

APPENDIX #1: ARTICLES of FAITH

(A Part of EMCC Bylaw #1)

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1. ABOUT THE BIBLE

1.1. We believe that the Bible, consisting of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, is divinely inspired, infallible, entirely trustworthy, and the only final authority in all matters of faith and conduct. The Bible, as originally written under the inspiration and supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit by human authors, is the Word of God, the supreme source of truth for Christian belief. The Bible reveals who God is, exposes who we are in light of His holiness, proclaims God’s merciful salvation and teaches and trains Christ’s followers how to grow in relationship with God and others.¹

2. ABOUT GOD

2.1. We believe in the one true, living and holy God who is a self-existent, eternal, personal Spirit eternally existent as a trinity of three persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These persons are distinct but inseparable, one in essence, power, and glory. God is the transcendent and immanent Creator, Sustainer and Ruler of all things visible and invisible.²

2.2. We believe that the Father is eternally the Father of the Son, the author of salvation, and now the Father of all who are born again into new life through faith in Christ.³

¹ Ps. 119:105; Matt. 4:4; John 17:17; II Tim. 3:16-17; Heb. 4:12; II Peter 1:20-21

² Gen. 1:1-2; Isa.44:6-8; John 1:1-3,14; I Cor. 2:9-12; Col. 1:15-16, 2:9; Heb. 1:3

³ Gen. 1:1. Ps. 90:2. John 13:3; Eph. 1:2-4; I Pet. 1:2-4

- 2.3. We believe in Jesus Christ in whom the divine and human natures are inseparably united. He is truly God and truly man, the eternal Son of God in the flesh, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin, Mary. He came to reveal the Father, announce the arrival of God's Kingdom with word, miracles and deeds, and to offer Himself up as a sinless atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world. He was physically raised from the dead and then exalted to the right hand of the Father.
- 2.4. In fulfilling the earthly mission of His first coming, Jesus demonstrated a life of victory on our behalf over Satan and sin, provided the only way for people to be rescued from sin, and opened the way to live a holy life as participants in the Kingdom of God. He continues now as the only Mediator between God and humanity. Jesus will, at the Father's appointed time, come again in power and glory.⁴
- 2.5. We believe in the Holy Spirit - who is fully God and, while not to be confused with the Father and Son, remains one with the Father and the Son in being, majesty, and glory. The Holy Spirit convinces of the need of a saving relationship with God and engages every person who trusts and follows Jesus in a life-giving relationship. Through His indwelling presence, the Holy Spirit gives the believer spiritual life, assurance of salvation, understanding and guidance in all truth, and power to live out the Christian life. The Holy Spirit gives all believers the ability to accomplish God's purposes for their lives with spiritual abilities and gifts to use for God's glory and the service of others.

3. ABOUT HUMANITY

- 3.1. We believe that God created humankind in His image, male and female, to enjoy a loving relationship with Him and with one another. God specially created humankind as the climax of His creative work on earth and established the family, based on covenant marriage between one man and one woman, as the building block of human community. We believe individual human lives are to be valued from conception, because God loves each one at every stage of life and desires that each one will come to know and love Him.

⁴ Matt. 1:18-25, 4:17, 23; Luke 23-24; John 1:1-18, 6:37-47, 10:10; 14:6; I Cor.15:3-8; Heb. 4:14-15, 9:14-15; Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Tim. 2:4-6a

- 3.2. Through human rebellion against God, we have fallen and have come to be marred by a sinful nature. Humanity, apart from Christ, is now spiritually dead and, unless born again through Christ, cannot see the kingdom of God. We, in our own strength, without divine grace, cannot do good works pleasing and acceptable to God or bring glory to Him as we were designed to do. Through the finished work of Christ and God's grace experienced in the influence and empowering of the Holy Spirit individuals are enabled to exercise their will to accept God's gift and will.
- 3.3. Personal acceptance of Christ's redemptive work results in a restored relationship with God and freedom to fulfill our created purpose through the power of the Holy Spirit.⁵

4. ABOUT SALVATION

- 4.1. We believe that in spite of our rebellion, God still loves all of humanity and has mercifully extended His life-giving grace toward us. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, people who believe in Him are forgiven of sin and declared righteous (justification), are made spiritually alive (regeneration), and are set apart into a never-ending relationship with Him as holy people who are being renewed in the image of God (sanctification).
- 4.2. True belief will be evidenced by heartfelt repentance from and godly sorrow for sin, complete trust (faith) in Jesus Christ as Saviour, and surrender to His will as Lord. Spiritual life will result in spiritual fruit in a life increasingly marked by love for God, fellow believers and the lost.
- 4.3. Salvation is God's gracious gift, to be accepted through faith, through which the believer can be assured of personal salvation which speaks to the past in the forgiveness of sins, to the present of a continuing walk with Christ, and to the future with the promise of resurrection life. Our assurance is in our continuing relationship with Christ by faith. As a result of the saving grace of Christ, the believer can experience a Spirit-filled, Spirit-gifted, and Spirit-led life of victory over sin. In submission to the Spirit the believer's life will show increasing alignment with the Great Commandment and Great Commission of Jesus.⁶

⁵ Gen. 6:5; John 3:3-7; Rom.3:10,18, 23; Eph. 2:1-3; Titus 2:11-14

⁶ Matt. 10:22; 22:37-40; 28:18-20; John 3:16-21; 15:4; Acts 2:22-42; Rom. 5:1-2, 6:11,19-23; II Cor. 5:14-6:2; Eph. 2:8-10

5. ABOUT THE CHURCH

5.1. We believe that the true Church consists of all people everywhere who have been reborn through personal participation, by faith, in the death and resurrection of Christ, being called out to become part of the body of which Christ is the Head. The Church is visible to the world when believers gather in community and when they are active in serving and blessing others in Jesus' name. The Church is the evidence of God's saving work and a strategic part of God's plan to reflect His grace, proclaim His truth, and extend His care to the world. The people of God have been sent on mission to the world – to love and worship God in a spirit of unity, to teach the Word of God, to celebrate Baptism and Communion, to encourage all people to follow Jesus, and to participate in the ever-growing kingdom of God.⁷

6. ABOUT THINGS TO COME

- 6.1. We believe that God intervenes in the affairs of this world. At the time of God's choosing, Jesus will bodily return to the earth in power and glory to judge and rule the world, as God's Kingdom is fully and forever established.
- 6.2. We believe the promise of Scripture that God will create a new heaven and a new earth which will be the eternal dwelling place of those who have been made righteous in Christ.
- 6.3. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all humanity to stand before God for final judgment. Those who have not accepted His life-giving grace will be raised to experience eternal punishment being separated from God and all that is good. Those who have trusted in Christ will be raised to live eternally in God's presence and receive the promised reward.⁸

⁷ Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22-23, 2:19-22, 3:8-11, 14-21; 4:1-16; Col. 1:18-23

⁸ Matt. 16:27; 25:31-46; John 5:24-29. 14:1-6; Acts 17:31; Rev. 20:11-15; 21:1-9