

Statesboro Worship Core Beliefs

God

There is but one, true, and living God. He is eternal, self-sufficient, omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent; perfect in holiness, truth, and love; having all life, goodness, and blessedness in and of Himself. In the unity of the Godhead there are three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are the same in substance and nature, equal in power and glory—each having the whole divine essence without this essence being divided—yet distinct in ministry. This is the very foundation of our faith, life, and fellowship with God.

Genesis 1:1; Exodus 20:3; 34:5-7; Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 14:9; Matthew 16:17; 28:19; Luke 3:22; John 5:26; 14; 16-17; 2 Corinthians 13:4, 14; Ephesians 4:4-6.

Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

Son

Christ is the Son of God present from eternity past. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ, He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of the Father, where He is the one mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man until he returns to judge all men at the last day.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:1-12; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration, He

baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

The Bible

The Holy Bible consists of the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments, all written by men chosen and inspired by God. The scriptures therein are God's revelation of absolute truth to man. The Bible is inerrant and infallible in the original writings, totally sufficient, and the authoritative and normative rule and guide of all Christian life, practice, and doctrine. Scripture is to be received through the Holy Spirit as the true rule and guide for faith and practice. Whatever is not revealed in or established by the Holy Scriptures is not to be made an article of faith nor is it to be taught as essential to salvation. The Bible contains all things necessary to salvation; so that anything not in it, nor proven by it, is not to be required of any man as an article of faith or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. The Old Testament and the New Testament agree as Christ is the focus of both: the Old Testament providing a complete background for the Gospel message of the New Testament.

Psalm 19:7-11, 119:142,160, 199:140; John 5:46, 17:17; Luke 24:27, 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:14-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

Creation

God, is the creator and sustainer of everything and everyone. Through Christ, He created the universe and everything in it. He upholds, directs, and governs all things, according to His holy will, to the end for which they were created—namely, the praise of His glory. The sovereignty of God extends over all things such that there is no aspect of reality outside of His ultimate control.

Job 38:11; Psalm 33:8-11; 93:1-2; 115:3; 135:6; Proverbs 16:33; 19:21; Isaiah 46:9-11; Danial 4:34-35; Romans 11:33-36; Ephesians 1:11; Revelation 4:11.

Mankind

Mankind is the special creation of God, made in His own image. All human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. Christians are called to defend, protect, and value all human life and to love sinners even as they hate sin. God created mankind as male and female as the crowning work of His creation. These two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the image of God.

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. Marriage is the joining of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the

framework for intimate companionship and the means for procreation of the human race. God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. Any other form of sexual intimacy is sinful and offensive to God. Ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted in our church or by our ministers.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God as both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband and wife are to love each other as Christ loved the church. They have the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, to serve, and to lead the family in a Christian manner. They are to submit graciously to the other even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. They have the God-given responsibility to maintain a Christian home.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20, 9:6; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Job 31:15; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; Psalms 127; Psalms 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Jerimiah 1:5; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; 12:28-31; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 18, 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

Satan

Satan is real and is active today. Created by God as an angel, through pride he rebelled against God and was banished from heaven. He is the father of lies. The truth is not in him. In Eden he deceived man into rebelling against God and brought death into the world. Today he prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking people to devour. He is crafty and the whole world lies within his power. He leads man into sin. But the Lord is faithful and will guard us against Satan. If we Submit ourselves to God and resist Satan, he will flee from us.

Genesis 3:1-6; Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28: 13-17; John 8:44; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8.

Sin

Sin is the violation of God's commandments to love Him with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our mind and with all our strength and to love our neighbors as ourselves. God created man in His own image to know, love, enjoy, and glorify Him. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man rejected the command of God and fell from his original innocence resulting in physical and spiritual death. From that original sin mankind inherited a nature and an environment inclined toward sin and is destitute of holiness. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, men become transgressors and are under condemnation. They are at enmity with God, completely unable to please Him or be reconciled to Him through any merit of their own. Sin separates one from God, who abhors sin. God did not spare angels when they sinned but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until judgment. Likewise, He will not spare man, who He created in His image but who turned from God to sin. By his own strength, without divine grace, a person cannot overcome sin. Only the grace of God can bring man into holy fellowship with God and enable man to overcome sin and fulfill God's purpose.

Genesis 1:26-27, 2:17, 3:1-7,19; Isaiah 64:6; Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 15:19; Mark 12:30-31; John 3:19; Rom. 1:18, 3:10-19,23, 5:12-14, 8:7-8; Ephesians 2:1-3, 5:5-6.

Hell

The penalty for sin is eternal separation from God in Hell. Those who do not know God and those who do not obey his commands will pay the penalty of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. The smoke of their torment will go up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Jesus told us: “if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than to have two hands or two feet and be cast into the eternal fire.” All people without salvation face that penalty.

Mathew 13:42, 18:8; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; Revelation 14:11.

Salvation

God loves us so much that He sent his only son Jesus Christ to be the path of redemption from the penalty of sin owed by all men. Jesus is the only man to ever live a sin free life. He perfectly followed the will and direction of the Father in all respects. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father except through him. Jesus is the only access to God and salvation. There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. Good works cannot save us neither can our positions in the church or among men. Salvation from the penalty for sin is offered freely to all who repent of their sins and accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment to Him as Lord and Savior.

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. God demonstrates His love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ and there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 3:16, 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:10-23; 5:8; 6:23; 8:1,38,39; 10:9-13.

Heaven

Eternal life, the free gift of God, is provided by grace alone, through faith alone in Christ alone, for the glory of God alone. Jesus has gone to prepare a place for those who follow him. He said “In my Father’s house are many mansions. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going.” He will wipe away every tear and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things will have passed away. No eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him. Do not lay up for yourself treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Mathew 6:19-21; John 14:2-4; 1 Corinthians 2:9; Revelation 21:4

Grace

The grace of God takes multiple forms, among those forms are Preventive Grace, Justifying Grace, and Sanctifying Grace. Through grace, God regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

Preventive Grace identifies God's call to man to salvation. To answer, man must exercise his God-given free will. Preventive Grace is the precursor to Justifying Grace by how it draws and enables a person to respond to the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Preventive Grace is not to be misconstrued as providing universal salvation for all humanity. Salvation requires justification.

Genesis 12:2-3, John 6:44, Romans 5:6-8, 1 John 4:10, 19.

Justifying Grace frees repentant sinners from the burdens and penalty of their sin.

No man is accounted righteous before God through his works or merit, but repentant sinners are justified or accounted righteous before God only by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who died to atone for their sins. They are in righteousness through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, whereby they partake of the divine nature and experience newness of life. By this new birth, believers are reconciled to God and enabled to serve Him with their will and affections.

John 1:12, John 3:3, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 4:4-5, Ephesians 2:8

Sanctifying Grace is the means by which those who have been justified and reconciled to God are cleansed from sin in their thoughts, words, and deeds, and are enabled to live in accordance with God's will, and to strive for holiness without which no one will see the Lord. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit reside in and help those who follow him. Sanctification is a state of perfect love, righteousness, and true holiness which every regenerate believer may obtain through the Holy Spirit by being delivered from the power of sin, by loving God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength, and by loving one's neighbor as oneself. Through faith in Jesus Christ, this gracious gift may be received in this life and should be sought earnestly by every child of God.

Joel 2:16, John 17:17,19; 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Hebrews 13:12

Fruit of the Spirit

Good works do not remove our sins or avert divine judgment. Rather, good works, pleasing and acceptable to God, spring from a true and living faith in Christ, for through and by them faith is made evident. Jesus said every tree is known by its fruit. The Holy Spirit's presence in a person will bear fruit. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Galatians 5:22-23; James 2:17

The Church

The Christian Church is the community of all true believers under the Lordship of Christ. It is the redemptive fellowship in which the Word of God is preached by men divinely called, and the sacraments are duly administered according to Christ's own appointment. Under the discipline of the Holy Spirit, the Church exists for the maintenance of worship, the edification of believers and the redemption of the world. God graciously chooses and preserves for Himself a community united by faith who love, follow, learn from, and worship God together. A visible church of Christ is a local congregation of baptized believers associated by covenant in the fellowship of the gospel, that observes the ordinances of Christ. This body of believers proclaims the gospel,

makes disciples of all men from all nations, and prefigures Christ's kingdom by the quality of their life together and their love for one another.

Matthew 16:15-19; John 17:20-25; 1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 2:19-22, 4:11-16; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; 1 Peter 2:5, 9-10; Colossians 1:15-20

Worship

Divine worship is the duty and privilege of all persons who, in the presence of God, bow in adoration, humility and dedication. Divine worship is essential to the life of the Church, and the assembling of the people of God for such worship is necessary to Christian fellowship and spiritual growth.

John 4:23-24

The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debt to the whole world, a holy trust in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians are directed to honor the Lord with their wealth and with the first fruits of all their crops and to contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Leviticus 27:30; Proverbs 3:9; Luke 21:1-4.

Great Commission

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every Christian to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ. Jesus instructed the disciples: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Go your way; behold,

I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house.'"

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 4:19, 9:37-38, 10:5-15, 13:18-30, 37-43, 16:19, 22:9-10, 24:14, 28:16-20; Luke 10:1-18, 24:46-53, John 14:11-12, 15:7-8,16, 17:15, 20:21; Acts 1:8, 2:1-47, 8:26-40, 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

Second Coming

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 men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4, 11:9; Matthew 16:27, 18:8-9, 19:28, 24:27,30,36,44, 25:31-46, 26:64; Mark 8:38, 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48, 16:19-26, 17:22-37, 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11, 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5, 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18, 5:11; 2 Thessalonians 1:7; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7; 1 John 2:28, 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18, 3:11, 20:1-22:13.

Creeds

Statesboro Worship affirms the oldest creed of the Christian church known as the Apostles' Creed. The Early church devised this unified creed for new converts to profess at baptism. The Apostle's Creed is based upon the teachings of the Apostles and is a concise and formulated explanation of the Bible's key message. It also answers the question, "What do you believe?"

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;
And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended to the dead;
on the third day he rose again from the dead
he ascended into heaven
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic* church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen

*universal

Statement on Marriage, Gender & Sexuality

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person and is not compatible with biblical teaching.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Genesis 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4). 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 sexual immorality (including but not limited to adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matthew 15:18-20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Statesboro Worship as a local Body of Christ and to provide a biblical role model to the community, all our members and employees should conduct themselves in a manner consistent with this statement. (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22).

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

We believe that every person is of sacred worth and must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Statesboro Worship.