



Statement of Faith

GOD

We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.

THE BIBLE

We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

THE HUMAN CONDITION

We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled and renewed.

JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus—Israel's promised Messiah—was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.

THE WORK OF CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

THE CHURCH

We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.

CHRISTIAN LIVING

We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.

**CHRIST'S RETURN**

We believe in the personal, bodily and premillennial return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.

RESPONSE AND ETERNAL DESTINY

We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace. Amen.



Vision & Mission Statements

THE VISION STATEMENT OF FAITH CHURCH

The main purpose for our existence can be summarized in three words: "To worship God." We acknowledge that God has ultimate worth by living for His pleasure in all we do. The purpose of our ministry is: "To make more worshipers" by proclaiming the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ; "to make more mature worshipers" by growing together in our relationship with God; and "to make sure God does the work and gets all the glory" by relying on the Holy Spirit, by praying faithfully, and by faithfully teaching the Word of God.

May all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who love your salvation always say, "Let God be exalted!" (Psalm 70:4)

THE MISSION STATEMENT OF FAITH CHURCH

OUR MISSION is to lead those within our fellowship to a loving and intimate relationship with Jesus Christ and to actively share the Good News of Christ throughout our community and the world.

THE KEY GOALS OF FAITH CHURCH

MINISTRIES - We envision the ongoing development of a wide range of ministries designed to introduce individuals to Jesus Christ and to encourage them and guide them into a loving and intimate relationship with Him. Our desire is to meet both the spiritual and physical needs of individuals in our congregation and community, and to provide the staff, facilities, and training required to meet these needs.

We desire to be a congregation that ministers to all ages, and at all levels of spiritual maturity, including those with special needs. We envision a congregation that welcomes people from all ethnic, social, and cultural backgrounds.

LOVING RELATIONSHIPS - We envision a congregation that radiates the love of Christ. We desire to be a congregation that encourages, exhorts, forgives, and admonishes one another, demonstrating Christ's love in practical and sacrificial ways.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH - We envision a well-defined path to spiritual maturity and desire that each person knows his or her spiritual gifts and uses them for the glory of God. We will value and provide training and mentoring opportunities that equip individuals at all levels of spiritual maturity to grow in their knowledge and application of God's Word.

SPIRITUAL HEALTH - We envision a congregation that practices and displays a passionate spiritual life, both personally and corporately, that is characterized by worship, including prayer, dependence on God, and obedience to His Word. We are committed to becoming a congregation of devoted followers of Christ, whose highest priority is to honor Him in all aspects of life - both inside and outside of the church.



CORPORATE WORSHIP - We envision inspiring and joyful worship that glorifies God and engages the heart, mind, and spirit of people with God. We are committed to a proclamation of God's Word that is clear, doctrinally sound, and relevant, leading people to please God by applying His Word to every aspect of life.

We will follow the Lord's leading as we design, create, and invest in multiple worship venues to build our body, reach our community, and ultimately bring glory to God.

Our desire is to be sensitive to the various worship preferences of our congregation. In all cases, we will strive to create the most effective environments for the heartfelt worship of our Lord.

We will look to promote excellence in all we do.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT - We envision a congregation committed to identifying, preparing, and placing individuals into leadership roles. We will strive to train, encourage, and mentor staff and lay leaders at all levels of ministry.

COMMUNITY IMPACT - We envision a congregation that has high visibility within our community, and is known for its love and personal involvement in the community at large. We see this happening through a variety of opportunities, such as caring for those in need outside our congregation, opening our facilities for various events, and supporting outreach ministries within our geographical region. Through our community involvement, we desire to honor Christ and share His love.

MINISTRY IMPACT - We envision a worship center with increased seating capacity that can accommodate a larger congregation in multiple services. We anticipate additional quality education space, the ability to handle multiple ministries, and facilities that would allow us to be a regional resource center for ministries in the Lehigh Valley. Our dream is a facility that can support significant ministry to the community.

OUTREACH - We envision a church that places a strong emphasis on introducing people to Jesus Christ through personal involvement, intentional strategies, and active prayer ministry. We will be diligent in removing barriers that inhibit people from finding Christ through our church.

We envision our entire congregation personally involved in world evangelism and actively engaged in missions, especially short term trips. We will be a Body that goes, gives, and prays for the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

We desire to see the church focus in a special way on one or more regions of the world, where we can have ongoing strategic involvement.

It is our ultimate goal that 50% of our church budget be targeted for outreach ministries, including local, national, and international activities.

As part of our regional outreach, we will keep aware of opportunities to begin new congregations in places that will fulfill our vision to spread the Good News throughout the areas we serve.

It is our desire to start these new works with sufficient people and staff to provide maximum effectiveness and impact.

OUR COMMITMENT

Our staffing, budgets, and priorities will reflect our commitment to achieving our desired future.



Distinctives

In addition to our Statement of Faith, there are distinctives in our teaching, our actions, and our preferences, that this document will briefly note. It is not intended to present arguments and references for support of these positions, but rather to concisely present those that are an important part of our spiritual heritage and body life. This document will be used as a standard for leadership and teaching at Faith Church.

ABORTION AND EUTHANASIA - God is the author of life, and human beings are made in his image from the moment of conception. Therefore, we oppose the practices of abortion (taking the life of an unborn child at any time) and euthanasia (actively terminating human life). However, grace and forgiveness are available in Christ for anyone who has this experience in his or her past.

BAPTISM - We practice full immersion of believers, because we believe that form best presents the picture of burial to a sinful life and resurrection to new life. We do not baptize infants, but we do encourage parents to present their children to the Lord in a ceremony of dedication, recognizing their responsibility to raise them in the knowledge of God.

CHURCH GOVERNMENT - Faith Church holds a congregational form of government led by an Elder Board. The constitution provides for an Elder Board with the authority to establish such other organizational mechanisms as may be necessary to efficiently care for, and administer the many activities and interests of, the church. The Congregation approves the annual budget, purchase and sale of property, calling and dismissing of pastors, and the appointment of elders. These items are voted on by the membership at the annual congregational meeting and other congregational meetings as needed.

COMMUNION - We invite all believers to join us in this act of remembrance of the Lord's Supper, where the bread symbolizes His body that was given for us, and the juice of the grape symbolizes His blood that was shed to atone for our sins. We urge everyone to come to the table only after cleansing their heart of enmity or impure thoughts. This act is only for those who have received Christ personally as their Savior.

DISPENSATIONALISM - When Faith Church began, the founding members were committed to a theological viewpoint known as "dispensational theology." This view affirms that God still has a plan for national Israel. Following a great time of national spiritual revival, God will fulfill his Old Testament kingdom promises to the Jewish people in the millennial rule of Christ. This view differs from "covenant theology", that sees the promises to Israel all spiritually fulfilled in the New Testament church. We continue to lean toward the Dispensational, Premillennial, Pre-tribulational orientation. However, we acknowledge that there are biblical arguments which can be made for Covenant Theology and other tribulational perspectives, and will show respect for other views. As with any systematic theology, we must remember to view our system in light of and under the authority of Scripture and not see Scripture under the authority of the system.

ETERNAL SECURITY - We believe that a true believer can never lose his or her salvation. While people may make false professions of faith and later turn away, we believe that a true believer will persevere in the faith by God's grace.



MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE - We believe the Scriptures teach very clearly that all sexual activity is strictly reserved for marriage, a monogamous, life-long union between a man and a woman. Therefore, divorce always falls tragically short of God's good plan. We recognize, however, that God himself made provision for divorce and remarriage in the case of adultery or abandonment. Remarriage and participation in leadership roles at the church are reviewed and approved on a case by case basis on biblical grounds. As a church, we seek to come alongside those who are going through the pain of divorce, and provide care for those who are in need of healing in Christ.

PERSONAL CONDUCT - All members, especially leaders, have an obligation to serve as good examples of Christian thought and conduct. Our personal choices in matters not precisely prescribed in Scripture should always take into account our effect on others. For this reason, we expect leaders to keep a clear conscience on matters including entertainment, choice of food and drink, mode of dress, etc. We do not believe that it is our right, or that it is wise, to generate codes of conduct where God does not. We do, however, urge everyone to abstain from any activity that is likely to cause discredit to the gospel among non-believers, or lead a brother or sister to act against conscience. We also believe that we must all remain open to admonition and correction from others where such danger is present.

ROLE OF WOMEN IN MINISTRY - With respect to our essential worth as human beings and our standing in Christ, men and women are fully equal. We therefore encourage women to be fully active in service to God and to our congregation. We do hold to one exception based on scripture: we believe that in His Word, God has reserved the role of pastor/elder for qualified men. We therefore do not have women leading or teaching in a manner that bears specific elder responsibility or authority. This restriction is not a reflection on worth or capabilities, but is simply a matter of how God has chosen to set order in his church. A woman may teach mixed groups under the authority of her husband and/or the Elders.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT - We believe that, at the moment of acceptance of Jesus Christ as personal Savior, the Holy Spirit indwells the believer. We believe that the baptism of the Spirit means we have been placed in the Body of Christ. Filling of the Spirit means that we are controlled by the Spirit, which is a continuing process as we submit our wills to His. The fruit of the Spirit is the inner qualities and outward actions produced in the life of the believer who is filled with the Spirit. The gifts of the Spirit are the special abilities given to believers in order to serve God.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS - The church grows as believers exercise spiritual gifts for the glory of God and the good of the whole body. We believe Scripture teaches that every true believer is baptized by the Holy Spirit and equipped for service. We further believe that God still performs miracles today, such as healing the sick. As for the "Charismatic" issue, we do not see Scripture clearly teaching either that the "sign gifts" have ceased or, on the other hand, that every local church must practice them in every age. While we affirm our fellowship with "Charismatic" believers who hold to the fundamentals of the faith, we do not practice the "sign gifts" in our worship services or other activities under the auspices of Faith Church.