

1921 Garden City Confession of Faith

Adopted in 1921, Garden City Missouri

(Taken for “Statement of Christian Doctrine and Rules and Discipline of the Eastern Pennsylvania Mennonite Church and Related areas “1998”)

This state of Christian doctrine and discipline has been prepared in the fear of God with a deep burden for the proper application of the unchanging principles of the Word of God.

We believe that God’s children will grow in their appreciation for a Biblically discipline church with a statement of Christian doctrine and application that will assist them in more fully conforming to God’s ways and be a safeguard against the constant pressures and temptations toward worldly accommodations. To this end the following document has been prepared and is presented for acceptance by the membership and for the benefit of interested persons.

A discipline reviewing committee reviewed and prepared this document for consideration and adoption by the Body of Christ.

ARTICLES OF FAITH

Article 1

OF THE WORD OF GOD

We believe in the plenary and verbal inspiration of the Bible as the Word of God; that it is authentic in its matter, authoritative in its counsels, inerrant in the original writings, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice. Ex. 4:12; II Sam. 23:2; Ps. 12:6; 119:160; Jer. 1:9; Mt. 5:18; 24:35; II Tim. 3:16; II Pet. 1:20, 21.

Article II

OF THE EXISTENCE AND NATURE OF GOD

We believe that there is but one God, eternal, infinite, perfect, and unchangeable, who exists and reveals Himself in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Duet. 6:4; Ps. 90:2; Gen. 17:1; Ps. 147:5; 139:7-12; Isa. 40:28; 57:15; Mal. 3:6; Gen. 1:2; Heb. 1:8.

Article III

OF THE CREATION

We believe that the Genesis account of the Creation is a historic fact and literally true. Gen. 1:1, 21, 27; Ex. 20:11; Mk. 10:6-9; Heb. 1:10; 4:4; Heb. 11:3.

Article IV

OF THE FALL OF MAN

We believe that man was created by an immediate act of God: In His own image and after His likeness; that by one act of disobedience he became sinful in his nature, spiritually dead, subject to physical death and to the power of the devil, from which fallen condition he was unable to save himself. Gen. 1:26, 27, 16, 17; 3:1-7; Eph. 2:1-3, 12; Jon. 6:44; Rom. 5:6

Article V

OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, that He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin-the perfect Godman; that He was without sin... Making the only adequate atonement for sine by the shedding of His blood, thus reconciling man to God; that He was raised from the dead, ascended to glory and “ever liveth to make intercession for us.” Jon. 1:1, 14, 18; Heb. 1:8; 13:8; Gen. 3:15; Isa. 7:15; Lk. 1:35; Mt. 1:20-25; Isa. 53:5, 6; II Cor. 5:14, 21; Gal. 3:13; I Pet. 2:22, 24; 3:18; Rom. 5:8-10; Mt. 28:6; Acts 2:24; 10:39-41; 17:31; I Cor. 15:20; Acts 1:11; Eph. 1:19, 20; Rev. 1:18; Col. 3:1; Heb. 6:20; I Jon. 2:1, 2; Heb. 7:25.

Article VI

OF SALVATION

We believe that man is saved alone by grace through faith in the finished work of Christ that he is justified from all things on the ground of His shed blood; that through the new birth he becomes a child of God, partaker of eternal life, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ. Eph. 2:8 Rom. 3:20-26; Acts 13:38, 39; Jon. 1:12, 13; 3:4, 8, 16; 5:24; Eph. 1:3.

Article VII

OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit; that He convinces the world of sin, righteousness, and of judgment; that He indwells and comforts the believer, guides him into all truth, empowers for service and enables him to live a life of righteousness. Acts 5:3,4; II Cor. 3:3, 17; Jon 16:7, 8, 13; I Cor. 3:16; Gal. 4:6; Acts 1:8; Rom. 8:1-4.

Article VIII

OF ASSURANCE

We believe that it is the privilege of all believers to know that they have passed from death unto life; that God is able to keep them from falling, but that the obedience of faith is essential to the maintenance of one's salvation and growth in grace. I Jon. 3:14; 5:13; Rom. 8:16; II Cor. 12:9; Jude 24, 25; Rom. 16:25, 26; 1:5; Gal. 3:11; Jon. 8:31; II Pet. 1:5-11.

Article IX

OF THE CHURCH

We believe that the Church is the body of Christ, composed of all those who through repentance toward God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ have been born again and were baptized by one Spirit into one Body, and that it is her divinely appointed mission to preach the gospel to every creature, teaching obedience to all His commandments. Mt. 15:18; Eph. 1:23; Col 1:18; Acts 20:21; Lk. 24:47; Acts 17:30; 16:31; Gal. 3:26; I Cor. 12:13; Mt. 28:19, 20; Mk. 16:15; Acts 1:8.

Article X

OF SEPARATION

We believe that we are called with a holy calling to a life of separation from the world and its follies, sinful practices, and methods; further that it is the duty of the Church to keep herself aloof from all movements which seek the reformation of society independent of the merits of the death of Christ and the experiences of the new birth. I Pet. 2:9; Tit. 2:11-14; 2:15; Mt. 28:19, 20; 18:15-18; Eph. 4:11-16; Heb. 13:17; Acts 14:21-23; 1:15-26.

Article XI

OF DISCIPLINE

We believe that the Lord has vested the Church with authority in accordance with Scriptural teaching: (1) to choose officials, (2) to regulate the observance of ordinances, (3) to exercise wholesome discipline, and (4) to organize and conduct her work in a manner consistent with her high calling and essential to her highest efficiency. Acts 6:1-6; 13:1-3; II Tim. 2:2; Tit. 1:5-9; 2:15; Mt. 28:19-20; 18:15-18; Eph. 4:11-16; Heb. 13:17; Acts 14:21-23; 1:15-26.

Article XII

OF ORDINANCES

We believe that Christian baptism should be administered upon confession of faith; that the Lord's Supper should be observed as a memorial of His death by those of like precious faith who have peace with god; that feet washing as an ordinance should be literally observed by all believers; that Christian women praying or prophesying should have their heads covered; that the salutation of the holy kiss should be duly and appropriately observed by all believers; that anointing with oil should be administered to the sick who call for it in faith; that marriage between one man and woman is a divine institution dissoluble only by death, that on the part of a Christian it should be “only in the Lord” and that consistency requires that the marriage relation be entered only by those of like precious faith. Lk. 22:19-20. 1 Cor. 11:23-28; Acts 2:39; 8:12; 18:8; Jon. 13:1-7; 1 Cor. 11:2-16; 16:20; Jas. 5:14-16; Mk. 10:6-12; Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:39; Amos 3:3

Article XIII

OF RESTRICTIONS

We believe that all Christians should honor, pray for, and pay tribute to, and obey in all things those who are in authority in state and nation, provided however, that should instances arise in which such obedience would violate the higher law of god “we ought to obey God, rather than man,” that Church and State are separate, and while believers are to be subject to, they are not a part of the civil, administrative powers; that it is contrary to the teachings of Christ and the apostles to engage in carnal warfare; that Christians should “adorn themselves in modest apparel ... not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array”; that the swearing of oaths is forbidden in the New Testament Scriptures; that secret orders are antagonistic to the tenor and spirit of the Gospel; and that life insurance is inconsistent with the filial trust in the providence and care of our heavenly Father. 1 Pet. 2:13, 14, 17; Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Tim. 2:1, 2; Acts 5:29; Mt. 22:21; Mk. 10:42-44; Jon. 18:36; 2 Cor. 10:4; 1 Tim 2:9, 10; 1 Pet 3:3-5; Mt. 5:34-37; Jas. 5:12; Jon. 18:20; Eph. 5:11, 12; I Jon 3:17; Gal. 6:10; Jer. 49:11; Eph. 1:22, 23.

Article XIV

OF APOSTASY

We believe that the later days will be characterized by general lawlessness and departure from the faith; that on the part of the world “iniquity shall abound; and “evil men shall wax worse and worse”; that on the part of the Church there will be a falling away and “the love of many shall wax cold”; that false teachers shall abound, both deceiving and being deceived and further, that present conditions indicate that we are now living in these perilous times. I Tim. 4:1, 2; Rom. 16:17,18; II Tim. 2:1-5, 13; II Peter 2:1, 2, 10; Mt. 24:11, 12; II Thes. 2:3.

Article XV

OF THE RESURRECTION

We believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ and in the bodily resurrection of all men, both of the just and the unjust-of the just to the resurrection of life, and of the unjust to the resurrection of condemnation. Jon. 20:20, 24-29; Lk. 24:30, 31; I Cor. 15:42-44; Acts 24; Jon. 5:28, 29; I Cor. 15:20-23.

Article XVI

OF THE COMING OF CHRIST

We believe in the personal, imminent coming of our Lord as the blessed hope of the believer; that we who are alive and remain, together with the dead in Christ who will be raised, shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the he air and thus ever be with the Lord, Jon. 14:2, 3 Acts 1:11; Mt. 24-44; Heb. 10:37; Tit. 2:11-13; I Thes. 4:13-18.

Article XVII

OF THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

We believe that in the interval between death and resurrection, the righteous will be with Christ in a state of conscious bliss and comfort, but that the wicked will be in a place of torment, in a state of conscious suffering and despair. Lk. 16:19-31; 23:43; Phil. 1:23; II Cor. 5:1-8; I Thes. 5:10; II Pet. 2:9