

CORE VALUES STATEMENT

Our core values are the key driving beliefs that guide our decision-making, determine our priorities, inspire us to action, and distinguish our ministry from others. Because Jesus said the two greatest commandments were to love God and love our neighbor (Matt. 22:34-40), we have grouped our core values under those two categories.

Our Relationship with God

We value loving God.

Our ultimate purpose as a church is to declare our adoration for God. We are centered around God the Father, founded on God the Son, and led by God the Spirit. *Jn. 14:26; 15:26; Gal. 4:4-6; Eph. 2:18*

We value the authority of Scripture.

Our final authority in matters of faith and practice is the Bible in which God has revealed his will for us. Because we love God, we obey his commands. The teaching of the Bible takes precedence over church traditions or human opinions. We obey no creed but Christ and no book but the Bible. Where Scripture speaks, we speak; where Scripture is silent, we are silent. *2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Jn. 5:2-3*

We value salvation by grace.

Our salvation is a gift of God's kindness that we have done nothing to deserve. We receive that gift by believing, confessing our faith, repenting, and being baptized. Our gratitude for God's acceptance causes us to adhere to our other core values. *Gal. 2:15-16; Eph. 2:4-10*

We value the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Our love for God and respect for his Word cause us to obey his commands concerning the practices of baptism and the Lord's Supper. As Christ commanded, we baptize by immersion only those who can make their own decision of faith and repentance. We offer the Lord's Supper during each worship service so that God's people can draw closer to Christ and to his followers. *Matt. 26:26-29; 28:18-20*

We value sacrificial service to God.

Our experience of grace causes us to respond with unrestricted devotion, unwavering commitment, and diligent service to God. We willingly and joyfully sacrifice our time, money, and talents to promote his purpose in the world. Because he has redeemed us, we are his servants. *Matt. 16:24-26; Rom. 12:1-2; Phil. 3:8-9*

We value prayer.

Prayer is the means by which we deepen our relationship with God. In prayer, we praise God, thank him for his blessings, confess our sins, seek his help, and intercede for others. *Matt. 7:7-11; Col. 4:2*

We value allegiance to Christ alone.

Because Christ is the head of the church, we manage our affairs without interference from other human authorities. Like the churches of the New Testament, we cooperate with other churches in various ministries, but no other church or organization controls our affairs. We refer to ourselves only as Christians not because we are the only Christians but because we are Christians only. *Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18*

Our Relationship with People

We value loving our neighbor.

Our experience of God's loving grace causes us to share his love with others by encouraging them, healing their hurts, and meeting their needs. We place the needs of others before our own needs. *Matt. 22:39; Jn. 13:34-35; Rom. 13:8-10*

We value building healthy relationships.

Those who have been united with Christ are also united with each other. We seek to strengthen the relationships within the body of Christ so that God's people will support each other and minister to each other. We promote strong marriages, healthy families, and deep friendships. *Acts 2:44-47; 1 Cor. 12:12-27*

We value equipping every member for ministry.

Every Christian has received a gift of the Holy Spirit that enables him or her to serve others. We assist people in discovering their gifts, we guide them in selecting an area of service, and we equip them to serve effectively. *1 Cor. 12:7-11; Eph. 4:11-13; 1 Pet. 2:4-5; 4:10-11*

We value godly leadership.

God has gifted certain people with the ability to equip believers to carry out their ministry. We select people to serve as elders who are spiritually mature and who have the gifts to serve as leaders. These leaders exhort and encourage others to continue to grow in Christ. They set an example of Christ-like living. They guide the church by discerning God's will and by persuading the church to follow his will. *Eph. 4:11-13; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; 1 Pet. 5:1-4*

We value evangelism and missions.

God has given the church the mission of making disciples of all nations. We encourage our members to share their faith with others. We offer ministries that will meet the needs of the unsaved so that they will become open to the gospel. We support missionaries and other organizations that promote the spread of the gospel around the world. *Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:18-21*

We value the relevance of the gospel.

The gospel itself is a timeless message that never changes, but the forms and methods used to spread the gospel are adapted to the needs, interests, and understanding of the unchurched. While we cannot reduce the difficulty of accepting the gospel message itself, we do not increase its difficulty by expecting unchurched people to adapt themselves to our customs and language. As servants, we willingly adapt ourselves to the needs and understanding of those who do not yet know Christ. *Mk. 4:33-34; 1 Cor. 9:19-23*

We value unity on the essentials of faith.

Our efforts at evangelism depend on our unity. We believe Christians should be united on the central doctrines of the faith that are clearly expressed in Scripture. We also accept diversity of opinion on matters that are not essential to the faith or matters that are not directly addressed by Scripture. Our motto is "in essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in all things, love." *Jn. 17:20-23; Rom. 14:1-21; 1 Cor. 1:10-13; Eph. 4:3*