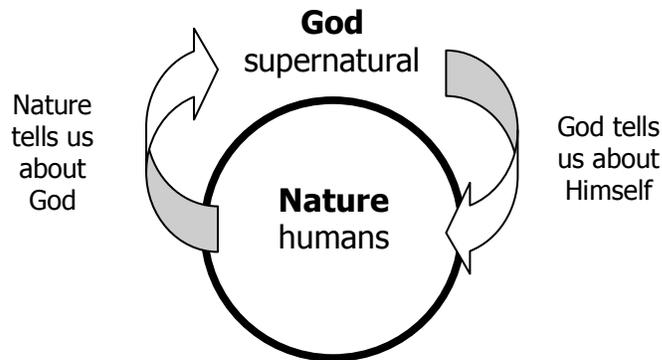


What we believe

For more information, attend our membership class “101 – Part of the Body”.

We Believe in God

We believe God created everything we call “nature” or “the universe” or “creation.”



We Believe the Bible

The Bible records how God told people about Himself. The Bible explains our relationships with God and with each other.

The Bible covers all of human history:

From the beginning						To the end
Adam & Eve	Abraham 2000 BC	Moses 1500	David 1000	Ezra 500 BC	Jesus AD 30	Christians

The Bible, literally “book,” is actually 66 books. It was written by at least **40** authors over **1,500** years. All these different authors wrote about the same God.

The Bible is God’s message. **We worship God.** We respect God’s message.

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness. *2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV)*

Our Seven Essential Beliefs

To function as Christ’s one body, the church, we need to be one, unified.

The following beliefs are essential to our relationships with God and each other.

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is **one body** and **one Spirit**—just as you were called to **one hope** when you were

called—**one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God** and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. *Ephesians 4:3-6 (NIV)*

One God and Father of all

We believe in one God who is the:

Powerful Creator (*Genesis chapter 1*) God always has been and always will be. God created everything, which we call “the universe” or “nature” or “creation.”

Loving Provider (*Genesis 2*) God gave the first humans everything they needed.

Merciful Judge (*Genesis 3*) The first humans broke God’s one rule (they sinned). Even though they deserved death, God gave them another chance. We continue to sin today, and God continues to show us mercy (*2 Peter 3:9*).

One Lord – Jesus Christ

We believe Jesus of Nazareth is God the Son. Like God, he always has been and always will be. *John 1:1-3*

We believe Jesus of Nazareth is the son of God. We believe...

- He was miraculously born to a virgin (*Luke 1:26, 1:35, 2:1-7*)
- He really died on a cross (*John 19:30, 19:34*)
- He was buried (*John 19:40-42*)
- He rose to life on the first day of the week (*John 20:1,2*)
- Many of his followers saw him alive and touched him (*John 20:11-29*)
- He went up to where God lives (*Luke 24:50-51; Acts 1:9*)
- He will return to take us to where he is (*Acts 1:10-11; John 14:2-3*)

One Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is God living within us. *John 14:16-17*

Each person who believes, repents and is baptized receives the Holy Spirit. *Acts 2:38*

The Spirit is a Counselor/Helper who teaches us what we need to know and reminds us what God and Christ have taught us. *John 14:26*

The Spirit shows each Christian how to live. The Spirit’s fruit is proof that a person has the Spirit. *Galatians 5:22-25*

One faith

We believe that we are saved by God’s grace. To be saved, each person must receive that grace. That response—trusting God and living in obedience to Him—is faith. *John 20:30-31; Gal 2:20; Eph 2:8-9; Hebrews 11:1, 6; 1 Peter 1:8-9*

We encourage each other to declare (profess, confess) faith in Jesus Christ. *Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10*

Faith is shown through our actions. Specifically, actions that show we love God and love our neighbors. *James 2:14-26; 1 John 3:16-18*

One baptism

Jesus Christ commands us, his people, to make disciples by baptizing and teaching.

Matthew 28:18-20

Baptism is an act of faith, confession and repentance. Being baptized demonstrates a change of heart and mind. *Acts 2:37-41; Romans 6:1-8; 1 Peter 3:21*

Baptism shows our faith—our obedient response to God’s grace. It is not a work (action to earn salvation). *Eph 2:8-9*

Baptize is Greek for “immerse in water.” We practice baptism of believers by full immersion. We do not baptize people into this congregation. We baptize people into Christ’s one church. **

One body – the church

The church is Christ’s body. Each Christian is a part of Christ’s body, the church. To be one body:

- We need to remain connected, and each Christian must do his or her part. *1 Cor 12:12-27*
- Christians must be unified in the essentials, and harmonious in the non-essentials. *1 Cor 1:10*
- We use the one name God gave us. We only call ourselves Christians. *Acts 11:26*

One hope

One day God will judge every human being, dead or alive. Each person will be judged by what he or she did in this life. God will decide each person’s eternity in heaven or hell. *Revelation 20:11–22:5; Romans 14:9-12; 2 Cor 5:10*

God has promised all Christians eternity with Him, and we are looking forward to it.

John 14:1-3; Romans 6:5-8; 2 Cor 5:1-9; 2 Peter 3:13

In light of this, all Christians need to be dying to sin and living for God. *Romans 6:8-14; Gal 6:7-10; 2 Peter 3:11-14*

Non-essential Beliefs

The following issues are *not* essential to salvation. These are matters of opinion. Various people have various opinions on these matters, and that’s fine.

At this church it is okay to *believe* differently on these issues. However, we have to agree how to *handle* these issues. We do not allow these issues to cause division in the church or destroy the Lord’s work.

Here is what we teach on each issue, and how we handle each issue.

Spiritual gifts

We do not believe that this subject constitutes a salvation issue. You can believe some, all, or none of the gifts are for today. You can be wrong on this issue, and still be a Christian.

We do believe God does miracles, answers prayers, and gives people gifts beyond their understanding. However, we do *not* require anyone to do a miracle as proof of their salvation.

Speaking in tongues

This particular spiritual gift causes sharp contention between believers. We do not exercise the gift of tongues, either in large groups or small groups. Please do not encourage it or allow it to divide Christians.

Eternal security

The idea that grace cannot be lost is a way to explain terms in the Bible such as *election* and *predestination* (*Romans 8:29-30*). The explanation may be based on irresistible grace, irrevocable election, or a combination of the two.

One thing is sure: Christians are identified by their growth that produces spiritual fruit. This growth is what we strive to encourage here. Arguing about eternal security won't help us grow.

The end times

We agree as a church that there will be a literal return of Christ and a Judgment Day when each person will enter heaven or hell for eternity (see *One Hope*, above).

When will this happen? We have members with different views. Some are pre-millennial, others are post-millennial, while others are a-millennial. These details are also a non-salvation issue.