

The River Christian Church

Statement Of Faith (Concise)

THE APOSTLE'S CREED

We agree with the Apostle's (or Nicene) Creed - the basic statement of faith for Christian churches across the world:

*I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic¹ Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.*

THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the sixty-six books forming the Bible are the inspired and infallible word of God - setting the standard for all doctrine and matters of faith.

THE TRINITY

We believe that there is only one God, eternally existent in three persons – God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, and they are equal in nature, power and attributes.

CREATION

We believe the Genesis account of creation – in six literal days the Word of God formed the universe.

SALVATION & THE ATONEMENT

Through faith in Jesus Christ's death on the cross, and His sinless blood shed as a perfect sacrifice to God, mankind can be forgiven and cleansed from all sin and brought back into relationship with God. Salvation is obtained not by works or human effort, but only through faith in the sacrifice of Christ. Those who believe in their heart and confess with their mouths that Jesus Christ is Lord will be saved, and it is the desire of God for all people to receive this free gift of salvation – to be 'born again'. True salvation is an inward decision that results in an outward transformation, accompanied by a strong assurance that comes from the Holy Spirit.

NEW IDENTITY

Through God's free gift of salvation we are not only washed and cleansed from sin, we are also given a brand new identity. We are no longer sinners, but saints. We are no longer orphans, but children of God and co-heirs with Christ.

BAPTISM AND DEDICATION

We believe in baptism by full immersion in water, given that the word 'baptise' means 'to immerse'. Baptism is an outward and public sign of an inward reality of salvation - that the person being baptised has given their life to Jesus and resolves to live fully in the new identity that they have been given. Baptism must be a free-will decision of the person being baptised. For infants and young children who have yet to reach an age where they can make a decision for Christ themselves, we are pleased to join with their families to dedicate them to God, in grateful thanks for their lives, and pray that God would protect them and reveal Himself to them as they grow.

HEALING

We believe in and pursue divine healing and miracles as works of God which bring glory and praise to Him. We seek to demonstrate love, concern and compassion for those who are awaiting healing. We also resolve to walk the mystery of the timing of God when it comes to answers to prayer – holding His character and nature above our experience and refusing to create any doctrine or belief system that removes hope or faith for healing.

HOLY SPIRIT POWER, SIGNS AND WONDERS

We believe in and pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit which can be evidenced in many ways including the ability to speak in other tongues, experiencing the presence of God, immediate freedom from long-term addictions and issues as well as many other indications.

We actively embrace the work and move of the Holy Spirit through such things as prophecy, speaking in tongues, laying on of hands, and more.

FAMILY

We believe that God's heart is for healthy, thriving families and that God created the model of husband, wife and children, as the optimum environment for children to grow up in and as the basic 'building block' of society. We believe that God's plan for marriage is exclusively between a man and woman who remain faithful and committed to one another for their whole life.

THE CHURCH & MINISTRY

We believe that the local church – the gathering of born-again believers - is God's primary vehicle for advancing and displaying the power of the kingdom of God. We believe that the church is the family of God, and that God gives people as gifts to the church to build it up so that we reach maturity together. We believe that God places leaders and overseers in the church to watch over and protect the fellowship and

culture and that submission and respect for all authority, and especially in the church, is pleasing to God and beneficial for our lives.

We believe that the believers are called to take an active role in society – to be salt and light in the world that we live, and that every believer is anointed and equipped by the full power of the Holy Spirit to bring hope, healing and life into every area of culture.

GENDER IN MINISTRY

We believe that the Scripture records instances of both men and women commissioned for ministry, and we believe that women can hold the same leadership and church government roles as men. We encourage both men and women to become all they can be in Christ and aim to release them as much as we are able into the fullest expression of their ministry and calling.

THE LORD'S SUPPER (COMMUNION)

We believe that Jesus intended the church to remember Him through the elements of bread and wine symbolising His body broken and his blood spilled for us on the cross. We believe in regularly celebrating communion as an act of remembrance, worship and intimacy with Christ.

GIVING

We believe in encouraging generosity in every way in our lives and see financial giving as both a practical and spiritual tool to release God's blessing both to the giver and to the one who receives. We believe in and encourage the principle of tithing 10% of our income as well as generously giving free will offerings into the local church to both help progress the work of the church and Christian ministry, as well as being a key to seeing financial health and breakthrough in our own lives.

RETURN OF CHRIST

We believe in the literal return of Christ to earth, and that it will be a worldwide event witnessed by every person. We believe that His return is our great hope. We believe He will visibly reign over the earth and the world will finally experience perfect government and peace.

END TIMES

We believe that Scripture makes it clear that the closer the return of Christ comes, the more that evil will be unmasked and simultaneously the greater the glory that is coming on the church. We believe that the Bible contains timelines and wisdom for God's people that will be increasingly clarified as we get closer to Christ's return. We believe that the church will be 'caught up' (raptured) to meet Christ. We do not agree with any end times teaching which destroys faith for God to move powerfully to change and impact the world around us, or that robs future generations of hope and vision for what God will do through their lives. We believe that Jesus Christ will literally return 'like a thief in the night', and that we are to diligently engage with His mission in the world with a sense of urgency and expectancy.

THE NATION OF ISRAEL

We believe that God is a covenant-keeping God - that He made a covenant with Abraham to bless His descendants, and that the covenant still stands today. The church has not replaced Israel; rather it stands alongside Israel as a co-heir of the promises of God through Christ.

RESURRECTION & ETERNITY

We believe that when Christ returns, we will be changed, and our sinful bodies will be transformed into eternal, perfect bodies. We believe that there are two resurrections, the resurrection of the righteous (those who have died in Christ) and the resurrection of the unrighteous and they will be judged separately. Those whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life will be lost to eternity in hell. For believers - the work of their lives will be tested by fire and they will be rewarded accordingly. There will be a new heaven and a new earth and the dwelling of God will be with His people forevermore. The Scriptures speak of ages to come where we will continue to see more of the unfolding goodness of God... the best is yet to come!