

Our Statements of Belief & Strategy

Our Vision & Mission Statements

Vision Statement

We are called to glorify God and to enjoy Him through our life's journey as we serve one another.

Mission Statement

To equip one another to be on mission for Christ because we exist to bring glory to God through lives that have been changed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In order to fulfill our vision and mission, we believe we should:

Have a Kingdom mindset. We want our resources, our time and our energy to be about the Kingdom of God. This doesn't mean that we will neglect one another, but it does mean that we will be intentional to be Christ to a dark and hopeless world. This means our mindset is focused on proclaiming the Gospel to as many as the Lord gives us opportunity to bless. Whether it's at McDonnell School, the YMCA, another church, people within our community or around the world. We are His light and His salt wherever He takes us. We are a part of the whole. There is one church. There is one name. There is one renown. There is one eternal bride of Christ.

Glorify God in everything. We believe our lives are defined by worshipping God in everything. We will only participate or speak into that which will glorify God.

Love others as Christ loves. We believe we should always reveal the nature and character of Christ in all circumstances, to all we come in contact with, and we should have a mindset that lines up with Christ. This is what is attractive and compelling. We will only question the people who say they are in Christ when they are walking contrary to His nature and character.

Make disciples. Wherever we are, our goals are to be disciples of Christ and to make disciples. Christ is the one who must increase, and we must decrease.

We have only one shot at this, so we desire to give it our best shot.

Our Statement of Faith

1. What We Believe

a. In essential beliefs - we have unity.

"Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit - just as you were called to one hope when you were called - one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and in all." Eph. 4:3-6

b. In non-essential beliefs - we have liberty.

"Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters...for God has accepted him. Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.... So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God. Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another...So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God." Rom. 14:1,3,12,22

c. In all our beliefs - we show love.

"If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing." 1 Cor. 13:2

2. The Essentials we Believe

a. The Bible

All Scripture is inspired by God. Therefore, the entire Bible is without error, completely truthful, and eternally the Word of God. It is the sole basis of our belief, composed of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament. We believe that Scripture in its entirety originated with God, and that it was given through the instrumentality of chosen men. Scripture thus at one and the same time speaks with the authority of God and reflects the backgrounds, styles and vocabularies of the human authors. They are the unique, full and final authority on all matters of faith and practice, and there are no other writings similarly inspired by God. 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20; 2 Tim. 1:13; Ps. 119:105, 160; Prov. 30:5.

b. God

There is only one true God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In the beginning God created out of nothing the world and all the things therein, thus manifesting the glory of His power, wisdom and goodness. By His sovereign power He continues to sustain His creation. By His providence He is operating throughout history to fulfill His redemptive purposes. Gen. 1:1,26,27; 3:22; Ps. 90:2; Matt. 28:19; 1 Pet. 1:2; 2 Cor. 13:14.

c. Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is the eternal second Person of the Trinity. He voluntarily came to earth as a human being by a miraculous conception and virgin birth. He lived a life of perfect obedience to the Father and atoned for the sins of all by dying on the cross as their substitute, thus satisfying divine justice and accomplishing salvation for all who trust in Him alone. He rose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He lived and died. He ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of the Father, where He serves as the Mediator between God and man, continually making intercession for His own. He shall come again to earth, personally and visible, to consummate history and the eternal plan of God.

Matt. 1:22,23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5; Heb. 14:14,15; 1 Cor. 15:3,4; Rom. 1:3,4; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Tim. 6:14,15; Titus 2:13.

d. The Holy Spirit

The essential accompaniment of a genuine saving relationship with Jesus Christ is a life of holiness and obedience, attained by believers as they submit to the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity. He was sent into the world by the Father and the Son to apply to mankind the saving work of Christ. He enlightens the minds of sinners, awakens in them recognition of their need of a Savior and regenerates them. At the point of salvation He permanently indwells every believer to become the source of assurance, strength and wisdom, and uniquely endows each believer with gifts for the edification of the body. The Holy Spirit guides believers in understanding and applying the Scripture. His power and control are appropriated by faith, making it possible for the believer to lead a life of Christ-like character and to bear fruit to the glory of the Father. 2 Cor. 3:17; John 16:7-13, 14:16,17; Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 2:12, 3:16; Eph. 1:13; Gal. 5:25; Eph 5:18.

e. Salvation

A central purpose of God's revelation in Scripture is to call people into a relationship with Himself. Originally created to have fellowship with God, man chose to sin by going his individual way and was thus alienated from God and suffered the corruption of his nature, rendering him unable to please God. The fall took place with Adam and Eve at the beginning of human history, and all individuals since have suffered these consequences and are thus in need of the saving grace of God. The salvation of mankind is, then, wholly a work of God's free grace, not the result, in whole or in part of human works of goodness, and must be personally appropriated by repentance and faith. When God has begun a saving work in the heart of any person, He gives assurance in His Word that He will continue performing it until the day of its full consummation. Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:8,9; John 14:6, 1:12; Titus 3:5; Gal. 3:26; Rom. 5:1.

f. Human Destiny

Death seals the eternal destiny of each person. For all mankind, there will be a resurrection of the body into the spiritual world, and a judgment that will determine the fate of each individual. Unbelievers will be separated from God into eternal condemnation, Hell.

Believers will be received into eternal fellowship with God and will be rewarded for works done through pure motives in this life, Heaven. John 3:16; Rom. 6:23; 1 John 2:25, 5:11-13; Heb. 9:27; Rev. 20:15.

g. The Church

There is one church universal, comprised of all those who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. The Scripture commands believers to gather together to devote themselves to worship, prayer, teaching of the Word, observance of baptism and the Lord's Supper as ordinances established by Jesus Christ, fellowship, service to the body through the development and use of gifts and talents, and outreach to the world. Matt. 16:16-20, 18:18-20; Acts 2:42-46; Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 11:33, 12:17, 14:26-33; Eph. 3:10; Heb. 10:24-25.

h. Faith and Practice

The Bible is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice. This church recognizes that it cannot bind the conscience of individual members in areas where Scripture is silent. Rather, each believer is to be led in those areas by the Lord, to whom he or she alone is ultimately responsible. See Romans 14 and 15

We believe this **Statement of Faith** to be an accurate summary of what Scripture teaches. Members of Life's Journey shall refrain from advocating doctrines that are not included in the Statement of Faith in such a way as to cause dissension.

Our Lifestyle Statement

1. What we practice

Beliefs are not worth much unless they are translated into actions. Based on what the Bible teaches, we feel very strongly about the following six practices:

a. Bible as our sole authority. "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Tim. 3:16,17

Since God's Word is the only reliable and truthful authority, we accept the Bible as our manual for living. Our first question when faced with a decision is, "What does the Bible say?" We practice daily Bible reading, Bible study, and Bible memorization. The Bible is the basis for all we believe.

b. Autonomy of each local church. "And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that I everything he might have the supremacy." Col. 1:18

Christ is the recognized head of our church, not any person, group, or religious organization. While recognizing the value of associating or cooperating with other groups of Christians, we believe every local church should be self-governing and independent from any denominational control. In relating to churches we will help sponsor, we will encourage each congregation to determine its own strategy, structure, and style.

c. Priesthood of every believer "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God." 1 Pet. 2:9

"To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father." Rev. 1:5-6

The Bible teaches that every Christian is called to "full time" Christian service, regardless of his or her vocation. We practice the truth that every believer is a minister by encouraging every member to find a place of service and ministry. Every believer has direct access to God through prayer and Bible reading.

d. Giving "A tithe of everything you produce belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord." Lev. 26:30

There are various interpretations on the biblical principle of tithing (giving 10% of our income to the Lord's work). Regardless, we believe that everything belongs to the Lord and we are to be good stewards of all that God entrusts to us. According to Scripture, "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." 2 Cor. 9:6-8.

Therefore, we recognize that giving 10% of our income is only a standard of giving, but we should not limit our giving to 10%, rather grow in our giving, for we belong fully to the Lord and all we have is His.

e. Immersion "...having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead." Col. 2:12.

We practice baptism by immersion (under water) - the way Jesus was baptized, and the way the Bible commands.

f. Spirit-led living Jesus said, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5

We believe the only way possible to live the Christian life is by God's power within us. So we seek to practice a daily dependence on God's Spirit to enable us to do what is right. Phil. 2:13; Eph. 5:18.