

## TFH Statement of Faith

The following 26 Sections comprise the Scriptural beliefs of this church and its members:

### **Section 1. We believe that the Holy Scriptures are the divinely inspired Word of God.**

We believe that the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, containing God's complete revelation of Himself to mankind. The Bible is not man-made; its words are God-breathed and true for all time. As such, their authority is supreme, and we agree and submit to them as our rule of faith and conduct.

The meaning of a Scripture is established in its relation to all other Scriptures, and the words of Scripture shall be understood according to their literal, grammatical, and historical meaning and context.<sup>1</sup>

*Scriptural Proofs: Matthew 4.3-10; Romans 3.4; 2 Timothy 3.16-17; Hebrews 1.1; 1 Peter 1.10-11; 2 Peter 1.20-21.*

### **Section 2. We believe in the one true God, who is the three Persons of the Holy Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.**

We believe in the one true God who is the three Persons of the Holy Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are co-equal in being and co-eternal in nature. God is the self-existent and self-revealed "I AM" and, in His Trinitarian nature, He manifests the principles of relationship and association.

*Scriptural Proofs: Exodus 3.13-15; Deuteronomy 6.4; Psalm 90.2; Isaiah 43.10-11, 44.6; Matthew 3.16-17, 28.19; Mark 12.29; 2 Corinthians 13.14; John 14.10, 26.*

### **Section 3. We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God.**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. Having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, without ceasing to be God, the Son of God became the man Jesus in order that He might reveal God to mankind and redeem them from their sins.

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, as a substitute for every person, experienced God's righteous judgement and penalty for sin through His death on the cross. Through this sacrifice of Himself, Jesus paid the price for the forgiveness of sins for each person.

We believe in the literal, physical resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. As we are saved from sin through Jesus' death, we are saved from death and for eternal life through His resurrection from the dead.

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ returned to heaven and sits in the highest place of honour at the right hand of God the Father. There, as our High Priest, He graciously serves as our representative, intercessor, and advocate.

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<sup>1</sup> All questions of meaning and interpretation of Scripture shall be sought in this framework as determined by the leadership of this church.

*Scriptural Proofs: Isaiah 7.14; Luke 1.35; John 1.1-2, 14; Galatians 4.4-5; Philippians 2.5-8; Acts 2.18-36; Romans 3.24-25; Ephesians 1.7; 1 Peter 1.35; Acts 1.9-10; Hebrews 9.24, 7.25, 1 John 2.1-2.*

#### **Section 4. We believe in the Holy Spirit.**

We believe that, as the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit works with respect to those who do not believe by convicting them of their need for salvation.

We believe that the Holy Spirit works with respect to those who do believe by revealing Christ to them as Saviour, by causing them to be born again, by baptizing them into the Body of Christ, by dwelling in them, by teaching them to understand and act on the Word of God, by empowering them with gifts and abilities to serve God and others, and by keeping them until the day when their faith in Christ shall be rewarded.

*Scriptural Proofs: John 16.8-11; John 3.3-8; Romans 8.9; 1 Corinthians 12.12-14; Ephesians 1.17-18; 1 John 2.20, 27; Romans 12.6-8, 1 Corinthians 12.8-10, Ephesians 4.11; Ephesians 1.13-14.*

#### **Section 5. We believe that humanity is inescapably sinful and utterly in need of a Saviour.**

We believe that man was created in the image of God (good and upright) and for relationship with God. However, being involved in Adam's willful sin of disobedience, all of humanity inherited a sinful, wicked nature and became alienated from God. This condition mankind is utterly unable to remedy; the only hope of restoration to right relationship with God is through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

*Scriptural Proofs: Genesis 1.26-27; Romans 3.22-23, 5.12, 6.23; Ephesians 2.1-3, 4.17-19.*

#### **Section 6. We believe that salvation is a gift of God's grace received through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.**

We believe that salvation—meaning the divine provision in Christ for the forgiveness of sins and restoration into right standing with God in His Kingdom—is a gift that in grace God offers to sinful people. This gift is received through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and is accompanied by repentance from sin.

We believe that in Christ who became sin God redeemed the world from sin, reconciling mankind and restoring them to favour. For this reason, all sins, except the sin of rejecting Christ as Son of God and Saviour of the World, are forgivable and have been forgiven by God in Christ.

We believe that in salvation the believer is, spiritually speaking, born again and becomes a new creation in Christ.

*Scriptural Proofs: Romans 10.13; John 1.12-13, 3.3-8; 1 Corinthians 5.17,21; Ephesians 1.7, 2.8-10, Acts 2.37-38; 1 Peter 1.23.*

#### **Section 7. We believe that those who belong to Christ are to become like Him.**

We believe in sanctification—meaning that those who are born again are holy and set apart for God. As such, and in cooperation with the Holy Spirit, they are to embrace the life of holiness and become more and more like Christ in their moral character and behaviour. Believers should not engage in activities that damage the reputation of Christ or His Church. This sanctification is the will of God for all believers and should be earnestly pursued by walking in obedience to God's Word.

*Scriptural proofs: Romans 12,1-2; 1 Corinthians 6.19-20; 2 Corinthians 6.14-7.1; Ephesians 4.21-24; Colossians 3.5-17; 1 Thessalonians 5.23-24; 1 Peter 1.15-16; 1 John 1.6.*

**Section 8. We believe that those who are saved are also kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ and His salvation.**

We believe that God preserves for the full and eternal experience of salvation all those who have been born again, and that they can enjoy confident assurance of eternal salvation as they live to please the Lord. This eternal security and assurance of salvation is a source of freedom, hope and joy to believers. However, scripture clearly forbids the use of this freedom as an occasion or license for ungodly behaviour, and it should only be natural that a person who persistently tramples on the gift of God's grace should, by doing so, lose the confident assurance of salvation.

*Scriptural Proofs: John 6.37-40; Romans 8.1, 38-39; 1 Corinthians 4.8; Philippians 1.6; Hebrews 10.19-23, 26-29; 1 Peter 1.4-5; Jude 1.24.*

**Section 9. We believe in the Church and the local church.**

We believe in the Church—in the Universal Church as the One Body of Christ into which all believers are incorporated; and in the local church as a representation of that Body, ordained for the fellowship, discipleship, support, and encouragement of those who believe.

We believe that the Universal Church consists wholly, solely and only of born again persons.

We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught, demonstrated and defined in the scriptures of the New Testament, and that a divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided for the two-fold purpose of spreading the Good News of salvation in Christ and of building up and bringing maturity to the Body of Christ.

We believe that both men and women can be gifted and called by God to teach, preach, and serve in ministry and leadership in the church. We, therefore, believe in the ordination of both men and women into the ministry.

*Scriptural proofs: Mark 16.15-20; Acts 2.41-42, 14.27, 18.26, 20.17, 28-32; Romans 16.1,3,6; Ephesians 1.22-23, 4.11-13; Philippians 4.3; 1 Timothy 3.1-13; Titus 1.5-11; Hebrews 10.24-25, 12.23; Revelation 2-3.*

**Section 10. We believe in the mission of the Church.**

We believe in the Great Commission as the command of the Lord Jesus Christ authorizing and enjoining His followers, the ambassadors of His heavenly Kingdom, to preach the Gospel of salvation to all people and nations. We therefore believe in supporting local and global missional works that seek to reach any people, ethnic or language group with the Good News of salvation in Christ.

*Scriptural proofs: Matthew 28.19-20; Mark 16.15; Luke 24.46-48; John 20.21; Acts 1.8; 2 Corinthians 5.20.*

**Section 11. We believe in water baptism (by immersion in water).**

We believe in water baptism (by immersion in water) as a ritual ordinance and command of the Lord Jesus Christ to be observed by all those who have believed on the Lord. Water baptism is a public sign and is symbolic of the tremendous spiritual realities of a believer's new life, including cleansing from sin, union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, and inclusion in the Body of Christ, His Church.

*Scriptural proofs: Matthew 28.19; Acts 2.38-41, 8.37-38, 10.47-48; Romans 6.3-11; 1 Corinthians 6.3-4; Hebrews 10.22.*

#### **Section 12: We believe in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.**

We believe that all who are saved are entitled to and should earnestly seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit according to the promise of God the Father and the command of the Lord Jesus Christ. This wonderful baptism is an experience distinct from being born again. As it was the general experience of the believers of the early Church, so believers across the ages can confidently expect to receive this baptism.

We believe that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is scripturally evident through “speaking in other tongues” as well as through boldness in sharing the Gospel, through power for life and service, and through joy.

*Scriptural Proofs: Luke 24.49; Acts 1.8, 2.4, 4.13, 8:8, 8.39, 10.44-46, 13.52, 16.34; Romans 14.17, 1 Corinthians 12.1-31.*

#### **Section 13. We believe in the Lord’s Supper (also called Communion).**

We believe in the Lord’s Supper as a ritual instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ and enjoined on all who believe, the elements of which represent the body and blood of Christ and remind those who share in it of the covenant of God’s grace, the cross of Christ’s suffering, the common union of believers, and the coming again of our Lord.

*Scriptural proofs: Matthew 26.26-29; 1 Corinthians 10.16-17, 11.23-26.*

#### **Section 14. We believe in divine health and healing.**

We believe that divine health and healing from sickness and infirmity are an integral part of the Gospel of Salvation for all time, purchased for believers by the sufferings of Christ, whose body was wounded so that ours might be made whole. Those who are sick can with confidence pray the prayer of faith for healing, trusting in God for restoration of well-being.

*Scriptural proofs: Isaiah 53.4-5; Matthew 8.16-17, 10.8; Mark 16.15-18; James 5.14-16; 1 Peter 2.24.*

#### **Section 15. We believe in the eternal state of all people.**

We believe in the eternal state of all people—of believing people to salvation and eternal life; of unbelieving people to judgment and eternal punishment.

We believe that the spirits and souls of those who die, having put their faith in Christ, are after death immediately and consciously present with the Lord Jesus in heaven.

*Scriptural proofs: Matthew 25.41-46; John 3.16-18, 5.28-29, 11.25-26; 2 Corinthians 5.8; Philippians 3.21, 2 Thessalonians 1.7-9.*

#### **Section 16. We believe in the Second Coming of Christ.**

We believe and put our hope in the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, who will come again to the earth and establish His Millennial Kingdom.

*Scriptural Proofs: Zechariah 14.4-11; Matthew 16.27; Mark 13.26; 1 Thessalonians 1.10, 4.16; Titus 2.13; Revelation 19.11-20.7.*

### **Section 17. We believe in the resurrection of believers and of all mankind.**

We believe that, as Christ was raised from the dead, so too shall all who are Christ's be raised to a glorious resurrection life like His. This resurrection is the completion of God's good work of redemption whereby believers in Christ shall become like Him.

We believe that those who have not put their faith in Christ shall also be raised from the dead in order that they may be judged according to their works.

*Scriptural Proofs: John 5.28-29; 2 Corinthians 15.20-23, 51-57; Philippians 1.6; 1 Thessalonians 4.13-17; Revelation 20.12-13.*

### **Section 18. We believe in the Final Judgement.**

We believe that Christ will ultimately judge everyone according to their works. The righteous—all those who have put their trust in Christ—will be rewarded for all that they have done that gives glory to God. The unrighteous—the wicked, including the devil, his angels, and all persons whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life—will be consigned to everlasting punishment, which is the second death.

*Scriptural Proofs: Matthew 25.31-46; Acts 17:31; 1 Corinthians 3.13-15; 2 Thessalonians 1.7-9; Hebrews 9.27; Revelation 20.10-15, 21.8.*

### **Section 19. We believe in the Creator and creation.**

We believe that God created the universe, man, animal life, and all things. We reject other narratives explaining existence and human life as unscriptural theories of origin.

We believe that God has given humanity the responsibility of stewarding His creation. People are to exercise this stewardship in submission to God and in service to others.

*Scriptural Proofs: Genesis 1-2; Psalm 8.3-8, 115.15-16; John 1.1-4; Acts 17.24-26; Colossians 1.15-17; Revelation 4.11.*

### **Section 20. We believe in the sanctity of human life.**

We believe in the sanctity of human life and that it is continuously so from the moment of conception to the hour of natural or accidental dissolution.

We believe the unborn child is a human being, and that abortion, as the taking of human life, is an interruption of God's intention and the human rights of the unborn child. We reject as misguided all justifications for abortions of pregnancies for any reason.

We believe that euthanasia, as the arranged termination of a human life, is unjustifiable and inexcusable.

*Scriptural proofs: Exodus 20.13, Psalm 51.5-6, 139.13-16; Isaiah 49.1; Jeremiah 1.5; Luke 1.15, 44.*

### **Section 21. We believe that human sexuality is designed by God and a gift from Him.**

We believe that human sexuality is designed by God and a gift from Him as Creator. He is the authority with respect to who people are as individuals and how they are to live. This being so, it is outside the

proper sphere of individuals, governments, or mankind generally to redefine, reinvent or redesign human sexuality, and should not be attempted.

We believe that God has designed the marriage relationship between a man and a woman (who are so from birth) as the only proper context for human sexual activity, and that, without exception, all sexual activity engaged in outside of this context is a perversion of God's design and a violation of His express intentions. Therefore, it is incumbent on all Christians, and on the Church, to abstain from all such activity.

*Scriptural proofs: Genesis 1.27, 2.18, 24; Leviticus 18; Romans 1.26-28; 1 Corinthians 5.1, 6.12-20; Ephesians 4.31-32; 1 Thessalonians 4.1-8; Hebrews 13.4.*

**Section 22. We believe that marriage is a lifelong commitment, and that divorce is not God's plan for any couple.**

We believe that God has ordained the marriage relationship between a man and a woman to be an exclusive commitment for life and that divorce is not God's plan or intention for any couple.

We believe that Scripture does affirm grounds for divorce in extraordinary circumstances and as a last resort where reconciliation seems impossible. These grounds and circumstances are adultery or desertion by one spouse of the other. However, a Christian should not rush into divorce even where these grounds exist, but should seek to be reconciled.

We believe that divorce for reasons other than the just reasons listed above is a sin. However, like any other sin, divorce is forgiven by Christ, and the person who is divorced can be restored as if the sin never occurred. We do not believe that a divorce (or a subsequent remarriage) disqualifies a person from service in the church; however, depending on the circumstances, it may disqualify them from leadership in the church.

*Scriptural proofs: Genesis 2.24; Malachi 2.14-16; Matthew 19.3-9; Romans 7.1-4; 1 Corinthians 7.1, 10-11, 15; Ephesians 5.22-33.*

**Section 23. We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society.**

We believe that the family, as God ordained it, consists only of a man and a woman united in marriage and their children.

We believe that men and women are spiritually equal before God, but that God has ordained distinct spiritual functions for men and women in the family. A husband is to love, lead, and serve his wife and family as Christ loves the Church, for whom He laid down His life. He is responsible for the spiritual and physical welfare of the family, including the training of his children in godliness. A wife is to respect her husband and his leadership and assist him in creating a nurturing and safe home.

We believe, as Scripture mandates, that parents, and not the state, are responsible for the training, education, and discipline of children.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Parents are to instruct their children in, among other things, spiritual and moral values, respect for authority, and civic responsibility.

We believe that the church has an important role in supporting parents in their obligation to train and educate their children and can do this by means that include education provision through a Christian day school, support for parents who choose to homeschool, and training and other supports to equip parents as caregivers and educators. All education offered by the church to support parents must be consistent with the Word of God.

*.26-28, 2.23-25; Exodus 20.12; Deuteronomy 6.4-9; Psalm 127.3-5; Proverbs 1.8, 4.1-4, 19.18, 22.15, 23.13-14, 31.1; Matthew 19.4-6; Mark 10.6-9; 1 Corinthians 7.1-13; Galatians 3.28; Ephesians 4.11-12, 5.22-6.4; Colossians 3.18-21; 1 Peter 3.1-7.*

#### **Section 24. We believe that Christians should give generously and serve willingly.**

We believe that Christians, as stewards of the gifts God has entrusted to them, are to live as generous givers, not as obeying a law, but as expressing trust in Christ and love for others.

We believe that God has established the tithe, meaning the biblical practice of returning a tenth of our income to the Lord through the church we attend, as the basis for providing for the work of the local church and its ministers. This tithe is a declaration of dependence on and trust in God as well as of commitment to the local church.<sup>3</sup>

We believe that, over and above the tithe, and as they are able, Christians are to cheerfully contribute financial assistance for the further support the church, for the relief of those in need, and for the spread of the Gospel. Tithes and offerings are to be given freely, the giver relinquishing all right to influence or direct the use of their gift.

We also believe that God's people, as part of their commitment to each other and their church, are to give freely of their time, skills, and labour to support the work of ministry and the preaching of the Gospel.

*Scriptural proofs: Genesis 14.20; Proverbs 3.9-10; Malachi 3.10; Matthew 6.19-21, 24, 33; Acts 4.34-37; 1 Corinthians 16.2; 2 Corinthians 9.6-7; Galatians 6.6; Ephesians 4.28; 1 Timothy 5.17-18; 1 John 3.17.*

#### **Section 25. We believe in civil government and the limits of civil government.**

We believe that God has ordained all authority and that the three basic institutions of the home, the church, and the state are to exercise it. Every person is subject to these authorities, and all persons and authorities are answerable to God.

We believe that God has given each institution separate responsibilities and functions, and that no one institution has the right to infringe on the mandate of the other two. Therefore, the church is not to rule the state, nor the state the church or the home. We believe that the state has been given authority by God in specific matters such as the maintenance of law and order (including the civil justice and criminal justice systems), national defence and international relations. Christians are, therefore, obliged to respect and obey every law of the land they live in.

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<sup>3</sup> We do not limit people's generosity to the tithe but set it as a good biblical principle and practice.

We believe that God's laws must be respected above those of civil government where civil laws are in direct opposition to the laws of God (i.e. commanding something prohibited by God or prohibiting something commanded by God). In such cases, civil disobedience is appropriate.

We believe that Christians are to be good and responsible citizens who are informed on the issues of the day and who exercise their privilege to vote. Christians should be actively involved in all levels and phases of the political process, and should, like any other citizen, run for public office to serve their fellow men and women and make their world a better place. We believe that all people, including those in government and politics, must be free to express their views and to be guided by their religious faith in their participation in the political process.

We believe that, while it does not advocate for a political party or candidate, the Church has a role in preaching the Gospel in all areas of life, including on issues addressed by Scripture related to public, community, and national life, and that not to do so is a sin. The Church is to be "salt and light" in a corrupt and dark world.

*Scriptural proofs: Matthew 5.13-16; Acts 5.27-29; Romans 13.1-7; Hebrews 13.17; 1 Peter 2.13-14.*

## **Section 26. We believe in love.**

We believe that God is love, and that, as followers of Jesus Christ, we are to love all people, including those who oppose us. We are to treat those who oppose us with grace, patience, and humility. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or use of violence as means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice.

We believe that love and truth are compatible: loving others cannot include compromising our Scriptural convictions to accommodate or justify another person's misguided beliefs or sinful actions.

*Scriptural proofs: Leviticus 19.18; Matthew 5.44-48; Luke 6.31; John 13.34-35; Romans 12.9-10, 17-21, 13.8-10; Ephesians 4.14-16; Philippians 2.2-4; 2 Timothy 2.24-26; 1 John 3.17-18, 4.7-11.*

## **The Authority of the Statement of Faith**

This Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible is the sole and final source of all that we believe as individuals and as a local church community. However, we do believe that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members of this faith community. All literature or resources of any kind used in the church shall agree with the Statement of Faith.