



Ethos of Woodside Baptist Church

The ethos of Woodside Baptist Church is reflected in three key statements:

1. A doctrinal statement, which sets out those *beliefs* which are non-negotiable, and which is contained within the Trust Deeds of the church.

This statement includes the following convictions (see Appendix for full statement and explanatory notes):

- that the Lord Jesus is God's son, truly God and truly man, and through his death and resurrection we are made right with God, simply through faith in him;
- that the Bible is the word of God and, interpreted by the Holy Spirit, is our essential guide to our faith and life.

2. A church covenant, which expresses our *commitment* to each other as a community of God's people:

In dependence on the grace of our Lord Jesus, we commit ourselves to building a community of love, accepting one another as He has accepted us, and putting the needs of others before our own. We will seek to express the unity of the Holy Spirit through being at peace with each other; to encourage one another in following Jesus; and to comfort and help one another in times of difficulty.

As fully as we are able, and cooperating with and supporting the church leaders, we will commit ourselves to contribute to the life of the church in prayer; through regular participation in worship together; in offering ourselves in service; and in financial support for all aspects of the church's ministry.

Under the leading of the Holy Spirit, we will seek in word and deed to share the gospel with our families and others, through our own personal witness; by sharing in the outreach activities of the church; by the instruction of our children and young people; and in our support for mission here and overseas.

3. A vision statement, adopted in 2000, which expresses the overall *purpose* of our life together:

God has called us to be a praying and worshipping community, committed to taking Christ into all the world and seeking to encourage a response of committed discipleship.

In the year 2000 the church corporately considered the question “How will we know if we are being true to this calling?”, and answered as follows:

- People will say of the church ...

“I am welcomed and accepted,
and I am helped and encouraged
to grow in my relationship with God,
to offer to God the worship that He seeks from me,
to give and receive ministry, as part of a loving and caring
community,
in my responsibility to be Jesus to the people I meet,
and in following Jesus and living out my faith.”

- As a community, we will be able to say of ourselves...

“Prayer is an integral part of all that we do,
we experience the Lord’s presence amongst us, as we meet
together,
we welcome and accept one another, just as Christ has accepted
us,
we reach out to the people around us,
we support the cause of mission in whatever way we can,
we discern, and we submit ourselves to, the Lord’s will
and we manage faithfully all that He has entrusted to us.”

As Baptists, we have a distinctive corporate identity and give warm assent to the public statements of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, including the Five Core Values (see Appendix)

These statements encapsulate the essence of our faith. Because we are entirely motivated by our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, we are totally different to a club or society. The very air we breathe and the unique flavour of all we do relates to a dynamic interaction with our God through the Lord Jesus Christ empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Appendix 1

Doctrinal Statement (with explanatory notes – added Sept 2003)

<p>1. The Divine Inspiration Authority and Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures as not only containing but being in themselves the Word of God and the need of the teaching of the Holy Spirit in order to a true and spiritual understanding of it.</p>	<p><i>We seek to base our lives on the Bible, believing it to be God's word to us, and relying on the Holy Spirit to help us understand it.</i></p>
<p>2. The unity of the Godhead and the Divine Co-equality of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit.</p>	<p><i>The belief that God is three persons and yet one God (the doctrine of the Trinity), a belief which separates Christianity from other faiths and religious groups.</i></p>
<p>3. The utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall.</p>	<p><i>For each one of us, every aspect of our humanity is affected by sin.</i></p>
<p>4. The true and proper Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ. His real and perfect manhood. His work of atonement for sinners of mankind. His resurrection and ascension and His present priestly intercession for His people at the Right hand of the Father.</p>	<p><i>Being both God and man, and through his death on the cross, Jesus is able to rescue us from our sin and put us right with God. He rose from the dead and returned to heaven, where he now reigns as Lord over all and represents us to the Father.</i></p>
<p>5. The Justification of the sinner solely by faith through the atoning merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.</p>	<p><i>We are children of God, not because of our humanity nor by our own efforts to be good, but through faith in Jesus as Saviour and Lord.</i></p>
<p>6. The necessity of the Work of the Holy Spirit in Regeneration Conversion and Sanctification also in ministry and worship.</p>	<p><i>Only through the Holy Spirit can we understand the gospel, experience a new life in relationship with God, and live in obedience as followers of Jesus.</i></p>
<p>7. The Immortality of the soul, the Resurrection of the body, the Judgement of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ with the eternal blessedness of the righteous and the eternal punishment of the wicked.</p>	<p><i>We believe that God is just, and will one day put right all that is wrong. Our eternal destiny rests on our response to Jesus – those who reject him will be separated from God forever.</i></p>
<p>8. The Divine institution of the Christian Ministry and the obligation and perpetuity of the ordinances of Believers Baptism (by immersion) and the Lord's Supper</p>	<p><i>Ordained ministry, as part of the total ministry of all believers, has a God-given role within the church; and the practice of believer's baptism and regular observance of communion are fundamental to our understanding of the church.</i></p>

Appendix 2

The Five Core Values of the Baptist Union

We are:

1. a prophetic community confronting evil, injustice and hypocrisy, challenging human concepts of power, wealth, status and security;
2. an inclusive community transcending barriers of gender, language race etc. identifying with those who are rejected;
3. a sacrificial community accepting vulnerability and the necessity of sacrifice seeking to reflect the generous and life giving nature of God;
4. a missionary community demonstrating in word and action God's forgiving and healing love calling and enabling people to experience the love of God for themselves;
5. a worshipping community engaging in worship and prayer which undergirds all we are and do.

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