

Statement of Faith

*Clyo & Silver Hill Global Methodist Churches
South Georgia Conference*

Clyo Community Church and Silver Hill Church are both Global Methodist Churches in the South Georgia Conference. We have two buildings, but we are **ONE Church**. The mission of our local church is to be disciples of Jesus Christ who make disciples for Jesus.

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen.”
— Matthew 28:18–20

The Doctrinal Standard

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic* church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic* and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism
for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**“catholic” means universal, referring to the worldwide Christian church.*

Confession of Faith

God

We believe in the ONE true, holy, and living God, Eternal Spirit, who is Creator, Sovereign and Preserver of all things visible and invisible. He is infinite in power, wisdom, justice, goodness and love, and rules with gracious reward for the well-being of salvation of humanity, to the glory of His name. We believe the One God reveals Himself as the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, distinct but inseparable, eternally one in essence and power.

Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, truly God and truly man, in whom the divine and human natures are perfectly and inseparably united. He is the eternal Word made flesh, the only begotten Son of the Father, born of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. As a ministering Servant He lived, suffered, and died on the cross. He was buried, rose from the dead and ascended into Heaven to be with the Father, from whence He shall return. He is the eternal Savior and Mediator, who intercedes for us, and by Him all humanity will be judged.

The Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit who proceeds from and is one in being with the Father and the Son. He convinces the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgement. He leads humanity through faithful response to the Gospel into the fellowship of the Church. He comforts, sustains, and empowers the faithful and guides them into all truth.

The Holy Bible

We believe in the Holy Bible, Old and New Testaments, reveals the Word of God so far as it is necessary for our salvation. It is to be received through the Holy Spirit as the true rule and guide for faith and practice. Whatever is not revealed in or established by the Holy Scriptures is not to be made an article of faith nor is it to be taught as essential for salvation.

The Church

We believe the Christian Church is the community of all true believers under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We believe there is only one, holy, apostolic, and universal. It is the redemptive fellowship in which the Word of God is preached by men and women divinely called, and the sacraments are duly administered according to Christ's own appointment. Under the discipline of the Holy Spirit the Church exists for the maintenance of worship, the edification of believers, and the redemption of the world.

The Sacraments

We believe the Sacraments, ordained by Christ, are symbols and pledges of the Christian's profession and of God's love towards us. They are means of grace by which God works invisibly in us, quickening, strengthening, and confirming our faith in Him.

There are two sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

We believe Baptism signifies entrance into the household of faith and is a symbol of repentance and inner cleansing from sin, a representation of the new birth in Christ Jesus and a mark of Christian discipleship.

We believe the Lord's Supper is a representation of our redemption, a memorial of the suffering and death of Jesus, and a token of love and union which Christians have with Christ and with one another. Those who rightly, worthily and in faith eat the broken bread and drink the blessed cup partake of the body and blood of Christ in a spiritual manner until He returns. Further, we believe in an open table. Christ died for all, and all are welcome at His table. We are to come to His table with repentant hearts.

Sin

We believe humanity is fallen from righteousness and, apart from the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, is destitute of holiness and inclined to evil. Except a person be born again, they cannot see the Kingdom of God. In their own strength, without divine grace, a person cannot do good works pleasing and acceptable to God. We believe, however, a person influenced and empowered by the Holy Spirit is responsible in freedom to exercise their will for good.

Salvation

We believe God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. The offering Christ freely made on the cross is the perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the entire world, redeeming humanity from all sin, so that no other satisfaction is required.

We believe we are never accounted righteous before God through our works or merit, but that penitent sinners are justified or accounted righteous before God only by Faith in Jesus Christ our Lord.

We believe regeneration is the renewal of a person in righteousness through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, whereby we are made partakers of the divine nature and experience the newness of life. By this new birth, the believer becomes reconciled to God and is enabled to serve Him.

We believe, although we have experienced regeneration, it is possible to depart from grace and fall into sin; and we may even then, by the grace of God be renewed in righteousness.

We believe good works are necessary fruits of faith and follow regeneration, but they do not have the virtue to remove our sins or to avert divine judgement. We believe good works, pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, spring from a true and living faith, for through and by them faith is made evident.

Sanctification

We believe sanctification is the work of God's grace through the Word and the Spirit, by which those who have been born again are cleansed from sin in their thoughts, words, and acts, and are enabled to live in accordance with God's will and strive for holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

The Judgement

We believe all people stand under the righteous judgement of Jesus Christ, both now and in the last day. We believe in the resurrection of the dead; the righteous to life eternal and the wicked to endless condemnation.

Moral Principles

Statement on Equality

We believe that all people are of sacred worth and affirm that God's grace is available to all. Therefore, we gladly welcome all who seek to grow in their relationship with God to attend worship services and participate in the church's ministries. No person shall be disqualified from becoming a member of this local congregation based on gender, race, color, nationality, or economic condition.

We believe that both men and women are called to, gifted for, and ordained and licensed ministry, and both are able to hold leadership roles within the church.

Statement on Marriage and Sexuality

We believe marriage and sexual intimacy are good gifts from God. In keeping with the Scriptures and Christian teaching through the ages we believe that marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in a single and exclusive union (Genesis 2:24–25, Matthew 19:5, 1 Corinthians 6:16, Ephesians 5:31). We believe that God intends for His children to practice sexual purity, faithfulness in marriage and celibacy in singleness. We believe any sexual expression outside of these standards is not in line with the teaching of Scripture.

Statement on Human Dignity

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed towards any individual or group are to be repudiated and are not in accordance with Scripture.

Statement on Divorce and Remarriage

Our first counsel when considering divorce is always to exhaust every avenue of reconciliation. However, when a married couple is estranged beyond reconciliation, even after thoughtful consideration and counsel, divorce is a regrettable alternative in the middle of brokenness. Divorce is always less than what God intended for marriage; however, it is not an unforgivable sin. Through the process of healing and restoration, people can be restored to community and to healthy and whole relationship that may include remarriage.

Statement on Abortion

We reject abortion. We do, however, recognize there are rare and exceptional cases when the life of the mother is endangered and when this is so, encourage prayerful inquiry and counsel in those circumstances. We affirm God's grace is available to all and it is our commitment to be in ministry with and to all who have been touched by the devastating circumstances of abortion.

Means of Grace

Grace is central to our understanding of Christian faith and life. Grace can be defined as the love and mercy given to us by God because God wants us to have it, not because of anything we have done to earn it.

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”
— Ephesians 2:8–9

As Methodists we describe God’s grace as threefold: prevenient grace, justifying grace, and sanctifying grace.

Prevenient Grace

Prevenient Grace is a gift that is always available, but that can be refused. God’s grace stirs up within us a desire to know God and empowers us to respond to God’s invitation to be in relationship with Him. God’s grace enables us to discern differences between good and evil and makes it possible for us to choose good. God takes the initiative in relating to humanity. We do not have to beg and plead for God’s love and grace. God is actively seeking us.

Justifying Grace

“That is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.”
— 2 Corinthians 5:19

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
— Romans 5:8

These verses demonstrate the justifying grace of God. They point to reconciliation, pardon, and restoration. Through the work of God in Christ Jesus our sins are forgiven, and our relationship with God is restored.

Again, this dimension of God’s grace is a gift. God’s grace alone brings us into relationship with God. There are no hoops through which we must jump in order to please God and to be loved by God. God has already acted in Jesus Christ. We need only to respond in FAITH.

Justification is a time of repentance, turning away from our behaviors rooted in sin and toward actions that express God’s love. In this conversion we can expect to receive assurance of our present salvation through the Holy Spirit; “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God” — Romans 8:16.

Sanctifying Grace

Salvation is not a static, one time event in our lives. It is the ongoing experience of God’s gracious presence transforming us into whom God intends us to be.

Through God’s sanctifying grace, we grow and mature in our ability to live as Jesus lived. As we pray, study the Scriptures, fast, worship, and share in fellowship with other Christians, we deepen our knowledge of and love for God. As we respond with compassion to human need and work for justice in our communities, we strengthen our capacity to love our neighbor. Our inner thoughts and motives, as well as our outer actions

and behavior, are aligned with God's will and testify to our union with God. This will be a lifelong process of being made perfect in our love of God and each other and removing our desire to sin.

Faith and Good Works

The New Testament insists that faith and good works belong together. What we believe must be confirmed by what we do. Personal salvation must be expressed in ministry and mission in the world. We believe that Christian doctrine and Christian ethics are inseparable, that faith should inspire service. The integration of personal piety and social holiness has been a hallmark of our tradition. We affirm the biblical precept that "faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead" (James 2:17).

Missions and Service

Because of what God has done for us, we offer our lives back to God through a life of service. As disciples, we become active participants in God's activity in the world through mission and service. Love of God is always linked to love of neighbor and to a passionate commitment to seeking justice and renewal in the world.

All for His Kingdom and His glory.