

CORE VALUES

Where Are We Going?

We believe the Christian life requires dynamic relationships with both God and the people He has placed around us. Our relationship with God begins with our being adopted as God's children and leads to Christian service. We desire to know God better and do what we can to deepen our relationship with Him (Passionate Spiritual Life). The book of James states, "faith without works is useless." In light of this, we believe that we demonstrate our love for the Father by using the gifts God has given to us (Gift Based Ministry).

The Bible also exhorts us to encourage one another to love and good deeds and to make disciples of all people. We believe that relationships with those around us contain two elements: building up fellow believers in Christ (Biblically Functioning Community) and reaching those within our sphere of influence with the good news of Jesus Christ (Spirit Led Outreach).

As beloved children of God, we endeavor to be imitators of Christ, not to earn God's acceptance, but out of love for Him, because He first loved us.

The core values of the Buffalo Evangelical Free Church are:

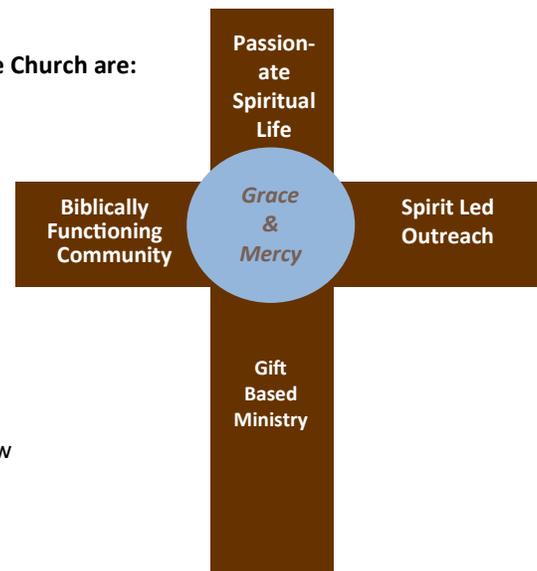
RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

- Passionate Spiritual Life
- Gift Based Ministry

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

- Biblically Functioning Community
- Spirit Led Outreach

All of this is an outpouring from a balanced view of God's grace and mercy.



All aspects of the Christian life flow from a Biblical understanding of our position in Christ. This begins with being aware of the relationship between God's grace and mercy and our obedience.

Grace & Mercy

Ephesians 2:8-9
 Hebrews 4:16
 Psalm 130:3-4
 Isaiah 64:6
 Titus 3:5

The shed blood of Christ alone pays the penalty for our sin. We cannot earn God's favor. God gives us an eternal life we cannot earn and withholds the eternal judgment we deserve. Nothing we do can make God love us more; nor can anything cause God to love us less.

Obedience

1 Samuel 15:17-23
 Romans 13:1-3
 John 13:21
 Acts 5:29

Though we do not earn our salvation, our proper response to God's grace and mercy is to obey Him joyfully – without grumbling, arguing, or delay. We do so as a result of the love God has freely bestowed upon us.

RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

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Passionate Spiritual Life

Deuteronomy 6:5

Psalm 63:1-4

We believe in being passionate in our pursuit of God. We commit to practicing the spiritual disciplines and passionately pursuing a life of full devotion to Jesus Christ and His kingdom. We believe that all decisions must be led and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Apart from God we can do nothing. We do this through prayer, worship, service, and personal devotion.

Prayer

1 Timothy 2:1-2

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Colossians 4:2

Philippians 4:6-7

1 John 5:14-15

We believe in the power of prayer. Prayer acknowledges our dependence on God. We recognize the necessity of prayer as a primary means of our communication with God. It is the foundation of all ministry areas: to discern God's will; to be led by the Holy Spirit; and to be empowered to accomplish the work of God. We strive to make prayer a constant part of our corporate and individual lives throughout the week.

Worship

Psalm 100

Romans 12:1-2

John 4:19-24

1 Chronicles 16:29

We were created to worship God. We strive for authentic corporate and individual worship that is God focused and God centered. Our motivation for worship arises out of who we are as children of God and understanding who God is in His fullness. Our worship is passionate and unashamed as befits the God who has drenched us with His grace.

Authority of the Bible

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Hebrews 4:12

Deuteronomy 32:47

Isaiah 55:10-11

The Bible is God's written word to us. It is authoritative truth, which guides us in our understanding of God, His desires, and His purposes. We value everyone being a diligent student of the Bible and making its teachings a daily part of our lives. Our lives as Christ followers are lived according to the principles outlined in the Bible.

RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD (cont)

Gift Based Ministry

1 Peter 4:10-11
Ephesians 4:11-13
Romans 12:3-16

We believe each person has been given at least one Spiritual gift for ministry. We encourage everyone to discover and use their gifts to encourage and build up the church. We desire to match an individual's ministry with the gifts granted them by God. We desire a servant attitude in ministry and that whatever we do we do to the best of our ability, to the glory of God.

Servanthood

Philippians 2:1-11
Matthew 20:25-28
Mark 10:42-45
Ephesians 5:1-2

The Bible commands us to place others ahead of ourselves. In God's kingdom, we demonstrate leadership by serving others, not for personal gain, but to emulate Christ like behavior.

Excellence

Malachi 1:6-14
Colossians 3:23-24

We desire to give our individual best to God. Excellence, expressed with humility, glorifies God and inspires others.

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS

The Bible also commands us to encourage one another to love and good deeds and to make disciples of all people. We believe relationships contain two elements: building up fellow believers (Biblically Functioning Community) and reaching out to others with the good news and compassion of Jesus Christ (Spirit Led Outreach).

Biblically Functioning Community

Acts 2:42-27
Matthew 18:20
Hebrews 10:24-25
Proverbs 27:17

We strive to develop increasingly intimate and contagious Christ-centered relationships with others. True community is a setting that can challenge us, equip us, and provide us with loving support, authentic sharing, caring encouragement, and accountability. We use our homes for ministry, as they are a personal extension of the church. Community extends beyond Sunday morning and the walls of BEFC. We believe that our relationships with God and others should be marked by humility, integrity, and authenticity.

Authenticity

James 1:22
1 Thessalonians 2:8

God's grace allows believers to be authentic people, able to admit their fears and flaws. We desire relationships that are transparent and honest. Authenticity and integrity do not require perfection, rather we strive to live out our faith, sincerely yearning for continuous growth. By virtue of the grace we have received from God, we do not judge one another. We embrace openness and candor in our relationships.

Personal Discipleship

Matthew 4:19
John 20:21
Acts 18:26
2 Timothy 2:2

The Bible commands us to make disciples of all nations, and making disciples was modeled by the early church. Discipleship encompasses more than building Christ followers for the sole purpose of their personal maturity. At its core, discipleship is a win-build-send mentality. The goal of discipleship is building Christ followers who will in turn win others to Christ, build them, and send them, thus perpetuating the spread of the gospel of Christ.

Family

Deuteronomy 6:1-9
Proverbs 22:6
Ephesians 5:22, 6:4
1 Timothy 5:8

We recognize that the Bible supports the nuclear family as the most basic ministry unit. We also recognize that families may take a variety of forms. It is within the family that we give and exchange day in and day out physical, emotional, and spiritual support and accountability. The church provides the family with the necessary support to nurture intimate marriages, raise Godly children, and work together as ministry cells with the context of the church.

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS (cont)

Spirit Led Outreach

Matthew 22:35-40
 2 Peter 3:9
 1 Peter 3:15
 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

*We desire to see all people reconciled to God through Jesus Christ. We believe the **Great Commission** (Matthew 28:18-20) should affect all aspects of our personal and community life. We desire to influence our community for Christ through serving, outreach, and ministry. Every aspect of our lives can shape eternity for the lost world around us. We are commanded to be in the world, but not of the world. Therefore, we interact with the world around us, for the purpose of intentionally being salt and light in a dark and decaying world. We are God's ambassadors for reconciliation.*

Relevance

1 Corinthians 9:19-23

We reach people in ways that are meaningful to them. We use the clearest and most effective means possible to communicate God's message. We are committed to presenting the Good News by creative and relevant means. We desire to strengthen the lives of Christ-followers and non-believers without compromising the Gospel.

Action

Matthew 28:18-20

Acts 1:8

We have a bias toward action. As Jesus Christ actively sought us to be His people, we actively seek to introduce others to Christ and help them grow in their relationship with Him. We cannot expect the lost to come to us; in love we pursue them with the power of God's love.