

EXHIBIT 1

Beliefs

I. INSPIRATION

We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are divinely and verbally inspired by God and are inerrant and infallible in the original writings, and that they are of supreme and final authority.

Terms explained:

- A. *Verbally: This means that the individual words of the Bible are true and without error in the original writings. Therefore, more than just the thought or concept is inspired, but also every word (Matt. 5:17,18; Prov. 30:5,6). The term "plenary" is often used with the word "verbal" to give the view that all Scripture is fully and equally inspired (2 Tim. 3:16,17).*
- B. *Inspired (Inspiration): Inspiration is that particular work of God by which the Holy Spirit, becoming the co-author of Scripture, supernaturally directed the writers of Scripture and without excluding their human intelligence, individuality, literary style, personal feelings, or any other human factor, God's own complete and coherent message to men was recorded in perfect accuracy and the very words of the Bible bear the authority of this divine authorship. Inspiration is not equivalent to dictation except in certain instances, as God uses the experience, feelings and thinking of the human author. The end result, however, is just as accurate as if God Himself had taken the pen. Hence, the Scriptures were inspired or breathed out by God and, though the authors were fallible men, what they wrote was without error (2 Peter 1:20,21). Inspiration does not suppress the intellectual ability and talent but rather uses that intellectual ability and talent (Luke 1:1-3; 2 Samuel 23:2).*
- C. *Inerrant: Inerrant means that the Scriptures in their original writings were without error (John 10:35; Luke 16:17).*
- D. *Infallible: Infallible means that the Scriptures in their original writings were incapable of error and never wrong (John 10:35; Luke 16:17).*
- E. *Final Authority: The Scriptures are God's special revelation (communication of truth) to man and because they are inspired and inerrant they become our final authority. However, we take careful note of what the Bible indicates as not being authoritative, such as Satan's statement to Eve in the Garden of Eden, "You surely shall not die" (Gen. 3:45; 2 Tim. 3:16,17).*

II. TRINITY

We believe in one God eternally existing in one essence, yet three co-equal persons, the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Terms explained:

- A. *Eternally existing: There is but one God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-6, 14, 18, 21-22; Mark 12:29-32), Who has no beginning and no ending (Ps. 90:1-2; Gen. 1:1).*
- B. *Three in One: God is one in essence, yet three persons, co-equal, eternally existing (Matt. 28:19; Eph. 4:4-6; Rev. 1:4; John 12:26; 15:26; 16:15; 1 Peter 1:2; Acts 2:32-36; I Cor. 12:3-6, II Cor. 13:14).*
- C. *Co-equal:*
 - 1. *The Bible tells us that the Father is God (John 6:27; Rom. 1:7).*
 - 2. *The Son is God (John 1:1; 20:28; Heb. 1:8; I John 5:19-27; Phil. 2:6).*
 - 3. *The Holy Spirit is God (Matt. 28:19; Acts 5:4,9).*

III. INCARNATION

We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by God, conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born to the virgin, Mary.

Terms explained:

- A. *Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ had two natures in one person, so that He was simultaneously fully God and fully man, and this relationship was such that there was no dividing of person nor confounding of the two natures (John 1:1-14).*
- B. *Conceived by the Holy Spirit: The conception of Jesus was a divine act of God, without human agency (Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:26-38).*
- C. *Born to the virgin, Mary: At the time of Christ's conception and birth, Mary was a virgin (Matt. 1:18-25; Isa. 7:14; Luke 1:27).*

IV. HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, who convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. He is at work in the life of the believer, and He empowers the preaching and teaching of the gospel.

Terms Explained:

- A. *Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, equal with the Father and the Son (John 14:16; Matt. 28:19).*
- B. *Convicts: Jesus Christ said that the Spirit would perform this ministry with respect to the world (John 16:7-11).*
- C. *Life: The Holy Spirit is the agent of spiritual birth (John 3:5-8). The Spirit regenerates, indwells, seals, and baptizes into the Church body all believers (1 Cor. 12:13; Titus 3:5; Eph. 1:13; 4:30; 1 Cor. 6:19; Rom. 8:9,11; 2 Cor. 1:21,22). The believer's life is strengthened and guided by the Spirit (Eph. 1:13;*

3:16; John 16:13; Rom. 8:4,14, 26-27). *The believer is commanded to be filled or controlled by the Spirit, so that the characteristics of Christ-likeness will be evident in a powerful life (Eph. 5:18; Gal. 5:16).*

- D. *Empowers: The Holy Spirit enables the spreading of God's Word in testimony, preaching and practical living (John 15:26-27). Spiritual obedience will give fruit to a spiritually powerful life of service for Christ (Eph. 5:15-21; Gal. 5:22-25).*

V. MANKIND

We believe that mankind was created in the image of God, sinned, and thereby incurred not only physical death, but spiritual death, which is separation from God, and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature.

Terms explained:

- A. *Created in the image of God: God created Adam and Eve (mankind) in the image of God. This divine likeness of mankind's ancestors gives people dignity, value, and a unique purpose in all of creation. (Gen. 1:27; 5:1; 1 Cor. 11:7).*
- B. *Separation from God: When mankind, of their own free will, chose to disobey God, they sinned (the breaking of God's law). This original sin separated us from God, Who, because of His holiness, could not tolerate sin, and therefore, judged such sin (Rom. 6:23; 3:10; 8:7; Gal. 3:22).*

VI. ATONEMENT

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice.

Terms Explained:

- A. *Representative: This means that Jesus Christ represented all the sins of the world and that He who knew no sin was made sin for us (2 Cor. 5:14-21). As Adam was the representative of man in the fall, so Christ was the representative of man in the Atonement (1 Cor. 15:22). Therefore, if Christ represented all, His sacrifice will cover all (John 3:16).*
- B. *Substitutionary: This is called the "vicarious" suffering since Christ died in our place. He did not die for His own sin (Heb. 4:15-16; 1 John 3:5), but died for the sins of others (1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 5:8).*

VII. SALVATION, HEAVEN, HELL

MC believes that all who believe in Jesus Christ and by faith, repent of their sins and accept that He is Lord of their lives (as a natural outgrowth of belief) are genuinely born again by the Holy Spirit, and thereby become children of God and heirs of eternal life ("believers"). All believers are justified on the basis of Jesus Christ's life, death, and resurrection alone. For this reason, after physical death, all believers will live eternally in God's holy presence. In contrast, all who do not believe in Jesus Christ by faith are not justified before God (the "lost"). Upon

physical death, the lost will live eternally separated from God, tormented in the Lake of Fire as described in the Scriptures.

Terms explained:

- A. *All Who Believe: The gift of salvation provided by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ is for all mankind (Rom. 1:13; 1 John 2:2), yet only those who exhibit faith are justified (Gal. 2:16; 3:11).*
- B. *Justified: Justification is that act of God whereby He declares the guilty and depraved sinner to be righteous because of God's own righteousness having been imputed, or credited to the sinner (Deut. 25:1; Prov. 17:15; Rom 3:23-26; 4:5-8, 25; 5:18f; 8:33).*
- C. *Faith: Faith is the "gift of God" (Eph. 2:8) and is produced by the Word of God (Rom. 10:14,17). We are saved by faith alone apart from works (Eph. 2:9; Rom. 3:20; Titus 3:5). However, genuine faith necessarily leads to good works (Eph. 2:10; Matt. 5:16; James 2:17-26).*
- D. *Born again by the Holy Spirit: The new birth (regeneration) is absolutely necessary for fellowship with God (John 3:7). Man is totally passive in regeneration since it is completely a work of God (John 1:13; 3:6). The new birth is the work of the Holy Spirit (John 3:8) by which He creates within a person a new nature, a new heart, a new spirit (John 3:5; 2 Peter 1:4; Ezek. 11:19; 36:26; 2 Cor. 5:17).*
- E. *Children of God: Those who have received the Spirit of Christ have therefore been born again into God's family (John 1:1-12; Rom. 8:9,14-17). As members of His family we not only have fellowship with our Father in Heaven, but we are being transformed by the Holy Spirit into the image of Christ, and when Christ returns we will be completely changed in body and spirit to be like Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:19-23; 1 John 3:2).*
- F. *Eternal Life: This experience of the life of Jesus Christ within us now by the presence of the Holy Spirit and forever ours in the presence of Jesus Christ is "eternal life." This state of being is a gift from God where the believer is in perfect union with God (John 17:3, John 3:36, John 5:24, Romans 6:23, Hebrews 5:9).*
- G. *Bodily resurrection: Those saints who are "asleep in Jesus" will be raised at the same time the living saints are "raptured" and changed (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-58). After the resurrection, all the unsaved will stand before the Great White Throne for judgment, and since their names will not be found in the Book of Life, they will be cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 3:5; 13:8; 20:11-15; 21:8, 27; Matt. 25:31-46; Luke 10:20; Phil. 4:3; Acts 13:48).*

- H. *Everlasting conscious suffering: Hell will not be a place of joyous fellowship but rather a place of torment for eternity (Luke 16:19-31; Matt. 25:30; 24:51; Heb. 12:23; 2 Cor. 5:6-9; Phil. 1:23; Rev. 6:9; 20:4).*
- I. *Heaven: We believe heaven to be a literal place where Jesus Christ is preparing an eternal home for believers of all ages (John 14:1-6; Heb. 1:10-16).*
- J. *Hell: We believe hell to be a literal place where all unsaved will spend eternity separated from God (Rev. 20:15; Matt. 13:36-43, 2 Thess 1:9).*

VIII. RESURRECTION, ASCENSION, EXALTATION

We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ, His ascension into Heaven and His present life there as High Priest and Advocate for us.

Terms Explained:

- A. *Resurrection: We believe that after three days, Jesus Christ arose bodily from the grave (Luke 24:23-40). The doctrine of the resurrection is essential to salvation (Rom. 10:9, 1-9; 1 Cor. 15:12-23, 35-37).*
- B. *Ascension: After His resurrection and forty-day ministry Jesus ascended up into Heaven (Acts 1:1-11; 1 Peter 3:22).*
- C. *High Priest and Advocate: Since Christ's atonement has restored our relationship with God, we now can approach God through Christ, Who as our High Priest represents us before God. As our Advocate, He compassionately deals with our needs and strengthens us (John 14:18; Heb. 4:14; 5:1-10; 13:5; 7:25; 8:1,2; 9:11-15, 24).*

IX. ESCHATOLOGY

We believe in the blessed hope, the personal, visible and imminent return of Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior. The Bible's teaching concerning the Lord's impending return is always set in the context of practical exhortation: focusing upon our need to understand God: teaching us a Godly lifestyle; and avoiding an undue focus on the spectacular and speculation (2 Peter 3:11; Matt. 24:42-51).

Terms Explained:

- A. *Blessed Hope: The return of the Lord is an event that believers ought to look forward to with high expectation and excitement. As still imperfect people, we eagerly await the restoration of all things to perfect Christ-likeness after the return of Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13; Rom. 8:18-25; 1 Peter 1:7, 13; 4:13; 2 Thess. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:7).*
- B. *Personal, visible: Jesus, not just in spirit, but also in bodily form, will return to this earth (Acts 1:11).*

- C. *Imminent: The Church, as God's steward, ought to consider the return of Christ as an event which is about to happen, and therefore, though patient, we are to be alert to such an event as we seek to glorify Him through our lives (Mark 13:33-37; Matt. 24:22,24,29-51; Luke 21:34).*

X. DEVIL

We believe in the existence of the devil also known as Satan. Satan is a liar, seeking to deceive men and turn them from God. Satan, his entire angelic host, and all the lost; those who have not received Christ as their Lord and Savior, will be eternally separated (perish) from God and tormented in the Lake of Fire.

Terms explained:

- A. *Devil: Though a created being and one of the highest angels, the devil fell because he wanted to be greater than God (Isa. 14:12-15).*
- B. *Eternally perish: The judgment upon the devil and his followers is an unending punishment (Rev. 20:10,14,15; 19:20).*

XI. CHURCH

We believe that all believers comprise the "Church." The Church's mission is to preach, teach, declare, and make known the Scriptures to all the world through the formal proclamation of the Scriptures and through the Christian's complete, transformed, and consistent lifestyle.

Terms explained:

- A. *Body of Christ: The collective body of believers in Jesus Christ is the Church (Eph. 5:23-32; Col. 1:18; Matt. 18:20; Eph. 1:22-23, Col. 2:19; 3:15).*
- B. *Mission: The mission of the Church is to: 1) go into the world; 2) make disciples of all men, baptizing them; and 3) teach them to obey the Bible, God's Word (Matt. 28:18-20; Rom. 15:6; Eph. 1:15-23).*
- C. *Preach: By this term we encompass all of the believers who are to declare and make known God's truth through the totality of their lives, in addition to the formal proclamation of the Word of God (Eph. 3:8-10; 4:15,16; Col. 1:10-28).*

XII. CHURCH LEADERSHIP

We believe that, within the local body of believers ("Local Church"), God provides a team of Pastor(s), Elders, Deacons and other workers who are to guide and enable the congregation to develop spiritual maturity.

XIII. STEWARDSHIP

We believe each believer is commanded by God to exercise care and concern with regard to all the time, possessions, and wealth which God has entrusted to him.

- A. *Stewardship: As members of God's family we recognize the obligation under which God places us to exercise care and concern with regard to all time, possessions, wealth and persons as may be entrusted to us. One mark of the spiritually wise person is the mature choices made with respect to these areas (Matt. 20:8; Gal. 4:2; Luke 16:2,3; 1 Cor. 4:1,2; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 4:10; 1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 3:2; Col. 1:25).*
- B. *Tithe: We believe the guideline of ten percent to be appropriate, yet we recognize the individual believer as free from compulsion or formal requirements in stewardship matters or church support (Lev. 27:30-33; Num. 18:21-29; Deut. 12:5-7,17-18; 14:22-29; 26:12; Gen. 14:17-24; Luke 11:42; Matt. 23:23f; Heb. 7:1ff).*
- C. *Offerings: We believe that offerings consist of any gift, time or effort that is freely given in response to the direction of God's Spirit (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 8:24-: 15).*

XIV. ORDINANCES

We believe that the ordinances of the Church given by our Lord are Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion).

Terms explained:

- A. *Baptism: Baptism is commanded of all believers and it is an act of obedience signifying the believer's death, burial and resurrection "in Christ" (Rom. 6:3,4; Acts 18:8; 1 Peter 3:21). The disciples were commanded to see to it that baptism was a part of their ministry (Matt. 28:19,20; 16:16) and the pattern of the book of Acts (Acts 2:38-41; 8:12,13,36,38) indicates the widespread practice of water baptism for believers. This church does not believe in baptismal regeneration, nor do we hold that baptism is necessary for salvation.*
- B. *The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the Church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His Second Coming. Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42, 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12).*

Appendix B **Definitions**

I) **Elder.** Biblically an Elder in the Old Testament was referred to as a “grey beard.” It was a respectful term, acknowledging wisdom, a position of authority, and God ordained service. In the New Testament Elders were called, selected, and appointed in the fledgling church to lead God’s people and to be undershepherds to the Lord Jesus Christ.

II) **Elder Emeritus.** This is a title of respect generated to describe an Elder who for honorable and practical reasons is no longer able to serve actively as an Elder.

III) **Husband of one wife.** This is a phrase used by Paul to describe a qualification for Eldership and Deacon service. We define that term to mean that a man is qualified to serve if any of the conditions below exist:

- A) The man has never been married and he is living a chaste and celibate life;
- B) The man has been married to one woman throughout his entire married life and he remains married to her at the present time or until her death;
- C) The man has been married before and his wife has been taken by death from this world, and he has remarried and remains married to that woman at the present time or until her death;
- D) The man has never been divorced for any reason.
- E) We recognize that there are believers who differ with us on this definition and interpretation. We do not want to break fellowship with other genuine believers over this point, but simply have chosen to establish purity in leadership from the ills of divorce, because we believe this is where scripture takes us. We do not want this explanation to imply that we condemn our brothers and sisters in Jesus who have had divorces., We will go out of our way to make a loving, warm, and inviting place in our fellowship for those who have endured a divorce. That place will simply not be in Eldership or Deacon service.

IV) **Pastor/Ordained Pastor.** These two terms are used interchangeably in this document to refer to Ordained Pastors of MC. It does not refer to Ordained Pastors from any other church or denomination.

V) **Word and or Scripture.** This term refers to the Holy Bible, the Old and New Testaments in any of the many well accepted translations available to Christians today. We have chosen to place the New King James Version in the sanctuary, but many other translations are good and helpful (to name a few NIV, NASV, King James, The Message, ESV, and Amplified). From time to time, the Elders may change the version used in the sanctuary based on which version helps the cause of Christ best for our culture.

VI) **Believer.** A believer is one who has genuine faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They have heard the Word of God, the Holy Spirit has moved in them to cause genuine faith to take root, and they have willfully decided to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Master. They are commonly referred to as “born again.” As a result of this change in Lordship in their lives, we believe over time there must be

observable changes in lifestyle, in appetites, in character, and in hunger and thirst for God's truth.

VII) Active member. An active member is a member who attends the church regularly, supports the church according to their means, serves the body in a manner appropriate to their giftedness, and has a Spirit driven desire to seek maturity in Christ. For voting purposes, a member who has not attended services regularly (5 of 8 weeks) for 2 successive bi-monthly periods (and does not have a legitimate reason such as health or family crisis or the like) is deemed to be inactive and therefore ineligible to vote.

VIII) Baptismal regeneration. Baptismal regeneration is a false belief that the physical act of baptism has salvific power – i.e. “baptism itself saves.” Those believing this sometimes believe that the act of baptism is either necessary or sufficient for salvation.

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