

Articles of Faith of The First Congregational Church of Hartford

Article 1

We believe in the only living and true God¹, eternally existent² in three Persons (Father, Son and Holy Spirit)³, Who has created all things for His own glory⁴.

Article 2

We believe that the Scriptures, comprised of the Old and New Testament, are the inspired Word of God, without error in the original writings, and are the only perfect authority for Christian faith and practice⁵.

Article 3

We believe that the first man (Adam) was created innocent by God, that he sinned against Him, and that because of his sin all mankind is by nature separated from God and prone to sin⁶.

Article 4

We believe that Jesus Christ is both God and man⁷, that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit⁸, born of the virgin Mary⁹, lived a sinless life¹⁰, died on the cross for our sins¹¹, rose bodily from the dead¹², ascended to the right hand of God¹³ and is coming again to the earth in power and great glory¹⁴.

Article 5

We believe that salvation (eternal life) is given to all who place their trust solely in Christ's shed blood for their sins, who are saved by His grace through faith and not by works and acknowledge Him as the only Savior and Lord¹⁵.

Article 6

We believe the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ¹⁶, to convict¹⁷, regenerate¹⁸, seal¹⁹, indwell²⁰, guide²¹, instruct²² and give us everything we need for life and godliness²³.

Article 7

We believe in the Body of Christ²⁴ (the Church) which is made up of all born-again believers in Christ²⁵, who are His ambassadors on earth²⁶ to reach the lost for Him²⁷ and to build up those within the Body²⁸. We also believe in the Lord's Supper and Baptism which are symbols of Christ's death and resurrection and may be administered to believers in Christ.

Article 8

We believe in the immortality of the soul²⁹, the resurrection of the dead³⁰, the future judgment³¹, the endless misery in hell of those who die rejecting Christ as their savior³², and the everlasting glory of the righteous in heaven with God³³.

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- 1 “Living God” is a term used throughout the Bible for the God of the Jews and the God of Christians. Its first use is by Moses in Deuteronomy 5:26. Joshua uses it in 3:10 to show that a “living” God will certainly be active and alive. Jeremiah explicitly defines “living God” in 10:1-15, comparing the terror of the weather or the heavens, and the idols made by people, to the “true” and “living God” who quakes the earth in His wrath and rightly terrifies the nations. Paul and Barnabas tear their clothes and cry out to the Lycaonians in Acts 14:15 to turn from the vain things of false gods to a “living God.” Paul reports of how the Thessalonians “turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God” in 1 Thessalonians 1:9.
- 2 God declares to Moses that He is “I Am,” and Jesus also takes that name upon Himself (these two verses are below). This is the strongest statement of God's eternal existence: He is the only being that just Is: not created, and eternal from the past.
Exodus 3:14: “God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'”
John 8:58: “I tell you the truth,' Jesus answered, 'before Abraham was born, I am!”
- 3 After Jesus rises from the dead, He tells His disciples to baptize new disciples in the one name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). Scriptures that show different Persons of the Godhead in communion with each other are John 10:15a; Matt. 11:27; Romans 8:27; and 1 Cor. 2:10. These references mention the Son or the Spirit or both: Psalm 2; Psalm 22; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; 11:2; Acts 28:25 with John 12:41. Paul concludes his second letter to the Corinthians with the mention of the three Persons of the Godhead (2 Cor. 13:14). As Jesus is baptized by John, the three Persons of the Godhead are present (Luke 3:22). John starts his gospel account with Jesus being with God and Jesus (the Word) being God (John 1:1-3).
- 4 Psalm 19:1; Romans 1:20-23; Rev. 4:11.
- 5 That the Bible is the Word of God is evidenced by every person who has trusted the Bible and thus reaped the benefits of its power. But the Bible itself states that it is the Word of God. In 1 Timothy 5:18, Paul is equating Luke with the Scriptures by quoting Luke 10:7 and saying it is Scripture, so it is not just the Old Testament that claims to be the Word of God. In Paul's last letter of the Bible, he is probably including all apostolic writing with the Old Testament when he says: “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness...” (2 Timothy 3:16). 2 Peter 1:21: “...for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.” This is a clear statement of the Word of God in prophecy. 2 Peter 3:2: “that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.” Peter is putting the apostles writings on par with Scripture. 2 Peter 3:15b-16: “just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.” Peter equates Paul's writing to Scripture.
- 6 The problem with allegorizing Adam and Eve and their fall is that the rest of Scripture takes it literally, even Jesus. So the rest of Scripture is delusional, or worse: lying, if Genesis 3 is not literal. Passages to look at regarding Adam's creation and fall and the nature of mankind:
Genesis 3; Psalm 14:2-3, Ecclesiastes 2:23; Isaiah 24:5-6, 53:6; Romans 1:18-20, 3:10-18, 23, 5:8-10, 12, 8:20-22.
- 7 John 14:9; Matthew 11:27; 1 John 2:22-23 (equality of Jesus with the Father).
Ps. 102:25-27; Isa. 9:6; Micah 5:2; John 1:1-3, 10; John 6:64; John 8:58; John 10:15; John 21:17; Phil. 3:21; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 13:8; Rev. 1:8; (divine attributes of Jesus)
Isaiah 7:14, 9:6-7; Micah 5:2 (predict the incarnation of Jesus)
- 8 Matt. 1:18, 20; Luke 1:35
- 9 Isaiah 7:14; 9:6-7; Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38
- 10 Heb. 4:15, 7:26, 2 Corinthians 5:21
- 11 2 Corinthians 5:14, 19, 21
- 12 Matt. 27:62-28:10; Mark 16:1-14; Luke 24:1-48; John 20:1-25 (actual accounts of Jesus' resurrection)
Matt. 16:21; 17:23; 20:17-19; Mark 9:30-32; Luke 9:22; 18:31-34; John 2:19-21; 10:17-18; (Jesus predicting His resurrection).
Psalm 16:10 quoted in Acts 2:29-31 and Psalm 118:22 quoted in Acts 4:10-11 (both prophesy the resurrection of Christ).

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- 13 Mark 16:19; Acts 1:9; 2:33-35; 7:55-56; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Peter 3:22.
John 17:20; Heb. 9:24, 1 John 2:1 (Christ our advocate in heaven)
- 14 Daniel 7:13-14, Zechariah 14:1-9; Matthew 24:29-31; 25:31-46; Mark 13:24-27; Acts 1:11 I Thessalonians 3:13 & Revelation 20:1-6.
- 15 John 3:16; Romans 5:6-11; Ephesians 2:8-9; Colossians 1:19-22; 1 John 4:9-10
These passages above are just three of the many that describe our salvation from sin by the cross of Christ and by the grace of God. John records Jesus as saying "It is finished!" when Jesus was on the cross just before He "gave up His spirit." This "finished" aspect of Christ's work means we can do nothing to add to God's salvation in His Son: it is all His work. We merely accept it (or don't).
- 16 John 15:26; John 16:13-15
- 17 John 16:7-11
- 18 Titus 3:5
- 19 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:13-14
- 20 John 14:15-17; 1 John 2:27
- 21 John 16:13
- 22 John 14:25-26
- 23 2 Peter 1:3
- 24 Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4-16
- 25 John 3:1-21; 1 Peter 1:22-23
- 26 2 Cor. 5:20; Eph. 6:20
- 27 Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8 & II Corinthians 5:18-20
- 28 Matt. 28:19-20; John 13:34-35; Rom. 14:19; Eph. 4:1-16; Gal. 6:10; Col. 3:12-16; 1 Peter 3:8-9, 4:8-9
- 29 John 5:21-29
- 30 Daniel 12:2; 1 Cor. 15:12-26
- 31 Rom. 14:10-12; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:11-15
- 32 Matt. 8:11-12; 10:28; 13:40-42; 25:41; Luke 3:15-17; 16:22-31, 28; Rev. 14:11; 20:13-15; 21:8
- 33 1Cor. 13:8-12; 15:50-53; Phil 1:23; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 3:4; 1Thess. 4:16-17; 1Tim. 4:8; 1John 3:1-3; Rev. 14:13; Rev. 21:27, 22:3-5