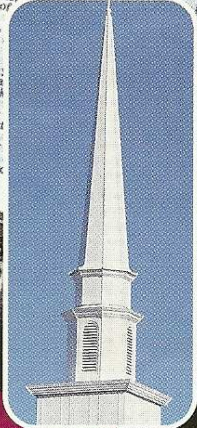
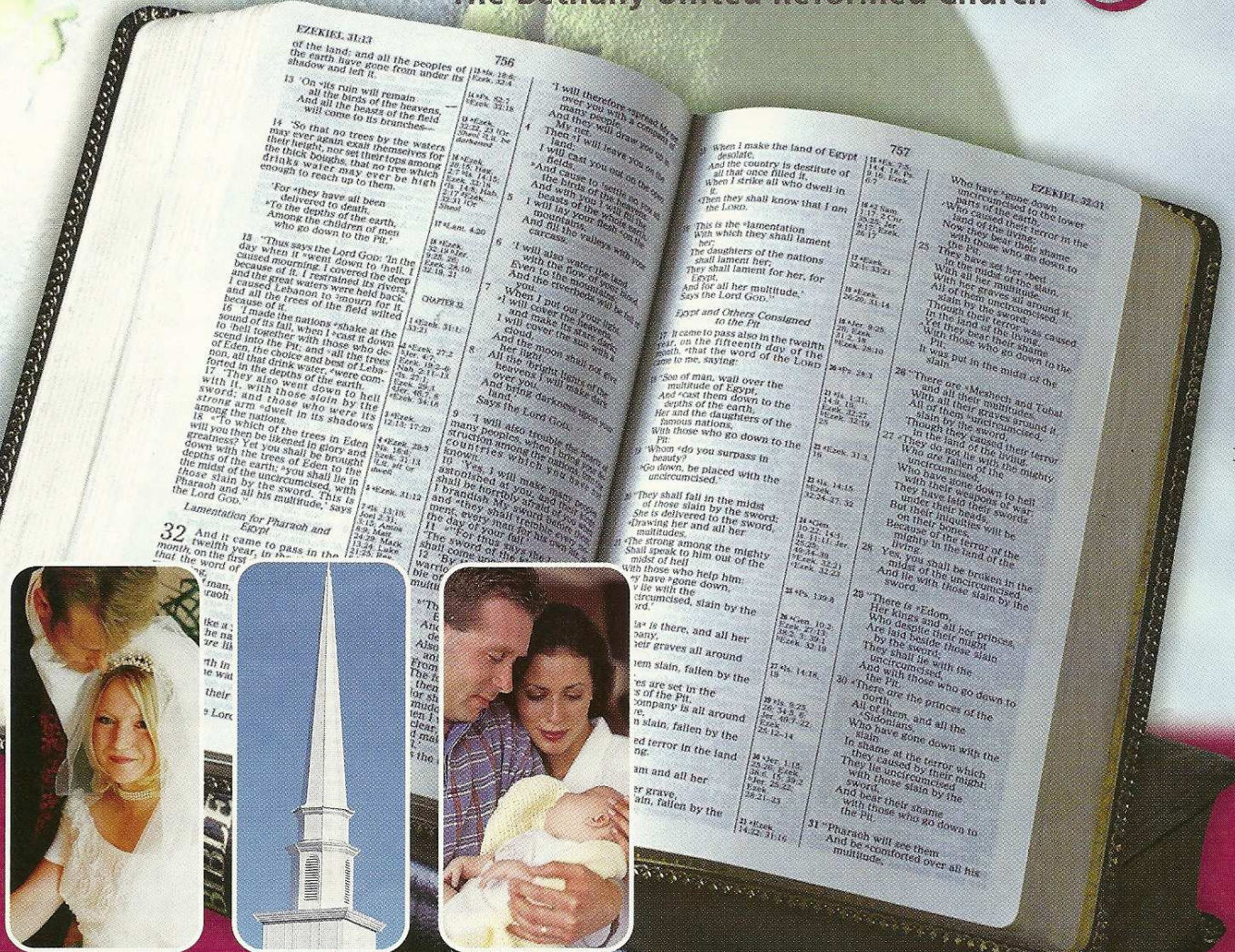


# OUR Testimony

The Bethany United Reformed Church



**32** And it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, that the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

**33** Thus says the Lord God: In the day when I went down to hell, because of it, I restrained the deep and the great waters were held back, and all the trees of the field withered because of it.

**34** I made the nations shake at the sound of its fall, when I sank it down to hell together with those who descend into the Pit, and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink and best of Lebanon, were cut down.

**35** They also went down to hell with it, with those slain by the sword, and those who were slain among the nations.

**36** I will also trouble the hearts of many peoples, when I bring down the structure among the nations, and I will say, "Where are they now?"

**37** I will make many people astonished at you, and they shall be horribly afraid of you, and every man shall tremble every day of your fall.

**38** For thus says the Lord God: "The sword shall come upon the uncircumcised, and he shall be slain by the sword."

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*Scripture is the very word of God.*

**Concerning the Inerrancy of Scripture We Believe:**

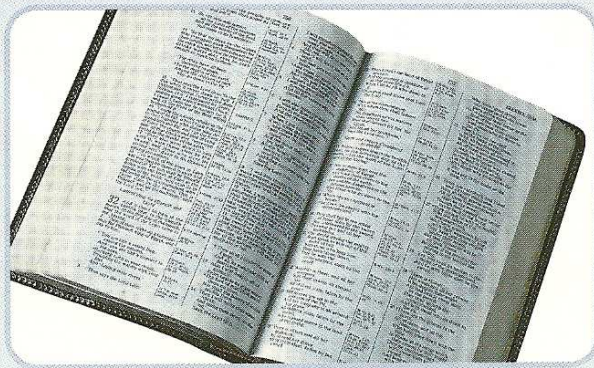
2 Timothy 3:16 "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

That the Scripture is the very word of God written. Since God can neither lie, be mistaken, nor change, His word cannot contain error. Therefore, Scripture is inerrant.

That Scripture's authority extends to all that it actually teaches. The careful study of Scripture will sometimes require us to correct our traditional views of what it says. But once the actual teachings of Scripture are ascertained, they bind our consciences, our theories, and our behavior. They take precedence over rival claims to knowledge.

That God's special revelation in the Bible is compatible in every aspect with his general revelation in nature. Human interpretations of general revelations, however, must submit to the authority of special revelation.

That Scripture's primary subject is the message of redemption from sin through Jesus Christ. But all Scripture's subject matter is God's Word and always true. When Scripture speaks to matters of history, science, ethics, or anything else, it is truth and authoritative, and it governs our thinking in these areas.



**Concerning the Interpretation of Scripture We Believe:**

2 Peter 1:20-21 "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

That since the Scripture is the word of God, it is a unity and cannot contradict itself.

That the meaning of Scripture must be learned through the faithful and accurate interpretation of the text of Scripture. The meaning of Scripture is not established by tradition, by appeals to continuing revelation or by the decisions of church councils.

That in the process of interpretation, the literary character of specific texts, the need to compare one text with another, the role of specific texts in the progressive unfolding of revelation, and the Christ-centered dimension of all Scripture are essential.

That thorough study of the original languages of Scripture as well as careful self-examination joined to humble faith and prayer, are the best preparation for the scholarly study of Scripture.

That a scholarly study of the Bible does not and must not undermine the plain meaning of Scripture.

*God has revealed Himself in His word as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.*

**Concerning God We Believe:**

Matthew 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

That the practice of addressing God in feminine pronouns, calling on God the "mother" and baptizing in the name of the mother, daughter and feminine spirit are clear violations of God's self revelation in Scripture. These practices are blasphemous and idolatrous.

That God must be worshiped the way He has revealed Himself: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

## *The unborn child is a human being.*

### **Concerning Abortion We Believe:**

*Psalm 139:13 "For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb."*

That the unborn child from conception is a human being in the image of God.

That abortion is a scandal and a grievous sin.

That laws to protect the life of the unborn, consistent with the Bible's teaching of the sanctity of human life, are needed in our land and throughout the world.

That we must provide support services for pregnant women to facilitate the choice of a live birth.

## *Worship in spirit and in truth.*

### **Concerning Worship We Believe:**

*John 4:23-24 "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."*

That many congregations have lost confidence in the preached Word of God as a means of grace by adding human innovations to Christian worship, namely liturgical dance and drama. Such additions are contrary to God's Word and are the moral equivalent of "strange fire" condemned in Leviticus 10:1-2.

That Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only divinely sanctioned sacraments given by God to His people.

That the elders of the church appropriately call God's people to worship twice every Lord's Day and on other occasions.

That the fundamental principal at stake is that God's Word, not our own desires nor the culture around us, must shape our worship. Therefore, we shall continue to worship in a way which places God's word as central and pleases God and edifies His people.

## *God created everything.*

### **Concerning Genesis 1-3 We Believe:**

*Hebrews 11:3 "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible."*

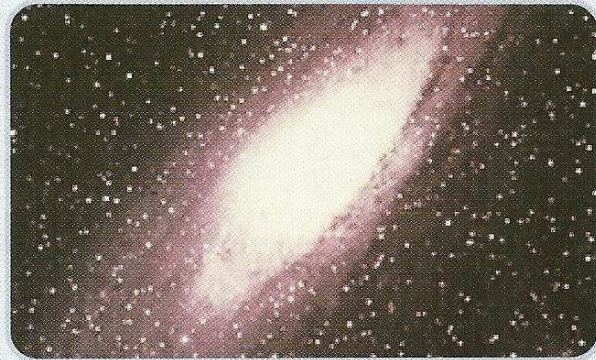
*Genesis 1:31 "Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day."*

That the book of Genesis was written by Moses under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and in all its parts is an accurate, historical presentation.

That God created the heavens and the earth and all things visible and invisible giving every creature its shape and being. This means we reject any evolutionary teaching, including theistic evolution, concerning the origin of the earth and of all creatures.

That God created everything in six sequential, literal days out of nothing and that He created it good.

That God created the first man, Adam, from the dust of the ground and the first woman, Eve, from that man. The first man was a unique creation of God, not descending from any previously existing creature. All human beings descended from these parents.



## *Mandated from Creation.*

### **Concerning the Ordination of Women We Believe:**

1 Timothy 2:11-14 "Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression."

That men and women equally bear the image of God and are to serve Him with their gifts according to his specific callings to them.

That from creation men were given authority and ultimate leadership in the family and in the covenant community.

That Christ, as he makes clear in His Word, does not call women to the authoritative offices of a minister, elder and deacon in the church and therefore the church may not ordain them to these offices.

That the purpose of the spiritual gifts given to men and women in Christ is not self-fulfillment but service to others, to the end that God receives all the glory.

## *Honor marriage.*

### **Concerning Marriage We Believe:**

Hebrews 13:4 "Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the 'sexually immoral'."

That the exercise of the beautiful gift of sex is intended by God to be enjoyed only within the instituted boundaries of heterosexual (male and female) marriage.

## *Seek forgiveness and grace.*

### **Concerning Homosexuality We Believe:**

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God."

That homosexual desires and actions are a result of the Fall and are sinful.

That those who practice or advocate homosexuality as a legitimate lifestyle must not be ordained to ecclesiastical office or be members of local churches seeking to be faithful to God's Word.

That those who give in to these desires and actions or who argue their legitimacy, like all sinners, must be clearly called to faith and repentance.

That the church must provide loving support and care for those struggling against homosexual temptations, encouraging them to seek forgiveness and grace to overcome their temptations.

That the church acts contrary to love for God and neighbor when it declares morally neutral anything which God has declared sinful.



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