ARTICLE IV: DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

This statement of faith is a guide of what we teach in this assembly. It represents our conviction of what the Scriptures teach. It is for the general instruction, unity, and guidance concerning those doctrines taught in the Scriptures. These detailed statements are a challenge to each member to search the Scriptures and see if these things are true.

Basic Doctrines of the Christian Faith

- Every word of the Bible is inspired by God and without error. The Bible is the only infallible rule for faith and Christian practice.
- There is one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- God is the one supreme ruler in the universe and created everything out of nothing.
- Jesus Christ is fully God (second person of the Trinity) and fully man (the God-Man).
- God supernaturally performed many special miracles—including the virgin birth of Christ.
- Jesus Christ never sinned, nor could He have sinned.
- Christ's death on the cross was a substitutionary sacrifice for our sins.
- Jesus rose bodily from the grave, lives victorious over death, and will come again.
- The Holy Spirit is fully God (third person of the Trinity). He is a person—not a force.
- Every human being has sinned, and apart from Christ is unfit for Heaven.
- Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone.
- Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and men.
- The Holy Spirit indwells all who place their faith in Christ for salvation. There is no second work of grace, and tongues are not an evidence of salvation or filling of the Holy Spirit.
- The saved need to live a Christ-like life in the Holy Spirit's power, turning away from sin including sexual immorality, and showing love and goodness.
- Every believer is commanded to learn the word of God, to pray, to worship, to witness their faith, to fulfill family duties, and to fellowship with other believers.
- Satan, demons, and angels are real created spiritual beings.
- Heaven and Hell are real places, and each person will spend eternity in Heaven or in Hell.

A. The Scriptures

The Bible (Old & New Testaments) is inspired, without error, and divinely inspired. Holy men of God were moved by the Holy Spirit to write the words of Scripture. Inspiration extends equally to all the writings as appeared in the original manuscripts. The Bible centers on the Lord Jesus in His person and work in His first and second coming. No portion is properly read or understood until it leads to Him. All Scripture is for our instruction *(Mk. 12:26; Lk. 24:27, 44; Jn. 5:39; Acts 1:16; 17:2-3; 18:28; 26:22-23; 28:23; Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 2:13; 10;11; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20-21)*.

B. The Godhead

The Godhead eternally exists in three persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These three are one having the same nature, attributes and perfections, and worthy of the same homage, confidence and obedience *(Matt. 28:18-19; Mk. 12:29; Jn. 1:14; I Cor. 13:14; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 1:4-6)*.

C. Angels, Fallen and Unfallen

God created a host of sinless, spiritual angels. Lucifer sinned through pride and became Satan and a great company of the angels followed him in his fall, became demons and are active in his unholy purposes *(Isa. 14:12-17; Ezek. 28:11-19; 1 Tim. 3:6; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 12:3-4)*.

Satan is the originator of sin. As the adversary of God, through subtlety led our first parents into transgression, accomplishing their moral fall and subjecting all to his own power. He is the enemy of God and the people of God exalting himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped; and appears as an angel of light counterfeiting the works of God by fostering political and religious movements and systems of doctrine characterized by such as the denial of God, the person and work of Christ as the God-man substitute for salvation by grace alone *(Gen. 3:1-19; Rom. 5:12-14; 2 Cor. 4:3-4; 11:3-4, 13-15; Eph. 6:10-12; II Thess. 2:4; 2 Tim. 4:1-3; 1 John 4:1-3)*.

Satan was judged at the cross, and as a usurper, now rules as the "god of this world" *(2 Cor. 4:4)*. At the second coming of Christ, Satan will be bound and cast into the abyss during the reign of Christ. He will then be loosed for a little season and then "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone" where he "shall be tormented day and night forever and ever" *(Col. 2:15; Rev. 20:1-3, 10)*.

Some angels kept their holy estate, are before the throne of God, and sent forth as ministering spirits to those who shall be heirs of salvation *(Luke 15:10; Eph. 1:21; Heb. 1:14; Rev. 7:11-12)*. Man was made lower than the angels and, that in His incarnation, Christ took for a little time this lower place that He might lift the believer to His own sphere above the angels *(Heb. 2:6-10)*.

D. Man Created and Fallen

Man was created by God, and did not evolve from a lower life form. He was originally created in the image and likeness of God. He fell through sin and, as a consequence of his sin, became dead in trespasses and sins, and subject to the power of the devil. Adam's totally depraved human nature, has been transmitted to the entire human race, the Man Christ Jesus being excepted. Every person born into the world possesses no spark of divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably depraved apart from divine grace *(Gen. 1:26; 2:17; 6:5; Ps. 14:1-3; 51:5; Jer. 17:9; Jn. 3:6; 5:40; 6:53; Rom. 3:10-19; 8:6-7; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 Tim. 5:6; 1 Jn. 3:8)*.

E. The First Advent

As purposed by God and announced in Bible prophecies, the eternal Son of God came into this world to manifest God to men, fulfill prophecy and become the Redeemer of a lost world. To this end He was born of the virgin and received a human body and a sinless human nature *(Lk. 1:30-35; Jn. 1:18; 3:16; Heb. 4:15)*. On the human side, He became and remained a perfect man but sinless throughout his life; yet He retained His absolute deity being at the same time very God and very man *(Lk. 2:40; Jn. 1:1-2; Phil. 2:5-8)*. Further, the impeccability of Jesus Christ means He did not sin, nor could He sin.

In fulfillment of prophecy, He came first to Israel as her Messiah-King but was rejected. According to the eternal counsels of God, He gave His life as a ransom for all who believe in Him *(Jn. 1:11;*

Acts 2:22-24; I Tim. 2:6). In infinite love for the lost, He voluntarily accepted His Father's will as the divinely provided sacrificial Lamb to take away the sin of the world *(Jn. 1:29)*, bearing the holy judgments against sin which the righteousness of God imposed. His death was substitutionary in the most absolute sense—the just for the unjust—and by His death, He became the Savior of the lost *(Luke 2:11; Rom. 3:25-26; 2 Cor. 5:14; Heb. 10:5-14; 2 Pet. 3:18)*.

According to the Scriptures, He arose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He had lived and died, was seen among witnesses *(I Cor. 15:1-8)*, and His resurrection body is the pattern of that body which ultimately will be given to all believers *(John 20:20; Phil. 3:20-21)*.

On departing from the earth, He was accepted of His Father and this is full assurance to us that His redeeming work was perfectly accomplished *(Heb. 1:3)*. He became Head over all things to the church, and intercedes and advocates for the saved *(Eph. 1:22-23; Heb. 7:25; 1 Jn. 2:1)*.

F. Salvation Only Through Christ

Owing to universal death through sin, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless born again. No degree of reformation, however great, no attainments in morality, however high, no culture, however attractive, no baptism or ordinance, however administered, can help the sinner to take one step toward heaven; but a new nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word, is essential to salvation and only those thus saved are sons of God.

Our redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of Jesus Christ, who was made to be sin and a curse for us, dying in our stead; and that no repentance, no feeling, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, nor all the churches that have existed, can add to the finished work of Christ who was in His person deity and perfect and sinless humanity *(Lev. 17:11; Is. 64:6; Matt. 26:28; Jn. 2:7-18; Rom. 5:6-9; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; 6:15; Eph. 1:7; Phil. 3:4-9; Tit. 3:5; Jam. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:18-19, 23)*.

The new birth of the believer comes only through faith in Christ. Repentance is a vital part of believing, and is in no way in itself a separate and independent condition of salvation; nor are any other acts, such as confession, baptism, prayer, or faithful service to be added to believing as a condition of salvation *(John 1:12; 3:16, 18, 36; 5:24; 6:29; Acts 13:39; 16:31; Rom. 1:16-17; 3:22, 26; 4:5; 10:4; Gal. 3:22; Eph. 2:8-9)*.

G. The Extent of Salvation

When an unbeliever exercises faith in Christ, he passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life and from the old creation into the new; being justified from all things, accepted before the Father according as Christ His Son is accepted, loved as Christ is loved, having his place and portion linked to Him forever. Though the saved one may have occasion to grow in the realization of his blessings and to know a fuller measure of divine power through the yielding of his life more fully to God, he is, as soon as he is saved, in possession of every spiritual blessing and absolutely complete in Christ, and is not required by God to seek a so-called "second blessing" or a "second work of grace" *(Jn. 5:24; 17:23; Acts 13:39; Rom. 5:1; 1 Cor. 3:21-23; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 1:3; Col. 2:10; 1 Jn. 4:17; 5:11-12)*.

H. Sanctification

Sanctification is three-fold. It is already complete for every person because his position toward God is the same as Christ's position. Since the believer is in Christ, he is set apart unto God in the measure in which Christ is set apart unto God. However, the believer retains his sin nature, which cannot be eradicated in this life. Therefore, while the standing of the Christian in Christ is perfect, his present state is no more perfect that his experience in daily life. There is therefore a progressive sanctification wherein the Christian is to grow in grace and to be changed by the unhindered power of the Spirit. The child of God will yet be fully sanctified in his state as he is now sanctified in his standing in Christ when he shall see his Lord and shall be like Him *(Jn. 17:17; 2 Cor. 3:18; 7:1; Eph. 4:24; 5:25-27; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 10:10, 14; 12:10)*.

I. Eternal Security

Because of the eternal purpose of God toward the objects of His love, because of His freedom to exercise grace toward the meritless on the ground of the propitiatory blood of Christ, because of the very nature of the divine gift of eternal life, because of the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven, because of the immutability of the unchangeable covenants of God, because of the regenerating, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are saved, we and all true believers everywhere, once saved shall be kept saved forever. However, God is a holy and righteous Father and that since He cannot overlook the sins of His children, He will, when they persistently sin, chasten them and correct them in infinite love; but having undertaken to save them and keep them forever, apart from all human merit, He who cannot fail will in the end present every one of them faultless before the presence of His glory and conformed to the image of His Son *(Jn. 5:24; 10:28; 13:1; 14:16-17; 17:11; Rom. 8:29, 32-39; 1 Cor. 6:19; Heb. 7:25; 1 Jn. 2:1-2; 5:13; Jude 24)*.

J. Assurance

It is the privilege of all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, to be assured of their salvation from the very moment of salvation; and this assurance is not founded upon any fancied discovery of their own worthiness or fitness, but wholly upon the testimony of God in His written Word, exciting within His children filial love, gratitude and obedience *(Lk. 10:20; 22:32; Rom. 8;15-16; 2 Cor. 5;1, 6-8; 2 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 10:22; 1 Jn. 5:13)*.

K. The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, though omnipresent from all eternity, took up His abode in the world in a special sense on the day of Pentecost according to the divine promise, dwells in every believer and, by His baptism, unites all to Christ in one body and that He, as the indwelling One, is the source of all power and all acceptable worship and service. He never departs from the church, nor from the feeblest saint, but is ever present to testify of Christ; seeking to occupy believers with Him and not with themselves nor with their experiences. His abode in the world in this special sense will cease when Christ comes to receive His own at the completion of the church *(John 14:16-17; 18:7-15; I Cor. 6:19; Eph. 2:22; 2 Thess. 2:7)*.

In this age, based on that which the Holy Spirit is to the believer, the Holy Spirit has certain well-defined ministries, and that it is the duty of every Christian to understand what the Holy Spirit is to him, and does to him, and to be rightly adjusted to the Holy Spirit in his own life and experience. The Holy Spirit, as a special provision of God, is an anointing *(2 Cor. 1:21; 1 John 2:20-27)*, a seal *(2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:14; 4:30)*, and a down-payment *(2 Cor. 1:11; Eph. 1:14)*.

He restrains evil to the measure of the divine will; convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment; regenerates all believers; indwells all who are saved whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption; baptizes into the body of Christ all who are saved; and fills believers for power, witnessing, teaching, leading, and service to those yielded to Him and subject to His will *(Jn. 3:6; 16:7-15; Acts 1:8; Rom. 8:3-14; I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:30; 5:18; 2 Thess. 2:7; I John 2:20-27)*.

Gifts (tongues and miraculous healings) were given to authenticate the message of the 1st century church. Tongues were never a necessary sign of the Spirit's baptism or filling. The deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection *(Acts 4:8, 31; Rom. 8:23; 1 Cor. 13:8; 2 Cor. 12:12)*. In God's sovereign will, healing is available through prayer *(Jam. 5:14)*. Other non-sign gifts were given to the church. Through the exercise of these gifts, believers who learn and apply the truth of Scripture will mature spiritually. Ecstatic experiences are not Biblical or how the Holy Spirit operates today *(Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Pet. 2:2)*.

L. The Church, A Unity of Believers

Universal Aspect - Composed of all united to Jesus Christ, baptized by the same Spirit into one body (Jews or Gentiles), members one of another, responsible to keep the unity of the Spirit in peace, rising above all prejudices and bigotry, and loving one another with a pure heart *(Matt. 16:16-18; Acts 2:42-27; Rom. 12:5; I Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:20-24; 4:3-10; Col. 3:14-15)*.

The Local Church - Is God's primary means, after the family, committed to the Lord, to communicate God's truth in worship and prayer, to love one another, and to spread the gospel to the world. Assemblies may cooperate with other Christian assemblies, are to function under the Lordship of Christ, free from external controls of any religious organizations beyond the early oversight by the church founders and the influence of its own mature leaders. All believers are to publicly identify with a visible, local assembly *(Acts 2:41-47; 4:19; 5:29; Heb. 10:24-25)*.

M. The Ordinances - Baptism and Communion

Christ *(Eph. 1:22)* commanded us to baptize believers only by full immersion in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit *(Matt. 28:19)*; and to partake at His Table (Communion). The ordinances are not sacraments defined as a ritual regarded as imparting divine grace.

N. The Christian's Walk

We are called with a holy calling to walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, and so to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit that we will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. But the flesh with its fallen, Adamic nature, which in this life is never eradicated, being with us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage, needs to be kept by the Spirit constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely

manifest its presence in our lives to the dishonor of our Lord *(Rom. 6:11-13; 8:2, 4, 12-13; Gal. 5:16-23; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:1-10; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; 1 Jn. 1:4-7; 3:5-9)*.

O. The Christian's Service

Divine, enabling gifts for service are bestowed by the Spirit on all who are saved. While there is a diversity of gifts, each believer called by the same Spirit to divinely appointed service as the Spirit wills. In the apostolic church, there were certain gifted men, i.e., apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor-teachers appointed by God for the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry.

In God's ordained divine order, some men (and only men) are gifted of God to be evangelists and pastor-teachers, and that it is to the fulfilling of His will and to His eternal glory that such are sustained and encouraged in their service *(Rom. 12:6; I Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:11; I Pet. 4:10-11)*.

Wholly apart from salvation benefits which are bestowed equally upon all who believe, rewards are promised according to the faithfulness of each believer in his service for his Lord, and that these rewards will be bestowed at the judgment seat of Christ after He comes to receive His own to Himself *(1 Cor. 3:9-15; 9:18-27; 2 Cor. 5:10)*.

P. The Great Commission

The Lord Jesus commanded believers to go into the world as witnesses to make Christ known to the world *(Matt. 28:18-19; Mk. 16:15; Jn. 17:18; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:18-20; 1 Pet. 1:17; 2:11)*. The church has the privilege and responsibility to financially support those serving (missionaries, etc. *[Phil. 4:14-17; 2 Cor. 8:1-5]*).

Q. The Blessed Hope

One day the Lord will return to receive to Himself those who are alive and remain, and all who have died in Jesus. This event for which we are to constantly look is the blessed hope *(Jn. 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:51-52; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Tit. 2:11-14)*. The Lord Jesus will return as He left - physically, visibly, and all shall see Him. It is not possible to know the date, but all should live in earnest expectation of His coming. When He returns, dead and living believers will be caught up to meet Him *(1 Thess. 4:13-5:4, 1 Cor. 15:51-53)*.

Believers will appear before the judgment seat of Christ, to be judged, not for sins, but for rewards. There will be a time of judgment on the earth, in which the wrath of God will be poured out on unsaved men because of their rejection of God and His Son. God's wrath will not affect believers as the church is exempt or protected from the wrath of God *(Rom. 5:9, I Thess. 1:10, 5:9)*. Christ will come the second time in power and glory to establish His never-ending reign.

R. The Eternal State

At death, the conscious souls of believers pass into His presence to await the resurrection of the body when Christ returns. The soul and new body will be joined and be with Him forever. The conscious souls of the lost remain in condemnation and misery until the Great White Throne

judgment. The soul and a never-dying body will be cast into the Lake of Fire to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord. We reject the teaching of annihilationism *(Lk. 16:19-26; 23:42; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Rev. 20:11-15)*.

S. On Human Sexuality

Marriage was given by God *(Gen. 2:18–24)*. Marriage is subject to the curse of the Fall but believers, living in obedience to the Scripture and under the control of the Holy Spirit, can experience productive, and fulfilled marriage as intended by God *(Gen. 3:16; 1 Pet. 3:7)*. The marriages of believers are to illustrate the loving relationship of Christ and His church, with the husband loving his wife as Christ loves the church and the wife responding to her husband's loving leadership as the church responds to Christ *(Eph. 5:18–33)*. As believers' marriages are to illustrate Christ's relationship with His church, believers are ordained by God to only be joined in marriage with another believer in marriage who shares their faith and regenerate life *(2 Cor. 6:14)*.

The term "marriage" has only one meaning. Marriage sanctioned by God joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union *(Gen. 2:23–24).* This body of believers, its pastors, staff and members will not recognize any other union as a legitimate marriage.

Grace Bible Church (formerly Yellowstone Baptist Church) and staff will not perform, participate, or recognize any same sex marriage, unions, or ceremonies of any kind; and Church facilities may not be used for such purposes. Any member acknowledging contrary to this belief is in sin against God and will result in church discipline.

Marriage is an officially recognized covenant between a man and a woman. Without such a covenant, prolonged conjugal cohabitation does not establish, and is not equivalent to, marriage *(John 4:18)*. Where no such covenant exists between a cohabiting couple prior to coming to faith in Christ, family units should be preserved to the extent possible and, if otherwise appropriate, solemnization encouraged. Where a valid marriage has been established prior to coming to faith in Christ, the couple should remain married *(1 Cor. 7:24)*.

God hates divorce, permitting it only where there has been unrepentant sexual sin *(Mal. 2:14–16; Matt. 5:32, 19:9)* or desertion by an unbeliever (abuse constitutes desertion of the marriage vows) *(1 Cor. 7:12–15)*. Remarriage is permitted to a faithful believing true Christian partner. In the case of those divorced or remarried, God grants forgiveness. People who have struggled through divorce and/or remarriage are not excluded from serving. It is through their testimony that they can be a testimony to the grace and faithfulness of God. This does not provide an excuse for divorce between two believers. The goal between two believers is always reconciliation.

God commands sexual intimacy is to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other *(Heb. 13:4)*. Any sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pedophilia, pornography, any attempt to change one's sex or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God *(Lev. 18:1–30; Matt. 5:28; Rom. 1:26–29; 1 Cor. 5:1, 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1–8)*. Homosexuality is subject to God's wrath of abandonment, is a matter of choice and not inherited status, and epitomizes man's ungrateful rebellion against God *(Rom. 1:18–28).*

Every person must be afforded compassion, love, and kindness. Hateful behavior or attitudes to any individual are not in line with Scripture or our doctrine. The faithful proclamation of the Scripture, including the call to repentance, does not constitute hate speech, or hateful and harassing behavior, but is a fundamental part of the church's loving mission to the world *(Matt. 28:16–20; 2 Cor. 5:11–20; 1 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:1–2).*

God offers redemption and forgiveness to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. *(Ps. 103:11–12, 130:3–4; Is. 43:25, 44:22; Jn. 5:24; Col. 2:13–14)*. God imputes the full righteousness of Christ *(2 Cor. 5:21)* to the believing sinner. They are cleansed from the guilt of sin, set apart unto God, made holy, and justified before Him *(1 Cor. 6:9–11)*. All receive that forgiveness are a new creation in Christ *(2 Cor. 5:17)*.

T. On Creation

The literal 6-day account shows man's creation was a special, immediate, and formative acts of God and not from existing lifeforms. *Gen. 1:26,27; 2:7-9,16,17; 3:1-19)*. God made Adam and Eve in His image and humans share no common ancestry with primates. Darwinian evolution, the Day-Age Theory, the GAP Theory, or the denial of the historicity of Adam and Eve is incompatible with our doctrine. Man was created perfect in the image of God, sinned and incurred physical, spiritual, and eternal death which is separation from God. All humans are born with a sinful nature, and are sinners in thought, word, and deed. *(Gen. 3:1-6; Rom. 1:18,32; 3:10-19; 5:12,19)*

U. On Music

All music is to be guided by the Holy Spirit. The elders are responsible for determining what music is acceptable to be played or sung in each service. Solid Biblical theology is to be the basis of all our music. Music does not establish our theology, nor does entertainment. Our guidelines:

1. Enhance worship through Christ-honoring music rooted in Biblical theology.
2. Use no music that promotes bad doctrine or teaching (e.g., Hillsong or Bethel Music).
3. Coordinate with the pastor for music selections for worship service.
4. Be in submission to leadership and in substantial agreement with our doctrine.

V. On Church Usage

We are to be good stewards of all possessions entrusted to us. *1 Cor. 10:31* says, *"So, whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God."* This means even the use of church facilities falls under our doctrinal position. If there is a question as to whether the event will bring glory to God, then we will err on the side of caution and deny the request.

Church facilities may not be used for any purposes not in line with our Biblical positions. No facility usage will be approved for any individual, organization, or group in violation with our stated purposes and doctrine. All requests for building usage will go through the elders and deacons for approval. Smoking, drugs, or alcohol are not permitted on church grounds.