



## CORE BELIEFS

**WE BELIEVE** there is only one God, who exists eternally as a Trinity of three persons: Father, Son, and Spirit. Each member of the Trinity is fully and equally God, yet personally distinct from one another.

**WE BELIEVE** that God in the flesh, Jesus Christ, was crucified and died on the cross, was resurrected from the dead, and ascended to Heaven.

**WE BELIEVE** the Holy Spirit of God comes to live within a person once they trust in Jesus as their Savior. The Holy Spirit indwells all believers to lead and empower life and relationship with God, to secure salvation, and to give gifts that build the church and spread the gospel.

**WE BELIEVE** God created men and women to live in relationship with him. But, the first humans chose to rebel against God and brought sin into the world. Sin spread like a virus to all humans, and all have sinned, and that sin separated us from God.

**WE BELIEVE** God created men and women in his image, that he made us to live forever. We will either exist eternally in community with God in Heaven through Jesus, or exist eternally separated from God in Hell by rejecting Jesus.

**WE BELIEVE** that God loves the world, and by his grace delights and desires to grant forgiveness and eternal life to all who trust in Christ as their Savior. Jesus died on the cross as a perfect substitute for our penalty of sin, and resurrected to overcome the death penalty caused by sin. It is only through faith in Jesus Christ—not being good enough or doing enough good—that a person can be restored to a right relationship with God.

**WE BELIEVE** that the Bible is God's Word to us, written by men who were inspired by God. God wrote his Scriptures to reveal himself to mankind, to communicate with us, and to direct us in his best way to live life.

**WE BELIEVE** that the Church is the Body of Christ consisting of believers worldwide, and that God has called believers to gather in local churches.

**WE BELIEVE** that Christ will return to earth to conclude history and restore God's plan for mankind.

## ECCLESIOLOGY

### DECENTRALIZED COMMUNITY

The Early Church operated in a decentralized structure, meeting in House Churches led by approved House Church Pastors so that each person in the broader Church could be part of a spiritual family with a pastor they were personally known and shepherded by. Decentralized from place and priest, House Church is the primary place of

community and discipleship. We remove any other structures or programs that compete with participation in House Church.

### **DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP**

House Churches are led by identified, trained, and empowered lay pastors, fulfilling all the qualifications listed in Timothy and Titus for an elder, carrying out all the functions of a pastor, and entrusted by the Church to shepherd people. House Church Pastors oversee the community, discipleship, benevolence, and discipline within their House Church, as well as perform baptisms, weddings, funerals, hospital visits, etc. for those in their House Church.

### **DIVERSE COMMUNITY**

House Churches are cross-generational, diverse gatherings of people in a home who share a meal, meet each other's needs, and help one another grow in their faith. House Church represents a spiritual family, rather than a group of friends. Diversity includes ethnicity, spiritual maturity, gender, socio-economical, and generational, with the sole identifier of inclusion being geographical proximity to a House Church.

### **COMMON OVERSIGHT AND IDENTITY**

The Early Church gathered in large gatherings as well as House Churches throughout the week, with individual House Churches being overseen by a plurality of Elders. In this way, House Churches are supported by Elders, given doctrinal and ecclesiological accountability, and live in community with other House Churches, helping ensure long-term health. Additionally, a Church of House Churches has exponential impact in their community through the shared resources and networking that an isolated House Church does not have on its own.