

Statement of Faith - Michigan State Holiness Camp Meeting Association

The Doctrinal Statement

We believe that there is but one living and true God, who is one in essence, while eternally existing in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Though each person of the Godhead possesses the same nature, each functions differently in respect to God's dealing with humankind (Deut. 6:4).

God the Father

We believe the first person of the Trinity orders and directs all things according to His own purpose, pleasure and grace. He created the universe apart from any pre-existing materials and without any means other than His own pure power. All things come to pass for His own glory. He graciously involves Himself in the affairs of humankind, hears and answers prayer, and saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ (Matthew 6:9; John 5:19-24; Ephesians 1:3-6).

God the Son

We believe Jesus Christ to be the eternally co-existing Son of God who became fully human without ceasing to be fully God. We believe that He is God's only begotten Son (John. 3:16) and our sole Mediator (I Tim. 2:5). We believe in His preexistence (John. 1:1), substitutionary atonement (Romans 3:23-25), His bodily resurrection from the grave (Acts 2:24-27), and in His bodily return from heaven (Titus 2:13). We believe that He is now in heaven, exalted at the right hand of the Father as High Priest; He fulfills the ministry of intercession and advocacy for us receiving us into the church (Hebrews 12:3).

God the Spirit

We believe that God the Holy Spirit is that person of the Trinity who convicts persons of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He also regenerates those who receive Christ as Savior, baptizes and sanctifies them into the Church, indwells them, intercedes for them in prayer, bestows one or more spiritual gifts on each believer, and empowers those yielded to Him (Matthew 28:19; John 3:3-7; John 16:8-11).

The Bible

We believe the Bible is the Word of God; verbally inspired by God and inerrant in the original writings, and that it is the supreme, final, and infallible authority in doctrine and practice. By inspiration, we mean God's superintendence of human authors so that they composed and recorded without error His revelation to humans in the words of the original autographs. (Matthew 5:16-18; II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21).

Human Persons

We believe that man and woman were created innocent and in the image and likeness of God, for fellowship with God, but that they sinned bringing forth both physical and spiritual death (which is separation from God) to themselves and their posterity. As a consequence, we are now sinners and corrupt both by nature and by choice, and alienated from God, and apart from salvation through Jesus Christ are eternally separated from God (Genesis 1:26-27, 2:17, 3:6, 19; Romans 3:10-18, 5:12-21; Ephesians 2:1-3).

Salvation

We believe that salvation is a gift of God, given when we repent and is received only through personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. We believe that persons are justified by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, apart from human merit, works, or ceremonies (Ephesians 2:8-10).. We believe that all true believers, "born again" by the Spirit through faith in Christ, are kept secure when the believer is faithful and obedient to Christ's New Testament commands.

The Work of the Holy Spirit

The work of the Holy Spirit is to manifest the active presence of God in the world and especially in the church. We believe every Christian receives the Holy Spirit at conversion (I Corinthians 12:13; 2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13). The Holy Spirit performs many necessary ministries in the believer's life such as: Counselor (John 14:16), Teacher (John 14:26), Revealer of Jesus Christ as Lord (1 Corinthians 12:3), Empowered (Acts 1:8), Guide (Romans 8:14), Intercessor (Romans 8:26-27), Giver of Spiritual Gifts (1 Corinthians 12:11; 1 Corinthians 14), and the One who brings conviction (John 16:8; Acts 7:51), and produces spiritual fruit (Galatians 5:22-25) and spiritual passion (Luke 3:16).

Entire Sanctification

We believe that entire sanctification is that act of divine grace, by which the heart is cleansed from all rebellion toward God (sin) and filled with the pure love of God. This is a definite cleansing work of grace in the heart of a believer subsequent to conversion, resulting from full consecration and complete surrender and faith in the cleansing merit of the blood of Jesus Christ.

This entire sanctification or infilling of the Holy Spirit results in purity of heart and empowerment for witness as the believer is filled with the fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23). We define this experience God calls us to as “holiness of heart and life”. Sometimes different terms are used to describe the experience: “baptism of the Holy Spirit”, “second blessing”, “making Jesus Lord of your life”, “entire sanctification”, “fullness of the Spirit” or “perfect love”. But the result always is that we are set apart from the world and set apart to God. (I Peter 1:14-16; Acts 1:8; Jeremiah 29:13; 1 John 1:9; 1 Thess. 5:23-24; Deut. 26:17-19; Matthew 5:43-48).

Spiritual Gifts

We believe that the Holy Spirit gives gifts to every believer to be used for the building up of the body of Christ. These gifts are to be exercised according to biblical guidelines and priorities (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12, 14). We believe the Holy Spirit is sovereign and may give any gifts He wants at any time He wants (I Corinthians 12:11).

Marriage

We believe God instituted marriage first and foremost for his own glory and honor (Malachi 2:15; Col. 3:17-19). He accomplishes this not by using marriage primarily to meet our needs, but by using it primarily to help us become more like His Son in our holiness and selflessness (Ephesians 5:25-31; 1 Peter 3:1-7). God instituted marriage to be a lifelong covenantal relationship between Himself and two willing adults, one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:39; Ephesians 5:31). The Bible views a marriage covenant as more than a legal contract between two people. It views marriage as an unconditional commitment by a man and woman to serve God until the fulfillment of their biblical responsibilities as husband and wife until death or God releases them from their commitment (Matthew 19:4-6).

The Church

We believe the Universal Church, the Body and Bride of Christ, is not an organization but a spiritual organism comprised of all who have expressed saving faith in Jesus Christ as both Savior and Lord. We believe the church began at Pentecost and that a believer is placed into the church by the work of the Holy Spirit. We believe that the local church is an assembly of professed believers in Jesus Christ who are voluntarily joined together in one locality for the purpose of worship, study of the Word of God, observance of the sacraments, Christian fellowship, and equipping for Christian service and for the making of disciples. We believe that it is God’s intention that all believers publicly identify with a visible local assembly (Acts 2:1-4, 2:41-47, 4:19, 5:29; 1 Corinthians 1:1, 2, 5:3-8, 10:32, 12:12-13; Ephesians 1:22-23).