

# West Edmonton Baptist Church

## Statement of Faith

West Edmonton Baptist Church is a member of The Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada

As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we affirm the following summary of what we believe to be basic truths about God and His works. The accompanying Scripture citations support the articles under consideration in a sequential manner. They are not comprehensive.

### **The Bible**

We believe that God has spoken to humanity in the Bible without error. As originally written and faithfully transmitted through the ages, we believe the sixty-six books of the Bible tell us one story about God, about what He does in history, and who we are in relation to Him. The Bible is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice; therefore, the Bible defines who we are, what we believe and how we live as a Gospel community.

2 Peter 1:19-21; Hebrews 1:1-2; John 5:39; Luke 24:27; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; Deuteronomy 29:29; Romans 15:4; Luke 16:31; Ephesians 2:20

### **God**

We believe that one God created everything. God is sovereign over His creation, being all powerful and all knowing. He is a relational being, Who is perfectly loving and perfectly holy in all His attributes. In keeping with this relational nature, the Bible identifies three Persons as our one God: *The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit*. Therefore, we believe in the mystery of the Trinity, where each Person fully and equally shares the same one being and essence of God. Relationship with this God is the non-negotiable foundation of the authentic Christian life.

Deuteronomy 6:4; Genesis 1:1; Exodus 34:6-7; John 1:1-2; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 2 Timothy 2:19; John 17:3; 1 John 2:23

### **The Father**

We believe God the Father is the Creator of all things. He is the only absolute and all-powerful Ruler in the universe. God the Father created all things in the heavens and earth through His Son, Jesus Christ. The Father reigns as sovereign with providential care over all life and history in His created universe. God the Father is not the author of sin. Rather, He saves from sin all who come to Him in faith through His Son, Jesus Christ. He adopts as His own all who come to Him and, through adoption, God becomes their Father. The Father answers prayer, having authority over all things and caring for all His creatures. Through His beloved Son Jesus Christ, the Father will consummate history, judge the world with righteousness and forever reign victorious.

Genesis 1:1 – 21; Colossians 1:15 – 17; Ephesians 3:9; 1Chronicles 29:11 – 13; Daniel 4:35; Romans 11:36; John 8:38 – 47; John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5 – 9; 1Corinthians 15:24 – 28; Revelation 22:1 – 5

### **Jesus Christ**

We believe that Jesus Christ is Lord. He is the unique Son of the Father, not by means of physical birth but by virtue of an eternal Father-Son relationship. Therefore, we believe Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully human. After becoming a human by birth through the virgin Mary, He lived the perfect life we could never live and died for our sins. After rising from the dead, Jesus ascended to heaven and represents believers before His Father until He returns to visibly establish His kingdom and renew all creation.

Romans 9:5; 1 Timothy 2:5; John 1:1-2, 14-18; Luke 1:31-38; 1 John 3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Luke 24:50-53; Hebrews 4:14-16

## **The Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit gives life to all creation and new life to those who believe in Jesus Christ. Unlike an impersonal force or power, the Holy Spirit personally dwells within believers to convict, sanctify, guide, and strengthen them. He also entrusts spiritual gifts to Christians to accomplish the mission of Jesus Christ.

Psalm 104:30; John 3:5-8; Acts 5:9; Acts 13:2; 1 Corinthians 6:19; John 14:15-31; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 1 Corinthians 12:11; Matthew 28:18-20

## **Angels**

We believe that there is a spiritual realm that interacts with our physical world. Within this spiritual realm exist beings called *angels*, who were created by God to carry out His will in caring for humanity. Those angels who rejected God are called *demons*. Demons follow the way of Satan by seeking to harm and destroy humanity generally and Christians specifically.

Daniel 10:10-21; Hebrews 1:14; Psalm 91:11; Jude 1:6; Revelation 12:7-17

## **Satan**

We believe that there is a fallen spiritual being called *Satan*, who introduced sin to the world and corrupts creation. He is the deceiver of humanity and the father of all lies. Though by virtue of Christ's death and resurrection his final defeat is certain, Satan remains a dangerous enemy who directs his demonic kingdom to war against all Christians.

Revelation 12:9; Luke 10:18; Matthew 12:29; Matthew 25:41; 2 Peter 2:10-11; 1 Peter 5:8

## **Creation**

We believe that the world was created by God for His glory and humanity's enjoyment. We believe God entrusted creation care to humanity. Therefore, as God's stewards, humanity must exercise this responsibility with respect and care.

Genesis 1:1; Job 38-41; Psalm 19:1; Genesis 1:28; 2:15

## **Humanity**

We believe that humanity is divinely created in God's image and was intended to be in a perfect relationship with Himself. Humanity is designed at conception to be male or female with equal dignity and worth. We believe that human life is of immeasurable value and significance, from conception to death, and ought to be protected and cherished.

-- God created people to be in relationship with one another. In keeping with this, God created marriage to unite one man and one woman for an intimate partnership to reflect and extend His kingdom on the earth. God's intention for mankind is honored as men and women see and treat each other as bearing God's image equally.

Genesis 1:26-27; James 3:9; Mark 10:6; Romans 1:26-27; Psalm 139:13-16;  
Genesis 2:18-24; Matthew 19:4-6; Ephesians 5:22-33; Hebrews 13:4; Galatians 3:28

## **Sin**

We believe that sin is disobedience to God's will. As all have sinned, every person is guilty, morally unclean, and dishonourable before God. Therefore, all are justly condemned to physical, spiritual, and eternal punishment.

1 John 3:4; Romans 3:23; Romans 3:10-11; Mathew 15:19-20; Romans 1:24; Romans 3:19-20; Matthew 25:31-46

## **Salvation**

We believe that humanity is saved from just and eternal judgment only by the undeserved kindness of God. Jesus Christ lived the perfect life no human could ever live and died under the judgment humanity deserved. All those who place their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ enter a personal and eternal relationship with God which will never be broken. Every believer will continue to grow in their relationship with God throughout life and into the age to come.

Ephesians 2:8-10; Romans 9:16; 1 Peter 2:22-24; Isaiah 53:5; Galatians 2:16; Romans 10:9-10; John 14:6; Hebrews 10:19-22; 2 Peter 1:8

## **Death**

We believe that physical death is not the end of a person's existence. Rather, believers who die go immediately to Jesus' presence in heaven. Lacking a body, these believers remain conscious souls in perfect peace, waiting for the resurrection at the end of time in order to be united again with their glorified bodies. Those who die apart from a relationship with Jesus Christ go to a place of conscious separation from God, waiting for the final judgment at the end of time.

Hebrews 9:27; John 8:51; Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:1-10; Revelation 20:12-13; 1 Corinthians 15:35-49; 2 Peter 2:9

## **Future Things**

We believe the Lord Jesus Christ will one day return to judge the world and visibly consummate His kingdom on Earth. At that time, every person who has ever lived will be resurrected and judged. Those who lived in relationship with Christ will continue in their relationship with God for all eternity in a new earth and heavens. Those who die apart from a saving relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ will be condemned to hell, a place of conscious separation from God where His just punishment for sin is executed on the unrepentant for eternity.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11; Revelation 22:12; 2 Timothy 4:1; 1 Peter 4:5; John 5:28-29; 2 Peter 3:1 – 13; Revelation 20:15; Revelation 21 – 22:5

## **The Local Church**

We believe the local church is the visible expression of Jesus' universal kingdom. That kingdom is comprised of all who profess faith in Christ. The church's mission is to live and multiply as fruitful and faithful citizens of Christ's kingdom.

- Central to this mission is obedience to Christ's command to *make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.*
- While Jesus is the ultimate Leader of every local church and all believers are priests, He has delegated authority for the direction and spiritual protection of His church to human leaders as described in Ephesians 4, 1 Timothy 3 and 1 Peter 5. All church members are responsible to submit to the leadership of the church in matters of faith and practice as unto Jesus Christ, as well as to meet regularly for worship, mutual encouragement, and instruction from God's word.

1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Corinthians 12:27; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ephesians 2:19; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 6:1-6; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; 1 Corinthians 14:26; Hebrews 10:25

## **Ordinances**

We believe that Jesus commands the local church to practice baptism and communion as living symbols of a believer's relationship with God:

- Baptism declares to the world that the believer has entered a relationship with God only through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Baptism does not save anyone. Rather, it illustrates and testifies that a person is accepted into Christ's kingdom. As the kingdom consists only of believers, baptism requires a profession of faith in Jesus Christ. We believe that full immersion in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit best symbolizes the believer's participation in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.
- Communion is a symbolic meal that reminds believers of Christ's life and death on their behalf. It consists of bread and the cup, which represents both Jesus' atonement and the new relationship with God made possible through His work. Those who participate declare to the world that they continue to depend on Jesus' life, death, and resurrection as the only way of salvation. Communion visibly demonstrates the unity of believers in Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:13; Colossians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 1:17; Matthew 28:19; Exodus 24:11; Matthew 26:26-29;  
1 Corinthians 11:17-34

## **The Lord's Day**

We believe that the sabbath command has been transformed through Christ into a perpetual rest of the believer's soul. However, Jesus made a habit of observing times of rest for spiritual renewal, a practice which remains important for believers today. Sunday serves as an appropriate day, as it was the day of Christ's resurrection, the day when New Testament churches met, and the day on which the church has consistently gathered for corporate worship since Christ's ascension into heaven.

Hebrews 3:7-4:13; Colossians 2:16; Romans 14:6; Mark 1:35; Matthew 28:1; Acts 20:7

## **Civil Government**

We believe the church and the government should be free from each other's direct control. Every person under our common government must have the religious freedom to live according to their beliefs and convictions, since each person will individually answer to God. God has delegated some of His authority to the government. Therefore, Christians should pray for, honour, and obey those who have legitimate authority over them. As the government's authority depends on the Lord Jesus Christ, no direct command that violates the will of Jesus as revealed in the Bible should be obeyed, since believers are migrant citizens of Christ's kingdom.

Mark 12:17; Romans 14:1-12; Romans 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-17; Proverbs 8:15; Daniel 4:17; John 19:11; Acts 4:19-20