



## **Our Faith**

### **1.0 The Nature of God**

We believe that God is One, eternally expressed in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is the creator of everything that exists but was Himself not created by anyone. He is the source of all that is good, the master of all creation, and the perfect, holy, and righteous judge of all the free creatures He has made. Besides Him there is no other god in heaven or earth (John 14:9-16, Matt. 28:19, Acts 2:33, 1 John 5:6-8, 24, Rom. 1:20, Col. 2:9).

### **2.0 The Deity of Jesus**

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Savior of the world. Christ is the visible image of the invisible God, and the exact imprint of his nature, in human form. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation - ( Heb.1:3, Col 1:15, Isa. 9:6, 7; John 1:1), Jesus is Himself God and shares equally all the qualities of the Father and the Holy Spirit (Phil. 2:6). Although He existed as God from all eternity, He willfully chose to assume a human nature and was born in time and space of the virgin Mary. He did this so that by full identification with the human race He could save us from our sins, and restore our fellowship with God. (Heb. 2:14).

### **3.0 The Person of the Holy Spirit**

We believe in the deity and personhood of the Holy Spirit. He proceeds from the Father and the Son and works actively as God's agent on the earth today. His mission is to convict the world of sin, create and secure believers in Christ, and empower God's Church to grow in grace and manifest God's Kingdom in the earth. We believe all the gifts and miraculous works of the Holy Spirit are available to God's people and that each believer has been given at least one spiritual gift for ministry to others in the local church. (John 14: 16-26; Luke 1:35, Rom. 12:4-13, 1 Cor. 12:4-11, 1 Peter 4:11-12).

### **4.0 The Scriptures**

We believe that the Holy Bible (39 books of the O.T. and 27 books of the N.T.) is the only inspired, unfailling and complete written Word of God. It is the revelation of God's plan for man. People are born again through hearing and believing the message of the Bible. God's Word is the primary sacrament God has provided for the perfecting and maturing of His children. (2 Peter 1:21, 1 Peter 1:23-2:2, John 17:17).

## **5.0 The Nature and Fall of Man**

We believe that all people were made in the image of God, but through sin have been separated from God and fallen into moral darkness and the dominion of God's adversary, the devil. Our sin has rendered humanity a race of spiritual rebels deserving nothing but God's everlasting wrath. Fallen people, left to themselves and without God's help, would not seek for God, die in sin, and perish eternally (Rom. 3:9-12, Eph. 2:1-3)

## **6.0 The Election and Redemption**

We believe that God, who is rich in mercy, has chosen from eternity to restore fallen humanity to Himself by providing salvation for all through faith in the sacrifice of His own Son. God gave Jesus to die for our sins and shed His blood as full payment for the sins of the human race. God calls people to Himself through the preaching of the Gospel, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the gift of His Grace. No one can take credit in any way for his own salvation. It is truly, from first to last, the gift of God (Eph. 2:4-10, 1 Tim. 4:10, Rom. 1:12, John 6:37-40). We believe that a person is saved by faith in Jesus Christ alone, and not by his own works or efforts.

## **7.0 The New Birth**

We believe that every person must be born again, spiritually, in order to be saved and enter the Kingdom of God (John 3:3). This means all genuine Christians are born again, and no other "kind" of Christian exists. We believe that the new birth powerfully and permanently changes the human heart, giving believers an eternal right-standing before God, by grace. All who are born again receive the gift of eternal life, and they shall never perish. All those who are in Christ are new creations, their old spiritual nature passes away, and all things become new. (2 Cor. 5:17, John 3:3-6, John 10:28).

## **8.0 The Believer's Security and Apostasy**

We believe that those who are saved by God's grace are sealed by the Holy Spirit, and will be kept by His divine power until the Day of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:6). Our confidence rests not our own efforts or goodness, but in the promise of Jesus; "...of all that the Father has given to me I shall lose none, but raise them up at the Last Day" (John 6:35-40). While the Bible warns believers against sin and apostasy (Heb. 6:9), we believe that God has provided Divine Grace and discipline along with salvation to prevent (John 6:39) the loss of His children from the grip of His Hand. John 10:28-29.: I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from me, for my Father has given them to me, and he is more powerful than anyone else. No one can snatch them from the Father's hand.

## **9.0 The Gift of the Holy Spirit**

We believe God has promised all believers a special gift called the "gift" or "baptism" of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:7, 8). This experience is a special work of God, following salvation and is received by faith (Acts 19:2). The initial physical sign that one has received this gift is the release of heavenly language for prayer and worship, known as speaking in other tongues. (Acts 2:4, 10:44-46, 19:6). God gives this gift to enable His children to communicate spirit to spirit with God in prayer and worship and for personal ministry to others (1 Cor: 14:4, 16; Mark 16:15).

## **10.0 Sanctification**

We believe that all God's children are called to be transformed by the renewing of their minds, and disciplining their bodies to put away sin and walk in God's righteousness. This is a process called sanctification. By regularly feeding on the Word of God, fellowship with God in prayer, receiving the ministry of the local church, and by making daily choices to discipline the behavior and desires of the flesh (Rom. 12:1, 2). At the coming of Christ, the Lord Himself will bring to completion that good work He began in us. (1 Thess. 5:23).

## **11.0 Divine Healing**

We believe that the redemptive work of Christ provides supernatural healing for our physical bodies. "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sickness..." (Matt. 8:17). Healing and wholeness is a promise available to His children who live in obedience to His Word and believe His covenant promises. Faith in God's power and the use of natural and medical remedies are mutual companions in the effort to bring healing. We acknowledge that there are mysteries surrounding the life, health and death of every believer and is a matter that is ultimately between the believer and God. However Divine Healing is the children's bread (Matt. 15:21- 28)!

## **12.0 The Sacred Institutions of God**

We believe that God has set the following institutions in the earth for the blessing of man and the orderly operation of human society. We understand these institutions to be God's provision for the benefit of the world. A believer must honor these institutions to achieve a successful and abundant life before God.

### *12.1 The Institution of Work*

We believe that God, having Himself set the pattern by creating the earth in six days and resting the seventh, has given to man the commandment to subdue the earth by the work of his hands (Gen. 1:26, 2:15, Deut. 28:1-10). This institution was given to us as the primary method of obtaining material prosperity. It is based upon a covenant between man and the earth. Under normal circumstances, each person is responsible to provide for their own need, their own home, and their own families. The institution of work is to be joyfully received as a gift from the Father, and each person should engage in their work with a spirit of excellence. Failure to do so is sin before God and places an undue burden upon society and the church. God has given to each man and woman special gifts and abilities that, when properly nurtured, will enable them to find success in life.

We further believe it is the sacred duty of every believer to offer unto God the tithes of their labors in faithful giving to their local church (1 Thess. 4:11, 2 Thess. 3:10-12, Mal. 3:10-12). The local church exists to benefit the believer through sound Bible teaching, corporate worship and prayer, service to one another and the community, the administration of God's sacraments and ordinances, and the exercise of spiritual gifts.

God's Word directs every believer to commit to the ministry of a local church and joyfully submit to its leadership. Active participation in the body life of the local church is essential to fulfilling the will of God for each individual. We further believe that Christians are commanded to support the local church by faithful attendance, regular fellowship, consistent giving, and active service in her ministry and outreaches (Matt. 16:18, Heb. 13:7, 17, 10:25, Mal. 3:10).

### *12.2 The Institution of Marriage and Family.*

We believe that God, in recognition of man's need for companionship and the expression of love, has given to humanity the gracious institution of covenant marriage. This institution is founded upon a covenant between a man and a woman, made before the eyes of God and the believing community, under the administration of the local church. Heterosexual marriage is the unique environment through which men and women may express their sexuality. Marriage is to be joyously received and honored by all, including those who are called to remain single and celibate in life.

We also acknowledge that it is the highest will of God for children to be brought up by a loving father and mother who are joined by the church in covenant marriage, God will bless and enable single parents to raise their children, providing His grace to do so. Christians are to help one another to raise children in all homes, and to care for the widow, unmarried, and fatherless. (Gen. 2, 5:1-5; Eph. 5:21-6:4).

### *12.3 The Institution of Civil Government*

We believe that God has provided the institution of civil government for the general benefit of human society. Government was established by God for the organization of humanity under the rule of law, to protect the innocent from the sin of others, for the punishment of evil, and for the just administration of civil welfare. At the core of this institution is a covenant between man and his community, seeking to strike a balance between individual liberty and the general welfare of the society in which he lives. God commands the believer to submit to the governing authority of civil government (Gen. 6-9; Rom. 13:1-10).

### *12.4 The Institution of the Local Church*

We believe that God provided the local church as the spiritual family of every Christian. This institution is based upon a covenant between the believer and the body of Christ to which the Holy Spirit has joined him. We believe it is impossible to fulfill God's plan for a believer's life without a commitment to the local church.

## **13.0 Sacraments and Ordinances of the Church**

We believe that God has set in the church sacraments and ordinances for the benefit of His Family.

### *13.1 Sacraments*

We believe in the following sacraments for the growth and nourishment of every believer;

## I. The Word of God

We believe that it is only by receiving the “daily bread” of God’s Word that a believer may mature in Christ. Jesus taught that man lives by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God (Matt. 4:4). The sacrament of God’s Word is received by the hearing the anointed teaching and preaching of God’s ministers in the local church, and through personal study of the Bible (Rom. 10:17).

## II. Prayer

We believe Grace is profoundly imparted to the believer in prayer (James 5:14-18) and is powerfully conveyed through the believer’s prayer to others (Col. 1:9). There are two important kinds of prayer that God has designed; personal prayer, and united prayer. The second is performed when two or more believers are gathered in Jesus Name or in the assembly of the local church. United prayer releases a unique and multiplied force of God’s power to carry out His will and plan upon the earth. (1 Timothy 2:1-3, Luke 18:1).

### *13.2 Ordinances*

Ordinances are particular practices commanded by God to be administered by the local church as signs of personal faith and sources of special gifts and blessings.

#### *I. Water Baptism of Believers*

We believe water baptism is an ordinance of initiation into the body of Christ. We believe that all those who have received the Lord Jesus Christ should immediately be baptized in water by immersion. We further believe that there is a mighty anointing of God present in water baptism to bring about deliverance from sinful habits and personal bondages (Acts 2:38, 8:38, Mark 16:16, Acts 22:16, Rom. 6:3).

#### *II. Holy Communion*

We believe the Lord’s Table is an ordinance of communion with Christ and His Body. We believe that all Christians are to participate in Holy Communion. We believe that Jesus is really and spiritually present with the believer in Holy Communion to minister to benefits purchased by the body and blood of Christ. The covenant bread and wine are not to be icons of worship or adoration but powerful conduits by which believers may access the benefits of forgiveness, deliverance, and healing, and celebrate their redemption through the completed work of Christ on the Cross. (Matt. 26:26, 1 Cor. 11:24).

#### *III. The Laying On Of Hands*

We believe the laying on of hands is an ordinance of impartation for the body of Christ. Through this ordinance spiritual gifts, blessings, prophecies, healing, dedications, and offices are conferred upon individual believers by the ministers of the church. Hebrews 6:12 calls the laying on of hands a fundamental doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ.

- Blessing and dedication of children (Matt. 19:13-15, Mark 10:16).
- Ministering healing, prophecy, deliverance and blessing to others. (Mark 5:23, 6:1-5, 8:23, Luke 4:40, 13:13, Mark 16:18, Acts 5:12, 28:8, James 4:14).
- Confirming of church offices (Acts 6:6, 13:1-5, 1 Tim. 4:14, 1 Tim. 5:22).
- Impartation of Spiritual gifts (Acts 8:17-19, 9:17, 19:6-11, 1 Tim. 4:14, 2 Tim. 1:6).’

## **14.0 Support of the Church**

We believe that each believer is to give of their time, talent and treasury in support of the local church and its witness to the world. We recognize the giving of tithes, offerings, and alms as a commandment to be regularly practiced by every believer. The Church has been given special authority to collect offerings for the purposes of preaching the Gospel, supporting ministers, funding ministries, building houses of worship and service, and charitable works on behalf of the poor and needy (Heb. 7:5-9, Matt. 23:23, 2 Cor. 8, 9, Matt. 5:42, Luke 6:38, Acts 4:32-36).

### **15.0 The Church and the Kingdom**

We believe that the Kingdom of God has both a present and future manifestation. The body of Christ operating through the organized local church is the present manifestation of God's Kingdom in the earth today. God's Kingdom is made visible through the active ministry of God's people through the agency of the local church, the establishing of strong families, and by living lives of personal excellence as productive members of society (Luke 17:21, Mark 4:26-32, Acts 1:8).

### **16.0 The Abundant Life**

We believe the promise of the abundant life is to be sought by all believers through living disciplined, focused and spiritually passionate lives. This promise includes the provision of grace to prosper spiritually, physically, mentally, socially, and materially. The abundant life can be realized by every believer who believe the promises of God, give faithfully to the local church, follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, and commit to achieve personal excellence in every area of life. We further believe that Christians are morally obligated to achieve their highest potential in body, mind and spirit, for the purpose of gaining spiritual and natural influence in the world and imparting the life character of Jesus Christ. The primary purpose of material prosperity is to enable the believer to enjoy life on earth, provide for their families, and generously give to the work of the church to bring the Gospel to the world.

### **17.0 Serving the Poor and the Oppressed**

We believe that God has commanded the Church to be an agent of His grace in this world by performing charitable works on behalf of the poor, meeting the spiritual and practical needs of the community. We desire to establish a visible witness to Christ by providing care for the suffering and developing creative solutions to enable the spiritually and socially oppressed to achieve their potential. "Let your light so shine among men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5, James 1:27).

### **18.0 Resurrection and Eternal Judgement**

We believe in the imminent, physical return of Jesus Christ to the earth. Jesus is coming first to rapture and reward His Church, bring judgment upon the wicked, deliver Israel from destruction, and establish His Throne.

Jesus will return physically to the Mount of Olives, and establishing an earthly rule in the city of Jerusalem, fulfilling His promises to the Jewish people. At His coming, the dead shall be physically raised, the believer will be resurrected unto everlasting life, and the

unbeliever will be resurrected unto everlasting death (Dan. 12:2; John 5:29, 6:40; Acts 24:15; Rev. 20:13).

Then God shall create a new heaven and a new earth where there shall be no more tears, no more pain, and nothing that will hurt or destroy. Then the dwelling place of God shall be with men, and we who have received God's free gift of salvation shall enjoy eternity in the presence of our triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit (2 Peter 3:10; Dan. 12:3; Rev. 21-22).

In light of these sacred truths, we invite men everywhere to repent of their sins, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and be saved into the Abundant Life that God has promised to all who cling in faith to Him.

*Pastors Joe and Dawn Coudriet are ordained through the Abundant Life Ministerial Association, founded by Pastor John R. Carter, Senior Pastor of Abundant Life Christian Center, Syracuse, New York.*