

Reach Church

Statement of Faith

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At Reach Church, we trust in God the Father Almighty, Creator of all heaven and earth, and Who governs all things according to the purpose of His will. We believe His purpose for us is good and generous beyond any human understanding!

We take refuge in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, the exact representation of God's being, fully God and fully human, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus suffered and died to pay for our iniquities, the penalty of our sins, and to make peace between us and God. Jesus defeated death forever through His bodily resurrection on the third day. Jesus is now at the right hand of the Father from where He will come again to complete history as Judge of all humanity and creation.

We walk in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Voice, and Executive of the Godhead on earth, who brings Christ alive in us. He is both Counselor, by taking what is Christ's and making it known to the Church, and Convictor, making known the reality of sin, righteousness, and judgment. It is by, in, and through the person of the Holy Spirit that we receive His spiritual gifts for our lives - generous gifts as He sees fit for each follower of Jesus in whom He dwells.

We are individual members among countless others in the Body of Christ, the universal Church set apart, sealed, and filled by the Holy Spirit in accordance with His will for our lives and to fulfill the Great Commission. Our very existence is to live to give glory to God and to cause all humanity to do the same.

Only because of God's grace are our sins forgiven. Our resurrection is sure. Our life today and in eternity is safe in Jesus Christ. We trust Him enough to walk in Him!

INTRODUCTION

At Reach Church, our Core Beliefs are not intended to be an exhaustive list of dos and don'ts. Rather, they are a system of beliefs (theology and doctrine) which bind us together and work to create unity and fellowship in the body. There will always be theologies Christian's debate and disagree on. However, at Reach Church we will strive to major on the majors and minor on the minors. As Rupertus Meldenius said, *"In the essentials we need unity, in the nonessentials we need freedom; but in all things we need love."*

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God's Purpose: At Reach Church, we believe in One eternal God, Author, Perfecter, and Sustainer of the world and universe: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who sovereignly governs all things according to the purpose of His divine will. (Isaiah 44:6-8, 45:20-21; 40:28, Revelation 4:11, Matthew 28:19, 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, 2 Corinthians 13:14, Ephesians 2:18; 4:4-6)

God's Nature: At Reach Church, we believe God's nature is seen throughout Scripture as the Triune God with many characteristics, though perfectly consistent as One true and living God, eternal, indivisible, and of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness. He is the Creator and Preserver of all things visible and invisible. In this Godhead there is a Trinity of one substance in power and co-eternal: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:1, Exodus 3:14, Deuteronomy 6:4, John 8:58, 1 Timothy 1:17, Matthew 28:19, 2 Corinthians 13:14)

Jesus Christ: At Reach Church, we believe in the person of Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, teachings, his substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people and personal, and physical second-coming, his return to earth. We believe there is no other name by which we must be saved. All humankind is perishing because of sin. God loves everyone, yet those who reject Christ reject the joy of salvation and condemn themselves to eternal separation from God. To preach Jesus as the Savior of the world is to proclaim God's love for a world of sinners and invite everyone to respond to Him as Savior and Lord through repentance of sin and surrendering our lives out of obedience in faith. We long for the day when every knee will bow to Jesus Christ and every tongue will confess Him as Lord. (Galatians 1:6-11, Romans 1:18-32, 1 Timothy 2:5-6, Acts 4:12, John 3:16-19; 4:42, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, Matthew 11:28, Ephesians 1:20-21, Philippians 2:9-11, 2 Peter 3:9)

Holy Spirit: At Reach Church, we believe in the Person and power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit bears witness to Jesus Christ. Conviction of sin, faith in Christ, new birth, and Christian growth are all His work. Evangelism should emerge spontaneously from a Spirit-filled church, but only becomes a realistic possibility when the Holy Spirit renews the church in truth, wisdom, faith, holiness, love, and power. Toward that renewal, we pray for such a visitation and outpouring of the sovereign Spirit of God, that all His fruit may appear in all His people, and that all His gifts shall enrich the body of Christ. The nine Fruit of the Spirit are the byproduct of a Spirit-filled life as evidenced in, and leading to, Christian maturity. The gifts of the Spirit are different manifestations of the Spirit intended to build up the body (the church). We are instructed to diligently seek the gifts, but they must be exercised in an orderly manner in the context of love. The highest evidence of the Spirit-filled life is the Fruit of the Spirit, the greatest of which is love. We believe the Holy Spirit abides in every believer in Jesus Christ and that He is a constant helper, teacher, comforter, counselor, guide, and

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leader of our lives. We believe all the gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in Scripture are available to and active in His church today. (1 Corinthians 2:4; 12:4-31, 12:3, John 3:6-8; 7:37-39; 15:26, 2 Corinthians 3:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:19, Acts 1:8, Galatians 5:22-23, Romans 12:3-8)

Sin and Salvation: At Reach Church, we believe that because of the fall of humanity, all people are sinners by nature from birth with a rebellious free-will that falls short of God's glorious standards, consequently placing us under God's righteous judgment. We believe God saves, gives new life, sanctifies, and secures all who come to Him in repentance and faith, having trusted in the Person and work of Jesus Christ. At the cross, Jesus Christ died in our place as our substitute, taking on God's wrath that should have come upon us and ultimately providing the remedy and forgiveness of sins. We believe Jesus died for all humanity's sin and the invitation to believe is open to whoever desires to come to Jesus for new life and the forgiveness of sins. We believe salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. We believe all who call on the name of the Lord will be saved eternally. (1 John 4:14, John 3:16-17; 14:6, Acts 4:12, Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 10:9; Acts 3:19, 20:21; 1 John 2:2; Revelation 22:17, Romans 3:10-23; 5:18-19, Matthew 1:21).

Sanctification: At Reach Church, we believe the moment of salvation to be the point in which a follower of Jesus is justified and made right (declared righteous by God), considered holy and perfect in position and status before God, otherwise known as initial sanctification, which takes place at the moment of belief and placing one's faith in Christ Jesus for their salvation, including repentance of sin. All believers are vulnerable in various degrees to all manner of sin and temptation. Though tempted and vulnerable, God's glorious standards and expectations are for all believers to keep growing in spiritual maturity over the course of the Christian life, the goal of which is always to pursue Christlikeness. This process of maturing spiritually, what Scripture describes as growing...in respect to salvation, is called sanctification, literally meaning, set apart for God. At the heart of sanctification is an increasing in the knowledge of the truth and renewing to a complete knowledge according to the image of Christ. Sanctification comes with being transformed in the renewing of one's mind or thought life, the fruit of which is active obedience to the Holy Spirit's leadership in our lives. Sanctification begins at justification and culminates in glorification, the point when we are united with Christ in death or at His second coming. (Romans 8:29-30; 10:9-10; 12:1-2, Philippians 2:12, 1 Corinthians 11:1, 1 Peter 2:2, 2 Peter 1:5-8, Ephesians 1:15-19, Colossians 3:10)

Security of the Believer: At Reach Church, we believe that all followers of Jesus, having freely come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as Savior and surrendered to Him as Lord by God's grace through faith, are made righteous and wholly secure in that faith. The same free-will that God has gifted us with to respond to the gospel is the same free-will that is exercised in abiding in a right-relationship with Jesus through the Holy Spirit. The work of Jesus as our substitutionary atonement is absolutely final and complete. The Bible teaches that in our human responsibility and free-will, we

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can willingly move away from the fellowship and the protection God provides us, that we have the free-will to turn from God and reject His sustaining power, otherwise known as apostasy. (Acts 7:51–53; Hebrews 3:12-19, 6:4-6; 2 Peter 2:20-22; 1 Timothy 4:1, 16; Revelation 2:4-5)

Christian Liberty: At Reach Church, we believe that God has given us free-will and human responsibility. Within both free-will and human responsibility is the balance of Christian Liberty; all things are permissible, not all things are beneficial. While Scripture is clear on all matters of sin, salvation, life, and godliness, we believe that choosing a life of holiness (living set apart) is a part of every maturing Christian. The aim and goal of every follower of Jesus is to bring glory to the name of God, to exemplify a redeemed life, free from the shackles of sin and brokenness. As such, while the Bible is implicit about activities that may not be inherently sinful, we believe that all followers of Jesus should diligently seek to determine whether any particular activity is God-honoring, edifying of others, and/or beneficial to the Christian life. As Christians, we should search to understand and examine how the activity reflects on our reputation as followers of Jesus and whether it will help or hinder our Christian witness. We must also seek the best for others around us, giving strong consideration as to whether our choices will edify and build them up or not. (1 Corinthians 8:9-13; 10:23, Romans 14:13-23; 1 Peter 2:11-12; Galatians 5:13)

The Bible: At Reach Church, we believe in the divine inspiration, truthfulness, perfection, and ultimate authority of both Old and New Testament Scriptures in their entirety as the only written Word of God, without error in all that it affirms, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice. The Holy Bible is our standard; the Scriptures serve as our ultimate authority where all theologies and doctrines are concerned. As a church, we are in complete agreement with the inerrant, sufficient Word of God. (2 Peter 1:3-11, 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21; John 10:35; Isaiah 55:11)

The Church: At Reach Church, we believe the Church (ecclesia: “gathering; body”) is the community of God’s people rather than an institution, and must not be identified with any culture, social or political system, or human ideology. A Church which preaches the entirety of God’s Word and abides in, through and by the grace of God, must be marked by the grace of God, a living faith in God, a genuine love for people, and scrupulous honesty in all things. Evangelism is at the core of the Church’s mission of sacrificial service. Christ sends his redeemed people into the world as the Father sent Him, and this demands a similar deep, deliberate, and costly engagement of the world. We believe there is one Church, the body of Christ, consisting of men and women from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation. (1 Peter 2:9-10, Galatians 6:14; 17, 2 Corinthians 6:3-4, 2 Timothy 2:19-22, Philippians 1:27, Matthew 28:19-20, John 17:18; 20:21)

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The Mission of the Church: At Reach Church, we believe the church has a five-fold mission:

- (1) To **worship** God as a lifestyle and an act of public adoration,
- (2) To **disciple** believers, growing them in faith and knowledge of the things of God,
- (3) To **evangelize**, sharing the Good News with others – taking our faith to our families, communities, workplaces, and the world,
- (4) To **fellowship** with others through conversations, relationships, events, and activities, and
- (5) To **minister** to the church and world by serving others in the name of God.

(Matthew 22:36-37; 28:19-20, John 4:24, Acts 1:8; 2:42-47, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, Ephesians 4:11-16)

Celebration Services and Public Worship: At Reach Church, we believe Celebration Services are public acts of common corporate worship. They bring both the responsibility and privilege of regular attendance by every believer who, in the presence of God, offers oneself in reflection and contemplation, adoration, humility, and dedication to God and His purposes. Public and private worship are essential to the life of the church and to Christians for fellowship and spiritual growth. The Bible teaches that the order of public worship doesn't need to be the same in all places but may be adjusted by the Church according to circumstances, culture, context, and the needs of the people. Worship should be offered in a language and form understood by the people, consistent with the Word of God and the intention of building up the believers to God's glory. All public worship must be done in a way that is glorifying to God alone and edifying to the body, the Church. (Psalm 95:1-6, Ephesians 4:11-16; 5:19, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Acts 5:1-11, 1 Corinthians 5:1-7)

The Five-Fold Ministry: At Reach Church, we believe the five-fold ministry as described in Ephesians 4:11-13 has been operative in the Church since inception. We hold firmly that biblical witness and history affirm the value of each role in the life of the church:

- (1) **Apostles** guide the foundation of new churches and set standards for the governance and life of those churches.
- (2) **Prophets** reveal the heart and message of God to His people, showing a special sensitivity to interpretation, application, and timing.

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- (3) **Evangelists** have a burning desire to not only share the gospel of Jesus Christ, but also to teach others how to share the Gospel.
- (4) **Shepherds** lead through training, correction, and protection as they develop Jesus-followers in a local body to fulfill their God-given destinies.
- (5) **Teachers** utilize their passion for the Word of God to reveal more of the mind of Christ to benefit His body, preparing and delivering a solid foundation of knowledge and wisdom to ground believers in the truth.

We affirm that the five-fold ministry is, at its heart, a ministry of service, "so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole nature of the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4:11-13)

Evangelism: At Reach Church, we believe we are all called to spread the Good News (gospel) of Jesus Christ: that He died for our sins, was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that as Lord, He now offers the forgiveness of sins and the power of the Holy Spirit to all who repent and believe. Evangelism is the byproduct of every follower of Jesus and the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Savior and Lord, with the intent of sharing with people in hopes that they also come to Him in a personal relationship and are therefore reconciled to God. The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into His Church, and responsible service in the world. (John 17:18; 20:21, Acts 1:8; 2:32-47, 1 Corinthians 1:22-24; 15:3-4, 2 Corinthians 5:20, Mark 8:34; 10:43-45)

A Nurturing Fellowship: At Reach Church, we seek Church depth as well as Church growth. Therefore, we cannot divorce Christian nurture from evangelism. We commit to nurture one another with continued and appropriate encouragement to conform each of us into the very image of Jesus. We also commit, as part of proactive Christian nurture in our fellowship, to model through example and teaching, effective training and discipleship, evangelism, nurture, service, and doctrine according to Biblical standards. (Colossians 1:27-28, Galatians 6:1, Titus 2, Ephesians 4:11-12, Hebrews 3:13-14, Romans 12, Galatians 2:6-7)

Ordinances: At Reach Church, we believe two celebrations are a part of our common Christian experience in our fellowship: baptism and the communion. These Holy Ordinances or sacraments, ordained by Christ, are not only pledges and symbols of the Christian's profession, but also signs of God's loving grace toward us, by which he works invisibly in us, quickening, strengthening, and confirming our faith in Him.

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Historically, baptism has been a key rite of passage into the Christian community. Baptism is associated with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and should be done in obedience to Jesus' example. Baptism is not the means of salvation but a celebration of, and witness to, an individual's salvation. Therefore, baptism should be administered to those who have made their own choice for Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. Simply put, we believe baptism to be an outward celebration and expression of an internal commitment to follow Jesus Christ. (Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12; Matthew 3:13-17; Acts 2:37-41)

Communion, also recognized as the Lord's Supper, celebrates the sacrifice and presence of the Lord Jesus in the sharing of common bread and cup. As Jesus directed, we symbolically celebrate the remembrance of Jesus, the present communion of believers with God and with one another, and the hope of the coming, completed Kingdom. We celebrate communion as often as we fellowship together, remembering Christ's radical love and sacrifice, and the promise of His second-coming. (1 Corinthians 10:14-17; 11:23-26, Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:15-20, 1 Corinthians 12:3)

Women in Ministry and Leadership: At Reach Church, we believe God has established a gender-based eldership of the Church in alignment with a unique leadership role for men in marriage, family, and the church. We hold to Scripture for all forms and mandates of life, leadership, and ministry. We affirm the leadership roles of women in every ministry function of the church aside from the office of Elder and/or Pastor. Holding with what we believe to be Biblical counsel, we believe the weight of church governance through the specific roles of Elders, and therefore including the Senior Pastor, is intended for men alone. We recognize that all gifts, spiritual or otherwise, are from God and useful for the edification of the body and the glorification of God, and that the Holy Spirit gives without prejudice as He sees fit to men and women alike. We see throughout Scripture, believe, and recognize that women who have been given the spiritual gift of preaching are encouraged to exercise their God-given gift under the lordship of the Holy Spirit, under the authority of the Elders of the Church, and to be practiced in a way that honors God and edifies the body. (Titus 1:5-9, 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 8-13)

Mankind and Genders: At Reach Church, we believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two unique, distinct, and complementary sexes serve to reflect the image and nature of God. We believe all people, male or female, are created in God's image. God created male and female equal in value, dignity, and worth. Men and women are equally created in the image of God and given a specific biological gender, before birth, by which God uniquely and distinctly establishes and sets apart for each person. (Genesis 1:26-8, Mark 12:28-31, Luke 6:31, Ephesians 5:22-64, 1 Timothy 3:1-7)

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Sanctity of Life: At Reach Church, we believe that human life is created by God and is good. Since we are uniquely created in the image of God and formed by God, we hold to the sanctity of all human life. We believe that human life begins at conception and that it lasts beyond death into eternity. God gives life and breath to everyone, calling us to value equally the dignity of every individual life in its entirety, which compels us to love and have compassion for all peoples of the world. (Genesis 1:27; 2-7; 9:6, Job 33:4, Psalm 139:13-16, Jeremiah 1:4-5, John 5:28-29, 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, 2 Corinthians 5:8-10; 14-15, Acts 17:25)

Marriage: At Reach Church, we believe marriage to be the covenant relationship, freely and exclusively taken on, between one man and one woman as taught by the Lord Jesus, used to advance wholeness, and establish new generations of families purposed toward the honor of God. We believe the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union as delineated in Scripture. We believe marriage between one man and one woman for life uniquely reflects Christ's relationship with His Church. We believe God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other and only after they are united in marriage. We believe God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity occur outside of marriage or between any other man and a woman. (Genesis 2:18-25, Matthew 19:4-6, Hebrews 13:4, 1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5)

Christian Responsibility: At Reach Church, we believe that mankind is made in the image of God and that every person has an intrinsic value and dignity worthy of our service. When we are born again into Christ's kingdom, we must seek not only to exhibit, but also spread His righteousness amid an unrighteous world. The salvation we claim should be transforming us in every aspect of our personal and social responsibilities. Faith without works is dead and useless. (Genesis 1:26-27, James 3:9, Isaiah 1:17, Matthew 5:20; 6:33, Luke 6:27; 35, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Micah 6:8, James 2:14-26)

Spiritual Warfare: At Reach Church, we believe that we are engaged in constant spiritual warfare with the principalities and powers of evil who are seeking to overthrow the Church and frustrate the completion of the Great Commission. We know our need to equip ourselves with God's armor and fight this battle with the spiritual weapons of truth, including prayer. We acknowledge that we ourselves are not immune to worldliness of thoughts and action. We need both watchfulness and discernment to safeguard the biblical gospel and to set ourselves a part as holy in Christ. (Ephesians 6:12, 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, Ephesians 6:11; 13-18, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, 1 John 3:8; 4:1-6, Matthew 16:16-18)

Christians and The World: At Reach Church, we believe it is our responsibility to be a fellowship always rooted in Christ. While culture and context are important when establishing a framework for community, culture must always be tested and judged by Scripture. The gospel does not presuppose the superiority of any culture to another but evaluates all cultures according to Biblical

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criteria of truth and righteousness and insists on moral absolutes in every culture. Churches should not be in bondage to culture, but rather accountable to Scripture. We seek to transform and enrich culture, all for the glory of God and good of humanity. (Mark 7:8-13, 1 Corinthians 9:19-23; 12:13, Galatians 3:28, Philippians 2:5-7, 2 Corinthians 4:5, Matthew 5, 6, 7)

The Return of Christ: At Reach Church, we believe Jesus Christ is returning personally and visibly in power and glory to consummate His salvation and judgment. This will fulfill all prophecies made concerning His final and complete triumph over all evil. We believe the interim period between Christ's ascension and return is to be filled with the mission of God's people who have no liberty to stop before the end. Our Christian confidence is that God will perfect His Kingdom, and we look forward with eager anticipation to that day when righteousness will be realized in the new heaven and earth and God will reign forever. (Mark 13:10; 21-23; 14:62, Hebrews 9:28, Acts 1:8-11, Matthew 28:18-20, 1 John 2:18; 4:1-3, Luke 12:32, Revelation 20:1-5; 21:1-5, 2 Peter 3:13)

Heaven and Hell: At Reach Church, we believe in a literal Heaven and a literal Hell, and that all those who place their faith, hope, and trust in Jesus Christ will spend eternity in Heaven with the Lord. Those who reject Jesus' gift of salvation will spend eternity separated from the Lord. (Psalm 9:17; Matthew 5:3, 5:22, 18:9, 25:31-34; Mark 9:42-49; Luke 12:5; John 3:18; Hebrews 12:23; 1 Peter 1:4; Revelation 14:10-11, 20:11-15)

Freedom and Persecution: At Reach Church, we believe it is the God-appointed duty of every government to secure conditions of peace, justice, and liberty in which the church may obey God, serve the Lord Jesus Christ, and preach the gospel without interference. It is to this end that we pray for and call upon the leaders of nations to guarantee freedom of thought and conscience. We remember all who have been unjustly imprisoned, especially those who suffer for their testimony to the Lord Jesus. We promise to pray and work for their freedom and refuse to be intimidated by their fate. With God's help, we stand together against injustice and remain faithful to the gospel, whatever the cost. (Acts 4:1-31; 5:17-42, Hebrews 13:1-3, Luke 4:18-19, Matthew 5:10-12, John 15:18-21)