

Grace Community Church

What we believe

ARTICLE I—NAME and PURPOSE

1.01 Name

The name of this church shall be Grace Community Church of Loveland, Colorado.

1.02 Purpose

The purpose of this church shall be to provide worship, fellowship, and instruction for Christian believers, and to proclaim the gospel of salvation through faith in Christ at home and abroad.

ARTICLE 2 - STATEMENT OF DOCTRINE

2.01 The Scriptures

We believe that “all scripture is given by inspiration of God,” by which we understand the whole Bible is inspired in the sense that holy men of God “were moved by the Holy Spirit” to write the very words of Scripture. Thus, Holy Scripture, being God’s own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches. Furthermore, this divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the writings-historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic - as recorded in the original manuscripts. Therefore, being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teachings, no less in what it states about God’s acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God’s saving grace in individual lives.

We believe that all the Scriptures center about the Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work in His first and second coming and hence that no portion, even of the Old Testament, is properly read or understood until it leads to Him. We also believe that all the Scriptures were designed for our practical instruction.

We believe the authority of Scripture is inescapably impaired if this total divine inerrancy is in any way limited or disregarded, or made relative to a view of truth contrary to the Bible’s own; and such lapses bring serious loss to both the individual and the church. (Matt. 5:18; 22:32-46; Mk. 12:26, 36; Lk. 24:27,44; John 5:39; 10:35; 17:17; Acts 17:2-3; 1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:26; 2 Peter 1:21)

2.02 The Godhead

We believe that the Godhead eternally exists in three persons - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit - and that these three are one God; having precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections, and worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence and obedience. (Matt. 28:18-19; Mark 12:29; John 1:14; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Cor. 13:14; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 1:4-6)

We believe that God is infinite in being and perfection, a completely pure spirit, without body, unchangeable, eternal, almighty, completely wise, completely holy, completely free, and completely absolute. He works everything according to the purpose of His own unchangeable and completely righteous will for His own glory. He is completely loving, gracious, merciful and long-suffering. He overflows with goodness and truth. He forgives wickedness, transgression and sin and rewards those who diligently seek Him. His judgements are completely just and awesome. He hates all sin and will not acquit the guilty.

(Job 26:14; Jer. 23:24; Ps. 147:5; 1 Kings 8:27; Ps. 139; John 4:24; Deut. 4:15-16; 1 Tim. 1:17; James 1:17; Mal. 3:6; Is. 44:6; Ps. 90:2; Gen. 17:1; Rom. 16~27; Is. 6:3; Rev. 4:8; Ps. 115:3; Acts 17:24-25; Eph. 1:11; Rev. 4:11; Prov. 16:4; 1 John 4:8-10, 16; Ex. 34:6-7; Heb. 11:6; Neh. 9:32-33; Ps. 5:5-6; Nah. 1:2-3; Ex. 34:7)

We believe that God has all life, glory, goodness and blessedness in and of Himself. He alone is all-sufficient in and unto Himself, nor does He need any of His creations or derive any glory from them. Rather, He manifests His own glory in, by, unto and on them. He has complete sovereign dominion over all things and does with, to, or for them whatever He pleases. Everything is revealed and completely open to Him. His knowledge is infinite, infallible, and does not depend on any created being, so that to Him nothing is conditional or uncertain. He is completely holy in all his purposes, works, and commands. To Him is due whatever worship, service, or obedience He is pleased to require from angels, human beings, and all other creatures. (John 5:26; Acts 7:2; Ps. 119:68; 1 Tim. 6:15; Acts 17:24-25; Ps. 50:12; Dan. 4:35; Heb. 4:13; Rom. 11:33-34; Ps. 147:5; Is. 46:9-11; Ps. 145:17; Rev. 5:12-14; Rev. 7:11-12)

2.03 Angels, Fallen and Unfallen

We believe that God created an innumerable company of sinless, spiritual beings, known as angels; that one sinned through pride, thereby becoming Satan; that a great company of the angels followed him in his moral fall, some of whom became demons and are active as his agents and associates in the prosecution of his unholy purposes, while others who fell are “reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” (Is a. 14:12-17; Ezek. 28-11-19; 1 Tim. 3:6; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6) We believe that Satan is the originator of Sin, and that, under the permission of God, he, through subtlety, led our first parents into transgression, thereby accomplishing their moral fall and subjecting them and their posterity to his own power; that he is the enemy of God and the people of God, opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped; and that he in his warfare appears as an angel of light, even counterfeiting the works of God by fostering religious movements and systems of doctrine, which systems in every case are characterized by a denial of the efficacy of the blood of Christ and of salvation by grace alone. (Gen. 3:1-19; Rom. 5:12-14; 2 Cor. 4:3-4; 11:13-15; Eph. 6:10-12; 2 Thess. 2:4; 1 Tim. 4:1-3,)

We believe that Satan was judged at the cross, though not then executed, and that he, a usurper, now rules as the “god of this world” that, at the second coming of Christ, Satan will be bound and cast into the abyss for a thousand years, and after the thousand years he will be loosed for a little season and then “cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where he shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.” (Col. 2:15; Rev. 20:1-3,10)

We believe that a great company of angels kept their holy estate and are before the throne of God, from whence they are sent forth as ministering spirits to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. (Luke 15:10; Eph. 1:21; Heb. 1:14; Rev. 7:12)

2.04 Man Created and Fallen

We believe that man was originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, and that he fell through sin, and as a consequence of his sin, lost his spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and that he became subject to the power of the devil. We also believe that this spiritual death, or total depravity of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire human race of man, the Man Christ Jesus alone being excepted; and hence that every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably bad apart from divine grace (Gen. 1:26; 2:17; 6:5; Ps. 14:1-3; 51:5; Jer. 17:9; John 3:6 5:40; 6:53; Rom. 3:10-19; 8:6-7; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 Tim. 5:6; 1 John 3:8).

2.05 The First Advent

We believe that, as provided and proposed by God and as preannounced in the prophecies of the Scriptures, the eternal Son of God came into this world that He might manifest God to men, fulfill prophecy, and become the Redeemer of a lost world. To this end He was born of the virgin, and received a human body and a sinless nature. (Luke 1:30-35; John 1:18; 3:16; Heb. 4:15)

We believe that, on the human side, He became and remained a perfect man, sinless throughout His life; yet He retained His absolute deity, being at the same time very God and very man and that His earth-life sometimes functioned within the sphere of that which was divine. (Luke 2:40; John 1:1-2; Phil. 2:5-8)

We believe that in fulfillment of prophecy He came first to Israel as her Messiah-King, and that, being rejected of that nation, He, according to the eternal counsels of God, gave His life as a ransom for all. (John 1:11; Acts 2:22-24; 1 Tim. 2:6)

We believe that, in infinite love for the lost, He voluntarily accepted His Father's will and became the divinely provided sacrificial Lamb and took away the sin of the world; bearing the holy judgments against sin which the righteousness of God must impose. His death was, therefore, substitutionary in the most absolute sense - the just for the unjust - and by His death He became the Savior of the lost. (John 1:29; Rom. 3:25-26; 2 Cor. 5:14; Heb. 10:5-14; 1 Peter 3:18)

We believe that, according to the Scriptures, He arose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He had lived and died, and that His resurrection body is the pattern of that body which ultimately will be given to all believers. (John 20:20; Phil. 3:20-21)

We believe that, on departing from the earth, He was accepted of His Father and that His acceptance is a final assurance to us that His redeeming work was perfectly accomplished. (Heb. 1:3)

We believe that He became Head over all things to the church which is His body, and in this ministry He ceases not to intercede and advocate for the saved. (Eph. 1:22-23; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1)

2.06 Salvation Only Through Christ

We believe that, owing to universal death through sin, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless born again; and that no degree of reformation, however great, no attainments, in morality, however high, no culture however attractive, no baptism or other ordinance, however administered, can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven; but a new nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word, is absolutely essential to salvation, and only thus saved are sons of God.

We believe, also, that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made to be sin and was made a curse for us, dying in our room and stead; and that no repentance, no feeling, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, nor all the churches that have existed since the days of the Apostles, can add in the very least degree to the value of the blood, or to the merit of the finished work wrought for us by Him who united in His person true and proper deity with perfect and sinless humanity. (Lev. 17:11; Isa. 64:6; Matt. 26:28; John 3:5; Rom. 5:6-9; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; 6:15; Eph. 1:7; Phil. 3:4-9; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:18-19, 23)

We believe that the new birth of the believer comes only through faith in Christ and that repentance is a vital part of believing, and is in no way, in itself, a separate and independent condition of salvation; nor are any other acts, such as confession, baptism, prayer or faithful service, to be added to believing as a condition of salvation. (John 1:12; 3:16, 18, 36; 5:24; 6:29; Acts 13:39; 16:31; Rom. 1:16-17; 3:22, 26; 4:5; 10:4; Gal 3:22)

We believe that, while God is sovereign in the salvation of an individual, and that God is the source and author of salvation, the offer of salvation by faith is extended in earnest to all people without distinction, going forth with the sincere promise that whoever believes in Jesus Christ shall certainly be saved. (Matt. 11:25-27; John 6:44; Eph. 2:8-9; John 3:16; Rom. 10-11; 13)

2.07 The Extent of Salvation

We believe that when regeneration occurs an individual passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life, and from the old creation into the new; being justified from all things, accepted before the Father according as Christ His Son is accepted, loved as Christ is loved, having his place and portion as linked to Him and one with Him forever. Though the saved one may have occasion to grow in the realization of his blessings and to know a fuller measure of divine power through the yielding of his life more fully to God, he is, as soon as he is saved, in possession of every spiritual blessing and absolutely complete in Christ, and is, therefore, in no way required by God to seek a so-called "second blessing," or a "second work of grace." (John 5:24; 17:23; Acts 13:39; Rom. 5:1; 1 Cor. 3:21-23; Eph. 1:3; Col. 2:10; 1 John 4:17; 5:11-12)

2.08 Sanctification

We believe that sanctification, which is a setting-apart unto God, is threefold: It is already complete for every saved person because his position toward God is the same as Christ's position. Since the believer is in Christ, he is set apart unto God in the measure in which Christ is set apart unto God. We believe, however, that he retains his sin nature, which cannot be eradicated in this life. Therefore, while the standing of the Christian in Christ is perfect, his present state is not perfect in his experience in daily life. There is, therefore, a progressive sanctification wherein the Christian is to "grow in grace," and to "be changed" by the unhindered power of the Spirit. We believe, also, that the child of God will yet be fully sanctified in his state as he is now sanctified in his standing in Christ when he shall see his Lord and shall be "like Him." (John 17:17; 2 Cor. 3:18; 7:1; Eph. 4:24; 5:25-27; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 10:10; 12:10)

2.09 Eternal Security

We believe that, because of the eternal purpose of God toward the objects of His love, because of His freedom to exercise grace toward the meritless on the ground of the propitiatory Blood of Christ, because of the very nature of the divine gift of eternal life, because of the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven, because of the immutability of the unchangeable covenants of God, because of the regenerating, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are saved, we and all true believers everywhere, once saved shall be kept saved forever. We believe, however, that God is a holy and righteous Father and that, since He cannot overlook the sin of His children, He will chasten and correct them in infinite love: but having undertaken to save them and keep them forever, apart from all human merit, He, who cannot fail, will in the end present every one of them faultless before the presence of His glory and conformed to the image of His Son. (John 5:24; 10:28; 13:1; 14:16-17; 17:11; Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 6:19; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2; 5:13; Jude 1:24)

2.10 Assurance

We believe it is the privilege, not only of some, but all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, to be assured of their salvation from the very day they take Him to be their Savior; and that this assurance is not founded upon any fancied discovery of their own worthiness or fitness, but wholly upon the testimony of God in his written Word, exciting within His children filial love, gratitude, and obedience. (Luke 10:20; 22:32; 2 Cor. 5:1; 6:8; 2 Tim. 1:12 Heb. 10:22; 1 John 5:13)

2.11 The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the blessed Trinity, though omnipresent from all eternity, took up His abode in the world in a special sense on the day of Pentecost according to the divine promise, dwells in every believer, and by His baptism unites all believers to Christ in one body, and that He, as the Indwelling One, is the source of all power and all acceptable worship and service. We believe that He never takes His departure from the church, nor from the feeblest of the saints, but is ever present to testify of Christ; seeking to occupy believers with Him and not with themselves nor with their experiences. We believe that His abode in the world in this special sense will cease when Christ comes to receive His own at the completion of the church. (John 14:16-17; 16:7-15; 1 Cor. 6:19; Eph. 2:22; 2 Thess. 2:7)

We believe that, in this age, certain well-defined ministries are committed to the Holy Spirit and that it is the duty of every Christian to understand them and to be adjusted to them in his own life and experience. These ministries are: the restraining of evil in the world to the measure of the divine will; the convicting of the world respecting sin, righteousness, and judgment; the regenerating of all believers; the indwelling and anointing of all who are saved; thereby sealing them unto the day of redemption; the baptizing into the one body of Christ of all who are saved: and the continued filling for power, teaching, and service of those among the saved who are yielded to Him and who are subjects to His will. (John 3:6; 16:7-11; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:30; 5:18; 2 Thess. 2:7; 1 John 2:20-27)

2.12 The Church a Unity of Believers

We believe that all who are united to the risen and ascended Son of God are members of the church which is the body and bride of Christ, which began at Pentecost and is completely distinct from Israel. Its members are constituted as such regardless of membership or nonmembership in the organized churches on earth. We believe that by the same Spirit all believers in this age are baptized into, and thus become, one body that is Christ's, whether Jews or Gentiles, and having become members one of another, are under solemn duty to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all sectarian differences, and loving one another with a pure heart fervently. (Matt. 16:16-18; Acts 2:42-47; Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:20-23 4:3-10; Col. 3:14-15)

2.13 The Ordinances

We believe that water baptism and Lord's Supper are the only ordinances of the church and that they are a Scriptural means of testimony for the church in this age. (Matt. 28:19; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 10:47-48; 16:32-33; 18:7-8; 1 Cor. 11:26)

We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ at the close of his last passover supper as a perpetual remembrance of His passion and death on the cross, by which sacrifice of Himself He has made the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. In this ordinance no sacrifice of any kind is offered for sin, but the one perfect offering of Christ as a sufficient sacrifice is set forth and commemorated by appropriate symbols. These symbols are bread and the fruit of the vine which are figuratively called the body and blood of Christ. We believe that in this ordinance, since the communicants have visibly set before them symbols of the Savior's passion, they should not approach communion without due self-examination, reverence, humility, and gratitude. (Luke 22:19-20; Heb. 7:23, 24, 27; 1 Cor. 11:23-26)

We believe that baptism is the visible testimony of salvation and of itself has no saving efficacy. We believe that in baptism the believer is identified with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection.

We believe that baptism by immersion is commanded by God, and that all believers should make public profession of their faith through baptism. (Matt 28:19; Acts 16:32-33; Titus 3:4-5)

2.14 The Christian's Walk

We believe that we are called with an holy calling, to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and so to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit that we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. But the flesh with its fallen, Adamic nature, which in this life is never eradicated, being with us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage, needs to be kept by the Spirit constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence in our lives to the dishonor of our Lord. (Rom. 6:11-13; 8:2, 4, 12-13; Gal. 5:16-23; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 2:1-10; I Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 1:4-7; 3:5-9)

2.15 The Christian's Service

We believe that divine, enabling gifts for service are bestowed by the Spirit upon all who are saved. While there is a diversity of gifts, each believer is energized by the same Spirit, and each is called to his own divinely appointed service as the Spirit may will. In the apostolic church there were certain gifted men - apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, and that it is to the fulfilling of His will and to His eternal glory that these shall be sustained and encouraged in their service for God. (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:11)

We believe that, wholly apart from salvation benefits which are bestowed equally upon all who believe, rewards are promised according to the faithfulness of each believer in his service for his Lord, and that these rewards will be bestowed at the judgment seat of Christ after He comes to receive His own to Himself. (1 Cor. 3:9-15; 9:18-27; 2 Cor. 5:10)

2.16 The Great Commission

We believe that it is the explicit message of our Lord Jesus Christ to those whom He has saved that they are sent forth by Him into the world even as He was sent forth of His father into the world. We believe that, after they are saved, they are divinely reckoned to be related to this world as strangers and pilgrims, ambassadors, and witnesses and that their primary purpose in life should be to make Christ known to the whole world. (Matt. 28:18-19; Mark 16:15; John 17:18; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:18-20; 1 Peter 1:17; 2:11)

2.17 The Return of Christ

We believe in the personal, bodily, imminent return of Jesus Christ. His coming is both the blessed hope and a time of judgment. (Rev. 19:11-16; John 14:1-3; Titus 2:13)

We believe that the Lord's coming is imminent and is the blessed hope and a comfort to all believers, and that at His coming all who have believed in Christ, whether alive or dead, shall be translated and caught up to meet the Lord in the air. (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:50-58)

We believe that at His coming also there will be an unprecedented time of the outpouring of God's wrath on the unbelieving world. This will be a seven-year period of great tribulation. (Dan. 9:27; Rev. 6:1-19, 21; Matt. 24)

We believe that the time of final judgment on the earth will be climaxed by the personal return of Jesus Christ in great power and glory with the armies of heaven, will come as a righteous judge to execute judgment on the peoples of the world. (Matt. 25:31-46; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Thess. 1:8-10; Rev. 19:11-16)

2.18 The Millennial Kingdom

We believe that at the return of Jesus Christ He will establish His Kingdom on this earth for one thousand years. This will be a world-wide kingdom of righteousness and peace, over which He shall rule personally as King. (Is. 11:1-10; Rev. 20:1-3; 2 Sam. 7:12-16)

We believe that this Kingdom is the fulfillment of the promises made to the descendants of Abraham, and that Israel as a nation will be restored to the land, and God's purpose of bringing blessings to all peoples and of being glorified through the nation will be accomplished. (Gen. 12:1-3; Duet. 30:1-10; Rom. 11:1, 26)

We believe that the saved of all ages will be raised to a glorified body and have a part in the glorious reign of Jesus Christ. (John 14:1-3; Dan. 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 15:50-58)

We believe that near the end of this millennial period Satan will be released from bondage and lead one final revolt against Jesus Christ. At this time Satan will be defeated and cast into the lake of fire forever, and the Kingdom will be given to the Father and the eternal state will begin. (Rev. 20:7-10; 1 Cor. 15:23-28)

2.19 The Eternal State

We believe that at death the spirits and souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body when Christ comes for His own, whereupon soul and body reunited shall be associated with Him forever in glory; but the spirits and souls of the unbelieving remain after death conscious of condemnation and in misery until the final judgment of the Great White Throne at the close of the Millennium, when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire, not be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. (Luke 16:19-26, 23-42; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil 1:23; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 1:6-7; Rev. 20:11-15)