

ECC What We Believe

Our entire story as followers of Jesus is built on the foundational truths of God's Word, the Bible. Erie Christian Church is driven to faithfully align both our personal and corporate living with God's Word in all we are becoming and doing.

We believe our mission and purpose is to fulfill doctrines (teachings) of Jesus Christ through evangelism and Christian education; and live in step with the Christian ethics of the New Testament as they are imperatively stated as "one another" and "each other" statements. These doctrines and ethics are uncoded yet limited teachings and practices of the Christian life and the Church. There are about 50 Christian doctrines which are inseparable from one another yet can be taught and preached independently. There are about 100 Christian ethics which are lived generally but practiced according to a Christian's freedom in Christ and without licentiousness in accordance to obedience of faith in Jesus Christ.

Our Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself speaks with final authority concerning truth, character, conduct, and the loving purpose of mankind, and is the sole and final source of all that we believe.

While the following statements represent the major areas where we stand on important doctrines of faith, we also understand that there are many lessons in God's word. We consider the following the primary doctrines that are essential for us as followers of Jesus Christ. It is our intention to approach all of these issues with the understanding:

- Where the Bible speaks, we speak; where it is silent, we are silent. Because of this, we choose not to engage in senseless arguments on areas where the Bible is silent.
- In essential beliefs, we strive for unity; in matters of opinion, we allow freedom; and in all things, we show love.

Our unity is built upon several vital biblical teachings:

1. We believe in one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

- John 14:9-10, 1 Peter 1:2, 2 Corinthians 13:14, 1 John 5:1-12

a. We believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of all things.

- Genesis 1:1, Matthew 5:16,45, 6:1,4,8,9, Hebrews 11:3

b. We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, one and only Savior

- John 1:1,14,29, 3:16, Philippians 2:6-11, Luke 1:26-35, Colossians 3:1, Hebrews 4:14-15

1. Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, both fully human and fully divine
2. Who lived a sinless life
3. Who suffered and was crucified for the forgiveness of our sins
4. Who rose again bodily from the dead on the third day
5. Who ascended into Heaven
6. Who will return in victory to rule forever.

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c. We believe in the Holy Spirit

- John 16:8, 2 Timothy 1:14, Romans 8:26

1. Who convicts us of our sin
2. Who indwells every Christian
3. Who helps us in our weakness and intercedes for us in prayer
4. Who empowers us to a fruitful Christian life

2. We believe in the Bible: God's Holy Word, Scripture.

a. We believe God inspired the original writings of the Scripture and those original writings were consequently without error.

- Mark 12:36, John 14:26, 16:12-15, Acts 1:16

b. We believe that the Bible is the final authority for all matters of faith, truth, morality, and Christian living.

- Isaiah 40:8, Psalm 119:11,105, Matthew 5:18, 24:35, 2 Timothy 3:16-17

c. We believe the Bible teaches that God is the Creator; that God creates each person in His image; and that life is therefore sacred, from conception to natural death.

3. We believe that God creates each person as male or female; that these two distinct, complementary genders reflect the "image of God" in humankind; and that each person's biological gender is an intrinsic, immutable aspect of his or her nature and identity.

- Genesis 1:26-27, 2:7,21-22, Psalm 139:13-18

4. We believe the Bible teaches that God established marriage in the beginning as a lifelong, exclusive relationship between one man and one woman.

- Genesis 2:23-25, Exodus 20:14,17, 22:19, 1 Timothy 1:8-11, Jude 7

5. We believe that all of mankind are in need of being saved, saved from their sins.

Through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, God has provided a way in which all sinners can be saved. **We believe that we are saved by grace through faith by the work of God in baptism for good works.** Salvation is available to all mankind. John 3:16-18, Acts 2:36-42, Romans 5 & 6

Through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, God has provided a way in which all sinners can be saved.

a. Salvation is a free gift of God. Romans 5:15-17, 6:23

- **Grace** — A free gift of God. Mankind did nothing to deserve God's grace. Romans 5:1-2, Romans 8:1-3

b. In order to receive God's Salvation, one must have faith in Jesus Christ. Romans 10:4, 17

- This includes **believing** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, your Lord and your Savior. Matthew 16:13-16; John 3:16-18
- This includes accepting Jesus Christ as the Lord of your life.
- This includes **repenting** of your sin. Acts 3:17-21
- This includes **confessing** Jesus Christ as Lord. Romans 10:9; Hebrews 4:14-16

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- Salvation takes place at the point of **baptism**. Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:38, 8:34-38; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12
- c. Salvation is for good works. James 2:14-26
- d. It is the church's responsibility to spread the good news of Jesus Christ's great sacrifice and God's offer of salvation to as many as possible so that as many as possible might have a chance to receive God's grace. Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:7-8; Matthew 5:14-16; 1 Corinthians 5:17-20

6. We believe in the Church of Jesus Christ, founded on the Day of Pentecost, consisting of all Christians everywhere, and organized into local assemblies, called churches.

- Matthew 16:13-18, Acts 2:14-47

7. We believe that the Elders of the church are the overseers of its affairs and the shepherds of its members; that they are the final interpretive authority of the Bible's meaning and application for the church; and that they are responsible for the oversight, instruction, edification, discipline, and restoration of church members.

- 1 Peter 5:1-4, Titus 1:9, 2:1-15, Matthew 18:15-17

8. We believe that the Bible instructs church members to:

- a. Meet together regularly for fellowship, worship, teaching, and the Lord's Supper.
 - Acts 2:42, Hebrews 10:25, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, 1 Corinthians 12
- b. Use our natural abilities and spiritual gifts to serve one another.
 - Romans 12, 1 Peter 4:10, Galatians 5:13
- c. Love one another, accept one another, and forgive one another.
 - John 13:34-35, Romans 13:8, Ephesians 4:2,32, Luke 10:25-31
- d. Seek unity, agreement, and peace with one another.
 - Romans 12:16,18, Philippians 2:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:13
- e. Encourage and build up one another. - 1 Thessalonians 5:11
- f. Bear one another's burdens and pray for one another. - Galatians 6:2, James 5:16
- g. Submit to the authority of the elders of the church. - Hebrews 13:17
- h. Support the church financially. - Malachi 3:10, 2 Corinthians 8:7, 1 Timothy 5:17-18
- i. Pursue personal holiness and obedience to God's Word.
 - 2 Corinthians 7:1, 1 Thessalonians 4:7, 1 Peter 1:15
- j. Strive together to fulfill the Great Commission. - Matthew 28:18-20