

CONFESSION OF FAITH

including revisions

Adopted September 1, 1952

Highland Hills Baptist Church

1415 Northrup Drive NW

Grand Rapids, MI 49504

I John 1:7

ARTICLE I - THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Bible was (a) written by men controlled by the Holy Spirit; (b) that it has truth without any admixture of error for its matter; and (c) therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man; the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.

(Explanatory)

1. By "The Holy Bible," we mean that collection of sixty-six books, from Genesis to Revelation, which, as originally written, does not merely contain and convey the word of God, but is the very Word of God.
2. By "Inspiration" we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be inspired.
 - a. II Tim. 3:15-17; I Pet. 1:19-21; Acts 1:16; Acts 28:25.
 - b. Psa. 119:116; Psa. 119:105; Psa. 119:130; Luke 24:25-27; John 17:17; Luke 24:44-45.
 - c. Psa. 119:89; Prov. 30:5-6; Rom 3:4; I Pet. 1:23; Rev. 22:19; John 12:48; Isa. 8:20; Eph. 6:17; Rom. 15:4; Luke 16:31; Psa. 19:7-11; John 5:45-47; John 5:39.

ARTICLE II - THE TRUE GOD

We believe that there is (a) one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, the maker and supreme ruler of heaven and earth; (b) inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; (c) that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

- a. Exod. 20:2-3; Gen. 17:1; I Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6; John 4:24; Psa. 147:5; Psa. 83:18; Psa. 90:2; Jer. 10:10.
- b. Exod. 15:11; Rev. 4:11; I Tim 1:17; Rom 11:33; Mark 12:30.
- c. Matt. 28:19; John 15:26; I Cor. 12:4-6; I John 5:7; John 10:30; John 17:5; Acts 5:3-4; I Cor. 2:10-11; Phil. 2:5-6; Eph, 2:18; II Cor. 13:14.

ARTICLE III - THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person; (a) equal with God the Father and (b) God the Son and (c) of the same nature; (d) that He was active in the creation; (e) that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the Evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled (f) that He convicts of sin, of judgment and of righteousness; (g) that He bears witness to the Truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony; (h) that He is the agent in the New Birth; (i) that He seals, baptizes, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps the believer.

And that the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance) is the evidence of His indwelling rather than the speaking in tongues and other spectacular demonstrations.

- a. John 14:16-17.
- b. Matt. 28:19.
- c. Heb. 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35.
- d. Gen. 1:1-3.
- e. II Thess. 2:7.
- f. John 16:8-11.
- g. John 15:26-27; Acts. 5:30-32.
- h. John 3:5-6.
- i. Eph. 1:13-14; Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:49; John 16:13; John 14:26; Rom. 8:1; Rom. 8:16; II Thess. 2:13; I Pet. 1:2; Rom 8:26-27; Gal. 5:22- 23; Eph. 5:18 -21.

ARTICLE IV - SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification has a twofold meaning: (a) that of setting apart of things, days, or persons specifically for God, and that the believer at the time of his regeneration is so set apart by God the Father; (b) the progressive work of the Holy Spirit whereby the believer, obedient to the Word of God experiences the power of the indwelling Christ for holiness of life and victory over the old nature, which work will be completed when the believer stands in Christ's presence.

- a. I Cor. 1:30; Heb. 10:10,14.
- b. Col. 1:26-28; John 17:17; I Thess. 5:23; II Cor. 3:18.

ARTICLE V - THE DEVIL, OR SATAN

We believe that Satan was once (a) holy and enjoyed heavenly honors; but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell and (b) drew after him a host of angels; that he is now (c) the malignant prince of the power of the air, and the unholy god of this world. (d) We hold him to be man's great tempter, (e) the enemy of God and His Christ, (f) the accuser of the saints, (g) the author, of all false religions, the chief power back of the present apostasy; (h) the Lord of the Antichrist, and (i) the author of all powers of darkness – destined however (j) to final defeat at the hands of God's Son, and (k) to the judgment of an eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for him and his angels.

- a. Isa. 14:12-15; Ezek. 28:14-17.
- b. Rev. 12:9; Jude 6; II Pet. 2:4.
- c. Eph. 2:2; John 14:30.
- d. I Pet. 5:8; I Thess. 3:5; Matt. 4:1, 3.
- e. Zech. 1:3; I John 3:8; Matt. 13:25, 37-39; Luke 22:3-4.
- f. Rev.12:10.
- g. II Cor. 11:13-15; Mark 13; 21-22.
- h. I John 4:3; II John 7; I John 2:22.
- i. Rev. 13:13-14; II Thess. 2:8-11.
- j. Rev. 19:11, 16, 20; Rev. 12:7-9; Rev. 20:1-3.
- k. Rev. 20:10; Matt. 25:41.

ARTICLE VI - THE CREATION

We believe in the Genesis account of creation, and (a) that it is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically or figuratively; (b) that man was created directly in God's own image and after his own likeness; (c) that man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species, or development through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms; (d) that all animal and vegetable life was made directly, and God's established law was they should bring forth only "after their kind."

- a. Gen. 1:1; Exod. 20:11; Acts. 4:24; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 11:3; John 1:3; Rev. 10:6; Rom. 1:20; Acts. 17:23-26; Jer. 10:12; Neh. 9:6.
- b. Gen. 1:26-27; I Cor. 11:7.
- c. Gen. 2:7; Gen. 2:21-23.
- d. Gen. 1:11; Gen. 1:24

ARTICLE VII - THE FALL OF MAN

We believe (a) that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker, but (b) by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state, (c) in consequence of which, all mankind are now sinners, not only by constraint, but of choice; and (d) therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse.

- a. Gen. 3:1-6, 24.
- b. Rom. 5:12; Rom 5:19.
- c. Rom. 3:10-19; Eph. 2:1, 3; Rom. 1:18; Ezek. 18:19-20.
- d. Rom. 1:32; Rom. 1:20; Rom. 1:28; Gal. 3:22.

ARTICLE VIII - THE VIRGIN BIRTH

We believe (a) that Jesus Christ was begotten of the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner; (b) born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of women, and (c) that He is both, the Son of God, and God, the Son.

- a. Gen. 3:15.
- b. Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; Mark 1:1; John 1:14; Psa.2:7; Gal. 4:4.
- c. I John 5:20; I Cor. 15:47.

ARTICLE IX - THE ATONEMENT FOR SIN

We believe (a) that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace (b) through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who by the appointment of the Father., freely took upon Him our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins; (c) that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust, Christ, the Lord, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree; (d) that, having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven, and uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection. He is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate and an all- sufficient Saviour.

- a. Eph. 2:8; Acts. 15:11; Rom. 3:24.
- b. John 3:16; Matt. 18:11; Phil 2:7; Heb. 2:14; Isa. 53:4-7; Rom.3:25; I John 4:10; I Cor. 15:3; II Cor. 5:21.
- c. John 10:18; Phil 2:8; Gal. 1:4; I Pet. 2:24; I Pet. 3:18; Isa.53:11; Heb. 12:2.
- d. I Cor. 15:20; Isa. 53:12; Heb. 9:12-15; Heb. 7:25; I John 2:2.

ARTICLE X - GRACE IN THE NEW CREATION

We believe (a) that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again (b) that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; (c) that it is instantaneous and not a process; (d) that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; (e) that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man,, wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; (f) that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruit of repentance and faith and newness of life.

- a. John 3:3.
- b. II Cor. 5:17.
- c. Luke 5:27; I John 5:1; John 3:6-7; Acts. 2:41; Acts. 16:30- 33.
- d. II Pet. 1:4; Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:1; II Cor. 5:19; Col. 2:13.
- e. John 3:8; John 1:12-13.
- f. Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:9.

ARTICLE XI - THE FREENESS OF SALVATION

We believe (a) in God's electing grace; (b) that the blessings of salvation are made free to all through the gospel; (c) that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent and obedient faith; and (d) that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel; (e) which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.

- a. I Thess. 1:4; Col. 3:12; I Pet. 1:2; Titus 1:1; Rom. 8:29-30.
- b. Mat. 11:28; Isa. 55:1; Rev. 22:17; Rom. 10:13; John 6:37.
- c. Isa. 55:6; Acts. 2:38.
- d. Isa. 55:7; John 3:15-16; I Tim. 1:15; I Cor. 15:10; Eph. 2:4-5; John 5:40.
- e. John 3:18; John 3:36.

ARTICLE XII - JUSTIFICATION

We believe that the great Gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is Justification; (a) that Justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness; (b) that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done; but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed unto us.

- a. Acts. 13:39; Isa. 53:11; Zech. 13:1; Rom. 8:1; Rom. 5:9; Rom. 5:1.
- b. Titus 3:5-7 Rom. 1:17; Hab. 2:4; Gal. 3:11; Rom. 4:1-8; Heb. 10:38.

ARTICLE XIII - REPENTANCE AND FAITH

We believe that Repentance and Faith are (a) solemn obligations, and (b) also inseparable graces, (c) wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God; (d) thereby, being deeply convicted of our guilt, danger and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession as supplication for mercy; (e) at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and openly confessing Him as our only and all sufficient Saviour.

- a. Acts 20:21.
- b. Mark 1:15.
- c. Acts 2:27-38.
- d. Luke 18:13; Rom. 10:13; Psa. 51:1-4,7; Isa. 55:6-7.
- e. Luke 12:8; Rom. 9:11.

ARTICLE XIV - THE CHURCH

We believe that a church of Christ is a congregation of immersed believers (a) associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel; (b) observing the ordinances of Christ; (c) governed by His laws; and (d) exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His word; (e) that its scripturally designated officers are pastors (elders) and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures; (f) we believe the true mission of the church is found in the great commission: First, to make individual disciples; second, to baptize them; Third, to teach and instruct, as He has commanded. We do not believe in the reversal of this order; (g) we hold that the local church has the absolute right of self government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only superintendent is Christ, through the Holy Spirit; (h) that it is scriptural for true churches to co-operate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel: that every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its co-operation; (i) on all matters of membership, of polity, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final.

- a. Acts 2:41, 42.
- b. Acts 2:42; I Cor. 11:2.
- c. Eph. 1:22-23.
- d. Eph. 4:11; I Cor. 12:4, 8-11.
- e. Acts 14:23; Acts 6:5-6; Acts 15:23; Acts 20:17-28; I Tim. 3:1-7; I Tim. 3:8-13.
- f. Matt. 28:19-20.
- g. Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:23-24; I Pet. 5:1-4.
- h. Acts 15:22; Jude 3-4; II Cor. 8:23-24; I Cor. 16:1; Mal. 3:10; Lev. 27:32; I Cor. 16:2.
- i. I Cor. 6:1-3; I Cor. 5:11-13.

ARTICLE XV - BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that Christian Baptism is (a) the believer's immersion in water; (b) into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, (c) to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Saviour, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; (d) that in scriptural order it (baptism) precedes the privileges of church membership and is the public recognition of the Lordship of Jesus Christ; (e) the Lord's Supper is a memorial service in which elements of bread and wine remind us of the love of God in Christ Jesus, "Who spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all," that this ordinance is to be observed in anticipation of His coming and preceded always by solemn self-examination.

- a. Acts 8:36-39; Matt.3:6; John 3:23; Rom. 6:4-5; Matt. 3:16.
- b. Matt. 28:19.
- c. Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12.
- d. Acts 2:41-42; Matt. 28:19-20.
- e. I Cor. 11:23-28; Rom. 8:32.

ARTICLE XVI - THE PERSEVERANCE AND PRESERVATION OF THE SAINTS

We believe (a) that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; (b) that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; (c) that special Providence watches over their welfare; and (d) that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto eternal salvation.

- a. John 8:31-32; Col. 1:21,23.
- b. I John 2:19; Matt.13:19-20.
- c. Rom.8:28; Matt. 6:30; Psa. 121:3; Heb. 1:14.
- d. I Pet.1:5; Phil 1:6; John 10:28; John 10:29; John 16:8; Rom. 8:35-39.

ARTICLE XVII - THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

We believe that (a) there are radical and essential differences between the righteous and the wicked; (b) that such only through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem; (c) while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse; (d) and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost.

- a. Mal.3:18; Gen. 18:23; Rom. 6:17-18; Prov. 11:31; I Pet. 4:18.
- b. Rom. 1:17; Rom. 6:16; I Cor. 15:22; Acts 10:34-35; I John 2:29; I John 3:7.
- c. I John 5:19; Gal. 3:10; Rom. 7:6; Rom. 6:16; Rom. 6:23.
- d. Prov. 14:32; Luke 16:25; Matt. 25:34, 41; John 8: 21; Luke 9:26; John 12:25; Matt. 7:13-14.

ARTICLE XVIII - CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is (a) of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society; (b) that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed; (c) except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ; (d) who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the kings of the earth.

- a. Rom. 13:1-7; II Sam. 23:3; Exod. 18:21-22.
- b. Acts 23:5; Matt. 22:21; Titus 3:1; I Pet 2:13-14; I Pet. 2:17.
- c. Acts 5:29; Acts 4:19-20; Dan. 3:17-18.
- d. Matt. 10:28; Matt. 23:10; Rev. 10:6; Phil. 2:10-11; Psa. 72:11.

ARTICLE XIX - THE RESURRECTION, RETURN OF CHRIST AND RELATED EVENTS

We believe in:

1. THE BODILY RESURRECTION.
 - a. Matt. 28:6-7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; I Cor. 15:4; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2, 4-6.
2. THE ASCENSION.
 - a. Acts 1:9; Acts.1:11; Luke 24:51; Marks 16:19; Rev. 3:21; Heb.8:1; Heb. 12:2.
3. THE HIGH PRIESTHOOD.
 - a. Heb. 8:6; I Tim. 2:5; I John 2:1; Heb. 2:17; Heb. 5:9-10.
4. THE SECOND COMING.
 - a. John 14:3; Acts. 1:11; I Thess. 4:16; Matt. 24:27;
 - b. Matt. 25:13; Jas 5:8; Matt. 24:42; Heb. 9:28.
5. THE RESURRECTION OF THE RIGHTEOUS DEAD.
 - a. I Thess. 4:16; I Cor. 15:42-44; I Cor. 15:52.
6. THE CHANGE OF THE LIVING IN CHRIST.
 - a. I Cor. 15:51-53; I Thess. 4:17; Phil 3:20-21.
7. ON THE THRONE OF DAVID.
 - a. Luke 1:32; Isa. 9:6-7.
 - b. Acts 2:29-30.
8. HIS REIGN ON EARTH.
 - a. I Cor. 15:25; Isa. 32:1; Isa. 11:4-5; Psa. 72:8; Rev. 20:1- 4; Rev. 20:6.

"And may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work, to do His will, working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory, forever and ever. Amen."