

# Statement of Faith for First Parish Congregational Church

(with Scriptures)

Throughout the great tradition of First Parish Congregational Church, Wakefield, Massachusetts, we have affirmed and continue to affirm the Apostles' Creed. More specifically,

1. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (*Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Corinthians 13:14*)

*Deuteronomy 6:4* Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.  
*Matthew 28:19-20* <sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."  
*2 Corinthians 13:14* May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

2. We believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory. (*Matthew 1:18-25; John 1:1, 14, 18; 3:16; Acts 1:11; Ephesians 1:20-21; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 2:14-17; 7:23-25*)

*Matthew 1:18-25* <sup>18</sup> This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.  
<sup>20</sup> But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."  
<sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: <sup>23</sup> "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").  
<sup>24</sup> When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. <sup>25</sup> But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

*John 1:1* In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

*John 1:14* The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

*John 1:18* No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

*John 3:16* For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

*Acts 1:11* "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

*Ephesians 1:20-21* <sup>20</sup> he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, <sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

*1 Timothy 3:16* Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great:  
He appeared in the flesh, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels,  
was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

Hebrews 2:14-17 <sup>14</sup> Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— <sup>15</sup> and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. <sup>16</sup> For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. <sup>17</sup> For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.

Hebrews 7:23-25 <sup>23</sup> Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; <sup>24</sup> but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. <sup>25</sup> Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

### 3. We believe that for salvation of lost and sinful people personal regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential. (*John 3:5-8; 14:16*)

John 3:5-8 <sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. <sup>6</sup> Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. <sup>7</sup> You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ <sup>8</sup> The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—

### 4. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by Whose indwelling power and fullness the Christian is enabled to live a godly life in this present evil world. (*John 16:7-14; 1 Corinthians 12:4-13; Ephesians 2:8-10; 4:30; 5:18*)

John 16:7-14 <sup>7</sup> But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. <sup>8</sup> When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: <sup>9</sup> about sin, because people do not believe in me; <sup>10</sup> about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; <sup>11</sup> and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

<sup>12</sup> “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. <sup>13</sup> But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you.

1 Corinthians 12:4-13 <sup>4</sup> There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. <sup>5</sup> There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

<sup>7</sup> Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. <sup>8</sup> To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, <sup>10</sup> to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup> All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

<sup>12</sup> Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup> For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

Ephesians 2:8-10 <sup>8</sup> For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— <sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Ephesians 5:18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit,

5. We believe in the spiritual unity of all believers in Jesus Christ. (*Matthew 16:17-19; 28:18-20; John 17:20-23; Ephesians 4:1-6*)

*Matthew 16:17-19* <sup>17</sup> Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. <sup>18</sup> And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. <sup>19</sup> I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

*Matthew 28:18-20* <sup>18</sup> Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

*John 17:20-23* <sup>20</sup> "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, <sup>21</sup> that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. <sup>22</sup> I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— <sup>23</sup> I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

*Ephesians 4:1-6* <sup>4</sup> As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. <sup>2</sup> Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. <sup>3</sup> Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. <sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

6. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation. (*Matthew 25:46; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-10; Revelation 20:11-15*)

*Matthew 25:46* "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

*2 Thessalonians 1:8-10* <sup>8</sup> He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. <sup>9</sup> They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might <sup>10</sup> on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.

*Revelation 20:11-15* <sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. <sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. <sup>13</sup> The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. <sup>14</sup> Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. <sup>15</sup> Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

In addition to the Apostles' Creed,

7. We believe the Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testaments, to be the only inspired, inerrant, infallible, authoritative Word of God written. (*Matthew 5:17-18; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Peter 1:23*)

*Matthew 5:17-18*    <sup>17</sup> "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. <sup>18</sup> For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

*2 Timothy 3:16-17*    <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

*1 Peter 1:23*        For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

8. We believe God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. We believe the biblical standard of marriage is between one man and one woman. (*Genesis 2:22-24; Exodus 20:12; Matthew 19:4-6; Colossians 3:18-19*)

*Genesis 2:22-24*    <sup>22</sup> Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

<sup>23</sup> The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."

<sup>24</sup> That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

*Exodus 20:12*        "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

*Matthew 19:4-6*    <sup>4</sup> "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' <sup>5</sup> and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? <sup>6</sup> So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

*Colossians 3:18-19*    <sup>18</sup> Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. <sup>19</sup> Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

All Scriptures are from Biblegateway.com using the New International Version (NIV).

Statement of Faith: as approved at special meeting 6/14/15