

# Orchard Avenue Baptist Church



## Doctrinal Statement & Covenant

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# DOCTRINAL STATEMENT AND COVENANT

## —DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

### (A) The Scriptures

1. We believe in the authority and sufficiency of the Holy Bible, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, as originally written; that it was verbally and plenarily inspired and is the product of Spirit-controlled men, and therefore is infallible and inerrant in all matters of which it speaks (2 Peter 1:19-21).
2. We believe the Bible to be the true center of Christian unity and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creed and opinions shall be tried (2 Timothy 3:16,17).

### (B) The True God

We believe there is one and only one living and true God, an infinite Spirit, the Maker and supreme Ruler of Heaven and Earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (Exodus 20:2,3; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Revelation 4:11).

### (C) The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He was active in the creation; that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment; that He bears witness to the truth of the gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the Agent in the new birth; that He was the dispenser of the "temporary gifts" such as knowledge, prophecy, and tongues, which have since ceased; that He dispenses the permanent gifts at the moment of salvation; that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps the believer (John 14:16,17; Matthew 28:19; Hebrews 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35; Genesis 1:1-3; John 16:8-11; Acts 5:30-32; John 3:5,6; Ephesians 1:13,14; Mark 1:8; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:49; Romans 8:14,16,26,27; 1 Corinthians 12:12,13; 1 Corinthians 13:8).

**(D) The Devil or Satan**

We believe in the reality and personality of Satan, the Devil; and that he was created by God as an angel but through pride and rebellion became the enemy of his Creator; that he became the unholy god of this age and the ruler of all the powers of darkness and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire (Matthew 4:1-11; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 20:10).

**(E) Creation**

We believe the biblical account of the creation of the physical universe, angels and man; that this account is neither allegory nor myth, but a literal historical account of the direct, immediate creative acts of God without any evolutionary process; that man was created by a direct work of God and not from previously existing forms of life; and that all men are descended from the historical Adam and Eve, first parents of the entire human race (Genesis 1-2; Colossians 1:16,17; John 1:3).

**(F) The Fall of Man**

We believe that man was created in innocence (in the image and likeness of God) under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression Adam fell from his sinless and happy state. All men sinned in him, in consequence of which all men are totally depraved, are partakers of Adam's fallen nature, and are sinners by nature and by conduct. Therefore, man is under just condemnation without defense or excuse (Genesis 3:1-6; Romans 3:10-19; 5:12,19; 1:18,32).

**(G) The Virgin Birth**

We believe that Jesus was begotten of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner, born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can be born of woman, and that He is both the Son of God and God the Son (Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35).

**(H) Salvation**

1. We believe that the salvation of sinners is divinely initiated and wholly of grace through the mediatorial offices of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who, by the appointment of the Father, voluntarily took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin, and honored the divine law by His personal obedience, thus qualifying Himself to be our Savior; that by the shedding of His blood in His death He fully satisfied the just demands of a holy and righteous God regarding sin; that His sacrifice consisted not in setting us an example by His

death as a martyr, but was a voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust, Christ the Lord bearing our sins in His own body on the tree; that having risen from the dead He is now enthroned in Heaven, and uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection, He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate and an all-sufficient Savior (Jonah 2:9; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24,25; Matthew 18:11; Philippians 2:7,8; Hebrews 2:14-17; Isaiah 53:4-7; 1 John 4:10; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

2. We believe that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation. Repentance is a change of mind and purpose toward God prompted by the Holy Spirit and is an integral part of saving faith (Ephesians 2:8; John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 1 Peter 2:24; Acts 4:12).

### **(I) Resurrection and Priesthood of Christ**

We believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ and in His ascension into Heaven, where He now sits at the right hand of the Father as our High Priest interceding for us (Matthew 28:6,7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; 1 Corinthians 15:4; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2-6, 51; Acts 1:9-11; Revelation 3:21; Hebrews 8:6; 12:2; 7:25; 1 John 2:1; Hebrews 2:17; 5:9,10).

### **(J) Grace and the New Birth**

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about by our sovereign God in a manner above our comprehension, solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, faith and newness of life (John 3:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 John 5:1; Acts 16:20-33; 2 Peter 1:4; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1,5; Colossians 3:13; John 3:8).

### **(K) Justification**

We believe that justification is that judicial act of God whereby He declares the believer righteous upon the basis of the imputed righteousness of Christ; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any work of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's shed blood (Romans 3:24; 4:5, 5:1,9; Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9; Titus 3:5).

**(L) Sanctification**

We believe that sanctification is the divine setting apart of the believer unto God accomplished in a threefold manner; first, an eternal act of God, based upon redemption in Christ, establishing the believer in a position of holiness at the moment he trusts the Savior; second, a continuing process in the saint as the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to the life; third, the final accomplishment of this process at the Lord's return (Hebrews 10:10-14; 3:1; John 17:17; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 5:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 4:3,4; 5:23,24; 1 John 3:2; Jude 24, 25; Revelation 22:11).

**(M) The Security of the Saints**

We believe that all who are truly born again are kept by God the Father for Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:6; John 10:28,29; Romans 8:35-39; Jude 1; John 6:37).

**(N) The Church**

1. We believe the church is the body of Christ, which is composed of all New Testament believers worldwide (1 Corinthians 12:12,13; Ephesians 1:22,23; 3:1-6; 4:11-12; 5:23; Colossians 1:18).
2. We believe in the local church as an organized congregation of immersed 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; that its officers are pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the scriptures. We believe the true mission of the church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all men as we have opportunity. We hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only Superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit; that it is Scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel; that each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; that on all matters of membership, of polity, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final (1 Corinthians 11:2; Acts 20:17-28; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Acts 3:41,42).

**(O) Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

1. We believe that Christian baptism is the single immersion of the believer in water to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem or identification with

the crucified, buried and risen Savior, through Whom we died to sin and rose to a new life; that baptism is to be performed under the authority of the local new testament church; and that it is prerequisite to the privileges of local church membership (Acts 8:36,38,39; John 3:23; Romans 6:3-5; Matthew 3:16; Colossians 2:12; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:41).

2. We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death until He comes, and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination by the believer (1 Corinthians 11:23-28; 1 Corinthians 10:15-22).

**(P) Separation**

We believe in obedience to the biblical commands to separate ourselves unto God from worldliness and ecclesiastical apostasy (2 Corinthians 6:14-17; 1 Thessalonians 1:9,10; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; Romans 16:17; 2 John 9-11; 1 John 2:15-17).

**(Q) Civil Government**

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed; except in those things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the only Lord of the conscience and the coming King of kings (Romans 13:1-7; Exodus 18:21,22; Acts 23:5; Matthew 22:21; Acts 5:29, 2:19,20; Daniel 3:17,18).

**(R) Israel**

We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God's eternal covenant people, that she is now dispersed because of her disobedience and rejection of Christ, and that she will be re-gathered in the Holy Land and, after the completion of the Church, will be saved as a nation at the second advent of Christ (Genesis 13:14-17; Romans 11:1-32; Ezekiel 37).

**(S) Rapture and Subsequent Events**

1. We believe in the pre-millennial return of Christ, an event which can occur at any moment, and that at that moment the dead in Christ shall be raised in glorified bodies, and the living in Christ shall be given glorified bodies without tasting death, and all shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air before the seven years of the Tribulation (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 51-54; Philippians 3:21,21; Revelation 3:10).

2. We believe that the Tribulation, which follows the Rapture of the Church, will be culminated by the revelation of Christ in power and great glory to sit upon the throne of David and to establish the millennial kingdom (Daniel 9:25-27; Matthew 24:29-31; Luke 1:30-33; Isaiah 9:6,7; 11:1-9; Acts 2:29,30; Revelation 20:1-4, 6).

**(T) The Righteous and the Wicked**

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that only those who are justified by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in His esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost in the lake of fire (Malachi 3:18; Genesis 18:23; Romans 6:17,18; 1 John 5:19; Romans 7:6; 6:23; Proverbs 14:32; Luke 16:25; Matthew 25:34-41; John 8:21; Revelation 20:14,15).

**(U) Human Sexuality.**

1. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, 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, appearance or any other means. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1: 26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)
2. We believe that the only legitimate marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23)

**(V) Family Relationships**

1. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be pastors and deacons of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)
2. We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church.

The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are an heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them, through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including Scriptural corporal correction. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:6-12; I Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; I Pet. 3:1-7)

**(W) Divorce and Remarriage.**

We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery except on the grounds of fornication. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor or deacon. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)

**(X) Abortion.**

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental well being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

**(Y) Love.**

We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward both those who are not believers and those who oppose us. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or the use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18)

**(Z) Lawsuits Between Believers.**

We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between

members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32)

**(AA) Missions.**

We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we may use all available means to go to the foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us. (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:20)

**(BB) Giving**

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support his local church financially. 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 to 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 the tithe or offering once the gift has been made. (Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17)

**SECTION 2.02—AUTHORITY OF DOCTRINAL STATEMENT**

The Doctrinal Statement does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Doctrinal Statement accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature used in the church shall be in agreement with the Doctrinal Statement.

**SECTION 2.03—COVENANT**

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and upon the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we do now in the presence of God, angels and this company, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body of Christ.

We engage therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote it's prosperity and spirituality; to sustain it's worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to

contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expense of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid behaviors and habits that hinder our Christian growth and testimony and to live for our Savior daily so as not to bring reproach upon His name.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

