

Core Beliefs

About the Bible

We believe the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God without error as originally written. It is the complete revelation of His Will for salvation and the final and unfailing authoritative rule of faith and practice for the Christian life. (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

About God

We believe in one God, Creator of all things, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit and that these three are co-eternal and of equal dignity and power. (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19-20)

About Jesus

We believe in the deity and the pre-existence of the Son of God; His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit; His virgin birth; His sinless life, miraculous works, and substitutionary death on a cross. We also believe in His bodily resurrection; His ascension into heaven to the right hand of the Father; His priestly ministry, and in His personal return and reign. (John 1:1-2; John 3:16; Luke 1:30-35; Heb. 4:15; John 5:25; 1 Tim. 2:6; 1 Cor. 15; Acts 1:9-11; Heb. 7:17; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 19:11-21; 20:4)

About The Spirit

We believe in the personality, deity, and present ministry of the Holy Spirit who convicts men of sin, righteousness and judgment; who regenerates, indwells, guides, and empowers the life and ministry of all those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 5:3-4; John 16:8; Titus 3:5; Romans 8:9)

About Humanity

We believe the Bible teaches that all people are created in the image of God and as a result, each person in every place and time, despite differences, has inherent dignity and value.

We believe that the first man and woman (Adam and Eve) were originally created by and for God and in the image and after the likeness of God. They then fell through sin, becoming subject to physical death, losing spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and subject to the power of the devil.

We believe that because of the disobedience of Adam and Eve, every person incurred physical death and spiritual death, which is separation from God; and that all human beings are consequently born with a sinful nature that condemns them and leads them to personally sin in thought, word, and deed. (Gen. 1:27; Eph. 2:1; Ps. 51:5; Rom. 3:23)

About Salvation

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Everyone who believes and accepts that Jesus Christ can and will save him or her is declared righteous in his or her standing before God. All who believe are justified on the basis of His shed blood alone; there is no other way to be restored to a right relationship with God apart from Christ's substitutionary atonement. (Matt. 20:28; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Rom. 3:24)

About the Church

We believe the universal church is a living spiritual body made up of all born-again persons of which Christ is the Head. We believe the local church is a segment of the universal church, organized with leadership for the purpose of advancing the cause of Christ. (Matt. 16:18; Col. 1:18; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 18:8)

About The Resurrection

We believe in the resurrection of all mankind, to everlasting blessedness with God for those in right relationship with God, and to everlasting punishment for those who have rejected God's forgiveness in His Son. (1 Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 20:4, 11-15)

Faith and Practices

The Scriptures

We believe that the entire Bible (66 books of the Old Testament and New Testament) is inspired of God and that holy men of God were “moved by the Holy Spirit” to write the very words of Scripture. We believe that this divine inspiration is limited to the 66 books, but extends equally and fully to all parts— historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic – as appeared in the original manuscripts. We believe that the whole Bible in the originals is, therefore, without error. We also believe that all the Scriptures are centered on the Lord Jesus Christ and were designed for our spiritual and practical instruction. (Mark 12:26, 36; 13:11; Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 1:16; 17:2-3; 18:28; 26:22; 23; 28:23; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 10:11; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21)

Therefore, we will cherish the Holy Scriptures; we will consider it a reliable source of truth; and, we will reject all other claims of divine special revelation.

The Godhead

We believe in the “Trinity,” that is, 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. (Genesis 1:2, 27; Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 12:29; John 1:1,14; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1:1-3; Revelation 1:4-6)

Therefore, we will reject all other so-called gods and all other theological systems that reject the “trinity.”

Angels, Fallen and Unfallen

We believe that God created an innumerable company of sinless, spiritual beings, known as angels; that Satan, “Lucifer, son of the morning,” the highest in rank, sinned through pride; that a great company of the angels followed him in moral fall, some of whom are active as his agents and associates in carrying out his unholy purposes, while others who fell are “reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” (Ezekiel 28:11-19; 1 Timothy 3:6; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 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 opposing God and exalting himself, Satan is the enemy of God and the people of God; 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 through faith in Christ alone. (Genesis 3:1-19; Romans 5:12-14; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; 11:13-15; Ephesians 6:10-12; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; 1 Timothy 4:1-3)

We believe that Satan, a usurper and now ruler as the “god of this world” was judged at the cross; 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 for ever and ever.” (Colossians 2:15; Revelation 20:1-3, 10)

We believe that an even greater number of angels remained in their holy estate and are before the throne of God, from where they are sent forth as ministering spirits to minister to all those who will be heirs of salvation. (Luke 15:10; Hebrews 1:14; Revelation 7:11-12)

Therefore, we will consciously acknowledge the spiritual battle against demonic forces and engage in it accordingly recognizing our power over Satan and his cohorts and, appreciating our angelic helpers.

Humankind, Created and Fallen

We believe that the first man and woman were originally created by and for God and in the image and after the likeness of God, and thereafter fell through sin, consequently becoming subject to physical death and losing spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins and 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, the Man Christ Jesus alone being excepted; and hence that every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature that not only possesses no spark of divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably evil apart from divine grace. (Genesis 1:26; 2:17; 6:5; Psalms 14:1-3; 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; John 3:6; 5:40; 6:53; Romans 3:10-19; 8:6-7; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 5:6; 1 John 3:8)

Therefore, we will not expect righteous behavior from unredeemed people; we will be loving and accepting, granting grace to those seeking a relationship with God; we will purposefully declare the gospel of Jesus Christ in order to set captives free and rescue fallen people from their pitiful state.

Human Sexuality

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. (Genesis 2:24; 19:5, 13; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4)

We believe that, because God created humanity in His image, male (man) and female (woman) have specific sexual differences—they are an individual's immutable sex as objectively determined by genetics or physiology present by or before birth.

Therefore, we will not accommodate the demands of anyone claiming a gender identity that is different to their biological sex—whether this be using restroom facilities that differ from their biological sex or affirming any attempts to physically change or otherwise represent differently their created, predominant, biological sex—including but not limited to elective sex-reassignment, transvestite, transgender, or non-binary “genderqueer” acts or conduct. (Genesis 1:26-28; Romans 1:26-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

We believe that God's design for marriage is the joining of one man and one woman for life. (Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:10; Ephesians 5:22-23)

Therefore, we will only participate in weddings involving the joining of one man and one woman in marriage. We will ask for a commitment to sexual purity prior to the wedding.

We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church.

Therefore, we will recognize the husband as the leader of the home and men as the leaders (pastors and elders) of North Highlands Bible Church. (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:18; 1 Timothy 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)

The First Advent of the Son of God

We believe that 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 human nature. (Luke 1:30-35; John 1:18; 3:16; Hebrews 4:15)

We believe that, on the human side, He became and remained a perfect man; sinless throughout His life, retaining His absolute deity, and being at the same time very God and very man. (Luke 2:40; John 1:1-2; Philippians 2:5-8)

We believe that in fulfillment of prophecy He came first to Israel as her Messiah-King, and that, being rejected by 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 Timothy 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 thereby took away the sin of the world, bearing the holy judgments against sin that 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; Romans 3:25-26; 2 Corinthians 5:14; Hebrews 10:5-14; 1 Peter 3:18)

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

We believe that when He ascended from the earth, He was accepted by His Father and that His acceptance is a final assurance to us that His redeeming work was perfectly accomplished. (Hebrews 1:3)

We believe all authority in heaven and earth was given to the resurrected Christ who is now seated at the right hand of the Father. (Matthew 28:18; Eph. 1:20)

We believe that He became Head over all things to the church, which is His body, and in His current ministry He never ceases to intercede and advocate for His own. (Ephesians 1:22-23; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1)

Therefore, we will recognize no one except Christ Jesus as the Messiah-King and worship Him as our Lord and Savior. As loyal servants of the risen King we will faithfully follow our King and fulfill His commands while waiting for His return.

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 impressive, no baptism or other ordinance however administered, can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven. A new

nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word, is absolutely essential to salvation, and only those thus saved are children 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 place; and that no feeling, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church can result in salvation. (Deuteronomy 6:4, Matthew 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24)

Therefore, we will trust in nothing or no one else for our salvation, and consider no other religious practice as a viable means of access to God.

Sanctification

We believe that sanctification is a setting-apart of believers unto God. Sanctification includes three aspects—positional, progressive, and ultimate.

Positional Sanctification: Sanctification is positional in that it is already complete for every saved person because his or her position toward God is the same as Christ's position. Since believers are "in Christ," they are set apart unto God to the measure in which Christ is set apart unto God.

Progressive Sanctification: Even though believers are positionally sanctified, they still struggle with habit patterns and vestiges from their former sin nature that cannot be eradicated in this life. Therefore, while the standing (position) of Christians in Christ is perfect, their present state is no more perfect than their 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.

Ultimate Sanctification: We believe also that the children of God will yet be ultimately sanctified in their being as they are now sanctified in their standing in Christ when, at His return, they shall see their Lord and shall be "like Him." (John 17:17; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 7:1; Ephesians 4:24; 5:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 10:10, 14, 12:10)

We believe, therefore, that every true Christian is called with a holy calling to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and so to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit so as to not fulfill the lust of the flesh. But the flesh with its propensity to sin needs to be kept by the Spirit constantly in subjection to Christ or it will surely manifest its presence in believers' lives to the dishonor of our Lord. (Romans 6:11-13; 8:2, 4, 12-13; Galatians 5:16-23; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 2:1-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 1:4-7; 3:5-9)

Therefore, we will strive to grow in grace and walk in holiness according to the law of Christ, which is love (The whole Law is fulfilled by loving God and loving one another). We will

practice spiritual disciplines which provide us with the opportunity to hear the voice of God and be transformed; the opportunity for personal examination and transformation; and, the environment to heal emotionally, spiritually and physically.

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 covenants of God, because of the regenerating, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are saved, those 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 willful disobedience of His children, He will, when they persistently sin, chasten them 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; 14:16-17; 17:11; Romans 8:28-39; Ephesians 1:11-14; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2; 5:13; Jude 24)

Therefore we will rest assured in our salvation founded wholly upon the testimony of God in His written Word, exciting within His children love, gratitude, and obedience; express love and gratitude to our Lord and Savior; seek to respond righteously to His corrective hand; and, revel and rest in our security and the hope of glory. (Luke 10:20; 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-8; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 10:22-23; 1 John 5:13)

Therefore any believer who has identified with this church body through membership who has been caught in unrepentant sin will be disciplined according to Matthew 18:15-20 with the desire to restore such a one to fellowship and present them to Christ in eternal glory.

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 unique manner on the day of Pentecost according to the divine promise. We believe He dwells in every believer, and by His baptism unites all 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 departs from the universal 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 Corinthians 6:19; Ephesians 2:22; 2 Thessalonians 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 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 subject to His will. (John 3:6; 16:7-11; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:30; 5:18; 2 Thessalonians 2:7; 1 John 2:20-27)

Therefore, we will seek to understand and adjust our lives to the working of the Holy Spirit.

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. 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 have become members one of another. (Matthew 16:16-18; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:20-23; 4:3-10; Colossians 3:14-15)

Therefore, we will make it our solemn duty to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all racial prejudices or sectarian differences, and loving one another with a pure heart fervently.

The Ordinances

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

We believe water baptism is an act of obedience whereby we declare our loyalty to Jesus Christ and our desire to walk in newness of life. We believe arguments could be made to support various modes of believer's baptism, but we view immersion as the most biblically consistent. (Matthew 16:18; Colossians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 18:8)

Therefore immersion is the preferred mode that will be practiced at North Highlands Bible Church.

We believe that in observing the Lord's Supper we remember His sacrifice. Therefore, not wanting to observe the Lord's Supper too frequently lest it become common or too infrequently lest we forget we will normally observe the Lord's Supper once a month.

The Christian's Service

We believe that divine, enabling gifts for service are bestowed by the Spirit on believers according to His will. While there is a diversity of gifts, each believer is empowered and energized by the same Spirit, and each is called to his own divinely appointed service in God's great redemptive plan of the ages. We believe that there were demonstrative signs performed by the Apostles and the early church, which served the specific purpose of validating the authority of the Gospel message they proclaimed but are not normative for the Church. (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:11-13; Hebrews 2:3-4)

Therefore, we acknowledge differences of opinion and position regarding spiritual gifts in general and sign gifts such as "tongues" in particular. However, we will abstain from the promotion or public exercise of the sign gifts at North Highlands Bible Church. (Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 13:8; 14:2-12)

We believe that, wholly apart from the benefits of salvation which are bestowed equally on 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 Corinthians 3:9-15; 9:18-27; 2 Corinthians 5:10)

Giving

We believe that all Christians, as stewards of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to them, should give, as their first priority, to support their local church financially. We believe that God has established the principle of giving whereby Christians should give regularly and cheerfully to the support of the Church, for the relief of those in need, and for the spread of the gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of the offering once the gift has been made. (Genesis 14:20; Proverbs 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7; Galatians 6:6; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17)

Therefore, we will collect weekly offerings as a part of our worship; The church will only accept contributions for designated needs that are subject to the control and discretion of the

NHBC Elder Board, or its designees. The church will provide a charitable contribution receipt for such gifts.

The Great Commission and Missions

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 all 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. We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ we must use all available means to go and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 17:18; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

Therefore, we will challenge individuals to participate in evangelistic outreach, short-term missions, and long-term missions. We will also commit a portion of our church budget to supporting such endeavors.

The Second Coming of Christ

We believe that the period of great tribulation on the earth will be climaxed by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth as He went, in person on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory to introduce the millennial age, to bind Satan and place him in the abyss, to lift the curse which now rests upon the whole creation, to restore Israel to her own land and to give her the fulfillment of God's covenant promises. At that time the whole world will be exposed to the knowledge of God. (Deuteronomy. 30:1-10; Isaiah 11:9; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Matthew 24:15-25, 46; Acts 15:16-17; Romans 8:19-23; 11:25-27; Revelation 20:1-3)

Therefore, we will look and live in a manner expecting His return. Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.

The Eternal State

We believe that at death the spirits of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and remain there in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body when Christ comes for His own. At that time those souls and bodies will be reunited and associated with Him forever in glory. The spirits 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 alike shall be reunited and ultimately cast into the lake of fire, not to 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 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:11-15)

Therefore we do not pursue a life that requires “heaven now,” instead we accept suffering and hardship in anticipation of the Eternal Heavens and Earth where all tears will be wiped away and suffering will be no more. We recognize that not all blessings will be ours on this side of Eternity.

The Kingdom

We believe that God’s plan for redeeming the world from sin and corruption is centered on the Kingdom of his Son, Jesus that is now manifested in the Church. At his first advent, Jesus claimed the throne of His father David and became the perfect and final King of Israel. After His ascension, He continues this reign in part. The present manifestation of the Kingdom lacks a land and the physical presence of the King. (Luke 1:32-33)

We believe that those who claim Jesus as King do so by expressing faith in His saving-power and continue in the Kingdom through obedience to His Law. As citizens of the Kingdom, each is called to represent the Messiah-King Jesus well through holy living and purposeful outreach to those yet outside the Kingdom, thus increasing the Kingdom population and fulfilling the King’s mandate. (1 Peter 2:9-12; 3:13-17)

We believe the church joins Israel in anticipation of the final return of the King, whereupon the Kingdom shall be established physically centered at Jerusalem. The citizens of the Kingdom will only then come into their rightful inheritance of blessing and peace. (Zechariah 12:10-13:1; Romans 8:16-24)

Therefore we, as believers, hold no loyalty to any organization, government or power above the Messiah-King Jesus and His Kingdom, and will forsake any and all other loyalties for the King’s sake if necessary. We submit every aspect of our lives to the authority of the King, living first as Kingdom citizens and contrary to secular society wherever the two diverge.