

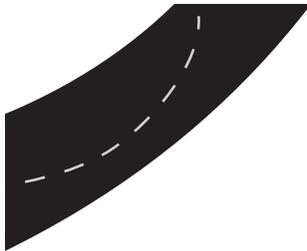
TULSA
**BOILER
ROOM**

*This is who we are.
This is what we believe.*

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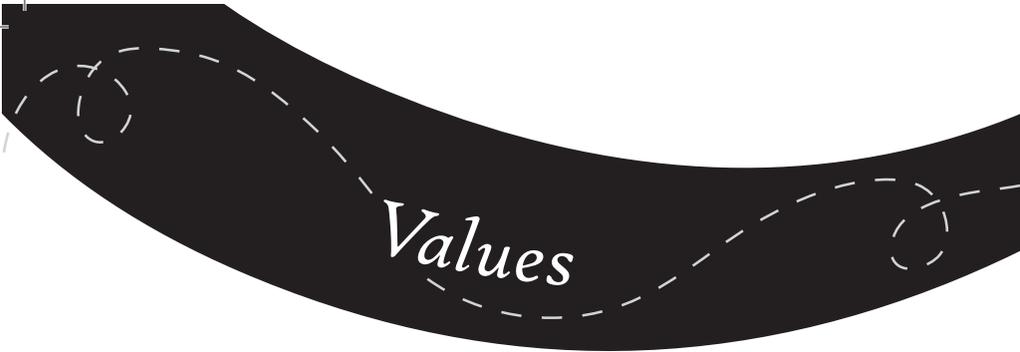
Welcome to the
Tulsa Boiler Room

Jesus said, "I will build my church..."

Paul planted churches everywhere he went. Church is a big deal. It is God's primary method for carrying out His purposes on earth. He calls all of His people who belong to Him to also belong to others. The Bible refers to the Church as the family of God, the body of Christ, and the bride of Jesus. Crazy stuff. God loves the Church! He has great plans and purposes for her.

The oldest person in the Bible is Methuselah. He died when he was how old?

- A** 135 years
- B** 969 years (*Pick this one.*)
- C** Obviously a trick question - he never died!
...Right?
- D** 13,208 months
- E** Who can say? They didn't, like, have the Gregorian calendar and probably didn't know how to tell time.



Values

Mission cont.

A gathering of Christians cannot properly call itself Church if it exists simply to meet its own needs and continue... existing. If it is all about personal growth or spiritual experiences it might be a nice group, but it isn't the Church that Jesus said will not be defeated even by the gates of Hell. Too easily we can become a food distribution experience for the overfed. Church does not exist primarily for me to "get fed," but for the glory of Jesus to be seen in the nations through the redemption of His creation. This is the mission of Jesus, and we really want to be part of it. Not as hired hands who are looking for a paycheck and a pat on the back, but as beloved sons and daughters who have been called to participate in their Father's great work.

To be honest, most of us are not very good at mission. Nor at discipleship. Nor at relationships. And certainly not at prayer. So it seems a bit hypocritical to say this is who we are. And yet, this is who we long to become. This is in our hearts. This is a longing and a desperation. This is a commitment. And the encouraging thing is that we can go after it together, empowered by the grace of God. We dare to think it's God's dream, and in that there is hope.

How do we live up to such a grand vision? As a local church, how do we play our part? We know this: becoming the people that Jesus calls us to be is worth all of our lives. We're not looking for church to demand less of us and offer more. We're waiting to be challenged to lay down our lives and become more. We're searching for family. We're looking for the Kingdom of God, and eager to find our part in it. We're seeking to fully participate, and no longer simply cheer on the "called." We are longing for a new reformation in our generation.

As we seek to orient all of our lives around following Jesus, we realize we need to do this together. The Tulsa Boiler Room is a local church, filled with folks with high hopes for what church can be. We are also a people characterized by weakness, and who often come up short -- and yet we continue to aspire for more. Though we are one church, we are also a small network of house churches. Our meetings are family-style gatherings that take place in living rooms, with kids running around and everyone participating. We like to eat together. We are friends and brothers and sisters and fathers and mothers. We strive to love one another well, and so be faithful witnesses of Jesus. We are carriers of the Gospel, and in the power of the Spirit endeavor to faithfully live it and proclaim it to the world.

This booklet gives details about what we believe, and how we aspire to live in response to these beliefs. It unfolds a little of our unique culture and distinctives, and how we seek to do life together as God's family. We are a work in progress, and are on a journey together. We'd love for you to join us.



Gospel Story

First Matter

God created man in His own image, to know Him and enjoy fellowship with Him. He gave man the task of stewarding His creation. Man sinned against God by disobeying His clear command. Because of this act of rebellion, evil and darkness were let loose in the world. Man's pure and intimate fellowship with God was broken, and from that time all people have been born with a propensity to sin. In fact, all people continued to rebel against God. All that is not right in the world can be traced back to this rebellion -- all the violence, injustice, wickedness, rejection, sickness, poverty, perversion, depression, etc. Man's sin is the root cause. Creation has been spoiled, twisted to the point that its original intent, design, and beauty can be difficult to see.

God began the work of redemption by choosing one people to bless, that through them He might bless all nations. He chose Abraham and his descendants, who became the people of Israel. Through them he revealed Himself to humanity in new ways. He delivered them from slavery in Egypt. He gave them the law. He provided for them a land, and He promised His ongoing presence. They in turn continually rebelled against His rule, and failed to represent Him in the world. God sent prophets and other righteous ones to remind and warn them, but these were largely ignored. Eventually God judged His people by removing them from their land and putting them in the hands of foreign oppressors. *Then He sent His Son.*

Together

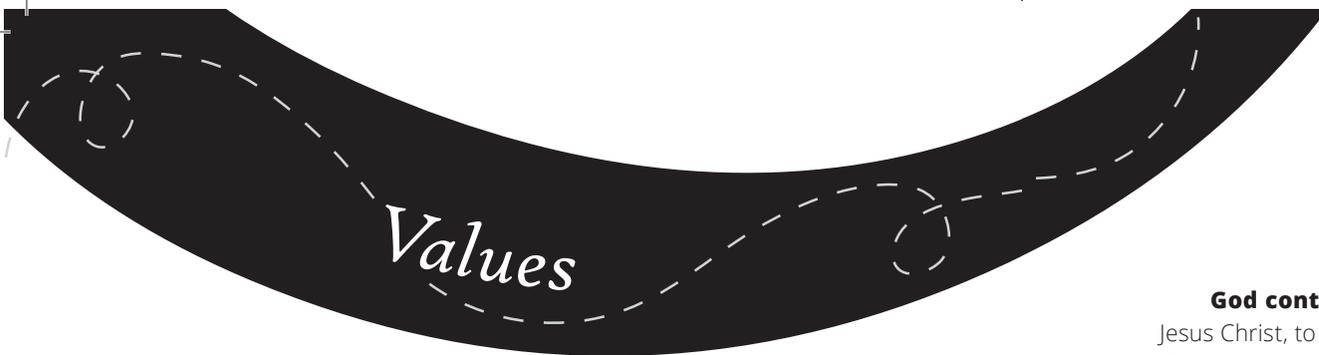
We have no desire to do this alone. Some of us have tried, and it's just no good. We have high aspirations in this. We want to be more than community. Community is so temporal, and temperamental. It's held together by geography or common interest or common belief or common cause. We want to be something held together by the greatest bonds – those of love. We want to be *family*. It can be risky to voice that sentiment, as it raises expectations to fearful heights, and we are sure to fall short. Yet it is the promise of the Scriptures and God's desire for us: "This kingdom of faith is now your home country. You're no longer strangers or outsiders. You belong here... God is building a home." (Eph 2:19). We belong. God is building a home. These are central and powerful truths describing who we aim to be. Of course, we cannot create this – which is why we begin with prayer. With Jesus at the center, God can make us a family. His family.

Discipleship

Together we are on a pursuit of becoming more like Christ. We are so thankful for His grace which accepts us just as we are. We are equally grateful for His grace that calls us and enables us to become something more. We echo Paul's yearning for the Colossians: "That we may present everyone perfect in Christ" (Col 1:28), and to the Galatians: "I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you" (Gal 4:19). We hunger for God's righteousness to fill our lives. We long for the fire of His holiness to consume in us all that is not like Him. We are committed to actively submitting to the Holy Spirit's work of making us like Jesus, and to helping one another in this pursuit.

Mission

We are convinced God is on a mission. Jesus said, "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost" (Lk 19:10). The more we love Jesus, and the closer we get to His heart, we ourselves become more and more passionate about His longing to bring redemption to the lost and hurting and broken people He created and loves.



Values

We are attempting to live out four important values.

Our goal is that these simple passions will direct all we do and become:

Prayer

No-brainer, maybe. Basic. Even un-exciting? We don't think so. The reason prayer is primary is that we are a Jesus-centered community. We're not simply about getting together and feeling good about ourselves. We're not into mere self-help or making friends or finding purpose or even serving the needy. We are about Jesus. He is our vision and our reward. He is our Master. It is for love of Him that we serve and for His glory that we gather. Intimacy with Him is our delight. Serving Him our privilege.

We value prayer because anything worth doing or being must be absolutely centered on Jesus. We are passionate about prayer because we are desperate for God and acutely aware of our own weakness. We put prayer first because our Father loves us, and we love Him too.

We are devoted to prayer because it is God's chosen instrument to bring change and to accomplish His will. Intercession is the most foundational and crucial ministry of the church. "Thy Kingdom come! Thy will be done!" is the cry of our hearts. Through prayer, we seek to see lives transformed; our city transformed; the world transformed. Through prayer, God changes things. As we labor together with the Spirit of the Father in the place of prayer, He gives us the compassion and the grace and the power we need to be faithful and fruitful witnesses and servants. Through prayer, people are moved, circumstances are changed, and God's purposes are realized.

The Good News

God continued to love all people deeply. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to reveal His love and to rescue people from the destruction they had wrought. Jesus is God's very Son, and he became a man, born of a virgin. He lived a perfect life, obeying His divine Father in every detail. In doing so, He revealed to us exactly what the Father is like. He also showed us how we as people are meant to live, empowered by the Spirit of God. More than that, He lived perfectly for us. He lived perfectly so that He could give us His perfection in exchange for our sin. And that's what happened when He died.

He gave Himself to be killed on the cross, and in so doing He made an exchange with us. We are offered His righteousness -- His rightness -- and all the rewards that come with that. And He took our sin -- and the punishment that came with that. He took the blame for all the selfishness, pride, and rebellion that has ever been committed. He took our shame and guilt and condemnation and brokenness, and in exchange we received His purity and wholeness and rightness. There is no condemnation for us now. Not for the sin committed ten years ago, or the one committed a minute ago -- or even for the one that will be committed tomorrow. No condemnation. No guilt. No shame.

God Himself died and was buried in a tomb -- the darkest and most hopeless situation imaginable -- but He rose again. He conquered sin and all that is most vile. Jesus rose bodily from the dead, forever defeating death and winning eternal life for all who would believe. We are people of resurrection. People of hope. Jesus ascended to heaven. He is preparing a place for us, and for all who believe. We have a home with Jesus. He is interceding for us.

Jesus also sent His Spirit to dwell inside of us. The very same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead lives within all who believe. Right now. And always. Because of this, we can live a life of victory over sin. A life filled with things like love and joy and peace and kindness and faithfulness. A life of power and of witnessing to the reality of Jesus. Together, filled with the Spirit of God, we can reveal to the world what He is truly like. That is our calling and our privilege and our duty and our destiny.

Gospel Story cont.

The Good News cont.

Jesus is coming again as judge and king. At that time, He will gather all who belong to Him to be with Him forever. He is going to make everything right. None of the evil in this world is going to survive. Injustice of every kind will be banished. No more poverty. Or sickness. Violence. Hatred. Pain. Depression. Fear. It is all overcome, and will be no more. Instead there will be joy and peace and goodness. There will be love and plenty and satisfaction. There will be true rest and true work and true relationship. True worship and true celebration.

Response

In order to receive the amazing benefits of the gospel, a person must believe, putting his complete trust in Jesus and what He has done. Faith in Jesus is the only way to be saved from the ravages of sin, which eventually result in eternal death. When a person decides to believe and submit to Christ, turning away from his old way of thinking and living, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within him. The Spirit leads the person to live a life according to the pattern and teaching of Jesus, as seen in the writings of the New Testament. He also empowers the believer to witness to the reality of Christ through proclaiming the gospel.

boiler
room

Distinctives & Practices

cont.

Gifts of the Spirit

We endeavor to make room for the Spirit to minister through one another however He will. We honor the prophetic, pray for the miraculous, and seek to call out the diverse ways the Spirit moves through each person. We also respect the work of teachers and preachers who labor in the Word to bring the community to greater knowledge of Christ and obedience to His instructions.

Baptism

In obedience to Jesus, all believers are to follow Him in baptism after putting their faith in Him for salvation. Baptism represents entry into the new life that is in Christ through the forgiveness of sins. It is also a celebration of entrance into the family of God, in which the new believer is received into fellowship as a brother or sister.

Learning & Growing

We are continually evolving in our understanding of how to "do church." We are ready experimenters, open to trying new things, and willing to fail. We strive to be tenaciously biblical while seeking to also be contextual and practical. We encourage creativity and love initiative. We are profoundly aware of our limitations and weaknesses, and have a voracious appetite to learn from others. We stumble frequently, but continue trying. We are intentional about offering grace to one another when it becomes clear that we've got it wrong yet again.

Scriptural Passages

- * Genesis 1:1 - 3:22
- * Exodus 1-17
- * Deuteronomy 6:4-6
- * Isaiah 7:14; 9:6-7; 53:1-12
- * Jeremiah 31:31-34
- * Matthew 1:18-25; 28:18-20
- * Luke 1:26-56; 2:1-7
- * John 1:1-14
- * Acts 1:5-8; 2:14-38; 3:11-26; 7:1-53; 13:17-42; 17:2-3; 17:30-31
- * Romans 1:1-7; 4:24-25; 8:9-17; 10:9-10
- * 1 Corinthians 5:17; 12:1-31; 15:1-58
- * Galatians 1:1-5; 3:2-5; 5:16-26
- * Ephesians 1:1-23; 3:14 -- 4:16
- * Philippians 2:5-11
- * Colossians 1:12-23; 2:8-15
- * 1 Thessalonians 4:13 -- 5:6
- * 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10
- * 1 Timothy 2:5; 3:14-16
- * 2 Timothy 2:8; 4:13
- * 1 Peter 1:2-5; 3:18
- * 2 Peter 3
- * Jude 24-25
- * 1 John 1:1-4
- * Revelation 21-22

Creeds

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty,
creator of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
Born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried.
He descended to hell,
On the third day rose again from the dead,
ascended to heaven,
sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty,
thence He will come to judge the living and the dead;

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.

The Poor. God loves the poor. Jesus calls the poor blessed. As His people, it is essential for us to demonstrate this reality. We do this by not showing preference to the rich, or to those who seem to have it all together. We do it by welcoming all who come, and striving to treat each one as a special guest sent to us by Jesus Himself. We also do it by joining with other churches in the city to provide a weekly meal and fellowship for the homeless in downtown Tulsa. Through this event, we seek to build relationships and invite people into ever-increasing devotion to Christ and commitment to His body.

Prayer. We seek to be a spiritual family centered on Jesus. Prayer helps this to be a reality. We focus on prayer in a number of ways. We have a prayer room in which we host periodic 24-7 prayer weeks, attempting to maintain day and night prayer for an entire week. We have seasons of weekly or daily corporate prayer. We incorporate everything from spontaneous to contemplative to liturgical. Intercession is our most powerful ministry, because through it God accomplishes His will and purposes in our lives and the world around us. Our desire to learn to connect with the Father any way we can, and to encourage different expressions.

Worship. Jesus is worthy of our worship, at all times, in all places, and in every way. We value worshipping through music, and are grateful for gifted worshippers who lead us. We also worship through regular, frequent celebrations of the Lord's Supper. Through this we are continually pointed to Jesus and reminded of the powerful truths of the Gospel. As we partake together, we are united as one family, enjoying a family meal and celebrating the adoption and the oneness that Jesus purchased for us. As we remember together what He has done, we remind ourselves that He is going to come again, and make everything right. Worship in all its forms moves us to turn our focus onto Jesus, and it leads us to an actual experience of His presence. We find that this experience with the risen Christ through His Spirit brings life and wholeness. In order to live out this value, we devote the first Friday evening of every month to all join together and worship the Lord. We take a break from other things in order to abandon ourselves to His worship.

Distinctives & Practices

Simple Church

The Tulsa Boiler Room is a local church. The style and form of church that we have adopted is what we like to call simple church. The most obvious manifestation of this is that we tend to meet in homes or public places, rather than church buildings. This is not just a temporary solution until we get it together. It's an intentional strategy. We desire to grow, not by creating larger and larger gatherings, but by planting more and more house churches. Our leadership style is also simple - relying more on relationship than on position, and on serving than controlling. We try not to focus on programs and performances, but instead to go after genuine relationships and compassionate outreach.

Gatherings

When we gather together as the family of God, we each have a significant role to play. The Spirit may speak through any one of us. One may have a testimony, another an exhortation, and another a request for prayer. Someone might share a poem or a song, and another a word of prophecy. We endeavor to make room for all of this. We also have recognized teachers who labor to study and expound God's Word for the community. We welcome children, and are ok with the messiness and chaos that can provide.

Unity & Diversity

We are unified around the person of Jesus, and the teachings and traditions passed on by Him through the first apostles. We come from different backgrounds, and have contrary views on many issues. We differ in worship styles, politics, sports teams, interests, giftings, and so many other things. But we value one another, and we hope to allow ourselves to be continually stretched and increased by our association with those who are different. We long for our family to include people from different races, ages, faith backgrounds, etc.

Nicene Creed

I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of his Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father;
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven,
and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary,
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered and was buried;
and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures,
and ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of the Father;
and he shall come again, with glory,
to judge both the quick and the dead;
whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost the Lord, and Giver of Life,
who proceedeth from the Father and the Son;
who with the Father and the Son together
is worshiped and glorified;
who spake by the Prophets.
And I believe one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church;
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins;
and I look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Statement of Faith

Scriptural Passages

There is only one God who exists in the three persons of the Trinity: Father, Son, & Holy Spirit.

God is the Creator of everything, and reigns over the entire cosmos.

He is perfectly holy, just, loving and good. He has revealed Himself through the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is perfectly revealed through Jesus Christ, and continues to reveal Himself today through the Holy Spirit. He is unchanging.

Jesus Christ is the Son of God the Father. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born a descendent of David - fully God and fully man.

He lived a perfect, sinless life, fulfilling the promises of God spoken by the Law and the Prophets.

He died on the cross, giving Himself as a sacrifice to offer forgiveness and rescue us from our sins, redeeming us, and restoring relationship with God. In so doing, He took the punishment that was due us.

He rose again bodily by the power of the Holy Spirit, as the dawning of a new creation in Him.

He ascended to Heaven and is exalted at the right hand of the Father, ruling over all, and is the Head of the Church.

He has continued interaction and relation to humans through the Spirit, through whom He can be known.

He is going to come again to judge the world, and to gather all who are His to be with Him forever.

Family Life

- * Matthew 19:1-12
- * Luke 8:21
- * 1 Corinthians 7:1-16, 32-35
- * Ephesians 5:22-6:9
- * Colossians 3:18-4:1
- * 1 Peter 3:1-7

The Church

- * Romans 12:3-8; 13:8-10; 14:1 - 15:7
- * 1 Corinthians 12-13
- * Galatians 5-6
- * Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:14-22; 4:1-16
- * Philippians 2:1-18
- * Colossians 3:18 -- 4:1
- * 1 Thessalonians 5
- * 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15
- * 1 & 2 Timothy
- * Titus
- * 1 Peter 3:1-7

Relationship with the World

- * Acts 2:43-47; 4:32-35
- * Romans 13
- * Galatians 2:7-10
- * Philippians 2:1-4
- * Colossians 4:5-6
- * 1 Peter 2:12-17; 2:21-25; 3:8-12

Perseverance

- * Romans 15:58
- * Ephesians 5:16-17; 6:10-18
- * Colossians 4:2
- * 1 Thessalonians 3:4; 5:8
- * 1 Peter 5:8-9
- * 2 John 1:8
- * Jude, 1:3, 1:17-21

Statement of Faith

cont.

Belief

- | | |
|--|--|
| * Genesis 1:1 - 3:22 | * Exodus 1-17 |
| * Deuteronomy 6:4-6 | * Isaiah 7:14; 9:6-7; 53:1-12 |
| * Jeremiah 31:31-34 | * Matthew 1; 27-28 |
| * Luke 1:26-56; 2:1-7; 23-24 | * John 1:1-14 |
| * Acts 1:5-8; 2:14-38; 3:11-26; 7:1-53; 13:17-42; 17:2-3; 17:30-31 | * 1 Corinthians 5:17; 11:23-26; 12:1-31; 15:1-58 |
| * Romans 1:1-7; 4:24-25; 8:9-17; 10:9-10 | * Ephesians 1:1-23; 3:14 -- 4:16 |
| * Galatians 1:1-5; 3:2-5; 5:16-26 | * Colossians 1:12-23; 2:8-15 |
| * Philippians 2:5-11 | * 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10 |
| * 1 Thessalonians 4:13 -- 5:6 | * 2 Timothy 2:8; 4:13 |
| * 1 Timothy 2:5; 3:14-16 | * 2 Peter 3 |
| * 1 Peter 1:2-5; 3:18 | * 1 John 1:1-4 |
| * Revelation 21-22 | * Jude 24-25 |

Conformed to Christ

- | | |
|---|---|
| * Matthew 5-7 | * Romans 1:24-32; 12:1-21, 13:11-14, 15:1-6 |
| * 1 Corinthians 6:7-20; 10:6-10; 11:22; 13:1-8 | * Galatians 5:16-26 |
| * Ephesians 4:1-3; 4:17-32; 5:1-20; 6:10-20 | * Colossians 3:1-17 |
| * 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12; 5:4-15 | * 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13 |
| * 1 Peter 1:1-11; 2:1; 2:11; 2:17; 2:21-25; 4:3-6 | * 1 John 2:15-17 |

The Holy Spirit has been sent to indwell each follower of Christ. He continues to reveal the Father and glorify Jesus, and to draw people to God.

All who repent, believe, and confess these things, submitting to Christ, receive the glorious gift of salvation and the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. This is available through Christ alone, and must be received through faith.

God created mankind in His own image, without sin, to know Him and enjoy fellowship with Him.

Through man's choice to willfully disobey the commands of God and reject His Lordship, death and judgment became our inheritance. All people have continued to sin.

Because of this we are by nature children of wrath, born with a propensity to sin, justly condemned in the sight of God and utterly incapable of saving ourselves or earning acceptance from God by any merit or works of our own.

The Church is the people of Christ on earth, indwelled by the Spirit, and congregated by the smaller, tangible households of Christians. It is the family of God on earth, and carries out His purposes as the body of Christ.

The 66 books of the Holy Bible are the divinely inspired Word of God. As such they are authoritative in all matters concerning what we are to believe and how we are to live. They were penned by human authors at different times, in different places and cultures, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. No other book or writing in history can make this claim or carry the authority that comes with it.

Statement of Faith cont.

In response to the Gospel, all Christians are called, expected, and empowered by the Holy Spirit to hold to and obey the teachings of Jesus and the apostles. These basic and universal teachings can be summarized as follows:

Conformed to Christ

We are called to reject the pattern of the world and put off the old self, conforming instead to the pattern of Christ, putting on the new self and walking by the Spirit.

Some of the chief evidences of this new life-pattern are:

- | | | |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| * humility | * rejoicing | * gentleness |
| * brotherly love | * generosity | * submission |
| * fervency in spirit | * peace | * joy |
| * devotion to prayer | * thankfulness | * goodness |
| * unity | * service | * faithfulness |
| * patience | * diligence | * compassion |
| * self-sacrifice | * self-control | * kindness |
| * honor | * hospitality | * forgiveness |

In contrast, indications of a life dominated by the flesh are:

- | | | |
|------------------------|---|--|
| * idolatry | * rage | * greed |
| * witchcraft | * drunkenness | * falsehood |
| * jealousy | * grumbling | * bitterness |
| * strife | * idleness | * hypocrisy |
| * stealing | * sensuality | * impurity |
| * dishonoring the poor | * quarreling | * profanity |
| * pride | * selfish ambition | * slander |
| * hatred | * crude, obscene,
& unwholesome talk | * sexual immorality
(including lust,
homosexual acts,
adultery, incest,
sex outside of marriage) |

The Church

Believers are expected to live out this new life-pattern as individuals and families that come together as the church, expressed by local congregations. The church is to be a family on mission, with each member diligently fulfilling his role and purpose in the body according to the grace given him. This mission is to proclaim the gospel and make disciples, reaching out to the lost and broken of the world with an invitation to receive the gospel and be united to Christ and His Church. The Church is a family of families, and its strength is dependent upon the strength of the individuals and families that make up its membership.

Individual Believers

As individual members of the body of Christ, we are to love and respect one another, and to serve and prefer one another. United in this body, we are led and instructed by the Holy Spirit and each other as we follow the example and teaching of Christ. Everyone has a responsibility to live in and by the fruit of the Spirit, building the church up with godly love and selfless service toward one another.

Family Life

As believers living self-sacrificing, submissive, and respectful lives within the church, we are to live these out diligently within our own households. We build up our families in godliness in order to build up the church with godly families. The Church also honors the single life, whether for a season or a lifetime, and recognizes in it a special opportunity to serve Christ and His Church.

Relationship with the World

The way each member, and family of members, relate to the outside world shall be transformed as well. We must live in peace, as much as we can, with every person and institution within society. We must submit to the authority of the government as a sign of our true submission to God. As we follow Jesus, we shall seek to serve those who are outside of the Church with the example of Jesus' selfless and unconditional love and sacrifice.

Perseverance

We are called to hold fast to the faith, standing firm with watchfulness and prayer, and persevering in trial.