

WHAT WE BELIEVE

Middle Creek Church

BELIEFS WE FIRMLY UPHOLD

God

We believe there is only one Almighty God who reigns over all things, eternally existent in three distinct, co-equal and co-eternal Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:1-2; Mat. 3:16-17; II Cor. 13:14). Each Member of the Trinity possesses the attributes of deity, and each One is the same in essence, and equal in glory, majesty, power and rank.

God the Father – We believe in God the Father as the Creator and Preserver of heaven and earth (Gen. 1:1-2; Neh. 9:6; Ps. 102:27). He is infinite in wisdom (Rom. 16:27), unlimited in power (Job 36:22-33), and is totally perfect in every way (Ps. 18:30). God reveals Himself to the world through creation (Rom. 1:20), through His Son Jesus Christ (Jn. 1:1-14), and through scripture (II Tim. 3:16). He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of humankind (Dan. 4:17). God hears and answers our prayers (I Jn. 5:14-15), and saves from sin and eternal damnation all who come to Him through faith in Jesus Christ (Jn. 3:16-18).

God the Son – We believe in the deity of Jesus Christ (Col. 2:8-9); in the fact that all things were created by Him and for Him (Col. 1:15-20); in His virgin birth (Mat. 1:18); in the sin-pardoning value of His shed blood and voluntary death on the cross (Eph. 1:7); in His bodily resurrection from the tomb (I Cor. 15:1-25); in His ascension to Glory (Acts 1:9); in His continual, priestly intercession for believers (Heb. 7:25); in His being the Head of the Church (Eph. 1:22-23); in His personal, visible and triumphant return to earth (Acts 1:10-11); and in being the Judge both of the living and the dead (II Tim. 4:1).

God the Holy Spirit – We believe in the Holy Spirit as a divine Person distinct from God the Father and God the Son, yet in a mysterious oneness within the Holy Trinity (Acts 5:1-3). The Holy Spirit brings conviction to the human heart (John 16:8-11); imparts new life to believers (Titus 3:3-6); indwells each new child of God (Acts 2:38); infills every sincere Christian (Eph. 5:18); bestows spiritual gifts to Christ-followers as He wills (I Cor. 12:1-11); serves as Counselor and Teacher (John 14:26); illuminates Scripture to us (I Cor. 2:10; and seals Christians for eternity (Eph. 4:30).

The Bible

We believe the original writings of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are fully inspired by God, and are without error, completely trustworthy, fully authoritative, and that they (the Scriptures) serve as our ultimate authority in faith and practice (II Tim. 3:16-17; II Pet. 1:18-21).

Salvation

Knowing that sin fractures all things that God has made, we believe that because of the disobedience of Adam and Eve to God's direct command (Gen. 3:1-24), every person since then has been born with a sin nature and is separated from God (Rom. 1:18-32). We further believe that God has made one

provision for the salvation of fallen humanity, which is faith in the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross as the satisfactory payment for sin (John 3:14-21; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Eph. 2:8-10). Furthermore, we believe that God will receive to Himself all persons who, with penitent hearts, confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord (Rom. 10:9-10).

The Church

We believe that all those who have received God's gift of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ constitute the Universal Church (I Cor. 1:2; I Cor. 12:12-27). Scripture defines the Church as those who have been called out of the world to be God's special people (I Pet. 2:9). The mission of the Church is both external and internal, including both word and deed. Externally, in order to bring glory to God, the Church is to proclaim the saving grace of Jesus Christ to a sinful humanity (Mat. 28:19-20), and also to impact the world for good (Mat. 5:13-16). Internally, the Church is to teach believers the whole counsel of God, which includes encouragement to live a holy life and accountability to one another (Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 1:4; I Pet. 1:13-16).

Heaven and Hell

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and unjust (John 5:28-29; Rev. 20:11-15). We also believe in a literal Heaven and a literal Hell (Luke 16:19-31; I Pet. 1:3-4; Mark 9:42-40), and that those who place their faith in Jesus Christ will spend eternity in Heaven with the Lord Jesus (John 3:16-18, 31; Heb. 12:22-24). Those who reject God's free gift of salvation will spend eternity separated from Him in Hell (Mark 9:42-49; Luke 12:5; Rev. 14:9-11).

Sanctity of Human Life

We believe that every person is created in the image of God and therefore has innate dignity and worth. Therefore, we firmly uphold the sanctity of all human life from the time of conception until the time of death (Gen. 1:27; Gen. 2:7; Exo. 20:13; Psa. 139:13-16; Jer. 1:5).

War, Loving Our Enemies and Living at Peace

We believe that God has given each of us life, and that He alone has the prerogative to take it away. For that reason, we regard all war and the taking of human life as rooted in sin (Ex. 20:13; Mat. 5:9; Mat. 5:21-26; Mat. 26:52). Christians are to love their enemies (Mat 5:43-44; Mat. 7:12); to show mercy rather than retaliation (Rom. 12:19-21; I Pet. 2:23); and to live peaceably with all persons (Rom. 12:18; Eph. 4:2-3).

Marriage and Human Sexuality

We believe that God has created all humans in His own image, and that He specifically created them biologically male and female (Gen. 2:24-25). (*A man has one X and one Y chromosome; a woman has two X chromosomes, and this cannot be changed by surgical procedures.*) God instituted monogamous marriage between a natural-born male and a natural-born female as the foundation of the family and is the basic structure of human society (Gen. 2:18-24; Mat. 19:4-6).

We further believe that any form of sexual immorality such as *adultery* (Lev. 20:10; Gal. 5:19-21), *fornication* (Col. 3:5; Rev. 21:8), *homosexuality* and *bisexual conduct* (Lev. 20:13; Rom. 1:26-27), *bestiality* (Lev. 18:23), *incest* (Lev. 18:6-18; I Cor. 5:1-2), *unbridled lust* (Mat. 5:27-28; Prov. 6:27-28), and *pornography* (Job 31:1; Psa. 101:3) are deviations from the Bible's standards and are sinful and offensive to God.

Divorce and Remarriage

We believe that divorce is outside the original plan of God. When marital problems arise, God's plan is for confession of sin, repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation. In faithfulness to the scriptures, however, we acknowledge that in certain instances, divorce and remarriage may be a reluctant concession. These instances include: (1) where marriage and divorce occur prior to a person's coming to faith in Christ (I Cor. 6:9-11; II Cor. 5:17); (2) where there has been continual, willful, unrepentant sexual unfaithfulness on the part of a spouse (Mat. 5:31-32; Mat. 19:3-9); and (3) where one spouse is an unbeliever and deserts and divorces his or her marriage partner (I Cor. 7:12-17).

Conclusion

As a congregation, *'Beliefs we Firmly Uphold'* are paramount to who we are as a church. Hebrews 10:23 instructs us in this regard: *"Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful."* The beliefs that we firmly uphold correlate well with our congregation's Mission Statement of: *Knowing* God's love through Jesus Christ; *Growing* as His disciples; and *Going*, sharing God's love with others."
