

STATEMENT OF FAITH

OPEN ARMS COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP



1. Scripture

We believe that the Bible is God's inspired witness, faithfully revealing His character, story, and purpose through the lives of real people in real times. Though written by human hands, it is breathed by the Spirit and serves as our trustworthy guide for faith and life. We interpret Scripture with care—recognizing historical and literary context, seeking wisdom, and relying on the guidance of the Holy Spirit (*2 Timothy 3:16–17; Psalm 119:105*).

Scripture References:

- **2 Timothy 3:16–17** – “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.”
- **Psalm 119:105** – “Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.”

2. God

We believe in one eternal God, Creator and Sustainer of all, who is both just and merciful, sovereign and near. God reveals Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—three in unity, distinct in relationship, and united in love (*Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; 1 John 4:8*).

Scripture References:

- **Deuteronomy 6:4** – “Listen, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.”
- **Matthew 28:19** – “Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”
- **1 John 4:8** – “But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”

3. Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, who took on human flesh and entered the world as both fully divine and fully human (*John 1:1, 14*). Conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary (*Luke 1:30–35*), Jesus came to reveal the Father's heart, fulfill God's promises, and reconcile creation to its Creator.

In His life, Jesus demonstrated perfect love, truth, and justice. He healed the sick, welcomed the outcast, challenged the proud, and uplifted the poor. His words carried divine authority, and His actions embodied compassion and holiness. He was tempted in every way yet remained without sin (*Hebrews 4:15*), showing us how to live in faithful obedience and love.

We believe Jesus willingly gave His life on the cross as a once-for-all sacrifice for the sins of the world (*Isaiah 53:5–6; 1 Peter 2:24*). Through His death, He bore the weight of humanity's brokenness, injustice, and rebellion — making peace between God and humankind (*Romans 5:8–11*). On the third day, He rose from the grave, defeating sin and death and offering eternal life to all who believe (*1 Corinthians 15:3–4; John 11:25–26*).

Jesus ascended into heaven and now reigns at the right hand of the Father as Lord, High Priest, and Advocate (*Hebrews 1:3; Romans 8:34*). He continues to intercede for us and pour out the Holy Spirit

upon the Church. We believe that Christ will return in glory to restore all things and judge the living and the dead.

To follow Jesus is not only to receive salvation but to walk in His way — to love as He loved, serve as He served, and proclaim the good news of the Kingdom of God. He is the image of the invisible God (*Colossians 1:15*), the Word made flesh (*John 1:14*), the head of the Church (*Ephesians 1:22–23*), and the hope of the world.

Scripture References:

- **John 1:1, 14** – “In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God... So the Word became human and made his home among us.”
- **Luke 1:30–35** – “The angel told her... ‘You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus... The baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God.’”
- **Hebrews 4:15** – “This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin.”
- **Isaiah 53:5–6** – “But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins... the Lord laid on him the sins of us all.”
- **1 Peter 2:24** – “He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right.”
- **Romans 5:8–11** – “But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners... So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God.”
- **1 Corinthians 15:3–4** – “Christ died for our sins... He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day.”
- **John 11:25–26** – “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying.”
- **Hebrews 1:3** – “When he had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven.”
- **Romans 8:34** – “Christ Jesus died for us... and he is sitting in the place of honor at God’s right hand, pleading for us.”
- **Colossians 1:15** – “Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation.”
- **Ephesians 1:22–23** – “God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church.”

4. The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is God’s presence at work in the world today. The Spirit guides, comforts, and empowers believers to grow in faith, live with integrity, and serve others with love (*John 14:16–17*; *Galatians 5:22–23*; *Acts 1:8*).

Scripture References:

- **John 14:16–17** – “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn’t looking for him and doesn’t recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.”

- **Galatians 5:22–23** – “But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!”
- **Acts 1:8** – “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

5. Salvation

We believe that salvation is a gift from God, made available to all through Jesus Christ. It is not something we can earn, but rather something we receive by grace through faith. This salvation brings renewal, freedom, and the promise of eternal life (*Ephesians 2:8–9; John 3:16; Romans 10:9–10*).

Scripture References:

- **Ephesians 2:8–9** – “God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.”
- **John 3:16** – “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.”
- **Romans 10:9–10** – “If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved.”

6. The Fellowship

We believe that the word “church” has been distorted over the centuries to primarily mean a building or an institution. However, in its original Greek form (*ekklesia*), the church refers to “the called-out ones”—a gathered community of believers, not a place or structure.

At Open Arms Community Fellowship, we affirm that the Church is not defined by walls, programs, or denominations, but by people who follow Jesus together in love, humility, and purpose. The Church is a living, breathing body of Christ—called to worship God, grow in discipleship, and serve the world with grace and compassion (*Acts 2:42–47; Ephesians 4:11–13*).

Scripture References:

- **Acts 2:42–47** – “All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer... And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.”
- **Ephesians 4:11–13** – “Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers... until we all come to such unity in our faith...”

7. Christian Life

We believe that faith is meant to shape every aspect of our lives. Followers of Christ are called to love God and others, seek justice, show mercy, and live with humility. We strive to reflect Christ’s grace in our relationships, work, and service to the world (*Micah 6:8; Matthew 22:37–39; Colossians 3:12–14*). Living as disciples means following the words and teachings of Christ, who instructs us to love our enemies, forgive those who wrong us, and serve the least among us (*Matthew 5:44; Luke 6:27–36; Matthew 25:35–40*). We are called to embody his example by practicing kindness, honesty, and

generosity in our daily interactions, allowing his words to shape our character and actions. By studying and applying his teachings, we grow in faith and reflect his light in the world (*John 13:34–35; James 1:22; 1 John 2:5–6*).

Scripture References:

- **Micah 6:8** – “No, O people, the Lord has told you what is good... to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.”
- **Matthew 22:37–39** – “‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart... Love your neighbor as yourself.’”
- **Colossians 3:12–14** – “Since God chose you... clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy... and love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.”
- **Matthew 5:44** – “But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!”
- **Luke 6:27–36** – “Love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you... Then your reward from heaven will be very great.”
- **Matthew 25:35–40** – “For I was hungry, and you fed me... When you did it to one of the least of these... you were doing it to me!”
- **John 13:34–35** – “Love each other. Just as I have loved you... Your love for one another will prove... you are my disciples.”
- **James 1:22** – “But don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says...”
- **1 John 2:5–6** – “Those who obey God’s word... should live their lives as Jesus did.”

8. The Return of Christ

We believe that Christ will return to bring healing, justice, and restoration to the world. While the details of the future remain a mystery, we trust in God’s ultimate plan and live in hope, seeking to bring God’s love and peace to the present (*Matthew 24:36; Revelation 21:1–5*).

Scripture References:

- **Matthew 24:36** – “However, no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen... Only the Father knows.”
- **Revelation 21:1–5** – “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth... He will wipe every tear from their eyes...”

9. Eternal Life

We believe that God’s love is eternal, and in Christ, we have the promise of life beyond this world. Heaven is the fulfillment of God’s presence, where love, justice, and joy will reign forever (*John 5:24; 1 Corinthians 15:51–57*).

Scripture References:

- **John 5:24** – “I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God... have eternal life.”
- **1 Corinthians 15:51–57** – “We will not all die, but we will all be transformed... Death is swallowed up in victory.”

10. Politics

Open Arms Community Fellowship affirms that our ultimate allegiance is to Jesus Christ and His Kingdom, not to any political party, platform, or ideology. While we recognize that faith has implications for how we live in society—including how we vote, advocate, and serve—we do not equate the Gospel with any political agenda or government system (*Philippians 3:20; John 18:36; Matthew 6:33*).

We are committed to being a community where people of diverse perspectives can worship, serve, and grow together in love. We reject any form of political idolatry, partisanship that divides the Body of Christ, or rhetoric that undermines human dignity (*Galatians 3:28; 1 Corinthians 1:10–13*).

As followers of Jesus, we seek to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God (*Micah 6:8*). This means listening before judging, praying before speaking, and striving always to reflect the character of Christ in how we engage the world (*Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 4:6; Romans 12:18*).

We encourage faithful presence in public life—but we do so with humility, compassion, and a deep trust that the Kingdom of God is not built by human power, but by grace, truth, and the Spirit’s transforming work in us and through us (*Zechariah 4:6; 2 Corinthians 10:4; Jeremiah 29:7*).

Scripture References:

- **Philippians 3:20** – “*But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior.*”
- **John 18:36** – “*Jesus answered, ‘My Kingdom is not an earthly kingdom. If it were, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over... But my Kingdom is not of this world.’*”
- **Matthew 6:33** – “*Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.*”
- **Galatians 3:28** – “*There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.*”
- **1 Corinthians 1:10–13** – “*Let there be no divisions in the church. Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose... Has Christ been divided into factions?*”
- **Micah 6:8** – “*No, O people, the Lord has told you what is good... to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.*”
- **Ephesians 4:29** – “*Don’t use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.*”
- **Colossians 4:6** – “*Let your conversation be gracious and attractive so that you will have the right response for everyone.*”
- **Romans 12:18** – “*Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.*”
- **Zechariah 4:6** – “*It is not by force nor by strength, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.*”
- **2 Corinthians 10:4** – “*We use God’s mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning...*”
- **Jeremiah 29:7** – “*Work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you... Pray to the Lord for it, for its welfare will determine your welfare.*”

