

The Gathering Church *Why The Gathering?*

Who is The Gathering Church:

The Gathering Church is a gathering of God's people, committed to making a difference in a shattered world. Where, by God's grace, the broken can become whole, where everyone is welcome and challenged to live a life defined by faith, hope, and love.

The Gathering Church's Mission:

To live lives characterized by Unwavering Faith, Enduring Hope, and Unconditional love.

- *"Let me say first that I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith in Him is being talked about all over the world." Romans 1:8*
- *"As we pray to our God and Father about you, we think of your faithful work, your loving deeds, and the enduring hope you have because of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. 1:3 NLT*
- *All of I Corinthians 13...*
- *"Three things will last forever – faith, hope, and love – and the greatest of these is love."*
- *I Corinthians 13:13*

The Gathering Church's Core Values: Core values answer the question, "What directs the organization in what it does?" These values articulate what The Gathering Church will stand for, and what The Gathering Church will ultimately do. The Gathering Church's culture is built upon the application of the following biblical principles.

1. To Know God (*Faith*) Psalm 42:1-4

- a. Truth (Be truthful...)
- b. Relationship (Grow in the likeness of Christ... John 3:1-8; etc) Jesus said, "I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." (John 15:5 NKJV)
 - i. We believe the only possible way to live the Christian life is by God's power within us. So, we seek to practice a daily dependence on God's Spirit to enable us to do what is right. (Philippians 2:13; Ephesians 5:18)
- c. Discipleship (Give your life away...) It is the responsibility of every Christian to share the good news with those whom God allows to cross our path. We practice personal sharing about Christ with our words and our life. Our lives act as the attraction and means of building genuine relationships through which we earn the right to share Christ and invite friends to attend church.

2. To Serve Humanity (*Hope*)

- a. Missional/Commissioned (Jeremiah 1:4-10; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8, 8:1-8, Acts 2, Acts 8:26-40; Galatians 1:15; Luke 4:14-21)
- b. Innovative (Born out of the heart of a Creative God... Genesis 1, Acts 2, ect.)

3. To Love People (*Love*) John 13:34-35, 1 John 4:7-21

- a. Community (Everyone belongs... John 4; 1 Peter 2:9)
- b. Connection (Everyone matters... 1 Corinthians 12, John 15:1-17, Romans 11, Matthew 9:14-17, Romans 12:3-8, John 15:2, Jeremiah 31:31, 2 Corinthians 3)
- c. Context (Love must be the basis for all ministry)

The Gathering Church's Core Convictions:

1. The Gathering Church must point People to the Holiness of God

The Gathering Church's greatest obligation will be to point people to the holiness of God. The Gathering Church will communicate the pursuing of God as the priority. Holiness can be defined as sanctity or purity. Holiness is about being, not doing. It is about creating a culture of righteousness by believing God and His Word. Genuine believers realize that they must first "Be" what they so desperately long for others to become. Peter said, "But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God, who chose you to be his children, is holy. For he himself has said, 'You must be holy because I am holy'" (1 Peter 1:15, 16). It is a reverent fear of the Lord. "Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous deeds have been revealed" (Revelations 15:4).

2. The Gathering Church must emphasize that Only Christ Can Change a Life for a Lifetime

The Gathering Church's deepest conviction is that only Christ can change a life for a lifetime. The Gathering Church will do whatever it can to earn the right to point people to Christ. It's not about the conversion but about the conversation – God is always at work; the believer just needs to know how and where to look.

There are two truths to examine. First, only Christ can change a life through His finished work on the cross. Paul said, "And it is this Good News that saves you if you firmly believe it..." (1 Cor. 15:2). "God saved you by his special favor when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God" (Ephesians 2:8). Second, believers have the responsibility of sharing the Good News for transformation to occur. Again, Paul said, "But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?" (Romans 10:14). The point is, THE GATHERING CHURCH must be willing to do whatever it takes to have the opportunity to point people to the only one that can change their lives for a lifetime.

3. The Gathering Church is committed to living for God's Kingdom

The Gathering Church exists for the realization of God's Kingdom, not for building it's own castle. The Gathering Church will seek to converge upon the community with God's Good News. The Gathering Church will encourage disciples to surrender to biblical standards in all areas of life, regardless of the Church a person attends. Paul said, "But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior" (Philippians 3:20).

4. The Gathering Church will promote God's Mission for People

The Gathering Church's practice will be to promote God's Mission for people's lives. The Gathering Church will mentor, disciple, and counsel others in the gifting given to each individual and seek God's will, not The Gathering Church's, for him or her. (1 Corinthians 12:7, Ephesians 4:11-12)

The Gathering Church has a responsibility of preparing people for the work of the ministry; however, it cannot assume the role of God in people's lives. It is God who works

His will in the lives of people according to His purpose. Paul said, “So we have continued praying for you ever since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you a complete understanding of what He wants to do in your lives and we ask him to make you wise with spiritual wisdom” (Colossians 1:9). Paul makes it clear that it is not The Gathering Church’s responsibility to tell people what it wants but to recognize that God has created each individual uniquely and purposefully.

The Gathering Church’s Statement of Faith – What We Believe:

1. ABOUT GOD

God is the creator, sustainer and ruler of the universe and the only one worthy of our worship. He has eternally existed in three persons: the Father, who is in control of all things; the Son, who has always dealt with man; and the Holy Spirit, who has always been the operational force of God. These three are co-equal and are one God.

Genesis 1:1, 26-27, 3:21; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; I Peter 1:2; II Corinthians 13:14

2. ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ was virgin born and is the only begotten Son of God. He is co-equal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

Jesus was God incarnate and lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as a perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He rose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven’s glory and will return again someday to earth to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. We recognize Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life and the only possible means of gaining heaven.

Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:22-23; John 1:1-5, 14:6, 10-30; Acts 1:9-11; Romans 1:3-4; I Corinthians 15:3-4; Titus 2:13; I Timothy 6:14-15; Hebrews 4:14-15

3. ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with God the Father and God the Son. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He is the guarantee of our inheritance and the seed of our redemption. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer a spiritual gift when they are saved. As Christians, we seek to live under his control daily.

II Corinthians 3:17; Ephesians 1:13; John 16:7-13, 14:16-17; Galatians 5:25; Acts 1:8; I Corinthians 2:12, 3:16; Ephesians 5:18

4. ABOUT THE BIBLE

The Bible is God’s Word to us. It was written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian belief and authority for living. Because it is inspired by God, it is the truth without error.

II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20-21; II Timothy 1:13-14; Psalm 119:105, 160, 12:6; Proverbs 30:5

5. ABOUT HUMAN BEINGS

People are made in the image of God. People are the supreme object of God's creation. Although every person has tremendous potential for God, all of us are marred by an attitude and act of disobedience toward God called "sin." This attitude and act separates people from God and causes many problems in life.

Genesis 1:27, 3:6, 24; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6a, 59:1-2; Romans 3:10-19, 23

6. ABOUT OUR SALVATION

Salvation is God's free gift to us, but we must accept it. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith, we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith.

Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 14:6, 1:12; Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:26; Romans 5:1

7. ABOUT ETERNAL SECURITY

Because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the true believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. If you have been genuinely saved, you cannot "lose" it. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and keeping power of God that gives us this security.

John 10:29-30; II Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25, 10:10-14; I Peter 1:3-5

8. ABOUT ETERNITY

People were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation.

To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life in Heaven. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence.

Matthew 24:4-44; John 3:16; Romans 6:23; I John 2:25, 5:11-13; Revelation 20:15

9. ABOUT CREATION

Genesis 1 and 2 record the literal story of the creation of the world. Man was created in God's image. It was not a matter of evolution. God created all that is in the world in six days.

Genesis 1, 2; John 1:3; Hebrews 11:3; Revelation 10:8