



## **Introduction**

Bethel Baptist Church was founded in 1895. It is a member of the Old Baptist Union, a group of wholly evangelical baptist churches founded in 1880. It is the policy of the church to co-operate wherever possible with other Christians in Macclesfield in the advancement of Christ's kingdom.





## Articles of Faith

WE BELIEVE with all our hearts in the only true and living God, the creator and sustainer of all things, visible and invisible; and that in the unity of this Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

"...baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."  
(Matthew 28: 19)

"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."  
(2 Corinthians 13: 14)

WE BELIEVE in the full inspiration of the Bible, accepting it as the Word of God, and regarding its teaching as of supreme and final authority in all matters of faith and practice.

"All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3: 16, 17)

"For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."  
(2 Peter 1: 21)

"...your word is truth." (John 17: 17)

WE BELIEVE in the Bible doctrine of the fall of man, and in his consequent need of redemption through the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and of regeneration through the Holy Spirit. We believe also that God does not want anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance (2 Peter 3: 9), for which cause Christ commanded that the Gospel should be preached to all creation.

"...sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death come to all men, because all sinned..."  
(Romans 5: 12)

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5: 8)

"Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit... 'You must be born again.'" (John 3: 6, 7)

WE BELIEVE that by his grace, and through the

merits of Jesus Christ, God has made full provision for the salvation of all men, but that only those who repent of their sins, and accept Christ, by faith, as their saviour, will be saved.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."  
(John 3: 16)

"He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2: 2)

"Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son." (John 3: 18)

WE BELIEVE that those who truly repent and believe the Gospel should be baptised by immersion.

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," (Matthew 28: 19)

"... 'Repent and be baptised, every one of you...'" (Acts 2: 38)

"We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death..." (Romans 6: 4)

WE BELIEVE that those who are baptised should receive the "laying on of hands" from the elders, in accordance with New Testament teaching and practice.

"Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit."  
(Acts 8: 17)

"...repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instructions about baptisms, the laying on of hands..."  
(Hebrews 6: 1, 2)

"Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you."  
(1 Tim 4: 14)

WE BELIEVE in the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ; and in his deity and absolute sinlessness.



"The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God'." (Luke 1: 35)

"...in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son... the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word." (Hebrews 1: 2-3)

"But about the Son he says, 'Your throne, O God, will last forever and ever...'" (Hebrews 1: 8)

"He committed no sin..." (1 Peter 2: 22)

WE BELIEVE in Christ's death upon the cross as an atoning sacrifice for sin; we believe in his bodily resurrection; in his ascension into heaven, there to "appear for us in God's presence"; and in his personal coming again to receive his people to himself, and to establish his millennial kingdom.

"For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver and gold that you were redeemed... but with the precious blood of Christ..." (1 Peter 1: 18, 19)

"...Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised the third day according to the Scriptures," (1 Corinthians 15: 3-5)

"...After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven." (Hebrews 1: 3)

"...so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him." (Hebrews 9: 28)

"For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air..." (1 Thessalonians 4: 16, 17)

"I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. ... They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years." (Revelation 20: 4)

WE BELIEVE in the infallibility of Christ as a

teacher.

"...he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law." (Matthew 7: 29)

"There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day." (John 12: 48)

"I have given them your word..." (John 17: 14)

WE BELIEVE in the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit, and in his continued presence in the church; and that his gifts may still be claimed and exercised, subject to his will.

"...the Spirit of truth...he will testify about me." (John 15: 26)

"...the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." (2 Corinthians 13: 14)

"Then Peter said, 'Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit? ... You have not lied to men but to God'." (Acts 5: 3, 4)

"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit." (1 Corinthians 12: 4)

"...God's gifts and his call are irrevocable." (Romans 11: 29)

WE BELIEVE in the existence of a personal devil, the arch enemy of God and man, who "leads the whole world astray"; and that although his power is still great on the earth, he is a defeated foe, doomed to final destruction.

"Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil." (Matthew 4: 1)

"...Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Resist him..." (1 Peter 5: 8, 9)

"And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulphur..." (Revelation 20: 10)

WE BELIEVE that man is a being consisting of body, soul and spirit. We believe that the spirit can exist independently of the body and that it continues in a state of consciousness between death and the resurrection.



"...May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thessalonians 5: 23)

"...and the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it." (Ecclesiastes 12: 7)

"...I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God... They called out in a loud voice..." (Revelation 6: 9, 10)

"While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit'." (Acts 7: 59)

WE BELIEVE in the present day possibility and privilege of divine healing, and we recognise that God uses a rich variety of means to bring people to health.

"...to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit," (1 Corinthians 12: 9)

"Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up..." (James 5: 14, 15)

WE BELIEVE that we should observe the ordinance of the Lord's Supper in accordance with our Saviour's injunction.

"For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: the Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you: do this in remembrance of me'. In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood: do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me'. For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." (1 Corinthians 11: 23-26)

WE BELIEVE in the resurrection of the body, in the glorification of the redeemed and that the finally impenitent "will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord".

"...a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out – those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned." (John 5: 28, 29)

"And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven." (1 Corinthians 15: 49)

"...they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace... Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father..." (Matthew 13: 41-43)

"If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." (Revelation 20: 15)

WE BELIEVE in the need of obedience to everything Christ has commanded; and that the way of obedience is the way of sanctification, power and blessing.

"...'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God'." (Matthew 4: 4)

It is God's will that you should be sanctified..." (1 Thessalonians 4: 3)

"Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth..." (1 Peter 1: 22)

"...obedience, which leads to righteousness?" (Romans 6: 16)

"Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him." (John 14: 21)

WE BELIEVE that marriage is the union between one man and one woman, ordained by God and acknowledged by the Lord Jesus Christ as attested to in the Scriptures. It is a building block for sound community and a safe place to bring up children.

"So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman', for she was taken out of man." For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame. (Genesis 2: 21-25)



These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. (Deuteronomy 6: 6-7)

Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?" "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female', and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate." (Matthew 19: 3-6)

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no-one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church – for we are members of his body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound mystery – but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. (Ephesians 5: 21-33)

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honour your father and mother" – which is the first commandment with a promise – "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. (Ephesians 6: 1-4)

All quotations are taken from the New International Version of the Bible.

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