

## **OUR CORE CONVICTIONS AND THEIR OUTWORKING**

This paper outlines some of the core convictions of our church and their practical outworking in our daily lives. It has been discussed and agreed by the PCC.

The purposes of this document include the following:

- It grounds our unity as a church in our God and what we believe about him
- It gives us a basis for teaching the things of first importance to our church-family
- It allows prospective PCC members and other leaders to stand together in what we believe
- It will be included in any job description for potential members of staff and in the parish profile when the church seeks a new vicar
- It gives us direction for our corporate praying

## **WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT GOD**

### **1. We are Trinitarian**

We believe that Jesus has revealed the one true God to us as three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. By sending his Son, God has made it possible to know him as Father through the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Therefore we endeavour to love and worship this God as he has been made known to us.

### **2. We are Jesus-centred**

We believe the ultimate revelation of God is in the person of Jesus Christ. This is what makes him unique. Jesus told his disciples, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father." Therefore our faith in Jesus is the very heart of what it means to be a Christian—we are delighted to be Jesus-centred people.

### **3. We are cross and resurrection-focussed**

The uniqueness of Jesus lies also in his ministry. By his death Jesus bore in himself the wrath of God against all the sin of the world and therefore he alone can offer full and free forgiveness of sins. By his resurrection Jesus destroyed the power of death and therefore he alone can offer the hope of eternal life. Therefore we believe and we endeavour to proclaim that 'there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.' We make the cross and resurrection the centre of our faith and our preaching.

## **WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT THE BIBLE**

### **4. It is inspired**

The Bible is God speaking to us. It has rightly been said that when we open the Bible we open the lips of God. It is in this sense that the Bible is inspired by God—that is: what the Bible says, God says, and it is his perfect truth.

### **5. It is sufficient**

We believe that the Bible is sufficient—that is: God has told us everything we need to know in order to be saved and live a godly life.

### **6. It is authoritative**

We believe that the Bible is authoritative for the life of the church and the individual—that is, it is a book to be obeyed as well as believed.

These convictions are not mere theory. Because we hold them, we make Bible teaching and preaching a priority in our church gatherings both on Sundays and at other times. We put Bible study at the heart of our small groups. We also encourage every church member, as far as they are able, to give some time every day to reading a part of the Bible.

## **WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT THE PEOPLE OF OUR WORLD AND OUR COMMUNITY**

### **7. Made in the image of God**

We believe that every human being is made in the image of God and therefore precious to him and to us. So we endeavour to love and serve our fellow-Christians and also those who live in our community.

### **8. And fallen**

We also believe that every human being is sinful and fallen and under God's judgment. Therefore every person's greatest need is to be reconciled to God. The most important fact about any person's life is whether or not he or she knows Christ. Therefore our mission is to proclaim Jesus as Lord and we call our neighbours to repentance and faith in Christ for the forgiveness of sins.

### **9. And to be served**

While the mission of the church is to make Christ known, it is not the only thing we do. We seek to do good to all people, to love and serve our neighbours and to meet their various needs as we have opportunity.

## **WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT THE CHURCH**

### **10. It is central to God's purposes**

God calls people into a fellowship of believers, the church, where every person matters. He loves the church as 'his treasured possession' and the existence of the church is central to his purposes. It has rightly been said that 'the local church is the hope of the world.'

### **11. It is central to our lives**

Therefore we value the church very highly. We understand that as well as belonging to God we belong to one another. We make Sunday gatherings a priority. We are committed to one another and our aim is that every church member serves actively in some capacity. We are also committed to one another financially and encourage every church member to make financial giving part of their discipleship.

## **WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT PRAYER**

Our speaking God is also a listening God who invites his people to speak to him in prayer and involves them in his work in the universe by means of prayer. Therefore we encourage every church member to spend time every day in prayer, and we encourage church members, especially the leaders, to be part of our corporate prayer meetings.

[Appendix]

## **WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT HUMANITY AND MARRIAGE**

Because the world in which we live has grown so confused about what it means to be human, male and female, and about the meaning and the place of marriage in our society, it is important to reaffirm our biblical and Christian convictions.

Marriage is God's gift in creation. It is inextricably bound up with our creation as male and female. Therefore it is the exclusive commitment of one man to one woman for life. This is the only God-given context for a sexual relationship and the foundation of family life.

As the people of God we seek to fulfil our *pastoral* role by welcoming anyone and everyone to our church, whatever their lifestyle, while at the same time seeking to fulfil our *prophetic* role by teaching the goodness of marriage and by calling those living in a sexual relationship outside of marriage to repent and turn to Christ.