Apostolic Church of God
Articles of Faith and Doctrine
Contents

Preamble ........................................................................................................ iii

Article I: The Bible ........................................................................................................ 1

Article II: The Godhead .......................................................................................... 5

Article III: The Person and work
   of our Lord Jesus Christ .................................................................................. 9

Article IV: The Holy Ghost ........................................................................................ 13

Article V: The Personality of Satan ............................................................................. 17

Article VI: Man .......................................................................................................... 21

Article VII: Total Depravity ...................................................................................... 25

Article VIII: Salvation ................................................................................................. 29

Article IX: Grace ......................................................................................................... 33

Article X: Eternal Security and the
   Final Perseverance of the Saints of God ............................................................... 37

Article XI: Unconditional Election: Predestination .................................................. 41

Article XII: The Church ............................................................................................... 45

Article XIII: Homosexuality ......................................................................................... 49

Article XIVa: The Ordinances: Baptism ...................................................................... 51

Article XIVb: The Ordinances: The Lord’s Supper ..................................................... 55

Article XV: The Second Coming of the Lord ................................................................. 59

Article XVI: Judgments ................................................................................................. 61
The following Articles of Faith and Doctrine of the Apostolic Church of God comprise lists of beliefs that define the fundamental theology of our church. The Apostolic Church of God accepts the full and final authority of Holy Scriptures as the basis for all that it believes. As such we are followers of the Apostles’ Doctrine. “And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42). All members of the Apostolic Church of God are expected to adhere to these Articles of Faith and Doctrine because they are based upon the Bible. These Articles of Faith and Doctrine do not exhaust the content of our beliefs.

All biblical text quoted or referenced in this document are from the King James Version of the Bible.
Article I

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.
2 Timothy 3:16
SECTION 1

WE BELIEVE that “all scripture is given by inspiration of God . . .,” and that it is the “God-breathed” words of the Bible that are “useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness.” Consequently, every word and every sentence, in both the Old and New Testaments, in their original autographs, were written in complete agreement with God’s purpose and divine will (2 Pet. 1:21; Matt. 5:18; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

SECTION 2

WE BELIEVE that the true understanding of Scripture cannot be achieved without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Only a born-again Christian can truly understand Scripture and believe that Scripture is the actual Word of God. The Bible, the breathed Word of God, is given directly to His Elect—His chosen people (Rom. 10:17). The Bible has a transforming, guiding power, which leads us to a personal encounter with the living God (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 4:20-24; Heb. 4:12).

SECTION 3

WE BELIEVE the words of the Bible are the guiding principles by which our souls are nourished and led into holiness, bringing us closer to God. The Word of God—the Bible—reveals to us God Himself: God’s attributes, God’s will, and God’s plan for salvation. Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, God reveals what we are to believe and how we are to live as children of God (1 John 3:1-3).

SECTION 4

WE BELIEVE the Bible is inerrant in the original autographs. The Bible is fully truthful in all that it affirms; it is infallible, God-breathed, and the complete and final authority for faith and salvation (2 Tim. 3:16-17; Matt. 5:17-18; John 10:35). Nothing can be added to or subtracted
from God’s words, “Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you” (Deut. 4:2).

SECTION 5

WE BELIEVE the Holy Spirit is the divine author of Scripture (2 Pet. 1:21). In the Old Testament, we find the expression “The LORD spake unto Moses” (e.g., Ex. 14:1). Similarly, in the New Testament, we find in 1 Cor. 2:13 that the writer’s words were “not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” The Old Testament Prophets and the New Testament Apostles declared the whole will of God. They did not speak (write) from their own will but from God’s will; they “spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Pet. 1:21). The Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of Truth (John 16:13), was the source of inspiration, who directed and carried the Word of God to the writers who wrote under the will and unction of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit ensured that they wrote precisely what God wanted written, without error or omission.

The Bible clearly teaches that God cannot lie or speak falsely (2 Sam. 7:28; Titus 1:2). Therefore, every word in Scripture is completely true and without error in any part (Num. 23:19; Ps. 12:6, 119:89, 96; Prov. 30:5; Matt. 24:35). We serve a trustworthy God. His words are the definition of truth and the ultimate standard of truth (John 17:17). To disobey the Word of God is to disobey God.
Article II

The Godhead

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

John 4:24
SECTION 1

WE BELIEVE that in the Godhead there is one Triune God, who is Creator of all (Deut. 6:4; John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16), eternally existing in three distinct manifestations, or modes, of being. We do not believe in the Orthodox Trinitarian perspective of the Godhead. Orthodox Trinitarians believe in the one Triune God, but they also believe that in the Godhead there are three eternal persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—one in substance but three in subsistence. We believe that the Triune God consists of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and each is fully God, perfect in intellect, emotion, love, and will (2 Cor. 13:14). The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, and the Holy Ghost is eternal; however, there are not three eternals but One Eternal. These three are One in being, essence, power, and glory, having the same attributes and perfections (John 10:30).

The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. The Father is immutable (He does not change), the Son is immutable, and the Holy Ghost is immutable. There are not three immutables but One Immutable, unchangeable in His nature, perfections, purposes/will, promises/sovereignty, and gifts/grace (Mal. 3:6; Jer. 33:3; James 1:17). God does not change. There are not three Gods but One God (Deut. 6:4; 1 Kings 8:60; Is. 44:6–8, 45:5–6, 21–22; 1 Tim. 3:16). God does not change; however, He does act and feel differently in response to different conditions.

SECTION 2

WE BELIEVE that “God is a Spirit” (John 4:24). God’s mode of existence is different from everything that He has created. Everything about God is perfect; He is the excellence of being. Neither the heavens nor earth can contain Him (1 Kings 8:27). God is infinite and has no boundaries—without measure.
God is wise—He always chooses the best possible means for the realization of His purpose or will. “To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen” (Rom. 16:27). “With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding” (Job 12:13). God, who is omniscient, uses His knowledge to achieve His purpose or will in a way that glorifies Him (Rom. 11:33; Eph. 1:11; Col. 1:16). God’s wisdom is seen in His creation (Ps.104:24), and in His plan of salvation through Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:24, 30). “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever” (Ps. 111:10). “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom…” (Prov. 9:10).

God is truthful, and the God revealed in Bible is the true God. “But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation” (Jer. 10:10).

SECTION 3

WE BELIEVE in the justice and righteousness of God. “He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he” (Deut. 32:4). Since God is just, He must punish sinners because sin deserves punishment. God always does what is right, and God’s righteousness is the standard for righteousness.

SECTION 4

WE BELIEVE in the omniscience of God. Omniscience means that God knows everything tangible and achievable, things past, things present, and things in the future, in one eternal act. The past, present, and future are the same with God (Rom. 4:17; Is. 46:10; Acts 15:18). God “is perfect in knowledge” (Job 37:16), and He “knows everything” (1 John 3:20; 1 Cor. 2:10-11).
SECTION 5

WE BELIEVE in the omnipresence of God. Scripture teaches us that God is omnipresent, meaning that He is everywhere present, or everywhere at the same time. There is no point in time when God is not present. God has no beginning, ending, or succession of moments in His Being—He distinguishes all time equally. Yet, God sees actions in time and acts in time. God is limitless with respect to time and space, whereas all things that are known to humanity are restricted to one place and time. This means that when they are here they are not there. It is not so with God (1 Kings 8:27; Ps. 139:7-12). God is present at every point of space with His whole Being, but through His might, God is capable of acting differently in different places concurrently.

SECTION 6

WE BELIEVE in the omnipotence, or sovereignty, of God. God has the power to do or obtain His holy will. God is in absolute authority, or control, to do whatever He decides to do. He is that by definition. He is the Creator of the universe and is free to dispose of it at His will (1 Sam. 2:6-8; 1 Chr. 29:11-13; Matt. 6:13). There are no constraints on God; He is not limited (Ps. 24:8). To the rhetorical question raised in Scripture “Is anything too hard for the LORD?” (Gen. 18:14; Jer. 32:27), we can respond with a resounding no! Nothing is too hard for the Lord (Jer. 32:17).
Article III

The Person and Work of Our Lord Jesus Christ

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6
SECTION 1

WE BELIEVE in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is God manifested in flesh. Although He became man, He never ceased being God. He is Emmanuel, “God with us” (Matt. 1: 23). He is fully God, the manifested image of God in flesh, who became man in order that He, as the Son of God, might redeem sinful humanity. He is the Savior of the world (Matt. 1:21; John 1:18; Col. 1:15). Jesus Christ was totally God and totally man in one being, and He will be so eternally (Luke 1:26-35; 1 Tim. 3:16).

SECTION 2

WE BELIEVE in the humanity of Jesus Christ. When Jesus Christ came in the flesh, He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary. The virgin birth made possible the uniting of full deity and full humanity in one person (Col. 2:9-10). “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons” (Gal. 4:4–5). This was the method God used to send His Son into the world as a man (John 3:16). God sent His own Son “in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. 8:3). His Son “knew no sin” (2 Cor. 5:21), “and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3). Thus, Jesus’ virgin birth demonstrates that salvation can only come from the Lord.

SECTION 3

WE BELIEVE that Jesus Christ came into the world to die on the cross for all humanity (1 John 2:2) as a substitutionary sacrifice (Is. 53:5-6) for all who would believe in Him (John 3:16; 1 Cor. 15:3-4 ; 1 John 4:2–3). Jesus’ substitutionary death paid the full penalty for all of our sins. We hold that Jesus Christ’s death is efficacious for all who believe (John 1:12; Acts 16:31), that our justification is grounded in the shedding of His blood (Rom. 5:9; Heb 9:22), and that it is confirmed by His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matt. 28:6; 1 Pet. 1:3).
Jesus Christ is the suffering servant whom God Himself elects, “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him... (Is. 42:1-4). “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him...” (Matt. 17:5). “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man” (Heb. 2:9). “Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high” (Is. 52:13). Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was “despised” and “rejected” (Is. 53:3-5). Jesus Himself “bare our sins in his own body on the tree” (1 Pet. 2:24).

SECTION 4

WE BELIEVE that Jesus Christ died on the cross, was raised from the dead by God, and, after spending forty days with His disciples, ascended into heaven in His glorified body (1 Cor. 15:1-7; Luke 24:45-50; Acts 1:9-10). The Lord Jesus Christ is now seated at the right hand of God, as our High Priest and Advocate (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25). When Jesus rose from the dead, He became the “first fruits” (1 Cor. 15:20, 23) of a new type of human existence, an existence in which His body was made perfect, no longer subject to weakness, aging, or death—able to live eternally. Christ died as a propitiation for our sins (Rom. 3:25). Propitiation is a covering—not in the sense that it hides our sins but in the sense that it blots them out and destroys them. Because of Jesus’ resurrection, we have the surety that we will also receive perfect, resurrection bodies (1Cor. 6:14). In Christ, God was reconciling the world to Himself (2 Cor. 5:18–19). Christ’s resurrection ensures our regeneration (1 Pet. 1:3), and it assures our justification (Rom. 4:25).

SECTION 5

WE BELIEVE that in God’s own time, Jesus Christ will return, those who died in Christ will be resurrected, and the children of God who are alive at that time will be changed and be caught up with them in the air (1
Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:13-17). Christ’s ascension into heaven foreshadows our future ascension into heaven. As children of God, we are united with Christ and our final home will be in heaven with Him (John 14:2–3). Christ’s return is the completion of God’s process of redemption—the gathering of God’s people, which is the Church (Luke 21:28, John 11:50-52), in new spiritual bodies adapted to an eternal existence in heaven (1 Cor. 15:44; 1 Cor. 15:52-53). To each of the gathered Christians, Jesus will say, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord” (Matt. 25:21).
Article IV

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 1:8
SECTION 1

WE BELIEVE in the deity of the Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit, who is also called the Comforter (John 14:26). He came to teach us all things by illuminating the hearts and minds of Believers, as they study the Word of God (John 14:26; 1 Cor. 2:9-11). The Holy Spirit is the One who guides Believers into all truth (John 16:13), the knowledge of all truth, which is only found in Jesus Christ (John 14:6). The Holy Spirit also reproves the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:8-11; Acts 7:51); and He produces righteousness, which is the “fruit of the Spirit,” in Believers (Gal. 5:22–23).

The Holy Spirit causes Believers to grow in holiness and righteousness by enabling us through the Spirit to “put to death the deeds of the body” and grow in personal holiness (Rom. 7:6, 8:13; Phil. 1:19). He also empowers Believers to be Christ’s witnesses (Acts 1:8).

The Holy Spirit baptizes all into one community, the Church. The community of Believers is marked by unity: “And all that believed were together…” (Acts 2:44–47). The Holy Spirit is the One who sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts (Rom. 5:5; Gal. 5:22; Col. 1:8). “And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness” (Col. 3:14). “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:13).

SECTION 2

WE BELIEVE that the Holy Spirit is not a second work of grace. There are no New Testament texts that encourage us to seek for a second experience of “baptism in the Holy Spirit” that comes after conversion. Through conversion all Believers have experienced the “baptism of the Holy Spirit.” “One Lord, one faith, one baptism” refers to Spirit baptism, which every Believer has received at conversion (Eph. 4:5).
SECTION 3

WE BELIEVE in speaking in tongues as the Spirit of God gives utterance (Acts 2:4, 10:46, 19:6). Speaking in tongues is prayer or praise from a Saint of God that is directed to God. The experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit may or may not result in speaking in tongues. Many Christians throughout history have experienced powerful infillings of the Holy Spirit that have not been accompanied by speaking in tongues. The changed life of a Believer is the true evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit (Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 3:18, 5:17; 1 John 3:14-15).

SECTION 4

WE BELIEVE the Holy Spirit “beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God” (Rom. 8:16), and gives evidence of the work of God within us (1 John 3:24, 4:13). The Holy Spirit witnesses to us not only that we are God’s children, but also He witnesses that God abides in us and that we are abiding in Him. God uses the Holy Spirit to convince His children of the truth of His will, which cannot be understood without the divine help of the Holy Spirit.

SECTION 5

WE BELIEVE the Holy Spirit is the active presence of God in the world and does the work of God. After Jesus’ ascension, the Holy Spirit is the primary manifestation of God in the world. He completes and sustains what God the Father has designed and what God the Son has created (Gen. 1:2; John 1:3). Jesus Christ baptizes all Believers into His body through the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:12-14), and the Holy Spirit is the One who seals all Believers unto the day of redemption—the guarantee, or surety, that every Believer will reap the benefits of salvation (Eph. 1:13-14). As such, the Holy Spirit is the source of new life; He regenerates sinners (Titus 3:5), and He permanently indwells every Believer (Rom. 8:9), continually revealing God to us as we grow in righteousness through the grace of God.
Article V

The Personality of Satan

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

Isaiah 14:12-15
SECTION 1

WE BELIEVE that Satan is a personality who is called the devil, the old serpent (Rev. 12:9), Lucifer (Is. 14:12), the Accuser (Zech. 3:1; Rev 12:10), Apollyon (Rev. 9:7–11), the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4), the prince and power of the air (Eph. 2:2). Satan was originally a great and good angel; yet, he rebelled against God, and as chief of the fallen angels, he took a host of angels with him. He was cast out of God’s presence and, as a usurper of God’s law, established a counter-kingdom of darkness and evil on the earth and declared, “I will exalt my throne above the stars of God” (Is. 14:12-17).

SECTION 2

WE BELIEVE Satan is the author of sin (1 John 3:8), and the source of temptation and humanity’s consequent fall. Satan is the adversary of God and humanity (Matt. 4:1); his final doom, along with his hosts, shall be eternal punishment in the lake of fire, which God created for Satan and his fallen angels (Matt. 25:41, Rev. 12:9-10, 20:1-2, 7-10). Satan was a “murderer from the beginning” and is “a liar and the father of it” (John 8:44). Satan and his demons will use everything at their disposal, such as lies (John 8:44), deception (Rev. 12:9), and murder (Ps. 106:37), to tempt the Elect to turn from God and remain trapped in his kingdom of darkness. “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2 Cor. 4:4). Satan is responsible for sin and misery, in this world and in the coming damnation of the reprobate.

SECTION 3

WE BELIEVE Satan is a distinct person who was created without sin. Satan, as a created being, is limited to actions allowed by God, God’s permissive will (Job 1:10-12, 2:5-7). As a created being, Satan is not omniscient, omnipresent, or omnipotent. He will be defeated by God who is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent. He is “Beelzebub the prince
of the devils” (Matt. 12:24). He is the constant enemy of God, of Christ, of the kingdom of God, and of the Body of Christ—the Church. Satan is the father of lies and wickedness, he is the embodiment of evil, and he is like a “roaring lion ... seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet. 5:8). Christians are called to resist Satan so that he will flee from them (James 4:7).

Revelation 12:9 reveals Satan’s plan for undermining God’s plan of salvation. Satan seeks to deceive “the whole world.” His main motivation seems to be to destroy the Elect—those set apart by God for salvation. Satan is an incredibly clever being, and to fight against him we must be covered with the “whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil” (Eph. 6:11; 2 Cor. 4:4). Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is greater than Satan!
Man

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Genesis 1:26-27
SECTION 1

WE BELIEVE that humanity is the special creation of God and not a result of evolution. Men and women are created in God’s image (after His own likeness) as rational, moral, and spiritual beings to fellowship with Him and give Him glory. “Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him” (Is. 43:7). Humanity is the crowning work of God’s creation, “For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour” (Ps. 8:4-5). In the creation, Adam and Eve were innocent of sin and were endowed by God with freedom of choice. As the highest form of earthly life, man was commanded to rule over God’s creation (Gen.1:26; Ps. 8:6).

By Adam’s voluntary transgression, man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race (Rom. 5:12). As a result, all of humanity became separated from God, the image of God in humanity was distorted, and the sin nature passed on to all their descendants—universal sin (Rom. 3:23, 5:14). By the actions of one man, Adam, all of humanity is now in a sinful state, a state of total depravity, not by constraint but by choice, and therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse. “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).

SECTION 2

WE BELIEVE that sinful humanity—unregenerate sinners—lives under the domination of sin and Satan. At enmity with God, humanity became the subject of divine wrath—sentenced to both physical and spiritual death. Humanity is utterly unable to cure its lost estate (Eph. 2:1-5, 12). Only the grace of God can bring men and women back into holy fellowship with God and enable them to fulfill the creative purpose of God: “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins” (Eph. 2:1).
SECTION 3

WE BELIEVE that humanity is lost and without hope apart from salvation in Christ. Unregenerate humanity does not seek “after God … they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one” (Rom. 3:10-18). Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was manifested to destroy the works of the devil; He gave His life and shed His blood to redeem and restore humanity back to God—atoning for our sins. “He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8).
Article VII

**Total Depravity**

As it is written, *There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*

*Romans 3:10-12*
SECTION 1

WE BELIEVE in the total depravity of humanity. We believe that all humanity, as a consequence of Adam’s fall (Gen. 6:5; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 5:12), has inherited a sinful nature—enslaved (John 8:34) to the service of sin (Ecc. 7:20; Rom. 3:23). The human spirit will inevitably sin from birth and lack any spiritual good; every part of our being is affected by sin (Ps. 58:3; Rom. 7:18; Titus 1:15). Humanity is inherently wicked (Jer. 17:9; Gen. 6:5).

SECTION 2

WE BELIEVE that sin is universal in humanity, “for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23), and that sin is extremely offensive to God. This does not mean that all people are equally bad, as bad as any given person can be, or that humanity has been stripped of all virtue. It does mean, however, that by the Fall, humanity is in a state of sin, and has lost all ability or will to do anything to save itself (Eph. 2:1-3, 12; 1 Cor. 2:14; Jer. 13:23). The human will is not free; it is in bondage to its evil nature. Humanity will not seek God (Rom. 3:10-11) because they love darkness rather than light (John 3:19). Also, humanity apart from Christ does not even understand the things of God (1 Cor. 2:14), much less their need for Christ. Without the work of Christ in our lives, we would be like all other unbelievers, “having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart” (Eph. 4:18). Being born-again, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, makes sinners alive and gives them a new nature and the victory over the sinful nature. “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Cor. 15:22).

SECTION 3

WE BELIEVE that humanity is guilty and in a lost condition apart from Christ (Rom. 2:1). Not only do we as sinners lack any spiritual good, but also we lack the ability to do anything that will glorify God—the
ability to draw closer to God through our own might (Heb. 11:6). Men and women are born dead in transgression, which implies that humanity, before Christ, is incapable of raising itself to spiritual life (Ps. 51:5; Jer. 13:23; Eph. 2:1, 5). Humanity is utterly unable to remedy its lost state (Eph. 2:1-5, 12). But in this state, humanity is totally unable to accept Jesus Christ and the salvation He freely offers (Rom. 3:10-11). The only remedy for humanity’s lost condition is belief in the Gospel—the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-4; John 14:6).
Article VIII

Salvation.

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation…. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Romans 10:9-10, 13
SECTION 1

WE BELIEVE that salvation is the deliverance from the habit and domination of sin in this life (Gal. 2:19-20) and of its eternal consequences. Salvation delivers us “from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God…” (Rom. 8:18-23). Salvation is the sovereign act of God, bringing us from spiritual death to spiritual life—regenerated, born-again. Salvation means being saved from “wrath,” or God’s judgment of sin (Rom. 5:9; 1 Thess. 5:9). Due to the fall of Adam, we entered a sinful state—separated from God—and the consequence of being in a sinful state is death, spiritual death (Rom. 6:23). Salvation removes sin and restores us to our original state, being in communion with God, which is eternal life.

SECTION 2

WE BELIEVE that we are saved by God’s grace. Our salvation is of divine origin. “By grace are ye saved” (Eph. 2:8). God’s grace, rather than human merit, is the source of salvation. It is a gift from God through our personal faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross (Eph. 2:8-9). It is by faith that sinners have received the benefit of Christ’s death and resurrection—saved from the guilt and penalty of sin. We are made alive with Christ—an eternal, spiritual deliverance (Eph. 2:4-5, 8). It is a deliverance by which God brings humanity into a glorified state, a state that is reserved for all who have received Christ as their personal Savior. “That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (Titus 3:5-7). Through the finished work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, as sinners we are reconciled (2 Cor. 5:19), justified (Rom. 3:28; 5:9), redeemed (1 Pet. 1:18-19), cleansed (Acts 22:16), and adopted as children of God and joint heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17; Eph. 1:5).

SECTION 3

WE BELIEVE that salvation is only available through faith in Jesus Christ
(Acts 4:12). We must hear the Good News of Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection—the Gospel (Eph. 1:13; 1 Cor 15:1-4). It was Jesus’ death on the cross and His subsequent resurrection—the finished, redemptive work of Christ alone—that achieved our salvation (Rom. 5:10; Eph. 1:7). Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8-9), and He bore our sins in His own body (1 Pet. 2:24). We must believe and fully trust the Lord Jesus (Rom. 1:16, 10:9). “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (Titus 3:5-7). This involves repentance, a changing of mind about sin and Christ (Acts 3:19), and calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:9-10, 13).
Article IX

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9
SECTION 1

WE BELIEVE in the efficacious grace of God. Efficacious grace is the grace by which God redeems, sanctifies, and glorifies those whom He elects to eternal life through faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Humanity, in a state of “total depravity,” is so corrupt that it cannot accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ; thus, God must powerfully intervene. God makes the unwilling sinner willing by the internal, efficacious call of the Holy Spirit and the grace of God. Under the unction of the Holy Spirit, the sinner obeys the call of the Gospel and accepts saving faith in Jesus Christ. “[G]race and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17).

SECTION 2

WE BELIEVE efficacious grace is God’s unmerited favor, at Jesus’ expense, toward those who deserve only punishment. God says He “will be gracious” to whom He will be gracious “…and will shew mercy on whom…” He will show mercy (Ex. 33:19; Rom. 9:15). “That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 5:21). It is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ at Calvary that we, as sinners, by the grace of God were born again unto eternal life by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Grace removes the guilt and penalty of sin, affects a change in the inner life of a person, and gradually cleanses him or her from the pollution of sin by the supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit.

SECTION 3

WE BELIEVE that in grace we see the love of God transforming us into the Christians we are and into the saints we will become. “[B]y the grace of God I am what I am” (1 Cor. 15:10). Through grace we can see the goodness God. “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:23–24). It is by the grace of God that we are justified and not by works of our own. “And if by grace, then is it no
more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work” (Rom. 11:6). As sinners, we do not deserve the unmerited favor (or grace of God), but without the grace of God, humanity would be lost forever.

SECTION 4

WE BELIEVE that salvation is an example of God’s efficacious grace (Eph. 2:5, 8). As sinners, we received the Gospel—the revealing of Jesus Christ in our hearts (Gal. 1:6), and we are “called” by grace (Gal. 1:15). We are justified—our sins forgiven—by grace, “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:24) “That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (Titus 3:7). By grace, we may come boldly to the throne of grace and receive mercy (Heb. 4:16). God’s grace is greater than all the sins of the world (James 4:6). “By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Rom. 5:2). “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen” (2 Pet. 3:18).
Article X

Eternal Security and the Final Perseverance of the Saints of God

And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

John 10:28
SECTION 1

WE BELIEVE that a person who has been truly born again—that is, indwelled by the Holy Spirit of God and cleansed by the blood of Christ—will not lose his or her salvation by any subsequent act of his or hers. No Christian will ever be separated from God and His love (Rom. 8:33-39). All those who have a genuine faith in Christ will be kept by God forever and will persevere to the end.

God is able to complete the good work of eternal life that He has begun in every Believer (Phil. 1:6). Eternal life it totally contingent on the promises of God and one of God’s greatest attributes is His trustworthiness (Heb. 6:17). The Scriptures clearly teach “[f]or by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Eph. 2:8). The Scriptures conclude, “if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace…” (Rom. 11:6). “Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts” (2 Cor. 1:22). The words sealed and earnest indicate that if a Believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, then the promise of salvation is irrevocable—once in grace, always in grace!

SECTION 2

WE BELIEVE for the child of God, no greater assurance can be found in the Bible than the unconditional statement made by our Lord Jesus Christ in John 10:27-29: “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.” Concerning His sheep, Jesus made six unconditional, unqualified statements (no ifs, ands, or buts): (1) My sheep hear my voice, (2) I know them, (3) They follow me, (4) I give them eternal life, (5) They shall never perish, and (6) Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. A person is eternally secure because God, by His power, will not lose even one of those whom He has predestined to save because He
faithfully keeps Believers, giving them the grace to persevere to the end of their lives.

**SECTION 3**

**WE BELIEVE** that, because God is in complete control, every Believer’s security is assured. Eternal security means that God is in control of a Believer’s salvation. Romans 8:30 reads, “Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” All who are predestined are guaranteed glorification; they will persevere until the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:6 reads, “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Since God is in control, for a Believer to lose his or her salvation would mean that God has lost his or her salvation; but, God is omnipotent, and everything He wills will come to pass. Jesus Christ says that “all that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out … and this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day” (John 6:37-39).
Article XI

Unconditional Election: Predestination.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Romans 8:28-30
SECTION 1

WE BELIEVE in unconditional election. Unconditional election is God’s sovereign choice unto salvation, the initial step in His plan for salvation. God, in His infinite wisdom and grace, before the foundation of the world, chose a limited number of people—the Elect—to be recipients of His saving grace. The remaining population—the reprobate—will be left in their totally depraved state (Eph. 1:4; Rom. 9:11-13; 1 Pet. 2:8; 1 Thess. 1:4–5; Rev. 13:8). There was nothing essentially superior or unusual about the Elect that caused God to choose them. God was absolutely free in His choice to show grace and mercy to some sinners, who deserved nothing but His wrath (Deut. 7:6-10). God only elects people unto salvation.

By the unmerited favor of God, the Elect were foreordained, or predestined, to salvation (Eph. 1:5; Acts 13:48), to be adopted as children (Eph. 1:5), and to be conformed to the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29). To elect means to choose; to predestine means to decide the outcome before the foundation of the world. God made His choice (election), and the all-powerful God, through His omnipotence, has the power to carry out that choice (predestination). All embracing predestination places our final destiny not in the hands of man, or the hands of blind fate, but in the hands of Almighty God, our Sovereign Creator. The unconditional and eternal purposes of an omniscient and omnipotent God cannot be frustrated by sinful man or by satanic forces (Eph. 1:5, 11; Rom. 8:29-30; Acts 13:48). The Elect are given to Jesus Christ by the Father for salvation and will be kept by God’s grace and omnipotence (John 6:37-39). “As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him” (John 17:2).

SECTION 2

WE BELIEVE that faith and good works are fruits and proof of unconditional election but not the basis for it (Eph. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13; Rom. 8:33; Titus 1:1; Acts 13:48). If man, by his works, provides anything for his salvation, then he has a case for taking glory (1 Cor.
1:29; Eph. 2:9). But God alone will be glorified in the end. According to John 1:13, the saved are “born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” Salvation is determined by the will of God, not by the will or works of humanity.

The foundation of election is God’s good pleasure. The final determining factor in whether we will be saved or not is not our own decision to accept the Gospel, but it is by the unconditional, unmerited, and sovereign election of God. It is by the mercy and grace of God, given to the totally depraved sinner, who deserved nothing but the wrath of God, that we are saved. “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 4:6).

SECTION 3

WE BELIEVE that God has also determined the means by which a sinner will be saved. The Elect, whom the Father calls to Himself, will come in faith, and all who come in faith the Father receives, justifies, regenerates, and sanctifies (John 6:44, 65, 15:16; Acts 2:39; Mark 13:2). The regenerate Elect of God are saved by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8). “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). The Gospel “is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth...” (Rom. 1:16-17). It is the means by which God saves His Elect and we, as Believers, are commanded by God to be witnesses of the Gospel (Acts 1:8).
Article XII

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many.

1 Corinthians 12:12-14
SECTION 1

WE BELIEVE that the invisible and universal Church is a congregation of baptized Believers who continue “steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship ... all that believed were together, and had things common,... [p]raising God.... And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:41-47). All Believers are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body, the Church (the bride of Christ), of which Christ is the head and sovereign Lord (Eph. 1:22-23, 4:15-16; Col. 1:18; Heb. 12:23). The Church is not a religious institution or denomination; it is the Body of Christ—a living organism. It is made up of those who have become genuine followers of Jesus Christ (the Son of God), have personally accepted the Gospel, and are obedient to the Word of God (1 John 4:2, 5:1-5).

SECTION 2

WE BELIEVE that the visible Church, which is sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be saints, congregates together to be “witnesses unto [Jesus Christ].” The Church is called to spread the Gospel, exhort (edify) one another, worship God, and give praises to God (1 Cor. 1:2; Acts 1:8; Heb. 10:25). Regulated by the Word of God, the Church—the Body of Christ—observes the ordinances of Christ (baptism and Holy Communion), and exercises the benefits and privileges that the Lord Jesus Christ has invested in it. The Church can discipline its members, exercise prayer, and participate in public worship and evangelism (Matt. 18:15-17; Acts 2:42, 46, 47 and 20:7; 1 Cor. 5:1-4, 16:2).

SECTION 3

WE BELIEVE as the Body of Christ that we are to present our “bodies a living sacrifice” in honor and praise to God (Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 1:6), to reflect the image of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in our lives, to evangelize the world by the preaching and sharing of the Gospel (Acts 1:8), and to equip Believers with God’s Word to face the struggles of
this world. Jesus Christ has given ministerial gifts to the Church: “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ…”, for the equipping of the Body of Christ, for spiritual growth, and for the work of ministry (Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Pet. 4:11; Jude 20-21). The ultimate mission of the Church is winning souls to Christ through the preaching of the Gospel. The Church administers the “gospel call” to invite sinful humanity into fellowship with Christ’s Body (Matt. 28:18-20; Eph 4:12).
Article XIII

Homosexuality

For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.”

Romans 1:26-27
Section 1

We believe that God’s plan for marriage consists of one man and one woman, and that any other understanding is unbiblical (Gen. 1:27, 2:18-25; Eph. 5:22-31; Matt. 19:4-6; 1 Cor. 3:18-19, 11:3). Scripture teaches that homosexuality is unacceptable, and therefore, a homosexual relationship cannot represent the foundation for a biblical marriage or family (Rom. 1:24-28; Lev. 18:22, 20:13). To sanction a homosexual marriage would be sanctioning sin. Christians should stand decisively against the idea of homosexuality, a perversion of the institution of marriage, and an offense to the Creator God who created the institution of marriage. God forbids and condemns homosexuality; so, He clearly is opposed to homosexual marriage, and His Church must be as well.
Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 2:38
SECTION 1

WE BELIEVE in the church ordinance of baptism, which is to be administered by total immersion in water, using the baptismal formula found in Acts 2:38. In a discussion of salvation, it must be remembered that water baptism is an essential element. However, water baptism alone saves no one; it is an important step of obedience for a Christian, just as repentance alone saves no one. Clearly, New Testament Scriptures inform us that water baptism is one of the essential components of salvation (Acts 2:38,19:5). “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:16). Faith in Jesus Christ is the basis of salvation. Jesus’ payment for our sins is applied to our “account” by faith alone (John 3:16; Acts 16:31; Eph. 2:8-9). Baptism conveys the realities of the new life to the Believer, who is born-again.

SECTION 2

WE BELIEVE a Christian should be water baptized by immersion. Baptism symbolically demonstrates a born-again Christian’s identification with Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection. “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:3-4). “Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead” (Col. 2:12).

SECTION 3

WE BELIEVE that the commissions in Mark 16:15-16, Matthew 28:19, and Luke 24:47 are three forms of the same command because, in the New Testament, baptism and the remission of sins are inseparable. Consequently, the first Christian baptism was administered by Peter and the apostles in the “name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...”
Furthermore, the Samaritans who were converted by Philip, the evangelist, “were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 8:16). Peter, at Caesarea, commanded Cornelius “to be baptized in the name of the Lord…” (Acts 10:48). When the Believers in Ephesus were convinced by Paul of the insufficiency of John’s baptism, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. “When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 19:5).

SECTION 4

WE BELIEVE that water baptism in the name of Jesus is the authentic baptism. According to the Acts of the Apostles, baptism should be administered in the name of Jesus Christ, “Then Peter said unto them Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38). There is no mention in the New Testament of anyone being baptized “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. 28:19). It is also clear from Scripture that the Apostles interpreted Matthews 28:19 as the baptism in Jesus’ name. Baptism administered using the Trinitarian formula of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is a product of second generation Christianity, reflecting a theology characteristic of the end of that generation, rather than its beginning. “Baptized into Christ” as the Apostle Paul states in Romans is more in line with the formula in Acts, “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?” (Rom. 6:3). Similarly, Paul states in Galatians 3:27, “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

In the formula in the gospel of Matthew, “Baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,” no name is mentioned. Father is not a name; it is a title of relationship—of a male parent to a child. Likewise, Son is not a name; it is a title of a male child in relationship to his father. Holy Ghost is not a name; holy is an adjective modifying the noun ghost. Since no name is mentioned in Matthew 28:19, we believe the final words of Jesus, before His ascension, as
found in Luke 24:45-47, explains the Matthean text. “Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures. And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”
And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come.

1 Corinthians 11:24-26
SECTION 1

**WE BELIEVE** that the Lord’s Supper is a symbol of Christian worship instituted by the Lord on the eve of His death and the most intimate time of worship for the Body of Christ (Lk. 22:14). The partaking of bread and the fruits of the vine are symbolic of Christ’s sacrifice and should be taken in fellowship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in remembrance of His atoning death, anticipating His Second Coming. The bread represents the broken body of Christ; the cup represents His shed blood—the New Covenant (1 Cor. 11:24-26). When the bread is broken, it symbolizes the breaking of Christ’s body, and when the cup is poured out it symbolizes the pouring out of Christ’s blood for us. “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come” (1 Cor. 11:26). As we partake of the communion elements, we are called to remember Jesus: His suffering, His death, His triumph over the grave, and His promised Second Coming.

SECTION 2

**WE BELIEVE**, as members of the Body of Christ, that we must participate in the Lord’s Supper—to acknowledge the benefits of Christ’s death—just as the Apostles were commanded to do. “Take, eat; this is my body” (Matt. 26:26). In partaking of the Lord’s Supper, we are participating in the benefits earned for us by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. The Christian’s participation in the Lord’s Supper is spiritual nourishment—our souls are being refreshed in Christ.

When Christians participate in the Lord’s Supper, it is a clear mark of our unity with one another as the Body of Christ Jesus, “For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread” (1 Cor. 10:17). The Lord’s Supper is a foretaste of the great banquet table of the King. I am a member of His eternal family, and I will be at the marriage supper of the Lamb, “for as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come” (1 Cor. 11:26). Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can feel the spiritual presence.
of Jesus Christ as we partake of the elements, bread and wine. “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matt. 18:20).
Article XV

The Second Coming of the Lord

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18
SECTION 1

WE BELIEVE that the Second Coming of Jesus Christ will precede the tribulation and the millennial reign of Christ. Christ will come again (John 14:1-3), and “the dead in Christ shall rise first” and the Believers “which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds … so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thess. 4:16-18; 1 Cor.15:42-44, 51-54). The “same Jesus” who was “taken up … into heaven, shall so come in like manner” as He ascended “into heaven” (Acts 1:11).

SECTION 2

WE BELIEVE that the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is our “blessed hope” for which we should be constantly looking (Titus 2:11-14). At the Second Coming, the dead in Christ shall be raised in incorruptible, glorified bodies, and those alive in Christ shall be given immortal, glorified bodies, without ever tasting death (1 Cor. 15:42-44, 51-54; Phil. 3:20-21).

SECTION 3

WE BELIEVE that Christians should love and long for Christ’s appearing. “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing” (2 Tim. 4:8). Christians should watch and pray always to “be accounted worthy … to stand before the Son of man” (Lk. 21:36), and to pray for His coming (Matt 6:10). “He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22:20). Moreover, we should faithfully “occupy” until He comes (Lk. 19:13). At that time, the whole earth shall proclaim the glory of God!
Article XVI

Judgments

For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Romans 14:11-12
SECTION 1

WE BELIEVE there will be future judgments for all humanity. A final judgment of humanity is definite (Eccl. 11:9), universal (2 Cor. 5:10), righteous (Rom. 2:5), decisive (1 Cor. 15:52), and eternal as to its consequences (Heb. 6:2). Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the judge, and “every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:9-11).

SECTION 2

WE BELIEVE that Believers will stand at the bema seat—the judgment seat of Christ—to give an account of our lives to Christ and be rewarded based on the life we have lived. The judgment seat of Christ does not determine whether a Believer will go to heaven or hell. The Judgment Seat of Christ determines the rewards or loss of rewards of the Believer. “If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire” (1 Cor. 3:11-15). The Believer’s salvation and eternal estate have been determined by Christ’s sacrifice on our behalf (1 John 2:2). All of our sins are forgiven, and we will never be condemned to hell for them. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus…” (Rom. 8:1). Believers’ names were written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world (Rev. 17:8). Believers will forever be in the presence of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the One who died for us—this is heaven!

SECTION 3

WE BELIEVE heaven is a place where Believers will dwell forever with God in a glorified physical body (1 Cor. 15:35-58; John 14:2, 3:10-15; Rev. 7:15-17, 22:5). “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (1 Cor. 2:9). We are also told by Jesus Himself that there are many rooms in God’s house, and that He has gone before us.
to prepare a place for us. We have the assurance that Christ “will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:1-4). Our belief in an eternal home in heaven is based on an explicit promise of Jesus. “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” (Rev. 21:4).

SECTION 4

WE BELIEVE that all unbelievers will be judged at the Great White Throne—the Last Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15). All unbelievers will be judged and banished forever from the presence of God. We believe the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious misery until the second resurrection when, with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne for their final judgment and shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated but to suffer forever. “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works” (Rev. 20:12).

SECTION 5

WE BELIEVE that hell is an actual place of never-ending fire (Matt. 25:41), “unquenchable fire” (Matt. 3:12), “torments” and “flame” (Lk. 16:23-24), “everlasting destruction” (2 Thess. 1:9), reserved forever for the devil and his angels and all whose names are not written in Christ’s Book of Life (Rev. 14:10-11, 20:10-15, 21:7-8). Let us praise the name our Lord because through His grace we will not suffer this fate! We will be with Him in the new heaven.
And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

Revelation 21:3-4