COLONIAL HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH
STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Bible is the written revelation of God and is composed of the 66 books held within the canon of Scripture. It is inspired by God, inerrant in the original documents, infallible in its teaching, and authoritative in our lives. Furthermore, we believe in dual authorship, meaning that the Holy Spirit used human authors with individual personalities to compose the Scriptures without error in whole or in part. The Bible is the only infallible rule of faith and practice. It provides exactly what is needed for the believer as it transforms, encourages, corrects, and trains. Ultimately, all Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation. *Psalm 119:11; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:14-16; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21.*

God, as the only one true God, is perfect in all His attributes, eternal in all His character, and glorious in His holiness. As the perfect creator of all, He displays complete justice as He rightly rules and sovereignly reigns over all creation. Yet, in His perfect character, God is love. The triune God is one God in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He is deserving of all worship for all eternity.

- **Trinity –** *Matthew 28:19*

    - **God the Father** is the first person of the Trinity. He orders all things according to His purpose and grace. The Father is all-powerful, all-knowing, all-loving, and all-wise. He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass and continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events. He does this in such a way as to not be the author or approver of sin nor to remove the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures. He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. *Genesis 1:1; Psalm 103:19; Romans 14:12; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 1:3-6, 11*

    - **God the Son** is the second person of the Trinity and is named Jesus Christ. He has all the divine attributes and is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus was the incarnate God and as such He surrendered only the prerogatives of deity but nothing of the divine essence. In His incarnation Christ's divine nature united itself with a human nature in an indissoluble union, and so He became the God-man. Jesus was born of the virgin Mary to reveal God, redeem mankind, and rule over God's kingdom. Jesus died a substitutionary death on the cross and was raised from the dead. He then appeared before His disciples and at least 500 others at one time before He ascended into heaven. He is now exalted at the right hand of the Father where he is the only mediator between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate his redemptive mission. *Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:31-35; John 1:1-3,14; John 10:30; Acts 4:12*

- **God the Holy Spirit** is the third person of the trinity and is a divine person, eternal, underived, possessing all the divine attributes, coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will to men. He had and has sovereign activity within creation, the incarnation of Christ, the written revelation, and the work of salvation. The broad scope of His divine activity includes convicting the world of sin, glorifying Jesus Christ, and transforming believers into Christ-likeness. Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation, and it is the Holy Spirit who alone administers spiritual gifts to the church. In looking at the whole of the New Testament, we teach that the gifts of tongues, healing, and prophecy were evangelistic gifts in the beginning days of the church for the purpose of confirming the gospel message and were not intended by God to be part of normative church worship and service. We also teach that (1) because God is sovereign and supreme, and (2) because the confirming sign gifts are indeed genuine gifts of the Holy Spirit that He can give and has given to born-again men and women at various times for His purposes, God may certainly choose, in His sole discretion, to give these gifts at specific times and places in the modern church, especially in remote missionary contexts. The confirming gift would be for God's glory and His purpose and not to give glory to men. *John 3:5-7; Romans 15:13; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; Galatians 5:22-23; 2 Peter 1:20-21*

Man, referring to all humanity, is uniquely created in the image of God. As image bearers of God, male and female are the crowning work of His creation. Gender, therefore, is a gift and a part of the goodness of God on display. In the beginning man was innocent of sin, but man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Because the first man, Adam, committed a sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God, man lost his innocence, incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death, and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. With no powers to enable him to recover himself, man is hopelessly lost, apart from the salvation which is the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ. All men are in the bloodline of Adam, thus a sin nature as well as the consequences of that original sin has been transmitted (imputed) to all men of all ages, Jesus Christ being the exception. All men are thus sinners by divine declaration, by nature and by choice. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the purpose of God. God created man in His own image and Christ died for all mankind; therefore, every person from every people, nation, tribe, and tongue possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and love. *Genesis 1:27; Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:9-12; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3*

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man and is offered freely to all who surrender to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. Salvation is a gift from God by grace through the redemption of Jesus Christ by the merit of His shed blood. Salvation cannot be achieved on the basis of human works. Salvation is found by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. Therefore, it is a free gift from God not attributed to any merit or work of man. Yet in His sovereignty God has chosen to place the

responsibility of faith on man. Therefore, repentance and faith are never separated from each other. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acknowledgment of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire person to Him as Lord and Savior. Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross. His death was voluntary, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive. Upon the basis of the efficacy of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, the penalty, the power, and one day the very presence of sin. As believers in Christ, we are declared righteous, given eternal life, and admitted to the family of God. Our justification is proven by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father where He is ministering as our Advocate and High Priest. By the resurrection of Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of Christ. In addition, God accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross and His bodily resurrection as the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers. Jesus Christ will return to receive the Church. He is the coming universal King who will reign on the throne of David. He is the final Judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as the Lord of life and the only Savior. *Romans 3:21-26; Romans 8:14-17 Ephesians 1:7; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:18-19*

- **Regeneration**, being born again, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart brought about by a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Regeneration is instantaneous, and it is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God, securing voluntary obedience to the Gospel. Good works are its proper evidence and fruit. *John 3:3-7; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:8-10; 1 John 5:12*

- **Justification** before God is an act of God by which He declares righteous those who believe in Christ. This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man and involves the imputation of our sins to Christ and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us. By this means, God is revealed as "just, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus." *Romans 3:20, 26; Romans 8:33; Galatians 2:16*

- **Sanctification** is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of His holiness. It is a progressive work begun in regeneration and carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means – especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer. *2 Corinthians 3:18; Philippians 2:12-13; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Peter 3:18*

- **Glorification** is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed. *Romans 8:30*

The Church is a congregation of baptized believers associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel, observing the ordinances of Christ, and governed by the Word of God. All who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately baptized by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual Body, the Church, which is the Bride of Christ. The Church is a spiritual

organism designed by Christ, made up of all born-again believers in this present age. *Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18*

- **Mission**: We teach that the purpose of the Church is to glorify God by making disciples of all nations. *Matthew 28:18-20*

- **Local Church**: We teach that the establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament, and that the members of this one spiritual Body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies. *Acts 14:23*

- **Autonomy**: We teach the autonomy of the local church, free from any external authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations. *1 Corinthians 5:4; Ephesians 1:22*

- **Officers**: The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders (also called bishops, pastors, and pastor teachers) and deacons. Both must meet biblical qualifications. *Acts 6:3; 1 Peter 5:1-3*

- **Church Discipline**: We teach the value of redemption-oriented discipline of church members who are in willful sin in accordance with scripture. *Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1-2*

- **Responsibility**: All believers ought to act in obedience to God's Word as they serve, give of their resources, use their gifts, and share the burdens of fellow church members. *Romans 12:4-8*

- **Ordinances**: We teach that two ordinances have been committed to the local church - baptism and the Lord's Supper.

    - **Christian baptism** by immersion is the testimony of a believer. This act is a symbol of the believer's faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior; union with Him in death to sin; and resurrection to a new life. It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible Body of Christ. *Matthew 28:19-20; Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13*

    - **The Lord's Supper** is the act of remembering and celebrating Christ's death until He comes and should always be preceded by self-examination. While Christ's flesh and blood are not actually present, the Lord's Supper is nevertheless an actual communion with the risen Christ who is present in a unique way, fellowshipping with His people. *Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11:25-26*

- **Sending**: It is the role and responsibility of the church to send out laborers into the harvest of lost souls. It is necessary to follow the Great Commission in the local

neighborhood and in all nations. All church members are called to fulfill the command of Jesus through personal evangelism and discipleship. Additionally, some are called by God to serve as missionaries to effectively plant churches where the gospel has not yet been preached. *Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 10:2*

The Family has been ordained by God and is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is one man and one woman bound together for life. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church. Marriage is the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle examples and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents. While we value married couples, we also value single adults as Scripture teaches. *Genesis 1:26-28; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Psalm 127; Ephesians 5:21-33, 6:1-4; 1 Corinthians 7*

The End will come. God, in His timing, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth, the dead will be raised, and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. Those bearing their own unrighteousness will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. Those clothed in the righteousness of Christ will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord. *Matthew 24:1-14; 30-31; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18*