saves.*

*We believe that faith and repentance are not confined to the beginning of the Christian life but are attitudes of the heart that continue throughout our lives as Christians.*

## **XI. Justification**

*We believe that justification is an instantaneous legal act of God's free grace where He pardons all our sins and declares us as righteous while still in a sinning state. God does this, not by any good work that we have done, but by imputing Christ's righteousness to the believer's account. That declaration brings us into a state of peace and favour with God and secures us forever. It is granted through faith alone in the person and work of Christ alone.*

## **XII. Adoption**

*We believe that in regeneration God gives us new spiritual life within; in justification God gives us a right legal standing before Him; and in adoption God makes us members of His family. Adoption focuses on the personal relationship that salvation gives us with God and with His people. One of the greatest privileges of our adoption is being able to speak to God and relate to Him as a good and loving Father. In adoption, the Holy Spirit leads us, and God disciplines us as His children. We are also members of God's family, the spiritual body of Christ.*

## **XIII. Sanctification**

*We believe that sanctification is the life-long process of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and like Christ in our lives. It is how we become a better Christian. Sanctification is never completed in this life. The role that we play in sanctification is both a passive one in which we depend on God to sanctify us, and an active one in which we strive to obey God and take steps that will increase our sanctification. Our most active role is to grow in our knowledge of God through the study of God's Word. The essence of sanctification is bearing the image of God. It is to rejoice in God's presence, to love Him above all else, and to live for His glory, not our own. The most basic question of human existence becomes, "How can I bring glory to God?" Bringing glory to God is found in the way we live. The awesome responsibility of sanctification is expressed in simple acts of obedience.*

## **XIV. The Perseverance of the Saints**

*We believe that those who are true converts will be kept by God's power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives, and that only those who persevere until the end have been truly born again. All Christians are moving in the same direction. Some are moving more quickly than others are and all experience temporary setbacks. Anyone who goes a different direction simply is not a Christian. God puts an ongoing holy fear of Himself into the hearts of believers that secures their abiding faithfulness to Him, perseverance through obedience, continued repentance of sin and a long-term pattern of growth.*

## **XV. Assurance**

*We believe our assurance is not in our confession, but in the promise and oath of God in that He cannot lie and has the will and power to do what He promises to do and is evident in the fruit of our changed life. Our lifestyle must change. We cannot remain in sin – it will repulse us. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit. There is evidence of a regenerating work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts as demonstrated by a sense of being led by the Holy Spirit in paths of obedience to God's will. We will also see evidence of the "fruit of the Spirit" and Godly attitude and character. Our lives should also have a positive influence on others through encouragement and proclamation of the gospel. It is also evidenced in our acceptance of sound doctrine and love for the body of Christ. We want to glorify God through obedience, holiness, prayer, evangelism, fellowship, and love for the Word of God.*

## **XVI. The Church**

*We believe that the church (ekklesia – 'called out ones') is the spiritual body of Christ composed of all those who have been justified by faith alone and have been baptised into the body of Christ with the Holy Spirit. The ekklesia is not an organisation or institution ordained by God on earth, but refers to all saved people,*

*and only saved people, as a whole or as a group of Christians in a geographical area. The body of Christ, as the “church,” is an element in a composite society, to influence culture with the gospel. It is not to join with society and become sacral in its nature.*

*We believe that God admonishes His people to assemble together regularly to worship Him through prayer, praise, and proclamation of the Word, participation in the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and for mutual edification and encouragement.*

*We believe that Christians need each other and need a good local “church” to instruct, counsel, and, if need be, correct them. We believe the local church should be a spiritual family that cares about the spiritual welfare and the physical welfare of its members. We are not to place the family above the local church or the local church above the family but to work together for the salvation of unsaved family members, their education and to stimulate love and Christ-like living that encourages and comforts and builds up the body of Christ.*

*We believe that the preaching (systematic exposition) and teaching of the Word should be central in the life of the local church. We believe that the Word of God contains principles which should order the policies, practices, and worship of the local church but does not give us all those rules. Everything the church does is to and for the glory of God.*

*We believe that God has and will gift (enable) individuals in order to help the local church fulfill its duty to God and man. We believe that miracles could still be given today, but believers need to be careful about outright acceptance of people's claims of possession of “miraculous gifts.”*

*We believe that the ultimate and ruling authority for the church comes from its Head, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Pastor and Elders are elected to their role by the congregation as stewards of Christ's headship in the church and are accountable both for the members and to the members. We believe the church is overseen by a plurality of men Elders and that Deacons are appointed to assist the Elders in ministry.*

## **XVII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

*We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer who gives a believable profession of faith in Jesus Christ. It signifies repentance from sin and rebellion against God, and signifies a commitment to becoming a disciple of Christ. It is also an emblem of our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Saviour. Jesus commanded that all disciples of Christ are to be baptised and welcomed into the fellowship of the local church. Therefore, we will only receive into membership those who have experienced believer's baptism by immersion and upon their baptism will receive them into membership.*

*We believe the Lord's Supper is an act of worship that commemorates the death of Christ; symbolically confesses trust in the substitutionary atonement; uniquely confesses belief in the unified body of Christ; and uniquely proclaims Christ until the second coming. Participation is for believers who are in right standing with God.*

## **XVIII. Worship**

*We believe that all worship is to be given to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, and to Him alone. True worship, in the New Covenant era, is not confined to any particular location or building or day of the week (Sunday is not the Christian Sabbath nor are the buildings we call churches sacred or holy). In the New Covenant era, believers are God's temple and dwelling place and are exhorted to gather with other believers to worship God together.*

## **XIX. Evangelism and the Gospel Message**

*We believe in the necessity and responsibility of evangelism. We desire to see true biblical conversion through the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our mission is not to get as many people as possible to ‘walk the aisle.’ We constantly proclaim and explain the gospel and take time with people struggling to understand*

*what it means to follow Christ. Through the proclamation of the gospel, God effectively calls the elect to himself in such a way that they respond in saving faith.*

## **XX. The Kingdom**

*We believe the Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who wilfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. The Kingdom came in the first coming of Jesus Christ and was inaugurated at the cross. Its main activity is the redemption of people through the preaching of the gospel. Christians are the embodiment of the Kingdom on earth and we wait for its full consummation at the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age. The Kingdom is defined as God's people in God's place under God's rule.*

## **XXI. New Covenant**

*We believe the **Old Covenant**, with the Law of Moses as its core, was revealed to the nation of Israel, promising earthly blessings for obedience, and threatening curses for disobedience. The purpose of the Old Covenant was never to offer eternal life, but rather to govern the life and worship of the Old Testament nation of Israel, to reveal the extent of man's depravity, and to foreshadow Christ and the New Covenant. The Old Covenant was temporary by divine design and was fulfilled in Christ, thus becoming obsolete.*

*We believe the **New Covenant**, established through the person and redemptive work of Christ, and inaugurated by the Father at the Feast of Pentecost when He gave the promise of the Holy Spirit, provides eternal blessings which are acquired by grace through faith to every person baptised into the body of Christ. The New Covenant community consists of only those indwelt by the Holy Spirit. All the former covenants find their fulfillment in Christ and the New Covenant. In the New Covenant we are no longer under the Law of Moses, but the law of Christ through the indwelling Holy Spirit. God's final words of revelation, given through Christ and His New Testament apostles and prophets, have become the authority concerning Christian conduct, and the interpretive lens through which the Old Testament must be understood and applied.*

*We believe that Israel has fulfilled its role as God's special people and that Jesus, the only faithful Israelite, brought Israel's history to its intended climax. With the start of the New Covenant and the Last Days, all believers, enjoined to their New Covenant head, have become God's eschatological people (i.e., Abraham's spiritual seed) until the end of This Age.*

## **XXII. Glorification**

*We believe that glorification is the final step in the application of redemption. When a person dies their body returns to dust, but their soul returns immediately to God – the righteous remain with God while the wicked go immediately to eternal punishment. We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and that when Christ returns, He will raise from the dead the bodies of all believers for all time who have died, and reunite them with their souls, and change the bodies of all believers who remain alive, into perfect resurrected bodies to live for eternity in the new heaven and new earth in God's presence.*

## **XXIII. The Judgement**

*We believe that at the end of the age God has appointed a day of final judgement that coincides with the second coming of Christ where all believers and unbelievers will stand before the judgement seat of Christ and hear His proclamation of their eternal destiny. The wicked will go into everlasting punishment in hell and the righteous into everlasting life to live eternally with God in new heavens and a new earth.*