



## **The mission of Common Ground Christian Church**

Our mission is to connect people to a relationship with Jesus Christ and to a relationship with a relevant, 21st century Christian community.

### **How we carry out our mission**

Common Ground was founded on the belief that in today's Church many barriers stand in the way of a person's ability to connect with Jesus Christ. We've attempted to strip away those barriers—the irrelevant rituals and "rules" of traditional religion—and return to the simplicity of the earliest form of Christianity. We also recognize that a large weekly worship service offers a limited context for knowing God—the true foundation of our community is our house churches. Usually comprised of 10-16 people, house churches are where the church expresses itself and where our members can connect with one another, minister to one another and walk together in the journey of knowing and following Christ.

## **Our beliefs**

Quite simply, the principles in which we believe can be boiled down to a few concepts, all of which are outlined in the Bible. At Common Ground, the outdated, irrelevant rituals and "rules" of traditional religion have been stripped away — instead, we seek to practice an "orthodox" Christianity, to worship and know God much as the earliest Christians did by removing such barriers. In a nutshell, this is what we believe:

### **The authority of the Scriptures**

The Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, are inspired by God and are the Divine authority for all Christian faith and life.

*Psalm 119:9-16; II Timothy 3:16&17*

### **The three persons of God**

God is the creator and sustainer of everything that exists. He is the one and only God manifesting Himself in three persons—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (In the Christian faith, this is also called the Trinity.) These entities have the same nature, are co-equal and co-existent.

*Genesis 1 & 2; John 14:15-21; Colossians 1:15-20*

### **Jesus Christ, the Messiah and Savior**

Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. He is truly God and truly man, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He was sinless, yet He gave His life for the sins of the world by dying on the cross in accordance with the Scriptures. He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of God, and is our great High Priest and Advocate. He alone can restore the relationship of mankind to God.

*Isaiah 53; Matthew 1:18-25; I Corinthians 15:1-8; Hebrews 1:1-4*

### **The Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is fully God, the Third Person of the Trinity. He is the Spirit of God and Christ, filling, comforting, and guiding those who love and are obedient to Jesus Christ.

*John 14:15-21; I John 2:1-6*

### **Sin and man**

Man is created in the image and likeness of God. The first man, Adam, rebelled against God, fell from a right relationship with Him, and in so doing, introduced sin and death into the world. All human beings share Adam's sinful, fallen nature. We are all naturally sinful and we need Jesus to rescue us from our sin.

*Genesis 3:13-17; Romans 5:12-13; I Corinthians 15:22*

### **Salvation and grace**

God sent Jesus Christ to save mankind from his sins and restore his relationship with God. Jesus was sacrificed on the cross, died, and was resurrected, atoning for the sins of all who believe in Him. Man can do nothing to earn his salvation. It is grace — a free gift of God through faith.

*Romans 3:10-24; Ephesians 2:1-10*

### **Baptism**

Major portions of the New Testament are dedicated to teaching the mode, purpose, and spiritual implications of baptism. Every person who became a Christian in the New Testament was baptized. Baptism is integral to becoming a follower of Christ. In baptism, a believer participates in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, is raised to walk with Him in a new kind of life, is freed from bondage to sin and death, and is empowered to walk in God's grace. In a way, baptism is like a wedding ceremony — they are both public expressions of a commitment already made.

Faith, repentance and public confession of Christ precede baptism, all of which are directly linked to the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

*Matthew 28:19; John 3:23; Acts 2:38, 8:38, 22:16; Romans 6:1-14; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12*

### **The Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper, or Communion, is practiced weekly at Common Ground, according to the example of the New Testament church. Physically, it consists of unleavened bread and grape juice. Corporately, it is open to all believers. The purpose of The Lord's Supper is to proclaim Christ's death until He comes again and to remind the church of the New Covenant—that Jesus paid the price for our sins and we are saved only by His Grace.

*Acts 2:46; I Corinthians 11:23-34*

### **The Church and its purpose**

Too often, we think of the Church as a physical building — it's not. The Church is a collection of people who confess Jesus is their Savior and seek to live a life of obedience to Him. The purpose of the Church is to glorify Jesus Christ through worship, Bible teaching, service, discipleship, and sharing Christ with others.

*I Corinthians 6:15-20; Ephesians 5:18-21; I Peter 2:1-6*

### **The Second Coming of Jesus Christ**

The return of Jesus Christ is our "Blessed Hope" to be eagerly anticipated. It gives Christians the courage to pray without ceasing, to work with energy, to expose falsehood, and to strive for justice and peace. (Godly men and women hold a number of views concerning the return of Jesus Christ. These are matters of scriptural interpretation and so should not be used as a test of faith or fellowship.)

*I Thessalonians 3:11-13, 4:13-18; I Corinthians 15:20-28*

### **The Eternal State**

God will raise all people from the dead bodily and judge them. Those who have trusted Christ spend eternity in Heaven. Those who have rejected Him spend eternity in Hell.

*I Corinthians 15:20-28; Hebrews 9:27-28; Revelation 21:6-8*