

### **Background**

The Statement of Faith is the central document of this organisation. NT Christian Schools is founded on, and constantly informed by, a Christian worldview. The Statement of Faith seeks to explain and make clear how NT Christian Schools understands what it means to be a Christian organisation, as well as Christian individuals. It is a lens through which the organisation expresses the depth and importance of the Christian faith and worldview.

Today, the breadth of activity and influence of NT Christian Schools places it in a unique and blessed position. As an organisation NT Christian Schools has the opportunity to share the love of God and tell His story to an ever widening audience of people across the NT, including contacts in business and government as well as people connected with our various school communities, for some of whom we may be the only witness for Christ in their lives.

The original Statement of Faith was adopted in 1977 at the time of the initial incorporation of the Darwin Christian Schools Association (later NT Christian Schools Association). It was a clear and sound expression of the fundamental truths at the heart of the Association.

Over time there was a developing awareness that the language of the original Statement of Faith was becoming less understandable to many, including the numerous Indigenous communities with whom the organisation interacts, families that have a non-English speaking background, and those who are young in the faith or not steeped in a theologically rich tradition. With this awareness grew a desire to make the Statement of Faith more accessible to all those people who the organisation exists to serve. A rigorous process of reviewing and rewriting the Statement of Faith in 'plain English' was undertaken. The document 'What We Believe' is the result.

The plain English Statement of Faith holds fast to the fundamental truths of our Christian beliefs. It has been built on the original Statement of Faith and reflects its doctrinal content. The review and rewording of the Statement of Faith also presented the opportunity to:

- more fully and overtly recognise the depth and breadth of God's love for His people,
- express the wonder of being in relationship with Him,
- reiterate the great commandments to love God and love one another, and
- reaffirm our responsibilities here on earth, particularly our daily witness for Christ and the task of telling everyone about who God is and what He's done.

In 'What We Believe', much of the rich language and theological terminology of the original Statement of Faith has necessarily been altered. Nevertheless the fundamental truths inherent in those words have been preserved. 'What We Believe' affords NT Christian Schools the opportunity to continue to be salt and light in making the truth of the Gospel known to all, but especially to new generations through use of language they can more readily relate to and resonate with.

# What We Believe

*Jesus Christ is Lord of everything. Because we know Jesus, we want to reflect His love through all our activities in education, training and care. Christ is Lord of the way we teach and learn. We want to tell His story and share His goodness with all people, especially the children and families we serve.*

*As Christians, this is what we believe:*

There is one God who is three persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

God created the world and He created us to be His people. God loves us and is our Father in Heaven. He rules over the world and He provides us with everything we need. God reveals himself to us through His creation, through His Word and most of all through His Son Jesus Christ.

The Holy Bible is God's word, breathed out by God through the people who wrote it. Because of this we can trust the Bible in everything we believe and everything we do. In the Bible, God tells us how much He loves us and how He wants to be with us forever, as family. The Bible guides and directs us on how God wants us to live. It tells us what God is like and that His plan for us is good.

God is Holy and His law is perfect. Since the beginning when Adam and Eve disobeyed God, all people have broken God's laws, this is what sin is. God is offended when we break His laws. Unless we turn to Him and away from our sin, we will be separated from Him forever.

But God loves us and does not want to be separated from us. God wants us to choose to be in His family. He wants us to honour Him because He made the world and He rules over the world. He wants us to learn about Him from the Bible. He wants us to talk to Him and enjoy being with Him.

God's plan is to allow us to be in His family again. We can do this when we believe in Jesus. Jesus is God. He came to earth as a man and taught people about God. Jesus lived exactly how God planned for Him and never broke God's law. Jesus took God's anger for us when He died on the cross. Because of this, God promises that He will forgive us when we turn to Him and away from our sin. Believing in Jesus and why He died for us is the only way we can be in God's family again.

Jesus died for us, but that was not the end! Jesus also rose from the dead. He is alive again! Jesus is the ruler of the world. He broke the power of sin. The Bible says that Jesus is now in Heaven. He rules over the world with God. Jesus is preparing a place in Heaven for every person who believes and trusts in Him.

Because Jesus is the ruler of everything, we can be sure that his promises are true. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to us to help us to believe God's promises and to understand the Bible. The Holy Spirit helps us to believe in Jesus. The Holy Spirit helps us to see all the things we do that break God's law, and helps us to be more like God made us to be. He encourages us to do God's work here on earth. God is bringing His world back to himself and He wants us to help Him with this job. One day Jesus will come again to this world, and everything will be made new and right again.

God wants us to tell every person in the world about how much he loves them. God wants us to tell all people about how He is the ruler of the world. God wants us to tell people about Jesus and why He died for us. Every person who believes this is part of God's family called the church.

This is God's world and Jesus is at the heart of all things. Jesus is the ruler and Lord of everything we do. He is Lord in our schools, in our homes, in our lives and hearts. Everything we do can be done with thanks for everything God has given us and be an act of worship to Him.