

# First Christian Church – Dayton, WA

## BELIEFS

First Christian Church of Dayton, Washington, is an independent, Bible-believing body of Christians. We are a free church with no denominational hierarchy, and we come from a wide variety of backgrounds.

We always seek to understand what God's Word says about the important matters of faith. While we cannot compromise on essentials of salvation, we do recognize that Christian people can and do sometimes have differences of opinion over certain non-essential issues. We value the freedom we have in Christ to hold these differences in a spirit of love.

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

At First Christian Church of Dayton, WA, we strive to teach the truth found in God's Word, the Bible, to all people. We believe in the basics of faith in God: God exists and He rewards those who seek Him. We are a New Testament Church. That means we recognize that Jesus, by His death, burial and resurrection, has established a new covenant with all of creation. The entire Bible is the inspired Word of God, but it is in the New Testament, in the Kingdom of Christ, that we base our faith and practice. In the particulars of faith, we could say, "We believe..." but it is preferable to say, simply: "The Bible says..."

### **God the Father**

There is one God, the Creator of the Universe and the Giver of Life. God is an all- powerful, all- knowing, and ever present spiritual being. He is truthful, faithful, loving, good, patient, just, merciful, holy, and righteous. As Ruler of the Universe, God reigns supreme over nature, history, and human life. (Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Hebrews 11: 3; 2 Corinthians 13: J4; Acts 17:24-28)

### **Jesus the Son**

Jesus Christ is the Son of God and co-equal with the Father. Though Jesus lived an uncorrupted human life on earth, his own people murdered him on a cross. After three days, Jesus came back to life, demonstrating his power over sin and death. This was God's plan from the creation of the world for the salvation of man. He later returned to heaven with the Father, and now reigns in heaven, interceding for us until he comes again. He is the only way to the Father. (John 1:1-3; 14,18, Acts 2:23-24,36; Genesis 3:15; John 12:31; 1 Timothy 2:5; John 14:6)

### **The Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is the presence of God in the lives of believers. God has given us the Holy Spirit as a comforter, guide, teacher, and guarantee of our eternal hope. The Holy Spirit recreates men and women, empowering us to live the new life to which we have been called. His work in us produces lives characterized by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Through His Spirit, God grants gifts and abilities to believers for the strengthening of the church. (John 14:16-17; Romans 8:9-14; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 4:11-13).

### **The Bible**

The Bible is the inspired and inerrant Word of God, written by human authors under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. Scripture is useful for teaching, preaching and training in faith. God's Word is the norm and standard for all subsequent Christian teaching. (2 Peter 1:20-21; John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

### **Sin and Salvation**

All people are created in the image of God and have tremendous potential for good, but we are all marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called sin. Man is born with a sinful nature, but is not born in

a state or condition of sin. Man becomes sinful by his own choices and is, therefore, subject to the wages and guilt of sin as a result of his own choices and actions. We are created free moral agents with the free will to obey or disobey the will and commands of God and are liable for the consequences of disobedience. As a result of our sin, we have a shattered and broken relationship with God that can only be made whole through Jesus Christ. Salvation is God's free gift (grace) to us but we must accept it by believing that Jesus is the Son of God and worthy of our complete confidence (faith); by acknowledging Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior (confession); by turning from our sinful life-style (repentance); and by being obedient to the commands of Jesus Christ (baptism, holy living). We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Since salvation is a gift of God through Jesus, He will never withhold nor withdraw his salvation. However, as a free moral agent, man has the ability to reject the offer of God's salvation both initially and at any time after accepting God's gift. (Romans 5:1; 3:23; 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:12; 14:6; Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:26)

### **Humanity**

Men and women are created in the image of God and are completely dependent upon Him. The primary purpose of humanity is to glorify God and to enjoy a relationship with Him. Unfortunately, all men and women rebel against God's standards and deserve the separation from Him that sin brings. Reconciliation with God is only available by His grace for salvation and new life. (Genesis 1:26-27; Psalm 23; Mark 12:29-30; Romans 3:23-24)

### **The Church**

The church is the community of God's people founded on the confession of Christ. Jesus is the head of the body, the universal church, which is united by its common faith in Him. The church participates in the worship of God, the fellowship and training of believers, and the spread of God's love in the world. The ministry of Jesus continues in the church as people love and help those separated from God and others. (Matthew 16:16-18; Ephesians 1:22-23, 2:19-20; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 2:42-47)

### **Baptism**

When we accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of our life, we are commanded in the Bible to be baptized by immersion in order to receive forgiveness of our sins and the gift of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:37-39). Baptism is done out of obedience to Jesus Christ and is a part of our salvation process. Baptism also illustrates how God cleanses us of our sins as well as how He raises us to new life in Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; Galatians 3:26-27; Acts 8:26-40; 9:17-19; 10:47-48; 16:15; 16:29-33)

### **Communion (The Lord's Supper)**

There is a declaration of forgiveness established by Jesus through communion. Communion is recognized in the church as a reminder of his sacrifice and death on our behalf and in our place. Each participant may know of the forgiveness offered to him or her through the body and blood of Christ. We celebrate the Lord's Supper every time we gather, as the early church did. (Matthew 26:26-28; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 2:42-47, 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29)

### **Spiritual Gifts**

Every disciple of Jesus Christ has been given specific gifts and talents by the Holy Spirit to advance the kingdom of God. These gifts and talents are to be diligently developed and used at home, church, and in society. (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; Ephesians 4:11-13)

### **Equality**

Jesus Christ came to restore not only our relationship with God - but also to bring unity and dignity to men and women of all races, ages, and classes. All persons are made in the image of God, and every disciple of Jesus Christ is to reflect that image in the home and in society. (Galatians 3:26-29; Ephesians 2:11-22; John 17:20-26; Acts 10:9-23; Colossians 3:11-14)

### **Eternity**

We are created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through the forgiveness and salvation of Jesus Christ. To be eternally separated from God is called Hell. To be eternally in union with God is called Heaven. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence. Eternal life begins the moment we receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of our life. (John 3:16; 14:17; Romans 6:23; 8:17-18; 1 Corinthians 2:7-9; Revelation 20:15; 21:27; Matthew 25:41)

## **Marriage**

Marriage has only one meaning. It is a ceremony which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. It was first instituted by God in the early chapters of Genesis (Genesis 1:27-28, Genesis 2:22-24) and codified in the Levitical law (Leviticus 18). The Old Testament prophets compared it to a relationship between God and his people (Jeremiah 2-4, Hosea 1-3), examples of it are in the historical narratives, and the wisdom literature discusses the unique unity of this relationship. Jesus explained the original intention and core elements of marriage (Matthew 19:4-6, Mark 10:5-9), and several New Testament Epistles give explicit instructions on this union (Ephesians 5:17-33). Marriage is a typology of Christ and the Church. As such, the Church views marriage as a profound spiritual institution established by God.