Our Church Name - STATEMENT OF FAITH

We are a Christian body of Jesus followers, holding to long-held Biblical beliefs. We also affirm the perspectives of the Wesleyan movement—holding together grace and truth, forgiveness and holy living, evangelism and the loving ministry of meeting the needs of the poor and hurting.

We believe that God's grace is the foundation of our relationship with Him. God makes the first move toward us, and He enables us to respond by receiving His love or walking away.

We believe that we are justified and forgiven of our sin by faith in Jesus Christ, not because of anything that we do, but solely because Jesus lived a life of perfect obedience, sacrificed His life by dying on the cross, and because He rose from the dead three days later.

We believe that God loves us so much, that He does more than forgive us. He gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit, makes us one with Him, and He brings actual transformation to our lives.

All of this is a work of God's grace.

Jesus Christ is the hope of the world, and we believe that the local church is the venue to share that hope. The church is the movement of those who trust in Jesus Christ for salvation, who follow Him in obedience, who worship Him, and are sent out into the world with the good news of what Jesus has done. The church is not a club for people who are perfect. The church is the gathering for all who recognize our need for God's grace and who are searching for God's presence and power in the midst of our lives.

In line with the teaching of Holy Scripture, we believe...

1. **<u>Nature of God</u>**
    - **Trinity**—God is three persons in one: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each person is distinct, yet the three are one. We worship one God.
    - **Father**—Jesus reveals to us God as Father, and He invites us to come to God through the relationship of father and child.
    - **Jesus Christ**—Jesus is the only begotten Son of the Father. He is not made. He is one with the Father. Jesus is the incarnation of God on earth. He is fully human and fully divine.
    - **Holy Spirit** —The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit lives within those who trust and follow Jesus, and the Spirit makes us one with God. The Holy Spirit guides us, teaches us, convicts us of sin, and empowers us to follow God in loving obedience.

2. **Salvation**

- **Grace**–God's grace enables us to trust and believe in Jesus Christ for Salvation. This grace also enables us to follow Jesus. It frees us from the power of sin. Grace is forgiveness, but it is also God's blessing and transformation in our lives. We can do nothing to earn this grace.
- **Atonement**—Atonement is the work that is done for us by Jesus Christ. Through the life, death by crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are given the gift of right relationship with God. Jesus suffered the punishment for sin, cleansing us and freeing us from the power of sin. When we receive the gift through grace, we are made one with God.
- **Justification by Faith in Jesus Christ**—Salvation comes through faith in Jesus Christ alone. The work of Jesus is the only work that is able to both forgive us of our sinful actions and to free us from the power of sin in us. When we repent of our sins and believe this truth and trust Jesus to save us, we are justified and made right with God based on Jesus' holiness and sacrifice.

3. **The Bible**

- The Bible is God's Word, given to us to offer us truth, to guide us in life, and to lead us toward salvation. The Bible is inspired by God and the truth of God contained within it is infallible. It is our final authority in all matters of faith, practice, and living. It contains all things necessary for us to understand and receive the gift of salvation from God by faith in Jesus Christ.
- The Bible is inspired by the Holy Spirit at work in the lives of at least 39 authors over a period of 1500 years or more. The Bible is made up of 66 books (39 Old Testament and 27 New Testament).

4. **Humanity**

- **Image of God**—Genesis 1:26-27 tells us that humans are created in the image of God. We reflect the nature of God, and we are given a spirit by which we can be joined to God through the Holy Spirit.
- **Sacred Worth**—All persons have inherent worth because all persons are made by God in His image. Worth comes from our creator rather than any accomplishments in life. Life is a gift from God, and that life (bearing the image of God and worth from the creator) begins at conception.
- **Fallen into Power of Sin**—All human life extends from the first life that God created. The first humans rebelled against God and submitted the human race to the power of sin. All persons are born into sin, called inherited sin. We are broken and prone toward selfishness and rebellion against God. We are all guilty and have fallen short of God's holy standard. All persons are in complete need of God's forgiveness and grace to be free of sin's hold on our lives.
- **Unable to Save Ourselves but Able to Surrender to God's Grace**— While we are unable to live righteous and holy lives without God's grace at work in our lives, we are able to surrender and receive the free gift of grace that God offers through Jesus Christ. We are given free will to reject God or to receive His gift. God pursues us first in His grace,

5. **The Christian Life**
    - **Means of Grace**—God gives us certain habits and behaviors that allow us to open ourselves to God's gracious work of transformation both in us and through us for the world. These habits and behaviors are called means of grace. They include: prayer, fasting, caring for others, marriage between one man and one woman, worship, and the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion.
    - **Priesthood of All Believers**—All who trust and follow Jesus are filled with the Holy Spirit, joined in oneness with God through Jesus Christ, and called into a life of ministry. Some are called specifically to lead the church through full time ministry, but all believers carry the responsibility to be witnesses daily of God's work in the world through Jesus Christ.

6. **Sacraments**
    - **Baptism**—Baptism is an outward sign of God's grace at work in our lives. It is a sign of the cleansing power of God's grace for all who trust in Jesus Christ for salvation. We are commanded to make disciples and to Baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Baptism is a marker of initiation in the body of Christ. Baptism may be administered by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling.
    - **Holy Communion**—Holy Communion was initiated by Christ at the last supper. In Holy Communion we remember the sacrifice of Jesus in giving of his body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins. As we gather in remembrance of Jesus' sacrifice, God is made spiritually present to us through the elements of bread and wine by the power of the Holy Spirit, and God ministers to us in order to build our faith and to make us one with Him, and to bring us unity with one another. We acknowledge that God's grace is powerfully at work in Holy Communion, therefore, every person that is seeking God is welcome to participate in Holy Communion.
7. **The Church**
    - **Hope of the World**—Jesus Christ is the hope of the world, and we believe that the local church is the venue to share that hope. It is the gathering of followers of Jesus, joining together in worship and mission, by which God promises to spread the Gospel message of Jesus Christ and to bring transformation of the world for holiness and faith in God.
    - **Spiritual Gifts**—The church is given certain spiritual gifts by the Holy Spirit for the building up of the church and for the mission of the church in the world. These are distinguished from talents in that they are spiritual in nature and designed specifically for the mission of the Gospel.
    - **Purpose**—The church has a single purpose: to make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We carry out this mission through evangelism, worship, prayer, holy living, and good works.

8. **<u>Eternity</u>**
    - **Forever**—Human beings are eternal beings. Though our lives on earth will come to an end, we will exist forever. To be eternally separated from God is hell. To be eternally in union with God is heaven.