

A photograph of a church service, overlaid with a dark blue semi-transparent filter. In the background, a sign reads "WINE PRESS" above a stage with purple curtains. A woman is seated on a stack of wine barrels on the stage. Other people are visible in the foreground and background, some with their hands raised in prayer.

Saratoga Abundant Life

STATEMENT OF FAITH

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Holy Bible: The Holy Bible, and only the Bible, is the authoritative Word of God. It alone is the final authority in determining all doctrinal truths. In its original writing, it is inspired, infallible and inerrant (see 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20,21; Proverbs 30:5; Romans 16:25-26).

Trinity: There is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These three are coequal and coeternal (see 1 John 5:7; Genesis 1:26; Matthew 3:16-17 and 28:19; Luke 1:35; Isaiah 9:6; Hebrews 3:7-11).

Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ is God the Son, the second person of the Trinity. On earth, Jesus was 100 percent God and 100 percent man. He is the only man ever to have lived a sinless life. He was born of a virgin, performed miracles, died on the cross for mankind and thus, atoned for our sins through the shedding of His blood. He rose from the dead on the third day according to Scripture, ascended to the right hand of the Father, and will return again in power and glory (see John 1:1,14 and 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:16 and 2:5; Isaiah 9:6; Philippians 2:5-6).

Virgin Birth: Jesus Christ was conceived by God the Father through the Holy Spirit (the third person of the Trinity) in the virgin Mary's womb; therefore, He is the Son of God (see Matthew 1:18, 23-25; Luke 1:35; Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:27-35).

Redemption: Man was created good and upright, but by voluntary transgression he fell; his only hope of redemption is in Jesus Christ, the Son of God (see Genesis 1:26-31 and 3:1-7; Romans 5:12-21).

Regeneration: The scriptures clearly state in John 3:3 that we need to be born again. At our birth we are physically born and at conversion the scripture states we are born of the Spirit of God (John 1:12-13). This conversion enables us to become children of God. In 2 Corinthians 5 scripture refers to being reconciled to God and becoming ambassadors for the Lord and His kingdom (see John 6:44, 65).

Salvation: We are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, His death, burial and resurrection. Salvation is a gift from God, not a result of our good works or of any human efforts (see Ephesians 2:8-9; Galatians 2:16 and 3:8; Titus 3:5; Romans 10:9-10; Acts 16:31; Hebrews 9:22).

Repentance: Repentance is the commitment to turn away from sin in every area of our lives and to follow Christ, which allows us to receive His redemption and to be regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Thus, through repentance we receive forgiveness of sins and appropriate salvation (see Acts 2:21 and 3:19; 1 John 1:9).

Sanctification: Sanctification is the ongoing process of yielding to God's Word and His Spirit in order to complete the development of Christ's character in us. It is through the present ministry of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God that the Christian is enabled to live a godly life (see 1 Thessalonians 4:3 and 5:23; 2 Corinthians 3:18 and 6:14-18; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3; Romans 8:29 and 12:1-2; Hebrews 2:11).

Jesus' Blood: The blood that Jesus Christ shed on the cross of Calvary is 100 percent sufficient to cleanse mankind of all sin. Jesus allowed Himself to be punished for both our sinfulness and our sins, enabling all those

who believe to be free from the penalty of sin, which is death (see 1 John 1:7; Revelation 1:5 and 5:9; Colossians 1:20; Romans 3:10-12,23 and 5:9; John 1:29).

Jesus Christ Indwells All Believers: Christians are people who have invited the Lord Jesus Christ to come and live inside them by the Holy Spirit. They relinquish the authority of their lives over to Him thus making Jesus the Lord of their life as well as Savior. They put their trust in what Jesus accomplished for them when He died, was buried and rose again from the dead (see John 1:12; 14:17, 23 and 15:4; Romans 8:11; Revelation 3:20).

Baptism in the Holy Spirit: Given at Pentecost, it is the promise of the Father, sent by Jesus after His ascension, to empower the Church to preach the gospel throughout the whole earth (see Joel 2:28-29; Matthew 3:11; Mark 16:17; Acts 1:5; 2:1-4,17,38-39; 8:14-17; 10:38, 44-47; 11:15-17; 19:1-6).

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit is manifested through a variety of spiritual gifts to build and sanctify the church, demonstrate the validity of the resurrection and confirm the power of the gospel. The Bible lists of these gifts are not necessarily exhaustive, and the gifts may occur in various combinations. All believers are commanded to earnestly desire the manifestation of the gifts in their lives. These gifts always operate in harmony with the scriptures and should never be used in violation of biblical parameters (see Hebrews 2:4; Romans 1:11; 12:4-8; Ephesians 4:16; 2 Timothy 1:5,16; 4:14; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31; 14:1-40; 1 Peter 4:10).

The Church: The Church is referred to in scripture as Body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of Jesus' Great Commission. Every person who is born of the Spirit is an integral part of the Church, as a member of the body of believers. There is a spiritual unity of all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ (see Ephesians 1:22 and 2:19-22; Hebrews 12:23; John 17:11,20-23).

Two Sacraments

1. Water Baptism: Following faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the new convert is commanded by the Word of God to be baptized in water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (see Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38).

2. The Lord's Supper: This is a unique time of Communion in the presence of God when the elements of bread and grape juice (the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ) are taken in remembrance of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross (see Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 16:16; Acts 8:12, 36-38 and 10:47-48; 1 Corinthians 10:16 and 11:23-25).

Healing of the Sick: Healing of the sick is illustrated in the life and ministry of Jesus, and is included in Jesus' commission to His disciples. It is given as a sign, which is to follow believers. It is also a part of Jesus' work on the cross and one of the gifts of the Spirit. (See Psalm 103:2-3; Isaiah 53:5; Matthew 8:16-17; Mark 16:17-18; Acts 8:6-7; James 5:14-16; 1 Corinthians 12:9,28; Romans 11:29)

God's Will for Provision: It is the Father's will for believers to become whole, healthy and successful in all areas of life. Because of the Fall, many may not receive the full benefits of God's will while on the earth. That fact, though, should never prevent believers from seeking the full benefits of Christ's provision in order to better serve others.

- Spiritual (see John 3:3-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Romans 10:9-10)
- Mental and Emotional
- (see 2 Timothy 1:7 and 2:11; Philippians 4:7-8; Romans 12:2; Isaiah 26:3).
- Physical (see Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 8:17; 1 Peter 2:24).
- Financial (see Joshua 1:8; Malachi 3:10-11; Luke 6:38; 2 Corinthians 9:6-10; Deuteronomy 28:1-14; Psalm 34:10 and 84:11; Philippians 4:19).

Resurrection: Jesus Christ was physically resurrected from the dead in a glorified body three days after His death on the cross. In addition, both the believers and unbelievers will be resurrected, they that are saved to the resurrection of life and they that are lost to the resurrection of eternal damnation (see Luke 24:16,36,39; John 2:19-21; 20:26-28 and 21:4; Acts 24:15; 1 Corinthians 15:42,44; Philippians 1:21-23 and 3:21).

Heaven: Heaven is the eternal dwelling place for all believers in the gospel of Jesus Christ (see Matthew 5:3,12,20; 6:20; 19:21 and 25:34; John 17:24; 2 Corinthians 5:1; Hebrews 11:16; 1 Peter 1:4).

Hell: After living one life on earth, the unbelievers will be judged by God and sent to hell where they will be eternally tormented with the devil and the fallen angels (see Matthew 25:41; Mark 9:43-48; Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 14:9-11; 20:12-15 and 21:8).

Second Coming: Jesus Christ will physically and visibly return to earth for the second time to establish His kingdom. This will occur at a date undisclosed by the scriptures (see Matthew 24:30 and 26:63-64; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8; Revelation 1:7).

Church Membership: We believe it is our sacred duty to identify and actively participate with the local and visible church of Christ. (Acts 16:5, Hebrews 10:25)

Civil Government: We believe that the laws of the land should be upheld at all times except in matters opposed to the Word of God. (Romans 13:1-5)

Evangelism: We believe that sharing the gospel is the Great Commission given to the Church. (James 5:20, Mark 16:15, 2 Corinthians 5:18-21)

Tithes and Offerings: We believe that the method ordained of God for the support and spread of His cause is by the giving of tithes and free-will offerings. (Malachi 3:10, 2 Corinthians 9:7, Hebrews 7:8)

Worship: We believe that "acceptable" and "true" worship is prescribed by God Himself in His Word. This embodies individual and corporate expressions of praise and thanksgiving (John 4:24, Psalm 150)

Church Government: We believe in church government to ensure order, and we believe in loyalty to those acting in rightful authority as they lead us in the Lord. (1 Peter 5:1-5, Romans 13)

Marriage & Sexuality

(Gen 2:18-24, Mat 19:3-9, 1 Tim 4:1-5, Heb 13:4)

- 1. We believe that the term “marriage”** has only one meaning and that marriage is sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture.
- 2. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman** who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.
- 3. We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church** as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.
- 4. We believe that every person must be afforded** compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture nor the doctrines of the church.
- 5. We believe that Marriage was instituted by God as a lifelong commitment**