**Statement of Beliefs**

**The Garden Gathering, Inc. and the Garden Apostolic Training Center, Inc.**

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of our faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our minister/executive board of directors is our final interpretive authority on the Bible’s meaning and application.

There is only one true, eternal God. He is love, perfect, holy, and truth. God is One. He has revealed Himself in three distinct, individual, equal persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. I JOHN 4:16:, MAT. 28:19; LUKE 3:21-22;MAT.5:48;ITIM.1:17;JOHN 5:18;PHIL2:6-11;JOHN 14,17;JOHN1:1-5;JOHN 5:18; PHIL. 2:6-11; JOHN 14, 17

God the Father is the Creator and author of all life. MAT.6:9

God the Son, Jesus Christ, Creator of all things with the Father, was manifest in the flesh, fully God , yet fully man, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit to bring God’s Kingdom to earth. He was crucified, dead, and buried, resurrected bodily on the third day according to the scriptures, and appeared to His disciples. He ascended to heaven, where He sits at the right hand of God the Father, and continually intercedes for His people. Jesus will return for His pure, spotless, glorious church and execute judgment upon the wicked. MAT.1:23; JOHN1:14,18;COL.1:13-20;ICOR.15:3-5;ACTS 17:31;HEB.1:1-4;17:25;EPH. 5:25-27

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth, Comforter, Promise of the Father and the One who reveals Christ and His work on the cross. The Holy Spirit dwells within every believer, sanctifying the believer and enabling them to live holy, supernatural lives. JOHN 14-16;ACTS 2:33;I JOHN 2:20,27;2 COR. 3:17,18

The Holy Spirit was poured out at Pentecost and is a gift from God to empower all believers as promised by the Lord Jesus Christ and is received by faith as a separate work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives gifts to believers for empowerment to be a witness.MAT.3:11; ACTS 1:8;ACTS 2-4;ACTS 2:38;;ACTS19:1-7

The Bible is the inspired, infallible Word of God. Both Old and New Testaments are fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, without error and an infallible guide in matters pertaining to life and godliness. It reveals God’s complete will for the salvation of mankind. His Word is trustworthy, and the supreme authority in all points of doctrine, life and godliness. 2 TIM.3:16;2 PET.1:20-21;I THESS.2:13;HEB.4:12-14

Mankind was originally created by God, In His image and likeness to have fellowship, and friendship with God. Male and female were created to have dominion and rule over all of God’s creation. Through Adam’s transgression of disobedience and rebellion, sin came into the world and mankind was separated from God and incapable of saving itself. GEN.1:26-28;3:6;2 COR. 11:3; ROM. 5:12;ROM.6:23

Knowing that ‘all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God’, redemption with God is only found through Jesus Christ. The power of sin and death was broken when Jesus Christ bore our sins on the cross and rose again from the dead. He provided salvation for the whole person: spirit, soul and body. ROM.3:10,23;ROM10:8-10; I THESS. 5:23-24; ISA 53:4-6; COL 3:13-14

An individual is saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ through repentance, believing, and receiving Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil and to provide freedom from the power of the enemy and sin, sickness, torment and lies. EPH.2:8;ROM.10:8-10; I JOHN 3:8;LUKE4:18-20;ACTS 10:38; II COR. 10:3-6

Water baptism, by immersion, is a direct commandment of Jesus Christ to all believers. It is a visible representation of the believer’s identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. MAT.28:18-20; ACTS 2:38;ROM.6:4

The Lord’s supper, communion, is an ordinance He gave for the body of Christ to partake of in remembrance of the New Covenant. I COR.11:17-34;LUKE 22:19

Divine healing-emotional, mental, and physical, freedom from the oppression of the devil, is available by the power of God, through the prayer of faith, by the laying on of hands, anointing with oil, and other means. It is provided for in the atonement of Christ and is available to us today. ISA. 53:4-6; I PET. 2:24;LUKE 4:18-20; ACTS 10:38;JAMES 5:14-15;MAT. 8:17;MARK 16:17-18

The church is the Body of Christ, His Bride, and Temple of the Holy Spirit. It consists of those who put their faith in Jesus Christ. The church has been commissioned to make disciples of all the nations, ministering as Jesus did, destroying the works of the devil. The church is called to preach the kingdom of heaven is at hand through the power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit thus advancing the kingdom of heaven. Christ set some to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry that we all may grow into the fullness of Christ. I COR. 12:12-14; EPH. 1:22-23;EPH.4:11-16;EPH. 5:25; I COR. 3:16; MAT. 10:7-8;MARK 16:15-20;I JOHN 4:17

**Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality**

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1:26-27.) Rejection of one’s biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-25.) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4.) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including but not limited to adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, transgender, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10.)

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of our local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to our members and the community, it is imperative that all persons we employ in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22.)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11.) We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of our belief statements.

We believe that weddings in our facilities are Christian worship services and therefore will only be performed in accordance with our Statement of Beliefs.

We will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman. Further, the pastors/ministers and staff shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman.

**Statement on the Sanctity of Human Life**

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Ps 139.)