

## **WHAT WE BELIEVE**

Jesus said to those who would believe in Him, “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (*John 8:32*). We use three phrases from the teaching of the Apostle Paul to govern our core basic beliefs. In matters of doctrine and belief, the Church strives for three things: in essential matters, unity; in nonessentials, harmony; in all things, love (*1 Corinthians 13*). These are the essential beliefs we hold to be true:

### ***In essential beliefs we experience unity — Ephesians 4:4-6***

Ephesians 4:4-6 (NLT) says, “We are all one body, we have the same Spirit, and we have all been called to the same glorious future. There is only one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and there is only one God and Father, who is over us all and in us all and living through us all.”

### ***In non-essential beliefs we seek harmony — Romans 14:1-8***

Romans 14:1 (NIV) teaches, “Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters.” There are teachings of the faith that have strong arguments for multiple conclusions, and are not essential to understanding and accepting the saving grace of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul called these “disputable matters.” We endeavor not to allow such matters to erode the unity of the church. We believe that if the focus remains on essential truths of what it means to be a disciple of Christ and help one another mature in our faith, we will be able to celebrate unity without fighting for uniformity.

### ***In both, we embody Christ’s love — 1 Corinthians 13***

1 Corinthians 13:3<sup>b</sup> (MESSAGE) states, “So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I’m bankrupt without love.” We strive for unity in the essential beliefs and we work together to help one another mature in our understanding of teachings that we might misinterpret, but in all our dialog with one another, we endeavor to embody the love of Christ.

## **GOD**

We believe in ONE God who has eternally existed in three unified but distinct persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God (*Mt 28:19; 2 Co 13:14; 1 Tm 1:17*).

### **GOD the FATHER**

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, all wise (*Gens 1:1; Dt 8:6; Ps 24:1-2; Ps 90:2; Jn 10:29-30*).

### **GOD the SON -- JESUS CHRIST**

Jesus Christ is the Son of God—co-equal with the Father and both Creator and Savior of the world. Jesus, although tempted like all people, lived a sinless life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on the cross. His death, in God’s perfect plan, paid the price for the sins of all humanity. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He returned to Heaven where He awaits His return to earth, where He will reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords (*Is 9:6; Mt 1:22-23; Jn 1:1-5; Jn 14:10-30; Rm 5:8; 2 Co 5:21*).

### **GOD the HOLY SPIRIT**

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and Jesus Christ. He was active at creation and is present in the world today to make people aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He provides the Christian with power and direction for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance for doing what is right. Christians seek to live under the Spirit’s control by deliberately carving time into their busy schedules for two-way communication with God (prayer and Bible study), and learning how to walk in obedience with Him (*Jn 5:17; Jn 14:16-17, 26; Jn 15:5; Jn 16:7-13; Ac 1:8; 2 Co 3:17; Gl 5:25*).

## **The BIBLE**

The Bible is God's desired words of wisdom to humanity throughout the ages. This book is the truth of God and never changes or goes out of date. The Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the only basis for our beliefs. We strive to understand the heart of God and teach the Bible in clear, accurate and relevant ways because we believe it contains the power for salvation and strength for daily living. The Bible is God's Word to all people. This message of love, grace, and judgment was written by human authors under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Because it is inspired by God, it is truth without any mixture of error. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living (*Ps 119:105, 160; Pr 30:5; Mt 4:4; 2 Tm 3:16-17; 2 Pt 1:20-21*).

## **HUMAN BEINGS**

Human beings are the crowning achievement of God's handiwork. Humans are made in the spiritual image of God the Father and are created to exist forever. Although human beings have a tremendous potential for good, we are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God. This disobedience is called "sin" which leads to a separation from God, both spiritually and physically (*Genesis 3*). Since we are so inclined to sin, we cannot achieve by our own efforts the degree of perfection necessary to stand in God's holy presence (*Gn 1:27; Ps 8:3-6; Is 53:6a; Is 59:1-2; Rm 3:23; Jms 2:10*).

## **SALVATION**

Salvation is a gift from God to people whereby we are rescued from life without Christ and restored to relationship with Him. God allowed His Son Jesus literally to become sin in our place and pay the penalty for the wrong we have done. He did this because He loves us and wants us to have a full and complete life beginning now and continuing throughout eternity. Self-improvement and good works can never make up for our sinful and rebellious nature. Only by accepting God's offer of forgiveness can people be saved from sin's penalty. When we remove ourselves from the throne of our own lives, submit to God's rule, and accept Jesus in faith, we receive salvation and are born again (*Jn 1:12-14; Jn 3:3-5, 16; Jn 10:10; Jn 14:6; Rm 5:1; Rm 6:23; 2 Co 5:21; Gl 3:26; Eph 2:8-9; Ti 3:5*).

## **ETERNAL LIFE**

Death seals the eternal destiny of each person, but death is not the end of existence. There will be a resurrection where each person will face the Creator of the world to give account for his or her life lived on earth. Each person will face a judgment day that will determine the fate of each individual. Those who prepared themselves for heaven, while on earth, by trusting in Jesus Christ as the forgiver of their sins and the leader of their life, will be taken into the very presence of God for all eternity. The finished work of Jesus on the cross makes those who embrace Him acceptable in the presence of our perfect God. Those who chose to reject God's free gift of salvation during their brief time on this earth will be eternally banished from His presence into a place called Hell (*Mt 25:31-46; Jn 3:16; 1 Co 2:7-9; 1 Co 15:12-28, 35-58; 1 Th 4:15-18; Heb 9:27; 1 Jn 2:25; 1 Jn 5:11-13; Rv 20:15*).

## **ETERNAL SECURITY**

Because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the believer is secure in his or her relationship to God for all eternity. If a person is genuinely saved, that person cannot lose his or her salvation. Nothing can be done to earn salvation; it is a gift freely given through Jesus Christ. It is God's power, not human power, which keeps an individual safe (*Jn 10:28-29; Rm 8:35-39; 2 Tm 1:12; Heb 7:25; Heb 10:10, 14; 1 Pt 1:3-5*).

## **BAPTISM**

Baptism is one's public display of commitment to Jesus Christ (*Mt 28:19-20*). Baptism does not make a person a Christian, but is symbolic of death to a sinful lifestyle, burial of our past mistakes, and resurrection to a new life in Christ. Baptism at Mountain View Community Church is by immersion in accordance with Christ's command and is done after one acknowledges his or her sinful nature, asks forgiveness from God, the only One who can forgive, and invites Christ to be the leader of his or her life (*Mt 3:13-17; Ac 8:35-39; Rm 6:3-5*).

### ***The LORD'S SUPPER***

The Lord's Supper commemorates the death of our Lord Jesus Christ and the sacrifice Christ paid for our sins. The elements used are symbolic of Christ's broken body and shed blood. At Mountain View Community Church, the sharing of the bread and the cup is open to all who have received Jesus as their Savior (*Ac 2:42, 46; 1 Co 11:23-29*).

### ***The CHURCH***

Jesus is the hope of the world. The church is the body of Christ and the physical representation of Christ on the earth. In a sense, the church is the hands and feet of Jesus. The Church consists of all who believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and have accepted His gift of salvation. Christians from every continent, no matter nationality, creed, worship style, denomination title or language make up God's universal church. The local church consists of believers who unite in faith and fellowship in specific locales to love God (*the Great Commandment —Mt 22:37-40*) and to love others (*the Great Commission—Mt 28: 19-20*). A church reaches its full potential when its members commit to applying the truth of Scripture in their lives and continually grow in Christ for the purpose of reaching their world with the love of Christ. The church experiences growth when believers share God's heart for humanity and commit to sharing God's love with others (*Mt 10; Mt 16:15-19; Mt 18:15-20; Lk 6:12-16; Ac 2:42-48; Ac 14:23, 27; Ac 20:28; 1 Co 1:2; Eph 1:22-23; Eph 2:19-22*).