

THE APOSTLE'S TEACHING:

WHAT WE BELIEVE

# WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS OF THE CHURCH?

“And they devoted themselves to *the apostle’s teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.*”

- Acts 2:42



# WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS OF THE CHURCH?

- *The Apostle's Teaching* (Doctrine/Instruction/Word):
  - Public Preaching
  - Public Reading
  - Church Polity
  - What We Believe

# STATEMENT OF FAITH

A “Statement of Faith” is a confessional document, issued by a church or churches that outlines what they believe. Individuals also have a “living” Statement of Faith, which although not necessarily written down, is always lived out in practice.



“Everyone’s a theologian.”

- R.C. Sproul

# ANCIENT CONFESIONS

“Great indeed, we *confess*, is the mystery of godliness:

*He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.”*

- 1 Timothy 3:16



# ANCIENT CONFESIONS

The Apostle's Creed / The Nicene Creed (4<sup>th</sup> century)

The Chalcedonian Creed (5<sup>th</sup> century)

Westminster Confession of Faith (17<sup>th</sup> century)

Nashville and Social Justice Statements (21<sup>st</sup> century)

## Our Statement of Faith

### Statement of Faith of the Associated Gospel Churches of Canada

[www.agcofcanada.com](http://www.agcofcanada.com)

#### The Scriptures

The Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is the complete Word of God. As originally given, it is verbally inspired, without error, and entirely trustworthy. The Bible constitutes supreme authority in all matters of faith, teaching, and behaviour. The Bible has Jesus Christ as its focus and fulfillment. *2 Peter 1:16-21, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Luke 24:27, Matthew 5:17-18*

#### God

God is the Creator and Sovereign Lord of all. The Lord our God is one God who eternally exists in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three have the same perfect nature and attributes. Each person of the Godhead is worthy of the same worship, confidence, and obedience. *Genesis 1, Psalm 8, Psalm 2, Romans 8:28-30, Deuteronomy 6:4, Matthew 28:19-20*



#### The Father





## What We Believe

### THE BIBLE

We believe that the Bible is God's Spirit-inspired Word and accept its authority over our faith and lives.

### GOD

We believe in God as revealed in the Bible: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

### THE FATHER

We believe in the Father who created and sustains all things and is our own faithful Father through Jesus Christ His Son.

### SIN

We believe that people, though created in the image of God and originally able to love and serve God perfectly, fell for Satan's lie and broke God's command. Since then, all people are sinners both by nature and choice and deserve God's righteous judgment. This original disobedience not only affected human beings, but it impacted all of life, unleashing sickness, death and devastation upon the whole of creation.

### JESUS CHRIST

We believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God. For our salvation He came to earth as a human being through a supernatural conception within the virgin Mary. As a human, Jesus experienced the difficulties and temptations of human life yet He never sinned. Through His conversations, teachings and miracles, Jesus revealed God's character and love.

Jesus died on the cross, bearing our sin, to pay for God's righteous judgement against it. After three days He rose from the dead to give us new life and has ascended back to heaven where He now reigns as the Lord of the universe.

### SALVATION

We believe that it is by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone that we receive the forgiveness of sins and are restored into a right relationship with God, gaining membership in His family as His sons and daughters.

### HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the Holy Spirit who lives within believers. The Holy Spirit sets believers free by the truth of God's Word, assures them of their salvation, nurtures them in their understanding and expression of the Christian life, and empowers them to carry on the ministry of Jesus Christ.

## OUR BELIEFS

**About the Bible:** The Holy Spirit inspired human authors to write the books of the Bible. God Himself chose every word of Scripture. The Bible is God's love letter to all of humanity and is the final authority in every issue it communicates. It is complete Truth, and we can trust it for all matters in this life and eternity.

**About God:** Scripture teaches that God created everything we can see (and even everything we can't see) out of nothing. Although it might be difficult for the human mind to comprehend, the Bible teaches that He is one, yet has existed since the beginning of time as three distinct and equal persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

**About Jesus:** Jesus Christ is God's Son and an equal of the Father. He has existed from the beginning of time, yet lived on earth during the first century A.D. Throughout His earthly life, He was completely God and completely human at the same time. After living a perfect, sinless life, Jesus offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for every human being who has ever lived by dying on a Roman cross. After three days in the grave, He defeated sin and death by rising from the grave. He then ascended to Heaven and will return to earth one day to reign as King.

**About the Holy Spirit:** The Holy Spirit is a full and equal part of the Trinity. He works in the world to make all people understand their need for Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit lives inside every follower of Jesus from the moment they decide to follow Him. The Spirit is our power source for life, ministry and spiritual growth. To tap into that power, we must continually yield to the Holy Spirit.

**About  
Jesus  
decis**

**About the Holy Spirit:** The Holy Spirit is a full and equal part of the Trinity. He works in the world to make all people understand their need for Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit lives inside every

**About  
pay t  
sepa**

follower of Jesus from the moment they decide to follow Him. The Spirit is our power source for life, ministry and spiritual growth. To tap into that power, we must continually yield to the Holy

**About  
Jesus**

Spirit.

**About Christ's Return:** God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth, the dead will be raised and Christ will judge all men in righteousness.



# OUR ESSENTIALS

## (WHAT WE BELIEVE)

### 1. TRINITY: GOD IS

We believe there is only one true God, who eternally exists as a Trinity of equally divine persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each member of the Trinity thinks, acts, feels, speaks, and relates because each is a person and not an impersonal force. Each member of the Trinity is equally God, sharing all the divine attributes. Because love and community flow from the Trinity to us through the Holy Spirit, we seek to live in loving community with God and others.

### 2. REVELATION: GOD SPEAKS

We believe that God reveals Himself to everyone everywhere through general revelation. We believe it is only by special revelation that anyone comes to a saving knowledge of God. We believe God has supremely revealed Himself through Jesus Christ, the Son of God and his incarnate Word. We believe that all of the divinely Holy Spirit inspired, inerrant, authoritative, sixty-six canonical books of the Bible reveal to us Jesus Christ. Because God is a loving Father who speaks, we seek to hear from Him and test everything by the Word of God.

### 3. CREATION: GOD MAKES

We believe that God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing, and lovingly prepared them as a home in which to worship and enjoy Him. Everything in creation and history is dependent upon God and is only good when functioning according to his intentions. God, the author and subject of history, will bring history to an end and create a new heaven and a new earth. Because God is our Creator we worship Him alone and enjoy his creation gladly.

### 4. IMAGE: GOD LOVES

We believe that in love God created the first human beings, Adam and Eve, as male and female, equal in dignity, value, and worth, in order to mirror and reflect God as an act of worship and obedience. We believe that human beings, as God's sole image bearers, are under God and over lower creation, not to be pulled up like gods or pushed down like animals. We believe that human life begins at conception and that an unborn baby is an image-bearer of God. We believe that God created marriage solely for one man and one woman, and created sex only for married couples. Because God created human life and marriage, we value the sanctity of life and godly marriage.

### 5. FALL: GOD JUDGES

We believe that God created this world in a perfect state. In Eden, Satan tempted Eve to mistrust God's word, and she was deceived. The sin committed by Adam, also called "original sin," has been imputed to all human beings except Jesus Christ. All human beings are sinners by both nature and choice. All fallen people are by nature sinners, children of wrath, and destined to death. Because we are sinners in need of a Saviour and new nature, we trust in Jesus Christ alone for new and eternal life and believe in the reality of spiritual warfare with Satan and demons.

### 6. COVENANT: GOD PURSUES

We believe that God makes and keeps his covenant promises. God's covenants reveal his loving grace and mercy, because although people deserve nothing but condemnation, God gives gracious, covenantal salvation. Because God has welcomed us into eternal covenant

[Watch](#)

[I'm New](#)

[Next Steps](#)

[Ministries](#)

[Give](#)

[Contact](#)



[Watch](#)[I'm New](#)[Next Steps](#)[Ministries](#)[Give](#)[Contact](#)

## Our Worship

We meet Sunday mornings at 10:00am, and most Sunday evenings at 6:30pm.

We invite you to visit with us so that we can

## Our History

From 1978 until now, the church services have lengthened from one hour per Sunday to around 2 hours (both services), with extra time

## The Vision

"I saw in the spirit realm a flaming cross over this area and flames spreading from rooftop to rooftop. This vision was for the area, not just

Watch

I'm New

Next Steps

Ministries

Give

Contact

## Our Worship

We meet Sunday mornings at 10:00am, and most Sunday evenings at 6:30pm.

We invite you to visit with us so that we can

## Our History

From 1978 until now, the church services have

## The Vision

"I saw in the spirit realm a flaming cross over

## Our Worship

We meet Sunday mornings at 10:00am, and most Sunday evenings at 6:30pm.

We invite you to visit with us so that we can worship together as one before the Lord. We do not necessarily have to be one in doctrine or thinking, we can disagree but still be in unity if we are one in spirit.

John 4:23-24: "Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."



# DOCTRINE AND UNITY

“Teach and urge *these things*. If anyone teaches a *different doctrine* and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and *understands nothing*.”

- 1 Timothy 6:2-4

# DOCTRINE AND UNITY

“Equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, *until we all attain to the unity of the faith* and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

- Ephesians 4:12-13





## WHAT WE BELIEVE

The following is Westmount Bible Chapel's Doctrinal Statement and summarizes what we believe and teach from the Scriptures.

### THE BIBLE

We believe and teach that the Bible is the inspired Word of God (Hebrews 1:1-2; 1 Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:19-21), inerrant, infallible, and totally free from error in the original manuscripts. The Word of God is our only authority, and constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice (Matthew 5:18, 24:35; John 10:35, 16:12-13, 17:17; 1 Corinthians 2:13; Hebrews 4:12) and it is absolutely sufficient for all matters of life and living (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

We teach the literal, grammatical-historical interpretation of Scripture which affirms the belief that the opening chapters of Genesis present creation in six literal days (Genesis 1:31; Exodus 31:17), describe the special creation of man and woman (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:5-25), and define marriage as between one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5). Scripture elsewhere dictates that any sexual activity outside of marriage is an abomination before the Lord (Exodus 20:14; Lev. 18:1-30; Matt. 5:27-32; 19:1-9; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5; 6:9-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-7).

## OUR POSITIONS

---

### **Creation.**

We believe and teach the literal interpretation of the Genesis account of creation. We believe and teach that science makes no contribution to creation since science requires observation of the event and no one was present to observe these events except God who caused the Scriptures to reflect the facts. Science also requires duplication of the creation events as verification and creation cannot be duplicated by man. We believe and teach that God spoke all of creation into existence in six 24-hour days, that He created Adam from the dust of the ground and Eve from a bone from Adam's side and that the age of the earth/creation should be measured in thousands of years, as the Bible makes consistently clear, instead of millions or billions of years. We believe and teach that creation came about out of nothing and was instant as described in Genesis 1-2, and was not part of an evolutionary process. We reject the "gap theory" of creation as well as any theories involving theistic evolution. (Genesis 1-2; Job 38-40; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 11:3)

### **Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage and Sexuality.**

We believe and teach that marriage was given by God as part of His common grace, and that it has no meaning other than as He has provided (Genesis 2:18–24). We teach that marriage is subject to the curse of the Fall but that believers, living in obedience to the Scripture and under the control of the Holy Spirit, can begin to experience peaceful, productive, and fulfilled marriage as intended by God (1 Peter 3:1-7).



# DOCTRINAL TAXONOMY

- **TIER 1:** *What one ought to believe to be called a Christian.*
- **TIER 2:** *What elders need to agree on for a healthy church.*
- **TIER 3:** *What church members ought to agree on for healthy church life.*
- **TIER 4:** *What can one overlook for the sake of unity in the local church.*

# DOCTRINAL TAXONOMY

- **TIER 1:** *The Gospel. Jesus Christ died and rose again.*
- **TIER 2:** *Church Polity. Ecclesiology (What Church is & does).*
- **TIER 3:** *Spiritual Gifts. Pneumatology (Doctrine of Holy Spirit).*
- **TIER 4:** *Eschatology (End Times).*



# DOCTRINAL TAXONOMY

- **TIER 1:** *The Gospel. Jesus Christ died and rose again.*
- **TIER 2:** *Church Polity. Ecclesiology (What Church is & does).*
- **TIER 3:** *Spiritual Gifts.*
- **TIER 4:** *Eschatology (End Times).*
  - This tier includes 'preference,' *but is not defined by it.*
  - *Décor style, program offerings, music selection, etc.*

# WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- *“Can we not all just get along? We have Jesus, right?”*
- *“I’m not a doctrine-person, give me something practical!”*
- *“Too much doctrine divides.”*



# WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- *“Can we not all just get along? We have Jesus, right?”*
- *“I’m not a doctrine-person, give me something practical!”*
- *“Too much doctrine divides.”*
- *Every decision in the local church flows from What We Believe:*
  - *How Sunday morning is put together... to who is involved with it.*
  - *How much money is spent on missions... to money spent on décor.*

QUESTIONS?