

STATEMENT OF FAITH AND COVENANT

An Affirmation of Our Faith

1. The Word of God

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:20,21; Mark 13:31; Acts 20:32

2. The Trinity

We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons, that these are equal in every divine perfection, and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence and redemption.

Genesis 1:1,2; Genesis 1:26; John 1:1-3; John 5:18; Ephesians 4:4-6

3. God the Father

We believe in God, the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

Luke 10:22; John 3:16,17; 2 Timothy 2:5,6; 1 Peter 1:3

4. Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and personal visible return to earth.

Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; John 1:1-3; John 1:14; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 9:28;

Luke 24:1-7

5. The Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ, and that He is an abiding helper, teacher and guide.

John 14:16,17; John 14:26; John 16:7-14; Romans 8:26,27; Romans 8:13-16; Galatians 5:22-26; Ephesians 1:13,14

6. Regeneration

We believe that all men are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe that those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

Genesis 1:26; Genesis 5:2; Genesis 2:17; Genesis 3; John 5:24; John 8:12; John 10:25-29;

Revelation 20:15; Revelation 20:1-8; Jeremiah 17:9; James 1:14; Romans 5:19; Proverbs 28:13; Isaiah 1 John 1:9; John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:17

7. The Church

We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, work and fellowship. We believe that God has laid upon the members of the local church the primary task of giving the gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world.

Ephesians 2:19-22; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:23-25

8. Christian Conduct

We believe that a Christian should live for the glory of God and the well-being of his fellowmen; that his conduct should be blameless before the world; that he should be a faithful steward of his possessions; and that he should seek to realize for himself and others the full stature of maturity in Christ.

Colossians 3:17; Romans 12:1-3; 1 John 2:3-6; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15; Colossians 1:9,10; Philippians 4:5-8; Titus 2:11,12

9. The Ordinances

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water into the name of the triune God. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Matthew 3:13-17

10. Religious Liberty

We believe that every human being has direct relations with God, and is responsible to God alone in all matters of faith; that each church is independent and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority; that therefore church and State must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from dictation or patronage of the other.

1 Timothy 2:5; Romans 14:12; Matthew 22:17-21

11. Church Cooperation

We believe that local churches can best promote the cause of Jesus Christ by cooperating with one another in a denominational organization. Such an organization, whether a regional or district conference, exists and functions by the will of the churches. Cooperation in a conference is voluntary and may be terminated at any time. Churches may likewise cooperate with inter-denominational fellowships on a voluntary independent basis.

Acts 15:36,41

12: The Last Things

We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal felicity of the righteous, and the endless suffering of the wicked.

Matthew 16:27; Mark 14:62; John 14:1-4; Acts 1:11; Philippians 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18;

1 Corinthians 4:5; 2 Thessalonians 1:7b-10; Revelation 20:4-6; Revelation 20:11-15

CHURCH COVENANT

"Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ, and,

"We promise, therefore, by the aid of the Divine spirit, to work together in Christian love, remembering each other in prayer, and aiding each other in sickness and distress. We further promise to be sympathetic in attitude, courteous in speech, slow to take offense, and always ready for reconciliation.

"We also promise to work and pray faithfully for the advancement of this church in knowledge, wisdom and holiness, and to attend regularly its worship, participate in its ordinances, and abide by its doctrines. We moreover promise to use willingly the talents we have for its program, and to contribute cheerfully to the expenses of its local ministry and its commitments in the worldwide spread of the Gospel.

"We promise that, if we move from this community, we will unite as soon as possible with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word."

CHURCH CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Admission

A person desiring to unite with this church who is in agreement with the Statement of Faith and Covenant of this church shall meet with the Deacon Committee after consultation with a pastor of this church. In every case, candidates for membership shall give satisfactory evidence of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord, and by baptism by immersion. Church membership will be granted upon recommendation of the Deacon Committee and a majority vote of the members present at a church business meeting.

Section 2. Responsibilities and Rights

a. Every member of the church shall strive to attend its meetings, to work for its growth, to fittingly represent his Lord and church in the community, and to contribute regularly and according to his ability.

b. Members shall strive with God's help to keep their church obligations. They shall hold their pastors in esteem and pray for them as well as other officers of the church and work with them in carrying out the program of the church. They shall endeavor to preserve the unity of the church and, if at any time they find themselves opposed to either this church's Statement of Faith and Covenant or other fundamental doctrines, they shall not seek to disrupt its fellowship but shall quietly withdraw from its membership.

c. Every member is expected to cultivate and cherish Christian love for each other; to visit and sympathize with one another in afflictions; to pray for each other; to regard each other's reputation tenderly; and to strive by all means to help one another grow in faith and spiritual maturity. Further, it is the duty of every member to speak and act against every evil practice; to live in a kind, peaceful, and neighborly manner; to act compassionately and charitably to those within the church congregation and the wider community; to set an example of honesty and integrity; and, as opportunity and ability may enable, to recommend the gospel of Jesus Christ and testify of its grace and power.

d. All active members in good standing who have attained the age of eighteen shall be eligible to vote. Members of this church have no property rights and upon termination of membership shall be entitled to no interest in the assets.

Section 3. Removal of Members

a. Any member desiring to withdraw his membership shall be removed upon request. Any member who joins another church will be removed from membership in this church.

b. The Deacon Committee shall annually reconfirm the membership of the church. Members who do not present written confirmation of their intentions upon request of the Deacon Committee for such confirmation may be removed from membership upon recommendation of the Deacon Committee and a majority vote of the members present at a church business meeting.

c. Members who do not fulfill the expectations and responsibilities of membership outlined in Article IV, Section 2 above may be placed on an inactive membership list and/or designated to be a "member not in good standing" upon recommendation of the Deacon Committee and a majority vote of the members present at a church business meeting.

After careful consideration by the Deacon Committee, persons may be removed from church membership after a period of one year on the inactive membership list, upon recommendation of the Deacon Committee and a majority vote of the members present at a church business meeting. Persons on the inactive list may be restored to active membership upon demonstration of personal commitment to the membership expectations and responsibilities outlined above and presentation of oral or written confirmation of membership intentions upon recommendation of the Deacon Committee and a majority vote of the members present at a church business meeting.

Section 4. Discipline of Members

Members who neglect their church obligations or engage in conduct disobedient to the Bible's teaching may be removed from membership. The Pastor and members of the Deacon Committee shall seek to meet with all such persons in order to restore them to fellowship. Failing to see satisfactory evidence of repentance and reformation, the Committee shall report the offenders to the church recommending appropriate action.

Section 5. Disputes Between Members

a. In all cases of grievances between members, the offenders shall be dealt with in accordance with the guidelines set forth in Matthew 18:15-17:

1. The one offended shall go personally to the fellow member and seek reconciliation.
2. If no progress is made through personal interaction, two or three members shall accompany the one offended to seek reconciliation again. The Deacons are available to serve as witnesses.
3. If the offense still has not been rectified, the one offended will take the matter to the church at any regularly scheduled or special business meeting so that the church may attempt to bring about reconciliation.
4. If the above procedures fail, the church shall take appropriate disciplinary measures.

b. In all matters of dispute or disagreement between members of this church, resolution of any claims or disputes will be sought through mediation and, if necessary, arbitration before turning to litigation. The procedures for mediation and, if necessary, arbitration will be in accordance with the rules of procedure for Christian conciliation of the Association of Christian Conciliation Services, and judgment upon an arbitration award may be entered in any court of competent jurisdiction.

REGARDING A VISION FOR FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF STURGEON BAY

~ PURPOSE STATEMENT ~

Our church constitution states the following:

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

This church exists as a community of Christians dedicated to the glorification of God through

1. worship and the administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper,
2. proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world,
3. instruction of believers in matters pertaining to the Christian life,
4. ministry to the needs of people,
5. mutual encouragement of members in fulfilling Christian life aspirations,

all of which shall be consistent with the will of God as revealed in the Scriptures.

~ MISSION STATEMENT ~

In keeping with the spirit of our purpose statement and springing from the truth of God's word, First Baptist Church's "Mission Statement" is:

WE HELP EACH OTHER WORSHIP, KNOW, AND PROCLAIM GOD.

IMPLICATIONS OF OUR MISSION STATEMENT

1. Those who identify our church as "their church" and especially those who have joined our membership will agree that Christ Jesus calls us to emphasize worship, Christian education, and outreach and missions. The mission statement conveys these priorities.

2. The mission statement exists to guide not only the pastoral ministry and the church leadership, but also individual believers. The statement calls a believer to take seriously one's own involvement with and personal commitment to individual and corporate worship, individual and corporate growth, and individual and corporate ministry.

Further, it should be a goal of every member of First Baptist Church to be committed to faithful and regular attendance at worship services, meaningful involvement with other believers in a smaller group setting, and appropriate personal ministry engagements.

3. The mission statement leads to the development of a vision statement, which indicates the church's ministry values but does not necessarily specify ministry "action steps."

~ STATEMENT OF VISION ~

The many ministries and activities in which our church engages could generally be classified in one of the following four ministry categories:

Worship
Christian Education
Outreach and Missions
Special Ministries and Hospitality

There is consistency and continuity among the purpose statement, mission statement and ministry categories indicated above. The next page includes 17 ministry values guiding our church's leadership when making decisions and considering ministry opportunities and "casting the vision" for the future.

~ MINISTRY VALUES GUIDING FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH LEADERSHIP ~

In order to accomplish meaningful ministries in the name of Jesus Christ and for the sake of Jesus Christ, First Baptist Church shall give ongoing consideration to the following ministry values:

WORSHIP

1. **Worship is central.**
2. **Worshippers have physical needs that must be considered.**
3. **Prayer is crucial in the worshiper's life.**

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

1. **Christians are lifelong learners.**
2. **Children, youth, and family ministries are paramount.**
3. **Quality infant and pre-school ministries and facilities are important.**
4. **Christian education, outreach, and recreation are closely related.**
5. **Education efforts are part of a "ministry whole."**

OUTREACH AND MISSIONS

1. **Churches support missions and missionary efforts.**
2. **Healthy churches start new churches.**
3. **Missions around the world and close to home need support.**
4. **Outreach to the local community is vital.**
5. **Church buildings are means for ministry and outreach.**

SPECIAL MINISTRIES AND HOSPITALITY

1. **Followers of Jesus love their neighbors.**
2. **Small groups grow disciples.**
3. **Believers work for the benefit of others.**
4. **Churches value hospitality.**

~ MINISTRY PHILOSOPHY and GROWTH STRATEGY ~

***In order to become the people of Christ our Lord intends
and to meet the challenges of future ministry,
we covenant together
to pray,
to teach and preach the Word,
and to trust in the sovereignty of God.***

It is the aim of First Baptist Church to realize both spiritual growth and numerical growth, with primary emphasis on personal, spiritual growth and discernible progress toward being more like Jesus Christ. A church made up of people committed to becoming more like Jesus will result in more people being touched by God's love and grace and more people choosing to become part of FBC.