**Statement of Beliefs – First Baptist Church, Shelby, OH**

**The Bible**

We believe that the Holy Bible as originally written was verbally inspired of God and the product of Spirit controlled men, and therefore has truth without admixture of error for its matter. We believe it is the only complete and final revelation of God with regard to His personal Being and His will for man, and that it is the supreme standard of all faith and practice.

**2 Timothy 3:16, 17 Revelation 22:18, 19 Isaiah 40:8 Matthew 24:35 2 Peter 1:20, 21**

**II The True God**

We believe that there is only one living and true God, infinite in every excellence; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three personal distinctions – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – one in nature, attributes, power and glory, and equal in every divine perfection.

**Genesis 1:1, 26, 27 Acts 5:3, 4 Exodus 20: 2, 3 1 John 5:7 Matthew 28:19
1 Corinthians 8:6 John 1: 1-4, 14, 18 2 Corinthians 13:14**

**III The Person and Work of Jesus Christ:**

We believe in the absolute deity of the eternal Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, existing from all eternity, coequal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin mother, possessing a divine nature unaltered in essence and undivested of its normal attributes and powers. We believe in His sinless life, His substitutionary death on the Cross for our sins, His bodily resurrection from the grave, His ascension to the right hand of God, and His premillennial return to the earth.

**John 1:1-3 I Thessalonians 4:13-18 Luke 1:35 Acts 1:8-11 Matthew 1:18, 20
Hebrews 1:3, 8 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4 1 Peter 2:24 2 Corinthians 5:21**

**IV The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, a member of the triune Godhead, and possessed of all the distinctive divine attributes. He convicts of sin, bears witness to the truth, and is the agent of the new birth. He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses to, sanctifies, and helps the believer, indwelling every true child of God.

**John 14:16, 17, 26; 16:7-14 Ephesians 2:22 1 Corinthians 12:13 Romans 8:9, 14-16, 23, 26, 27**

**V Satan**

We believe in a personal devil, called in the scripture, Satan, Wicked One, Dragon, Price of the power of the air, god of this world, the Tempter, that Old Serpent, and the Devil. He is the author of all the powers of darkness and sin, and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the Lake of Fire.

**Matthew 4:1-3 Ephesians 2:2, 3 2 Corinthians 4:4 Revelation 20:1-3, 7-10 1 John 3:12**

**VI The Creation**

We accept the Genesis account of creation and believe that man came by direct creation of God and not by the process of evolution.

**Genesis 1 and 2 John 1:3 Colossians 1:16, 17**

**VII The Fall of Man**

We believe that man was created in innocence, but by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless state, plunging the entire human race into condemnation and death. The penalty for sin was paid by Christ in His atoning death on the cross. Those who continue rejecting this sacrifice for sin will be eternally punished in their sinful state in the Lake of Fire.

**Genesis 1:27; 3:1-19 Revelation 20:12-15 Romans 5:10-19**

**VIII The Atonement for Sin**

We believe that the only escape from the condemnation of sin is through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, when He voluntarily took upon Himself a human body and nature, yet without sin, and by his suffering, death, and resurrection, made full satisfaction to the justice of God for the sin of man; that the blessings of this salvation are given on the ground of grace to all who believe; that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation; that no works, however good, can make that salvation more secure.

**John 1:29; 3:16 Hebrews 2:14 2 Corinthians 5:21 1 Peter 3:18 Ephesians 2:8, 9 1 John 2:2**

**Philippians 2:6-8 Isaiah 53:5**

**IX Justification**

We believe that those who are born again are justified by that judicial act of God, by which, on account of Christ, to whom the sinner is united by faith, He declares that sinner no longer exposed to the penalty for sin, but standing in the merit and righteousness of Christ. It is the reversal of God’s attitude toward the sinner because of the sinner’s new relationship to Christ.

**Romans 3:24; 4:5; 5:1; 6:23 2 Corinthians 5:21 Ephesians 1:6 Titus 3:4-7 1 Corinthians 15:3**

**X The Security of the Believer:**

We believe that those who are born from above are made partakers of the divine nature, and have eternal life abiding in them; therefore they are kept by the power of God for Jesus Christ. The finished work of redemption on the Cross (John 19:30), the sealing presence of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13, 14; 4:30), and the constant intercession of Christ at the right hand of the Father (Hebrews 7:25) make the believer forever secure.

**John 10:28, 29 2 Peter 1:4 Romans 8:35-39 Jude 1 Philippians 1:6**

**XI The Church**

**1. The Church in its General aspect:**

We believe the Church to be a body of persons called out by the power of God to faith in a crucified and risen Christ.

**Ephesians 1:22, 23 Colossians 1:18**

**2. The Church in its Local aspect:**

We believe a local church to be a company of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, living for the most part in one locality, who unite themselves voluntarily together, in accordance with the principles, precepts, and purposes revealed in the New Testament.

**Acts 14:23 1 Corinthians 1:2 Romans 16:5 1 Thessalonians 2:14**

**XII Ordinances of the Local Church**

We believe there are two church ordinances: **Baptism** and the **Lord’s Supper**, designed only for believers, and having in themselves no meritorious grace, but rather symbolizing our identification with Christ and commemorating His death.

We believe that **Baptism** is the immersion of a believer in water and is properly called “Believer’s Baptism.” It sets forth in a beautiful and solemn way our faith in, and union with, our Lord Jesus Christ in His death, burial, resurrection, and newness of Life.

**Romans 6:3,4 Acts 8:36-39**

We believe that the **Lord’s Supper** is the commemoration of our Lord’s death, and an expression of the hope of His return. The elements are symbolical of the body of Him Who is the Bread of Life, and of the shed blood of Him Who is the True Vine, and may be properly partaken of only by members of the body of Christ, living in a godly manner.

**Matthew 26:26-28 Luke 22:14-20 1 Corinthians 11:23-32**

**XIII Government of the Local Church**

We believe that the local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; that the one and only superintendent is Christ, through the Holy Spirit: that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel; that each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. On all matters of membership, polity, government, discipline, and benevolence, the will of the local church is final.

**Acts 2:41, 42; 13:1-4; 20:17, 18, 28 1 Corinthians 5; 6:1-8; 2 Corinthians 8:1-8**

**XIV Heaven and Hell**

We believe in a literal Heaven where Jesus Christ is now seated at the right hand of the Father. At death the believer’s soul is taken into Heaven to await reunion with the resurrected and glorified body. Heaven is a prepared place of eternal bliss for a prepared people.

**John 14:1-3 Ephesians 1:20, 21 1 Corinthians 15:35-54 Hebrew 1:3 2 Corinthians 5:1-8; 12:2-4**

We believe in a literal Hell, described in scripture as a lake of fire, a place of torment, and the second death. It is to be the final abode of Satan, the fallen angels, and all unbelievers, and is a place of conscious unending punishment.

**Matthew 25:41 Revelation 20:10-15, 21:8**

**XV Resurrection**

We believe in the resurrection of the bodies of the dead; that believers who sleep in Jesus will be raised at the imminent arrival of Christ for His Church and caught up with transformed living believers to meet the Lord in the air, and that the wicked dead will be raised at the close of the Millennial Kingdom and stand in their bodies at the Great White Throne Judgment to receive their final doom.

**John 5:28, 29 Revelation 20:11-15 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17**

**XVI Image of God**

We believe that every person from every race, tongue, tribe, and nation is made in the image of God with inherent worth and value from the moment of conception and, therefore, must be treated with compassion, love, kindness, respect, dignity, and when necessary, protected. (Genesis 1:26-27; Psalm 139:13-16; Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) All people, regardless of their past or current sin struggles, are loved and welcomed at our gatherings and events. Hateful and harassing behaviors or attitudes directed toward ***any*** individual are to be forsaken and repented of and/or lovingly confronted and corrected. (Luke 15:1-2; Romans 5:6-8; Jude 1:23; Colossians 4:6.)

We believe that God determines who we are. He wonderfully and intentionally formed people distinctly male and female; different and yet equal in value, dignity, and worth. Together, these two complementary genders each reflect an aspect of God’s image and nature. (Genesis 1:26-27.) Since The Fall (Genesis 3:1-7), all people are sinful and broken in every way, including sexually; some have a specific struggle regarding their gender and/or sexualidentity, and some are unable to clearly determine their sexeither genetically or physically *(those whom the Lord Jesus acknowledged as “eunuchs who have been so from birth” (Matthew 19:12)).* All are made in the image of God, and all are called to live a fruitful life in obedience to Christ finding their identity in Him through the gospel. All should embrace their biological sex and gender insofar as it may be known because God has created each individual intentionally as an expression of His image, including our sex and gender.

We believe that the meaning of marriage is conveyed only through the joining of one man and one woman in an exclusive, ordered, covenantal, sexual, procreative, lifelong union as explained in Scripture (Genesis 2:22-25; Ephesians 5:22-23). In God’s wise purposes, men and women are not simply interchangeable, but were made to complement each other in marriage in mutually enriching ways which reflect the loving relationship and union between Christ and The Church. The husband exercises humble headship in a way that displays the caring, sacrificial love of Christ, and the wife confidently submits to her husband in a way that models the love of The Church for Her Lord. (Genesis 2:18-25; Matthew 19:4-6***;***Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Timothy 2:8–3:13; Titus 1:5-9; Romans 16:1-2; 1 Corinthians 11:2-3)

We believe God has commanded that no sexual activity be engaged in outside of an exclusive marriage between one man and one woman. Any form of sexual immorality (including, but not limited to, adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual behavior, polyamorous behavior, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is contrary to God’s intention and design for sexual intimacy and is, therefore, sinful. (Matthew 15:18-20; Romans 1:20-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 12-18; Hebrews 13:4)

We believe that God offers redemption to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. All who are redeemed are progressively conformed into the image of Jesus, and when all things are made new, will be fully conformed to the image of Christ for eternity. (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

**XVII The Sanctity of Life**

We believe that human life begins at conception. The Bible teaches that God holds human life to be sacred and created human beings in His own image. We express the belief that society has a responsibility to affirm through the laws of the state a high view of the sanctity of human life, including fetal life, in order to protect those who cannot protect themselves.

 Psalm 139:12-17 Luke 1:39-44 Jeremiah 1:4-5 Psalm 22:10-11 Galatians 1:15