

CONSTITUTION OF Mountain Reformed Church Prescott, Arizona

WHAT DO WE BELIEVE?

*“We 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 Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
We believe in the Holy Ghost;
The holy catholic church;
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body;
and the life everlasting.
Amen.”*

OUR MISSION AND VISION

The vision of Mountain Reformed Church

is to provide an open door to relationship with God for all through worship, teaching God’s Word, and by celebrating with music and the arts.

Our mission is simple: All Glory to God! (*Soli Deo Gloria!*)

Our church is independent and non-denominational, with a theology based in the REFORMED way of being Christian.

WHAT IS REFORMED THEOLOGY?

Broadly speaking, Reformed Theology includes any system of belief that traces its roots back to the Protestant Reformation of the 16th Century. During the Middle Ages, the Christian Church in the west became increasingly corrupt in its beliefs and practices. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the church experienced a

great reformation. The term "Reformed" refers to the biblical standards confessed during the Protestant Reformation.

THE FIVE SOLAS

The five solas are five Latin phrases popularized during the Protestant Reformation that emphasized the distinctions between the early Reformers and the Roman Catholic Church. The word sola is the Latin word for "only" or "alone" and was used in relation to five key teachings. The five solas serve as a foundation for our beliefs and practices as a church in the Reformed tradition.

They are:

1. Sola fide = by faith alone
2. Sola scriptura = by scripture alone
3. Solo Christo = through Christ alone
4. Sola gratia = by grace alone
5. Soli Deo gloria = to the glory of God alone

Sola Fide

Sola fide emphasizes salvation as a free gift. The Roman Catholic Church of the time emphasized the use of indulgences (donating money) to buy status with God. Good works, including baptism, were seen as required for salvation. Sola fide stated that salvation is a free gift to all who accept it by faith (John 3:16). Salvation is not based on human effort or good deeds (Ephesians 2:9).

Sola Scriptura

Sola scriptura emphasizes the Bible alone as the source of authority for Christians. By saying, "Scripture alone," the Reformers rejected both the divine authority of the Roman Catholic Pope and confidence in sacred tradition. Only the Bible was "inspired by God" (2 Peter 1:20-21) and "God-breathed" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Anything taught by the Pope or in tradition that contradicted the Bible was to be rejected.

Solo Christo

Solo Christo ("through Christ alone") emphasizes the role of Jesus in salvation. The Roman Catholic tradition had placed church leaders such as priests in the role of intercessor between the laity and God. Reformers emphasized Jesus's role as our "high priest" who intercedes on our behalf before the Father. Hebrews 4:15 teaches, "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our

weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin."

Sola Gratia

Sola gratia emphasizes grace as the reason for our salvation. Grace is not merited favor, but unmerited and de-merited favor. Ephesians 2:8-9 teaches, "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."

Soli Deo Gloria

Soli Deo gloria emphasizes the glory of God as the goal of life. The idea of *soli Deo gloria* is found in 1 Corinthians 10:31: "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

PURPOSE: WHY WE EXIST

To glorify God (***Soli Deo Gloria***) through lives changed by the gospel of Jesus Christ (Ps 34:1-3, Jn 3:16, Jn 14:6, Rom 10:9-13, Eph 4:20-21, Col 1:15-23, 1 Cor 15:1-28, 2 Cor 5:17-21)

MEANS: WHAT WE DO

Our passion is to see God at work among us as we seek to fulfill our God-given purpose. This is accomplished through three primary means, including *connecting*, *transforming*, and *living*.

- A. Connect: To God and each other (Matt 28:19-20, Mark 12:28-31, Acts 1:8, Acts 2:42-47, 2 Tim 1:8-14, 1 Thess 3:11-14, Heb 10:24-25, 1 Jn 1:3, 1 Jn 4:19-21)
- B. Transform: Into mature followers of Jesus (Rom 12:1-2, 2 Cor 3:12-18, Eph 4:11-16, Phil 1:6, Phil 2:12-13, Col 1:28-29, 1 Tim 4:7-8, 1 Thess 5:23-24)
- C. Live: As missional people who serve in Jesus' name (Micah 6:8, Matt 28:18-20, Mk 12:31, Jn 20:21, Rom 12:3-8, 1 Cor 12, Eph 2:8-10, Col 4:5-6)

DISTINCTIVES: WHO WE ARE

As a missional church family, it is our goal to be:

- A. Bible-believing: (***Sola Scriptura***) The Bible is the Word of God given to teach us about God and how we should live in His world. It is our authority for all things. It is the 'roadmap' for all that we are, say, and do. God's

voice, speaking through it, must make sense of our past and guide our present and future. Personal and corporate traditions, history, and experience are all important, yet it is God alone through Scripture who is definitive (***Soli Deo Gloria, Sola Scriptura***). (Ps 1, Ps 119, Matt 22:29-33, Mrk 7:1-23, Jn 17:17, 2 Tim 3:16-17, 2 Pt 1:20-21)

- B. Gospel-centered: (***Sola Scriptura***) The story of the Bible is the gospel - God's amazing plan to restore all things to himself. The gospel is the 'good news' that God has graciously provided a way for sinful people to have a right, loving relationship with Him. Jesus is the way (***Sola Cristo***), (***Sola Fide***): He left heaven, came to earth, lived a perfect life, and died in our place. Miraculously He rose from the dead to demonstrate victory over sin and death. Through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, God chooses and redeems us. This happens in an instant, yet God's work in a person does not end there. The on-going aspect of salvation will continue for the rest of a person's life; therefore, the gospel is for all time. (Jn 3:1-18, Rom 3:21-26, Rom 10:13-15, 2 Cor 5:21, Gal 1:6-9, Gal 2:16-3:14, 2 Tim 2:8-10, 1 Thess 2:4)
- C. Transformation-minded: The Christian life is a life of grace-driven (***Sola Gratia***), progressive holiness. Followers of Jesus are on a path of being supernaturally changed by God to live in increasingly Christlike ways. Real change is possible and even promised. Our character ought to more and more frequently and robustly reflect the life of Jesus. (2 Cor 5:17, Eph 2:1-10, 1 Tim 1:12-17)
- D. Devoted to each other: As a local church, being an interconnected, interdependent family of believers, we pursue genuine Christian living together. This can be a reality because the gospel affects not just our relationship with God but also our relationships with people: people who know Jesus can be in harmony with others who know Jesus. (***Sola Christo***) We are literally children of God who need and rely on one another. (Jn 13:34, Rom 12:10, 1 Cor 13:4-6, Gal 6:2, Phil 2:3)
- E. Passionately engaged in both our community and the world: As a family of believers who have been and are being changed by the gospel, we cannot help but be moved with compassion for the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, and mental needs of both our community and the world at large. God has called us to leave a geographical footprint in the greater Prescott area. He has also called us to participate in extending the gospel around the globe. We yearn to engage people in spiritual conversations, demonstrate the love of Christ through acts of mercy, and live in such a way that people will be drawn to and experience the good things of God through our words and deeds. (***Soli Deo Gloria!***) (Lk 4:18-19, Jn 20:21, Acts 1:8, 1 Pt 3:13-17)