

# APPENDIX A: THE URBAN REFUGE

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

### SCRIPTURE

The sole basis of our beliefs is the Bible, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments. It was uniquely, verbally, and fully inspired by the Holy Spirit and was written without error in the original manuscript. It is the supreme and final authority in faith and life in every age.

### GOD

There is but one God, infinite in power, wisdom, justice, goodness and love, Creator of the universe, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—each of whom possesses all the attributes of Deity and the characteristics of personality.

### HUMANITY

God created humans in His own image, and as originally created, innocent before Him. But Adam and Eve chose to disobey God and became separated from the Creator. This act introduced sin into the world and infected the nature of all humanity to follow, including us. Our corrupted nature leaves us without spiritual life, incapable of pleasing God by our own human effort, and in need of salvation in order to enjoy a restored and intimate relationship with God.

### JESUS CHRIST

God the Father, by His own choice and out of love for sinful men and women, sent Jesus Christ into the world to reconcile sinners to Himself. Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. He was God in the flesh, both true God and true man. Jesus Christ lived a sinless life and voluntarily suffered and died as our substitute to pay the penalty for our sins, thus satisfying God's justice and accomplishing salvation for all those who trust in Him alone. He rose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He lived and died. He bodily ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God the Father, where He, the only mediator between God and man, makes intercession for His own. He will return to earth personally, visibly, and bodily to judge all men and establish His kingdom.

## SALVATION

Men and women are freed from the penalty for their sins not as a result, in whole or in part, of their own works, goodness, or religious ceremony, but by the undeserved favor of God alone. God declares righteous all who put their faith in Christ alone for their salvation.

## THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit has come into the world to reveal and glorify Christ, to convict men and women of their sins, and to impart new life to all who place their faith in Christ. He indwells believers from the moment of spiritual birth, seals them until the day of redemption, and empowers them to live a life pleasing to God.

## ASSURANCE

All who are born again of the Spirit can be fully assured of their eternal life from the very moment they put their faith in Christ. This assurance is not based on any kind of human merit, but upon the fact of God's election, upon Christ's complete payment for our sins, and upon the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, whom is the deposit guaranteeing our inheritance.

## RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

At physical death, the believer enters immediately into eternal, conscious fellowship with the Lord and awaits the resurrection of his or her body to everlasting glory, and blessing. At physical death, the unbeliever enters into eternal, conscious separation from the Lord and awaits the resurrection of his or her body to everlasting suffering, judgment, and condemnation.

## BAPTISM & THE LORD'S SUPPER

Jesus Christ has instructed those who believe in Him to be baptized in water as a symbol of their new birth in Christ. Baptism is only for those who have personally believed in Christ. Our practice is to baptize by immersion. The Lord also instituted the Lord's Supper as a remembrance of His suffering, death, and resurrection. Neither baptism nor the Lord's Supper has any merit in helping a person obtain eternal life.

## THE CHURCH

All true believers make up the church worldwide and should assemble together in local churches for worship, prayer, fellowship, and teaching, in order to become conformed to the image of Christ and to become equipped to carry out the 'Great Commission' that Christ gave His followers in Matthew 28:19-20.

## MARRIAGE

God designed marriage for humanity. As first described in Genesis and later affirmed by Jesus, marriage is a God-ordained, covenant relationship between a man and a woman. This lifelong, sexually exclusive relationship brings children into the world and thus sustains the stewardship of the earth. Biblical marriage--marked by faithfulness, sacrificial love and joy--displays the relationship between God and His people.

## APPENDIX B: THE URBAN REFUGE VIRTUES

WHAT WE DO IS WHO WE ARE.

When we embody beliefs and values, they become living and breathing virtues that reveal who we really are. The abundant life that Jesus gives and invites us to live fully into is received by faith, embraced in the mind, and practiced in action. We believe God has expressly called our church to pursue, emphasize, and live into these virtues.

### LIVE A GOSPEL LIFE

The Gospel is the heart of everything we do. The forgiveness and love of Jesus Christ propel us by the power of the Holy Spirit to follow Him, be like Him, and do like Him. We desire to proclaim the hope found in His saving love and share the truth that sets us all free.

### LIVE A HUMBLE LIFE

Humility opens the doors to greater experiences of God's grace, which in turn enables us to extend Christlike grace to others. We treasure God's Word, the Bible, as our greatest way of understanding God and how to live a life that reflects His kingdom. We come to the Word humbly and with teachable hearts so we can learn from the Great Shepherd. We strive to live in humility and understanding toward others, trusting that each of us has something to teach and something to learn.

### LIVE A CONNECTED LIFE

Life is far better lived in circles than in rows. Church isn't just about attending on Sundays; it's about doing life together as followers of Jesus Christ and expressing His love to the community we are planted in. We believe this is true not only of individuals, but also of congregations. Prompted by the Spirit, we invite opportunities to partner with other churches and ministries. We believe that we are better together than alone, and trust that God will bless unity and use it to demonstrate His heart to a watching world.

## LIVE A PEACEMAKING LIFE

A life of faith is meant to impact our entire being, including our conscience, our will, and our affections. Compartmentalized faith and relationships divided by hostilities and earthly differences of economics, age, and ethnicity will only yield a fraction of what life could be. We pursue life in harmony with God and others which gives us the clarity and courage to live justly, mercifully, and humbly.

## LIVE A SPIRITUALLY HEALTHY LIFE

We place a high value on healthy single, married, and family life. We want to help each other love God with all our hearts, souls, minds, and bodies. We desire to experience healing for generational patterns of dysfunction so that we can be spiritually, emotionally, and relationally healthy in the present. We strive to inspire future generations to claim their faith and establish their own authentic relationships with Jesus Christ.

## LIVE A GENEROUS LIFE

We are never more like God than when we give. We've not only been given salvation through Jesus Christ but gifts of unique talents, abilities, and resources. We long to see lives given to God's work through generous contributions of service and resources in our church, in our community, and in our world.

## APPENDIX C: SALVATION

Heaven ... no doubt you have thought about it. Certainly you are interested in it. But, do you know for certain that you are going there? While some people may say it's arrogant for you to claim you're going to heaven, the Bible does tell us that we can know for sure that heaven is our destiny.

*I write these things to you who believe in the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.*

*1 John 5:13*

Now that is certainty!

### HOW TO HAVE A NEW LIFE (SALVATION)

#### 1. UNDERSTAND - WHO GOD IS

- *God is love.* 1 John 4:8
  - i. God is the one who created us so He could direct His love to us.
  - ii. He loves us personally and deeply.
  
- *I am holy.* 1 Peter 1:16
  - i. God is also holy or perfect. That means He is:
    - Righteous - the Ten Commandments are His perfect standard of right and wrong. (*Psalm 11:7*)
    - Just - He won't leave any of the guilty unpunished. (*Romans 2:5-11*)

#### 2. UNDERSTAND - WHO WE ARE

- *God created humans in His own image.* Genesis 1:27
  - i. God made us with unlimited potential for good.
  
- *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory (standard) of God.* Romans 3:23
  - i. As humans, we are sinful.  
We have an attitude of being independent and rebellious toward God and what He says.  
The result is sin ... breaking or ignoring the laws of God.  
Just ask yourself, "Have I ever...?"
    - been immoral in action or thought?
    - lied or been dishonest?
    - desired another person's property?
    - taken something that wasn't mine?
    - dishonored my parents?

We have great potential, but we all have a barrier keeping us from our potential ... sin!

### 3. UNDERSTAND - WHERE HUMANITY IS HEADED

- *For the wages of sin is death. . . Romans 6:23*  
Sin separates us from God now, resulting in spiritual death. This accounts for the emptiness man experiences in his life. If sin separates us from God during life, it will continue to separate us forever after we die. The final punishment for sin is called eternal death - or hell.
- *They will be punished with everlasting destruction, forever separated from the Lord and his glorious power. 2 Thessalonians 1:9*

### 4. UNDERSTAND - WHAT WE CAN DO

- Nothing - *...all of our righteous acts are like filthy rags. Isaiah 64:6.*
  - i. We are unable to save ourselves. Being good, going to church, helping others—all these are great, but won't save us from hell and get us to heaven.
- Accept God's solution:  
*For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. 1 Peter 3:18 But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8*

God's love and justice were both demonstrated at the cross. How? Jesus, as our substitute willingly suffered the punishment of death that we deserved. Because of His death and resurrection, God can now offer eternal life as a FREE GIFT!

*If we confess our sins He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us of all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9*

### 5. UNDERSTAND - THE SACRIFICIAL GIFT OF JESUS CHRIST

- *For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only son that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16*
- True believing is more than simply an intellectual understanding of certain facts. It involves a realization that:
  - i. I have broken God's law and as a sinner deserve His judgment.
  - ii. There is nothing I can do to remove the guilt and penalty of my sin.
  - iii. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the only solution for my sin.
- Make a deliberate choice to receive Jesus Christ into your life by putting your faith and trust in Him alone.
  - i. *Yet to all who received Him, to those who believe in His name, to them He gave the right to become children of God. John 1:12*

Simply pray (talk to God) and express:

- That you are a sinner
- That the death and resurrection of Jesus is the only solution to your sin.
- That you are placing your trust in Jesus Christ alone
- Thanksgiving for His forgiveness and the gift of eternal life

## 6. UNDERSTAND - WHEN YOU DO THIS YOU CAN NEVER LOSE YOUR SALVATION

*And this is the testimony that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.*

*1 John 5:11-12*

If you have made the decision to receive Jesus Christ into your life just now or recently, we would highly encourage you to talk to a pastor, others at the church, and tell two people you love.



# APPENDIX D: THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING BAPTIZED

## WHY SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

### TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

*At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river.*

*Mark 1:9*

### BECAUSE CHRIST COMMANDED IT

*Jesus said, "Go then, to all people everywhere and make them my disciples, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and then teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. Matthew 28:19-20*

### IT DEMONSTRATES THAT I REALLY AM A BELIEVER.

*...many of the people who heard him believed and were baptized.*

*Acts 18:8*

*We know that we have come to know him, if we obey his commands.*

*1 John 2:3*

## WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BAPTISM?

### IT ILLUSTRATES CHRIST'S BURIAL AND RESURRECTION

*Christ died for our sins....He was buried....and He rose again.*

*1 Corinthians 15:3-4*

*For when you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ.*

*Colossians 2:12*

## IT ILLUSTRATES MY NEW LIFE AS A CHRISTIAN

*When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun!*

*2 Corinthians 5:17*

*By our baptism then, we were buried with Him and shared His death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead...so also we may live a new life.*

*Romans 6:4*

Baptism doesn't make you a believer – it shows that you already believe. Baptism does not “save” you, only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring – it's the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart.

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith...it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.*

*Ephesians 2:8-9*

## WHY BE BAPTIZED BY IMMERSION?

### BECAUSE JESUS WAS BAPTIZED THAT WAY

As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water.

Matthew 3:16

### EVERY BAPTISM IN THE BIBLE WAS BY IMMERSION

*then both Philip and the man went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water...*

*Acts 8:38-39*

### THE WORD BAPTIZE MEANS TO “DIP-UNDER” WATER

The Greek word baptizo means to “immerse or dip under water”. It symbolized a burial and resurrection! The founders of denominations agree:

- Martin Luther...“I would have those who are to be baptized be entirely immersed, as the Word imports and the mystery signifies.”

- John Calvin...“The word ‘baptize’ signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church.”
- John Wesley...“Buried with him, alludes to baptizing by immersion according to the custom of the first church.”

## WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

### EVERY PERSON WHO HAS BELIEVED IN CHRIST

*Those who believed and accepted his message were baptized...*  
Acts 2:41

*Simon himself believed and was baptized...*  
Acts 8:13

*But when they believed Philip as he preached the Good News...and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.*  
Acts 8:12

Some churches practice a “baptism of confirmation” for children. This ceremony is intended to be a covenant between the parents and God on the behalf of the child. The parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make his own personal confession of Christ. This custom began about 300 years after the Bible was completed. This is different from the baptism talked about in the Bible, which was only for those old enough to believe. The purpose of baptism is to publicly confess your personal commitment to Christ.

*Note: We do offer child dedication ceremonies as a way for parents to express their commitment to raise their child through their faithful devotion to Jesus Christ.*

It is a Membership Partner commitment to be baptized the way Jesus demonstrated, even though many of us were baptized as children.

## WHEN SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

### AS SOON AS YOU HAVE BELIEVED!

*Those who believed...were baptized...that day! Acts 2:41*

*Then Philip began with the scripture and told him the Good News about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water, and the man said, “Look, here is water! Why shouldn’t I be*

*baptized right now?" Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." The man answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." So they went down into the water and Philip baptized him.*  
*Acts 8:35-38*

There is no reason to delay. As soon as you have decided to receive Christ into your life, you can and should be baptized. If you wait until you are "perfect", you will never feel "good enough"!

If you have already been fully immersed in baptism, as a Christian, at a previous church there is no need to be baptized again. Baptism is a personal commitment to Christ, not to a church.

### WHAT SHOULD I WEAR WHEN I AM BAPTIZED?

You are free to wear whatever modest clothing you would like to; there is no uniform for being baptized. Bring a change of clothes, a towel, and a plastic bag for your wet clothes. We provide changing rooms.

### WILL I HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY?

During the service, one of the pastors typically explains the meaning of baptism. At that point, you will be given the opportunity to say a few words if you want. Baptism is a very good time to give a quick testimony of how you came to put your faith in Christ and why you are getting baptized, but there is no obligation to say anything if you don't want to.

A volunteer we lead you to the baptismal area at the appointed time (often at the end of the service after you've changed) where you will wait your turn to be baptized. A fellow believer in Jesus Christ of your choice (you can ask a pastor if you want to) can baptize you by briefly lowering you under the water, and saying words similar to "Name, because of your profession of faith in Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." You can leave the baptismal, dry off, and go to a room to change. We encourage you to invite all your relatives and friends to attend your baptism.

### SPECIAL NEEDS?

One of the pastors can perform a private baptism in special circumstances.

## APPENDIX E: PROBLEMATIC CONDUCT THAT COULD LEAD TO THE REMOVAL OF A MEMBERSHIP PARTNER.

Note: The church is designed to reveal the glory of God to the world. The church is like a light on a hill for all to see. Our light shines bright when we do good, share the gospel, and live godly lives in this dark world. We are called by Jesus to live differently from the world around us. This may result in tension, criticism and persecution.

*Choose a good reputation over great riches, for being held in high esteem is better than having silver and gold.*  
*Proverbs 22:1*

We must always keep in mind that an invisible spiritual warfare rages against the Church of God. Satan, our adversary, is doing all he can to destroy the church. He attacks the church from the outside (e.g. pornography, drugs, suppression of religious freedom) and from the inside (e.g. hypocrisy, greed, legalism, bickering). Historically, his inside strategies have been particularly effective. A church will be paralyzed if it struggles with internal strife, division and slander. The Bible supplies guidelines to deal with these difficulties so the church can carry on its important work of winning people to Christ. There are times when God instructs us to limit fellowship with member partners who choose to live in defiant rebellion to God's commands and refuse to repent from sin.

### WHAT KINDS OF SINS DEMAND CHURCH ACTION?

*When I wrote to you before, I told you not to associate with people who indulge in sexual sin. But I wasn't talking about unbelievers who indulge in sexual sin, or who are greedy or are swindlers or idol worshipers. You would have to leave this world to avoid people like that. What I meant was that you are not to associate with anyone who claims to be a Christian yet indulges in sexual sin, or is greedy, or worships idols, or is abusive, or a drunkard, or a swindler. Don't even eat with such people. It isn't my responsibility to judge outsiders, but it certainly is your job to judge those inside the church who are sinning in these ways. God will judge those on the outside;*

*but as the Scriptures say, “You must remove the evil person from among you.”*

*1 Corinthians 5:9-13 (NLT)*

- Greed/swindling
- Idolatry
- Slander/divisiveness
- Immorality (includes all sexual relations outside the confines of marriage including adultery and homosexuality)
- Drunkenness/addictions
- Jealousy/envy
- Idleness

IF SIN IS DETECTED OR IF YOU ARE OFFENDED, WHAT IS THE THREE-STEP PROCESS IN DEALING WITH THE PERSON?

*If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or tax collector.*

*Matthew 18:15-17*

1. Talk to him/her in private.
2. Talk to him/her with another (perhaps with another small group member or close friend).
3. Talk to the church (discussing this with a pastor is usually the best place to start).

IF A PERSON PERSISTS IN THEIR SIN, THEY CAN BE ASKED TO REFRAIN FROM PARTICIPATION IN SMALL GROUPS OR MINISTRIES OR ASKED TO LEAVE THE CHURCH. THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES CAN VOTE TO REVOKE MEMBERSHIP PARTNER STATUS. THE GOAL IS ALWAYS RESTORATION WHEN POSSIBLE.

If you have questions or struggles with any of these areas mentioned above, please make it a point to talk to one of the pastors about your situation **before** signing the Membership Partner Application. Any issue discussed will remain confidential.

## DISCUSSION OF CONFIDENTIALITY

All of the pastors from The Urban Refuge work collaboratively as a team and routinely discuss with each other many aspects of leading the church, including the various types of counseling needs that may arise. Depending upon the nature and scope of a counseling issue, the pastor may elect to draw on the expertise of other pastors so as to best serve the interests of the person(s) requesting counseling.

The congregation benefits from the balance of perspective and breadth of experience offered by this team approach to difficult situations. At the same time, the pastoral staff is protected by the accountability and support inherent in community. If member partner is uncomfortable with the potential of a counseling issue being shared within this tight circle of people directly responsible for the health and leadership of the church, then he or she may refrain from confiding in a pastor. We will try to assist you in finding a Christ-centered, fee-for-service counselor in the metro area, to find the help you need.