

Lighthouse Baptist Church of Rocky Mount VA

540-650-0558

Our Vision

We are followers of Jesus Christ who believe in the power of God's Word to transform lives for God's glory.

What We Believe and Teach

Doctrine matters. Since our actions and attitudes are a reflection of what we think and believe, we want to know and believe the truth. The sovereign God of the universe has spoken and what He said is of utmost importance. Our desire as Christians and our purpose as a church can be summarized quite simply: we want to know and do what God has said so that we can please Him and sense His pleasure. Everything we teach, the way we relate to one another and the decisions we make are all guided by our commitment to Scripture. Our doctrinal statement is a summary of the major themes and truths of God's Word and it allows us to serve side by side in unity and love.

Everything we teach lines up with the doctrine presented below.

Section 1 – The Scriptures

We believe that all the words and all the parts of the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament and the twenty-seven books of the New Testament are the only inspired Word of God. The Bible is the product of men controlled by the Holy Spirit, and in the original manuscripts it is truth without any mixture of error. God, in His providential care, has also kept these Scriptures authentic and trustworthy from the time of their composition until the present time. The Bible is the center of true Christian unity and the supreme standard by which all human life and conduct will be evaluated and judged. (2

Timothy 3:15–17; 2 Peter 1:19–21)

Section 2 – God

We believe that there is one and only one living and true God, the Creator and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth. God is inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love. In the unity of the Godhead there are three

persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. (Exodus 20:2–3; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Revelation 4:11) God the Father – We believe that God the Father, the first Person of the Trinity, orders and accomplishes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Psalm 145:8–9; 1 Corinthians 8:6). As the only absolute and omnipotent Ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:36). His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator He is Father to all humanity (Ephesians 4:6), but He is spiritual Father only to believers (Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Ephesians 1:11). He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (1 Chronicles 29:11). He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own (Ephesians 1:4–6). He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. He adopts as His own all those who come to Him, and He becomes, through adoption, Father to His own (John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5–9). God the Son – We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. He was not created, but is the Second Person of the Trinity. He came into this world as foretold in the Scriptures to manifest God to mankind and to be the Redeemer of the sinful world. Jesus took upon Himself human flesh and a sinless human nature through the supernatural conception by the Holy Spirit in a virgin, Mary. Jesus was both fully God and fully man, and His earthly life sometimes functioned in the realm of the humanly and at other times in the realm of the divine. He came to die for the sin of the world—the just for the unjust. Jesus Christ alone is the full and complete propitiation for sin—the full satisfaction of the Father's justice regarding sin. He rose from the dead, according to the Scriptures, retaining the same body, though glorified. His bodily resurrection and ascension into heaven, where He now serves as the High Priest for the redeemed of God and head over the Church, gives proof to the fact that His sacrificial death was fully acceptable to the Father for sin. (Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; 53:1ff; Micah 5:2; Luke 1:30–35; 24:34–39; John 1:1–2; 20:20; Acts 2:22–6; Romans 3:25–26; Col. 1:16–17; Heb. 1:3; 2:17; 4:14–15; 7:25; 10:1–14) God the Holy Spirit – We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature. He was active in the creation. He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled. He convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. He bears witness to the truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony, and He is the agent in the

new birth. He seals, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and helps the believer (Genesis 1:1–3; Matthew 28:19; John 14:16–17, 26; 16:8–11; Hebrews 9:14). The Holy Spirit gives gifts to the Church through which the members serve one another and the world. Some of those gifts were temporary and are no longer given today. Some revelatory gifts such as word of knowledge, tongues, and interpretation were critical when the Church was without the written New Testament. Other foundational gifts, such as healing and raising from the dead, were used to confirm and validate the ministry of the apostles as the authentic founders of the Church (Hebrews 2:1–4; Acts 2:22; Mark 16:14–18; Matthew 10:8; 1 Corinthians 13:8).

Section 3 – Creation

We believe that the creation of the universe from nothing is neither allegory nor myth but a literal, historical event. The existence of all things is the result of the direct, immediate, creative acts of the triune God over six literal days (Genesis 1). Humanity—body and soul/spirit—was created by a direct work of God. Humans did not evolve from previously existing forms of life. The entire human race descended from the historical Adam and Eve, the first parents of the entire human race. (Genesis 1–2; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16–17)

Section 4 – Spirit Beings

Angels – We believe that God created an innumerable company of sinless spirit beings. Although they are a higher order of creation than humanity, they were created to serve God and to worship Him. (Luke 2:9– 14; Hebrews 1:6–7, 14; 2:6–7; Revelation 5:11–14; 19:10; 22:9) Fallen Angels and Satan – We believe that Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator, by taking numerous angels with him in his fall, and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve. He is the open and declared enemy of God and mankind. He is the prince of this world, who was defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and he will be eternally punished in the lake of fire. (Genesis 3:1–15;

Isaiah 14:12–17; Ezekiel 28:11–19; Matthew 4:1–11; 25:41; 2 Corinthians 4:3–4;
Revelation 12:1–14; 20:10)

Section 5 – Mankind

We believe that Adam and Eve were created in innocence under the laws of their Maker, but by voluntary transgression, Adam fell from his sinless and happy estate. Adam represented all humanity and all humanity sinned in Adam. As a result, all men and women are totally depraved, are partakers of Adam's fallen nature, and are sinners by nature and by conduct and, therefore, are under just condemnation without defense or excuse. (Genesis 3:1–6, 24; Romans 1:18–32; 3:10–19; 5:12, 19)

Section 6 – Salvation

We believe that, in order to be saved, sinners must be born again. The new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus. Salvation is instantaneous and not a process. In the new birth, someone who is dead in trespasses and sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life. Salvation is the free gift of God's grace, based entirely on the merit of Christ's shed blood, and not on the basis of human merit or works. Faith alone in Jesus Christ alone is the only condition for salvation. (John 1:12; 3:3–7; Acts 16:30–33; Romans 6:23; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 1:7; 2:1, 5, 8–10; 1 Peter 1:18–19; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 5:1) Regeneration – We believe that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given to men and women. It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God when the repentant sinner, as enabled by the Holy Spirit, responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation. (John 3:3–7; 5:24; Titus 3:5) Election – We believe that election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies (Romans 8:28–30; Ephesians 1:4–11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; Titus 3:4–7; 1 Peter 1:1–2). Sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of men and women to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord (Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18–19, 36; 5:40; Romans 9:22–23; 10:9–13; 2 Thessalonians

2:10–12; Revelation 22:17). Justification – We believe that justification is the legal act of God as He declares us to be righteous through faith in Christ Jesus. Justification includes the pardon of sin and the imputation of God's righteousness. It is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer. (Isaiah 53:11; Zechariah 13:1; Acts 13:39; Romans 5:1, 9; 8:1; 2 Corinthians 5:18–21) Thus, the righteousness of Christ that believers enjoy is given to us, not earned by us (Titus 3:5). Repentance – We believe that repentance is a change of mind and purpose toward God prompted by the Holy Spirit. True repentance is inseparably related to true faith. (Luke 13:1–3; 15:7; Romans 2:4) Adoption – We believe that adoption is the gracious act whereby the Father, for the sake of Christ, places new believers into the honored position of heirs. This is in contrast with regeneration whereby the believer receives the nature of God and becomes a child of God. The full benefit of the position of adoption awaits the glorification of the believers at the coming of the Lord. (Galatians 4:1–7; Ephesians 1:5, 13, 14; 1 John 3:1–2) Sanctification – We believe that sanctification is the unfolding work of God: first, an eternal act of God, based upon redemption in Christ, establishing the believer in a position of holiness at the moment he or she trusts the Savior; second, a continuing process in the saint as the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to his or her life; third, the final accomplishment of this process at the Lord's return. (John 17:17; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 5:25–26; 1 Thessalonians 4:3–4; Hebrews 3:1) Eternal Security – We believe that all who are truly born again are kept secure by God the Father for Jesus (Philippians 1:6) and will persevere to the end in faith and obedience by the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Peter 1:10; Ephesians 2:10; 1 John 2:19).

Section 7 – The Church

We believe in the unity of all true believers in the universal Church, which is the body of Christ and was formed on the Day of Pentecost. All believers, from Pentecost to the Rapture, both Jews and Gentiles, are added to this Church when they believe the Gospel and are spiritually immersed into Christ's body (Acts 2:41–42; 1 Corinthians 11:2; 12:12–13; Ephesians 3:1–6). The universal Church is revealed through local congregations of redeemed, baptized believers who commit to one another in their covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel. The Church observes the ordinances of

Christ, is governed by His laws, and exercises the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word. The biblically designated offices are elders (also called bishops, pastors, and pastor-teachers) and deacons, whose qualifications and duties are revealed in the scriptural accounts of the early Church. The true mission of the Church is the faithful witnessing of Christ to all as we have opportunity. The local church has the absolute right of self- government free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations. The one and only superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit. It is scriptural for biblical churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel. Each local church is the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. On all matters of membership, polity, government, discipline, and benevolence, the will of the local church is final. (Acts 15:13–18; 20:17–28; 1 Timothy 3:1–13; Titus 1:5–9; Ephesians 1:22, 23; 4:11; 5:23–24; Colossians 1:18; 1 Peter 5:1–5) Ordiances – We believe that biblical baptism is the immersion of a believer in water. That is the only form of baptism revealed and commanded in the Scriptures. Baptism has no saving power, but is an act of obedience for those who are already saved. The Bible affirms that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death until He comes and should be preceded by solemn self-examination. The elements themselves represent the body and blood of the Savior in symbol only. God does not extend His grace to us through the elements of communion. (Matthew 3:16; 28:19–20; John 3:23; Acts 2:38, 41; 8:36–39; 10:47–48; Romans 6:3–6; 1 Corinthians 11:23–28; Colossians 2:12) Water baptism is a one– time act of identification; communion is a repeated act of rededication. Separation – We believe that believers are to separate entirely from worldliness and ecclesiastical apostasy unto God (2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1). Civil Government – We believe that civil government is ordained by God for the interests and good order of human society. Believers are to pray for and conscientiously honor and obey their civil authorities except when ordered to disobey Scripture and the will of God. (Exodus 18:21, 22; 2 Samuel 23:3; Acts 23:5; Romans 13:17) Israel – We believe that God sovereignly selected Israel as His eternal covenant people. Israel is now dispersed because of disobedience and rejection of their Messiah, Jesus Christ, but will be regathered in Israel during the Tribulation. According to God's grace and His eternal covenant with the Jewish nation, God will prepare their hearts in repentance for the second coming of Christ. (Genesis 13:14–17; Ezekiel 37; Romans 11:1–32)

Section 8 – Last Things

The Rapture and Tribulation – We believe in the imminent, pretribulational, premillennial return of Christ for His Church. At that moment the dead in Christ shall be raised in glorified bodies, and the living in Christ shall be given glorified bodies without tasting death. All believers shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air before the tribulation, the seventieth week of Daniel. (Daniel 9:25–27; Matthew 24:29–31; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; Revelation 20:1–4, 6)

The Millennial Kingdom and Subsequent Events – We believe at the end of the tribulation Christ will return physically to earth to render judgment and inaugurate the one thousand year millennial kingdom.

Christ will establish Himself as King, sitting on the throne of David, as the nation of Israel is saved and restored to their land. The millennium will be a time of peace, joy, righteousness, obedience, holiness, truth and fullness of the Holy Spirit. Satan will be bound during this time but released at the end when he leads a rebellion against Christ, only to be defeated and judged. As the millennium concludes, the unsaved dead of all ages are resurrected and judged at the great white throne. Following this, God will create new heavens and a new earth. (Psalms 24; Isaiah 9:3-7; 11:1-10; 32; 35; 61:7-10; 65; 66; Daniel 12:2-3; Joel 2:28-29; Micah 4:1-4; Zechariah 12:10-14; 14:4-21; Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 1:32-33; Romans 11:25-27; 1 Corinthians 15:22-28; Revelation 19:11-21; 20-22)

The Saved and the Lost – We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between those who are saved and those who are lost. Only those who are justified by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Spirit of our God are saved in God's sight. All who continue in unrepentant sin and unbelief are lost in God's sight and under His abiding curse. This distinction will remain eternally: in the everlasting joy in heaven for the saved and in the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost in the lake of fire. (Genesis 18:23; Malachi 3:18; Matthew 25:46; John 8:21;

Romans 6:17–18, 23; 7:6; 1 John 5:19)

Section 9 – Moral Issues

Abortion – We believe that human life begins at fertilization and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn

God-given human life. God is the author of life and death. Therefore, abortion is murder. (Job 3:16; Psalms 51:5; 139:14–16; Isaiah 49:1, 5; Jeremiah 1:5; 20:15–18; Luke 1:44)

Euthanasia – We believe that God is the author of life and death. The direct taking of an innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of intention. Life is a gift of God and must be respected from fertilization to natural death. (Exodus 20:13; 23:7; Matthew 5:21; Acts 17:28)

Human Sexuality – We believe that sexual activity outside of a marriage between one man and one woman is sin. Any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, transgender, bestiality, incest, pedophilia, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God’s gift of sex. God has created us male and female, and He desires that we find joy and contentment in His design. (Genesis 2:24; Genesis 19:5, 13; Genesis 26:8–9; Leviticus 18:1–30; Romans 1: 26–29; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; 1Thessalonians 4:1–8; Hebrews 13:4)

Marriage – We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. (Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:10; Ephesians 5:22–23)

Gender Relationships – We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is the head of his household, serving as a shepherd/leader in the home. Likewise, men are to hold the offices of authority in the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church and qualified to exercise their authority by leading mixed adult worship services and adult Christian education classes. (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:18; 1 Timothy 2:8–15; 3:4–5, 12)

Family Relationships – We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the Church. The wife is to submit herself to the scriptural leadership of her husband as the Church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are a heritage from the Lord, and parents are responsible to oversee their children’s spiritual and moral instruction, which includes a consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including scriptural corporal correction. (Genesis 1:26–28; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4–9; Psalms 127:3–5; Proverbs 19:18; 22:15; 23:13–14; Mark. 10:6–12; 1 Corinthians 7:1–16; Ephesians 5:21–33; 6:1–4, Colossians 3:18–21; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1–7)

Divorce and Remarriage – We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until the death of a spouse. Divorce and remarriage is regarded as adultery except on the grounds of fornication and spousal abandonment. Divorce is also permissible to end civil unions or legal marriages which violate Scriptural marriage as defined above (such as

polygamous or homosexual unions). However, marriage to an unbeliever is not solely a legitimate ground for divorce. (Malachi 2:14–17; Matthew 19:3–12; Romans 7:1–3; 1 Timothy 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)

Section 10 – Christian Interactions

Christian Love – We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, prayerfully, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat of or use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 5:44–48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34–35; Romans 12:9–10; 17–21; 13:8–10; Philippians 2:2–4; 2 Timothy 2:24–26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17–18) Lawsuits between Believers – We believe that scripture prohibits members from bringing civil lawsuits against other members of our assembly or the church to resolve personal disputes. (1 Corinthians 6:1–8; Ephesians 4:31–32)

Section 11 – Authority of Statement of Faith

This statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our belief. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing statement of faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. For purposes of church doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, the elders are the church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application. All teaching conducted as part of our ministry and all curriculums used in our education ministries must be approved by appropriate church leadership.

For questions, contact Pastor Randy at pastor@lighthousebaptistva.com