

# MATT PAPA

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

### **God**

God is the self-revealed Creator, Upholder, Governor, and Lord of the universe. This God is eternal in his self-existence and unchanging in his holy love, goodness, justice, wisdom, and faithfulness to his promises. God in his own being is a community of three co-equal and co-eternal persons, who are revealed to us in the Bible as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Together they are involved in an unvarying cooperative pattern in all God's relationships to and within this world. God is Lord of history, where he blesses his own people, overcomes and judges human and angelic rebels against his rule, and will finally renew the whole created order.

### **Jesus Christ**

Jesus was and is the second person of the triune Godhead, now and forever incarnate. He was virgin-born, lived a life of perfect godliness, died on the cross as the substitutionary sacrifice for our sins, was raised bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, reigns now over the universe and will personally return for judgment and the renewal of all things. As the God-man, once crucified, now enthroned, he is the Lord and Savior who in love fulfills toward us the threefold mediational ministry of prophet, priest, and king. His title, "Christ," proclaims him the anointed servant of God who fulfills all the Messianic hopes of the canonical Old Testament.

### **Holy Spirit**

Shown by the words of Jesus to be the third divine person, whose name, "Spirit," pictures the energy of breath and wind, the Holy Spirit is the dynamic personal presence of the Trinity in the processes of the created world, in the communication of divine truth, in the attesting of Jesus Christ, in the new creation through him of believers and of the church, and in ongoing fellowship and service. The fullness of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in relation to the knowledge of Christ and the enjoyment of new life in him dates from the Pentecostal outpouring recorded in Acts 2. As the divine inspirer and interpreter of the Bible, the Spirit empowers God's people to set forth accurate, searching, life-transforming presentations of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and makes their communication a fruitful means of grace to their hearers. The New Testament shows us the supernatural power of the Spirit working miracles, signs and wonders, bestowing gifts of many kinds, and overcoming the power of Satan in human lives for the advancement of the gospel. Christians agree that the power of the Holy Spirit is vitally necessary for evangelism and that openness to his ministry should mark all believers.

### **Salvation**

This word means rescue from guilt, defilement, spiritual blindness and deadness, alienation from God, and certainty of eternal punishment in hell that is everyone's condition while under sin's dominion. This deliverance involves present justification, reconciliation to God and adoption into his family, with regeneration and the sanctifying gift of the Holy Spirit leading to works of righteousness and service here and now, and a promise of full glorification in fellowship with God in the future. This involves in the present life joy, peace, freedom and the transformation of character and relationships and the guarantee of complete healing at the future resurrection of the body. We are justified by faith alone and the salvation faith brings is by grace alone, through Christ alone, for the glory of God alone.

### **The Scriptures**

We believe that the Bible is God's revelation of Himself to man. God is the author of the Scriptures. The 66 books of the Old and New Testaments constitute the written Word of God. As the inspired revelation of God in writing, the Scriptures are totally true and trustworthy, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice. In every age and every place, this authoritative Bible, by the Spirit's power, is efficacious for salvation through its witness to Jesus Christ.