

## The Teachings at Christ Church | northeast

### *Foundational Assumptions*

At Christ Church, we affirm several foundational assumptions that go to the heart of traditional, orthodox Christian teaching. These assumptions provide answers to the following questions:

- (1) *Who is God?*
- (2) *What has He done?*
- (3) *What is our response?*

Answering these basic questions is important, because we are called to a life of worshipping God<sup>1</sup>—and in order to worship God as we ought to, we must know God as He is. The holy Scriptures, as understood through the orthodox teachings of the Christian church, show us who God is and what He has done, thereby igniting true worship of God through the ministry of the Holy Spirit and leading to changed lives and communities.

These sacred teachings ultimately serve God’s Kingdom purposes on earth.<sup>2</sup> At Christ Church we are challenged, critiqued, inspired, and changed by the Spirit through these teachings. We therefore submit the following list of foundational assumptions in an effort to be both accurate and generous, leading to true worship.

#### ***The foundational assumptions at Christ Church are:***

- The Bible was written by men moved by the Holy Spirit. It is fully truthful in all that it affirms, and it is our primary source of knowledge about God. (Proverbs 22:19-21; Psalm 119:105; Matthew 5:18; John 5:39; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; Peter 1:19-21)
- The one true God exists in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:26; Deuteronomy 6:4; 1John 5:7; Matthew 3:16-17; John 1:14-18; 15:26; Hebrews 1:3; Philippians 2:5-8)
- Jesus Christ walked the earth as both fully human and fully God. (Isaiah 53:2-3; Malachi 3:1-4; John 1:1, 14; 1 John 5:20; Philippians 2:6; Galatians 4:4)
- Jesus Christ lived a perfect life; he endured temptation, but he never sinned. (Matthew 4; 5:17; Acts 2:23-27; 13:37; Hebrews 9:14; 10:14; Romans 5:19)
- Though Jesus Christ lived a sinless life, he nevertheless laid down his life for the sins of those who believe and trust in him. (Romans 5:19; Acts 2:23-24, 27; 1Corinthians 3:4-5) At the crucifixion, Christ endured to the end God’s wrath and judgment for sin—the judgment that we deserve and that Christ did not. (Isaiah 53:4-12; Romans 3:25-26; Colossians 1:19-20; Hebrews 9:12,15)

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<sup>1</sup> Romans 12

<sup>2</sup> Hebrews 6:17-20

- Though Jesus Christ died and was buried, he rose from the grave and reigns today at the right hand of the Father. (Mark 16:19; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 9:24-25; 12:2; 10:12; Acts 1:11; 2:29)
- God calls us to be holy as He is holy—a calling that we are utterly incapable of fulfilling on our own (Lamentations 3:22-24; Isaiah 1:17-19). Thankfully, Christ did everything necessary for our salvation, and we can add nothing to what Christ has accomplished for us. (Matthew 6:48; Ephesians 1:7, 9)
- We are declared righteous before God by grace alone, through faith alone, on account of Christ alone. (Ephesians 2:8-10; Romans 3:27-31)
- While we hold firmly to the Biblical witness that faith in and through Christ is our only means to salvation; we cannot separate faith and works within the Christian life (Amos. As Scripture makes clear, faith without works is dead; so we seek a faith that is not simply cerebral, but life transforming... and this obedience that comes with faith daily molds us into the image of Christ. (Romans 12; Ephesians 2:10; James 2:14-26)

**By stating these foundational assumptions, we are not saying:**

- that we will be excluding or including people from the community based upon the beliefs contained in this list;
- that our interpretation of Scripture is foolproof; or
- that eternal salvation is dependent upon a prescribed level of understanding of orthodox Christian theology.

**We are saying:**

- that the church of Jesus Christ is diverse in its expression, but is held together by a common, proven, and traditional confession of belief that is rooted in the Scriptures;
- that we affirm as true the common, proven, and traditional (*i.e.*, orthodox) confession and belief that is rooted in the Scriptures and has been upheld by the Reformed tradition with its creeds and confessions; and
- that within the Reformed confessions there are key assumptions that are foundational, upon which rest the major tenets of the Christian faith.

Rightly understood through the Spirit's leading, the integration of these truths into the disciple's daily life yields fruit of the Spirit that brings glory to God. It leads to a life of love, which is a fulfillment of the commandments that Christ taught:

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.*<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Matthew 22:36-40