

Wheelock Heath Baptist Church – Our Basis of Faith

STATEMENT OF CORE BELIEFS

Since the earliest times Christians have believed that the Christian faith can be expressed in plain statements of truth drawn from the Bible. This belief gave rise to the ancient Creeds and later to the great Confessions of Faith. It is not sufficient simply to say that the Bible is our creed – we must be able to state plainly the specific truths that the Bible teaches. The Apostles were conscious of their awesome responsibility to commit to others “The Faith” – this body of revealed truth – this sacred deposit from God. So today the Church must “*earnestly contend for the faith once for all committed to the saints*” (Jude v.3)

Clearly no statement of faith contains every truth revealed in Holy Scripture; what Christians have sought to do is draw out the leading truths of Scripture – those that are central and fundamental to the message of the Apostles.

The Basis of Faith stated here is not the private confession of one Christian but the common confession of the Church worshiping at Wheelock Heath. Indeed, we can go further than that; the truths stated here have been believed and proclaimed by evangelical Christians down through the ages. Along with our forefathers in the faith we regard such a statement of faith as subordinate to the Bible, as Scripture alone is the final authority to which all our creeds and confessions must be submitted.

STATEMENT OF ESENTIAL BELIEFS

- The divine inspiration and infallibility of Holy Scripture, as already given, and its sole authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
- The one True and Living God Who is infinite, eternal, and unchanging in all His glorious attributes, and who exists in three Persons as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- The Sovereignty of God, in Creation, Providence and Redemption.
- The universal sinfulness and guilt of human nature since the Fall, rendering man subject to God’s wrath and condemnation, and without hope of salvation by his own effort.
- The Lord Jesus Christ as the only mediator between God and man; His Deity; His conception by the Holy Spirit and His birth by the Virgin Mary; His sinless humanity; His atoning death as our representative and substitute, by which He secured eternal redemption from the guilt, penalty, and power of sin for all who believe.
- The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; His Ascension to the right hand of God and His present reign.
- Justification by faith alone, by which we are freely pardoned of all our sins, and declared righteous in God’s sight, solely on the ground of the righteousness of Christ imputed to us.
- The necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit to regenerate the sinner and make the death of Christ effective to him, granting him “*repentance towards God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ*” (Acts 20 v21).

- The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in every believer, working in him holiness, a child-like disposition to God as Father, equipping him for service and enabling him to be faithful unto death.
- The one holy universal Church which is the Body of Christ, and to which all true believers belong. The universal Church finds its visible expression in the local Church, which is a community of believers gathered together for worship and witness under the preaching of God's Word, and to which belong all the privileges and prerogatives of the universal Church.
- The two ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper which Jesus Christ has given to the Church. Baptism is a sign of the washing away of our sins and of the union with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection, and is a command of Christ to all who believe, and to them only. The Lord's Supper is both a memorial and a communion of Christ's death; no change takes place in the bread and wine, and the Supper itself is not a sacrifice, but a remembrance of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross, once for all our sins.
- The personal, visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory at the end of the age, when He will raise all the dead and judge the world in righteousness.
- The eternal blessedness in Heaven of all who have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and the everlasting damnation of all unbelievers.