

# Our Values

## **Bible Based**

The Bible is no ordinary book! Men were inspired by the Holy Spirit, through their own personality and historical culture and context, to write down the thoughts, intents, directions, and revelations of God. First Church upholds the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments as our final absolute authority, the only infallible rule of faith and practice. We understand that transformation in individuals' lives and in the church happens through personal study and anointed teaching/preaching of God's Word.

## **Gospel Centered**

Jesus Christ was no ordinary man! Some people believe Jesus was just a good prophet, excellent moral example, kind healer, or a great philosopher. However, Jesus was and is so much more. He is fully God and fully man, and is the only way to Heaven. Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty of our sins, and He rose from the dead to destroy the power of death. Our church seeks to honor and glorify Christ, and endeavors to create an atmosphere that would invite the reign of Jesus. First Church will strive to be Jesus sensitive rather than seeker sensitive. We desire 1 Corinthians 2:2 to be our focus: "For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

The Gospel changes everything! The Gospel - and the word "Gospel" simply means "Good News" - so the "Good News" is that because of the Lord's love, the wrath and holiness of God have been satisfied through Jesus' death, burial and resurrection, and by placing our faith in what Jesus has done on the cross, we can be forgiven, accepted, adopted, embraced, and reconciled to the Creator of the universe. Romans 1:16 declares, "[the Gospel] is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes."

## **Spirit Empowered**

People are empowered by the Holy Spirit to be Jesus' witnesses to the world around them. We understand this empowerment to be distinct from and subsequent to salvation. We anticipate the Holy Spirit filling each believer continually with increased power for Christian life and witness, and imparting His supernatural gifts for the edification of the Body and for various works of ministry in the world. All the gifts of the Holy Spirit that were at work in the first-century church are available today, are vital for the mission of the church, and are to be earnestly desired and practiced. Furthermore, we believe anything the Spirit does, harmonizes with what the Word of God says. Creatively Missional We value sharing our faith, innovation, the arts, and worship First Church will be engaged in the adventure of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). The Great Commission is clear: to go and make disciples of all nations. Jesus' last command should be our first concern! Believers will be equipped and encouraged to share their faith in their sphere of influence, and we expect that 7 days a week individuals will accept Jesus as Life Leader and Forgiver. Corporate worship services will be opportunities

to strengthen seasoned believers and to celebrate new disciples. Our church will seek to invest in evangelistic outreaches and local missions, both prayerfully and financially. As a globally minded church, we will encourage, pray for, and financially support those who feel led toward full-time missions around the world.

We serve the most creative Being in the entire universe. Inspired by the Lord's creative genius, First Church will utilize the arts, technology, and various forms of communication as tools to convey God's message. Although innovation is not a substitute for Holy Spirit inspiration and empowerment, we are not afraid to think "outside the box" when it comes to discipleship, evangelism, and ministry.

Every individual is uniquely gifted to serve Jesus Christ. We celebrate our differences, and strive to use our God-given talents to bless both the local church and our community.

The wonder of God's incredible design, both in creation and in our salvation, calls for worship. The Father is seeking worshipers (John 4:23). In fact, the Bible says that God inhabits the praises of His people (Psalm 22:3). We take time for praise and worship to connect with God, to focus our attention on Jesus, and to allow the Holy Spirit to soften our hearts to receive the preaching of the Word of God. Our worship expressions are as varied as our individual personalities, and we encourage freedom to the worshiper. However, as we seek liberty in our various worship styles, we must not hinder other worshippers. Our focus of worship must always center on Jesus Christ!

### **Family Oriented**

Marriage and family were created and instituted by God, and serve as pictures of Jesus Christ and His bride, the Church. First Church desires to encourage and support these institutions in a world where it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain godly families. Biblically, marriage is defined as one man and one woman in covenant with God for life. We are convinced that good marriages are the foundation of a strong family, and strong families are the bedrock of a great society. We are also committed to equipping parents to disciple their children. Our goal is to train and prepare parents to raise fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ in the home, and to launch our children as transforming agents into the culture.

The Bible also pictures the church as a family, where we care for, pray for, and nurture one another. First Church is purposefully intergenerational. We firmly believe God wants to use every person, regardless of age, to advance the cause of Jesus Christ.

We affirm that...

- life begins at conception and concludes at the discretion of God alone.
- children and youth are the church of today, not the church of tomorrow.
- both singleness and marriage are gifts from God according to 1 Corinthians 7.
- mentoring relationships, in which the wisdom and experience of one generation is passed to the next, are integral to God's plans for spiritual maturity. the lost virtue of respect for elders and those in authority needs to be recaptured.