



Declaration of what we believe

God tells a story and invites us to be part of it...

God is Father, Son and Spirit, one God in three persons, self-existing from before the beginning of time and creation. By His spoken word, He created the entire universe in six days, out of nothing. He created people in His image and placed them on earth to rule and to reign under His authority. He created them to enjoy relationship with Himself, with creation and with one another. He is the source of all knowledge and wisdom. Through the disobedience of the first man, Adam, sin entered into the world, bringing with it destruction, death and the corruption of all creation and all relationships. However God, in His love and mercy, purposed to rescue the world and establish a new creation.

In the Trinity, God establishes equality, authority and submission. God the Father is the ultimate loving authority, to whom both Son and Spirit submit in loving obedience. God sent His Son, Jesus into the world as a Servant, to undo the corruption of humanity and the divine curse on creation caused by Adam. Jesus is fully man and fully God, having been conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. As God-in-the-flesh, Jesus came to testify to truth and make God known. As Saviour, Jesus came to liberate us from our devastating self-love and to rescue us from the consequences of our wilful refusal to love God and others. As Lord of all, His redemptive work secures restoration for mankind and all creation.

God tells His story in His word, which was written by men under the inspiration of His Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the author and interpreter of the Bible, which is God's word to His world concerning His Son, Jesus Christ. The Bible is entirely trustworthy in its revelation of God's character and plans, as well as history and the cosmos. Because it is the word of God, the Bible is the final authority in matters of faith, conduct and truth.

We are a people longing eagerly for the future

We are waiting for the arrival of a new heaven and earth, which God will bring about through His transforming power. A day is coming when Christ will return to establish His reign of justice and freedom. He will create the home of righteousness which we long for, and will forever banish sin, sorrow, Satan and death.

"I am the vine; you are the branches.
Whoever abides in me and I in him,
he it is who bears much fruit, for apart
from me you can do nothing."

John 15:5

In renewed bodies in a renewed creation, we will live as God's people in unbroken relationship with God and one another. At the centre of everything will be the one God, whose character is constant and purposes unchanging. He will be all our glory. We will enjoy life as it was meant to be lived – abundant life in all its glorious and satisfying fullness.

We are a people formed decisively in the past

From before the creation of the world, God the Father chose us and blessed us in His Son, Jesus. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus lived the life Adam and the rest of humanity could not live. Jesus died the death that Adam and the rest of humanity deserve to die. On the cross He endured and exhausted God's righteous anger against our rebellion, paying its penalty in full. Jesus rose physically from the dead and His resurrection is the promise and beginning of God's new creation. He then returned to His Father in heaven, from where He now rules over all creation. He sent His Spirit to apply to our hearts all that He achieved on the cross. The Spirit enables us as God's people to live for Christ and speak of Him so that others might submit to His gracious reign. In this way Jesus sovereignly gathers His church as He rescues those the Father has given Him.

We are a people living joyfully in the present

God has given His Spirit and His word to us to equip us to serve Him in the world and to bring us to His future. God the Holy Spirit is the giver of spiritual life, the one who convicts us of sin and righteousness and who grants us saving faith. He sets us apart for Christ and makes us more like Him as we hear and obey His word. He lives in us, uniting us as one body, the church, which is the body of Christ. This body includes people of every age, ethnic background and social class.

As image-bearers of God, we are workers. We are called to investigate, explore, discover, develop and manage God's world. Applying wisdom, knowledge and skill we are to care for His creation. Our work includes both restoration and creativity, by alleviating poverty, curing disease, implementing justice, meeting needs, restoring order, teaching truth and adding beauty through artistic expression of every form. All such work is worthy and we should undertake it with respect, gratitude and joy.

As members of Christ's church, living in union with Him, we are a means of grace to a needy and dying world. Jesus gave us a glimpse of the world to come, calling us to follow Him and to demonstrate the goodness of His rule by our shared lives, serving and loving one another. We are sent to make the good news of Jesus known to those without God and without hope. As those welcomed, forgiven and accepted, we are to be a community of people who welcome, forgive and accept. So, by word and life, we model and offer reconciliation to those alienated from God. We call people to turn from despising God and urge them to trust in Christ. Without Christ, we would face the judgment of being forever cut off from God and all that is good. Instead, by faith, we share in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and are made heirs of God's kingdom. We never earn the right to be called children of God, but are justified and saved solely by the grace of God, through faith. By grace we live in the present as forgiven sinners. However grievous our offences, we can never lose our salvation, for we depend entirely upon the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, our King and Rescuer.