

**Our Mission** is to lead people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through the teaching and preaching of God's Word.

**Our Strategy** is to create environments where people are encouraged and equipped to pursue intimacy with God, community with insiders, and influence with outsiders.

## What We Believe

### ABOUT THE BIBLE

We believe the entire Bible is the inspired and authoritative Word of God, and that men were moved by the Holy Spirit of God to write the very words of Scripture recorded in the original manuscripts preserved throughout history. Both the Old and New Testaments are designed for our practical instruction in faith and conduct, and highlight God's Law and Grace, and we therefore believe the Bible is without error.

### ABOUT GOD

We believe in one God who eternally exists in three persons: The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit.

**The Father:** We believe God the Father is the Creator and Ruler of all things, absolute, omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption. He is Father within the Trinity and He is Father to all believers. The heavens declare His Glory; He alone is worthy of our praise. In His love, the Father is holding back His wrath against sin that humanity might not be cut off from Himself. He will bring final judgement and complete annihilation of sin, death, and hell. The Father saves all who come to Him through Jesus Christ and He becomes, upon adoption, Father to His own.

**The Son:** We believe the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, came into the world that He might reveal God to men, fulfill prophecy, and become the redeemer to a lost world. To this end, He was born of the virgin Mary in a human body with a sinless human nature and without ceasing to be God. In infinite love for humanity, He voluntarily accepted His Father's will, became the divinely provided sacrificial Lamb, and took away the sins of the world. Jesus rose from the dead in the same physical body, though glorified, in which He had lived and died. His resurrected body is the pattern of the body which ultimately will be given to all believers. On departing earth,

He was accepted by His Father, the final assurance to us that His redeeming work was perfectly accomplished. Jesus is the head over all things to the Church, which is His body, and in this ministry He continually intercedes and advocates on behalf of the saved.

***The Holy Spirit:*** We believe the Holy Spirit dwells in every believer immediately after placing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. God provides by his grace, through the Holy Spirit, the power to live the Christian life. The Holy Spirit transforms believers into the image of Jesus Christ by convicting the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment, and glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ. Believers are sealed unto salvation by the Holy Spirit, serving as the guarantee of the Father's promise until the day of redemption. He administers spiritual gifts unto the Church for the work of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the salvation of humanity.

### **ABOUT HUMANITY**

We believe that people were created in the image of God to have fellowship with Him and find fulfillment in Him, but became alienated in that relationship through an inherited sin nature and willful sinful disobedience. As a result, people are incapable of regaining a right relationship with God through their own efforts and are cut off from their creator.

### **ABOUT SALVATION**

We believe that the blood of Jesus Christ, shed on the cross, provides the sole basis for the unmerited forgiveness of sin, and is not the result of any human works. God freely offers salvation to those who are born again spiritually by placing their faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as sufficient payment for their sin. Absolutely nothing can add to, enhance, or supplement the fully completed work of redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ and made available by grace through faith in Him.

### **ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN LIFE**

We believe the explicit message of our Lord Jesus Christ to those whom He has saved is to make the Gospel of Jesus Christ known to the whole world and that this is the purpose of the Church through the individuals within it. All Christians should live for Christ and not for themselves. By obedience to the Word of God and daily yielding to The Holy Spirit of God, every believer should mature and be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

## **ABOUT THE CHURCH**

We believe the Church is the Body of Christ, of which Jesus Christ is the head. The members of the church are those who have trusted by faith the finished work of Jesus Christ. The purpose of the Church is to glorify God by loving Him and develop disciples who make the Gospel of Jesus Christ known to the lost world. The mission of the Church is to lead all people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through practical instruction in the Scriptures, active participation in worship, fellowship with God and with other believers, and for corporate witness to the unsaved world.

## **ABOUT THE SACRAMENTS/ORDINANCES**

We believe the Sacraments/Ordinances of the Church - Baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the Lord's Supper - are ordained by Christ, and are to be observed in obedience to our Lord's command. These are symbols and pledges of God's love toward us and of the Christian's profession of faith in Jesus Christ. The Sacraments/Ordinances serve as an outward visible sign of an inward spiritual grace and connection to the Lord Jesus Christ.

We believe the baptism of a believer is a public witness that a person has received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and is becoming part of the community of faith through submission to Jesus Christ and identification with His death and resurrection. It indicates that the old self, with all sin and evil desires, has died, is buried with Christ, and the believer is raised to walk in a new life with Him.

We believe the Lord's Supper is a representation of our redemption, a memorial of the suffering and death of Christ, and a symbol of unity which Christians have with Christ and with one another. We are to examine ourselves in the light of Scripture before approaching the Lord's Table as an essential preparation for participation. Those who rightly, reverently, and in faith eat the broken bread and drink the cup of the Lord partake of the Body and Blood of Christ in a spiritual manner until he comes.

## **ABOUT MARRIAGE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY**

We believe God has created each human being as either male or female. We believe that all people are individuals of sacred worth created in the image of God. All people need the ministry of the Church in their struggles for human fulfillment, as well as the spiritual and emotional care of a fellowship that enables reconciling relationships with God, with others, and with self.

We believe that sexuality is God's good gift to all people, and call everyone to responsible stewardship of this sacred gift. Sexual relations are affirmed only within the covenant of monogamous, heterosexual marriage, while human sexuality is also affirmed within the chaste single life. We do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching.

We deplore all forms of the commercialization, abuse, and exploitation of sex.

We believe God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between one biological man, one biological woman, and Himself. Therefore, Live Oak Church, its pastors, and staff shall only recognize, participate in, and solemnize marriages between one biological man and one biological woman.

### **ABOUT LAST THINGS**

We believe all people stand under the righteous judgement of God the Father both now and in the last days.

We believe that according to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth. The return of Christ is certain and may occur at any time. We believe the conflict between God and evil will intensify as we approach the last days. At Christ's return, the enemies of God will be conquered, the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of God, and His sovereign reign will be established forever.

We believe the final destiny of all things lies in God's hands. The dead will be bodily resurrected, and Christ will judge all people in righteousness before the Holy God. Those redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ will receive their reward and dwell with the Lord in their resurrected and glorified bodies eternally. All people who have rejected Jesus Christ will forever remain separated from God to endure eternal condemnation.