



# OUR CORE VALUES

## 1. We Are a Christian People

As members of the Church Universal, we join with all true believers in proclaiming the Lordship of Jesus Christ and in affirming the historic Trinitarian creeds and beliefs of the Christian faith. We value our Wesleyan-Holiness heritage and believe it to be a way of understanding the faith that is true to Scripture, reason, tradition, and experience.

We are united with all believers in proclaiming the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We believe that in divine love God offers to all people forgiveness of sins and restored relationship. In being reconciled to God, we believe that we are also to be reconciled to one another, loving each other as we have been loved by God and forgiving each other as we have been forgiven by God. We believe that our life together is to exemplify the character of Christ. We look to Scripture as the primary source of spiritual truth confirmed by reason, tradition, and experience.

***We are united with all believers in proclaiming the Lordship of Jesus Christ.***

Jesus Christ is the Lord of the Church, which, as the Nicene Creed tells us, is one, holy, universal, and apostolic. In Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit, God the Father offers forgiveness of sin and reconciliation to all the world. Those who respond to God's offer in faith become the people of God. Having been forgiven and reconciled in Christ, we forgive and are reconciled to one another. In this way, we are Christ's Church and Body and reveal the unity of that Body. As the one Body of Christ, we have "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." We affirm the unity of Christ's Church and strive in all things to preserve it (Ephesians 4:5, 3).

## 2. We Are a Holiness People

God, who is holy, calls us to a life of holiness. We believe that the Holy Spirit seeks to do in us a second work of grace, called by various terms including "entire sanctification" and "baptism with the Holy Spirit"—cleansing us from all sin, renewing us in the image of God, empowering us to love God with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves, and producing in us the character of Christ. Holiness in the life of believers is most clearly understood as Christlikeness.

***It is the work of the Holy Spirit that restores us in the image of God and produces in us the character of Christ.***

Because we are called by Scripture and drawn by grace to worship God and to love Him with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves, we commit ourselves fully and completely to God, believing that we can be "sanctified wholly," as a second crisis experience. We believe that the Holy Spirit convicts, cleanses, fills, and empowers us as the grace of God transforms us day by day into a people of love, spiritual discipline, ethical and moral purity, compassion, and justice. It is the work of the Holy Spirit that restores us in the image of God and produces in us the character of Christ.

We believe in God the Father, the Creator, who calls into being what does not exist. We once were not, but God called us into being, made us for himself, and fashioned us in His own image. We have been commissioned to bear the image of God: "I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy" (Leviticus 11:44a).

## 3. We Are a Missional People

We are a sent people, responding to the call of Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit to go into all the world, witnessing to the Lordship of Christ and participating with God in the building of the Church and the extension of His kingdom (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Corinthians 6:1). Our mission (a) begins in worship, (b) ministers to the world in evangelism and compassion, (c) encourages believers toward Christian maturity through discipleship, and (d) prepares women and men for Christian service through Christian higher education.

## A. Our Mission of Worship

The mission of the Church in the world begins in worship. As we are gathered together before God in worship—singing, hearing the public reading of the Bible, giving our tithes and offerings, praying, hearing the preached Word, baptizing, and sharing the Lord's Supper—we know most clearly what it means to be the people of God. Our belief that the work of God in the world is accomplished primarily through worshipping congregations leads us to understand that our mission includes the receiving of new members into the fellowship of the church and the organizing of new worshipping congregations.

*Worship is the highest expression of our love for God.*

Worship is the highest expression of our love for God. It is God-centered adoration honoring the One who in grace and mercy redeems us. The primary context for worship is the local church where God's people gather, not in self-centered experience or for self-glorification but rather in self-surrender and self-offering. Worship is the church in loving, obedient service to God.

## B. Our Mission of Compassion and Evangelism

As people who are consecrated to God, we share His love for the lost and His compassion for the poor and broken. The Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) move us to engage the world in evangelism, compassion, and justice. To this end we are committed to inviting people to faith, to caring for those in need, to standing against injustice and with the oppressed, to working to protect and preserve the resources of God's creation, and to including in our fellowship all who will call upon the name of the Lord.

Through its mission in the world, the Church demonstrates the love of God. The story of the Bible is the story of God reconciling the world to Him, ultimately through Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:16-21). The Church is sent into the world to participate with God in this ministry of love and reconciliation through evangelism, compassion, and justice.

## C. Our Mission of Discipleship

We are committed to being disciples of Jesus and to inviting others to become His disciples. With this in mind, we are committed to providing the means (Sunday School, Bible studies, small accountability groups, and so on) through which believers are encouraged to grow in their understanding of the Christian faith and in their relationship with each other and with God. We understand discipleship to include submitting ourselves to obeying God and to the disciplines of the faith. We believe we are to help each other live the holy life through mutual support, Christian fellowship, and loving accountability. John Wesley said, "God has given us to each other to strengthen each other's hands."



## *Discipleship is the means through which the Holy Spirit gradually brings us to maturity in Christ.*

Christian discipleship is a way of life. It is the process of learning how God would have us live in the world. As we learn to live in obedience to the Word of God, in submission to the disciplines of the faith, and in accountability to one another, we begin to understand the true joy of the disciplined life and the Christian meaning of freedom. Discipleship is not merely human effort, submitting to rules and regulations. It is the means through which the Holy Spirit gradually brings us to maturity in Christ. It is through discipleship that we become people of Christian character. The ultimate goal of discipleship is to be transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18).

### **D. Our Mission of Christian Higher Education**

We are committed to Christian education, through which women and men are equipped for lives of Christian service. In our seminaries, Bible colleges, colleges, and universities, we are committed to the pursuit of knowledge, the development of Christian character, and the equipping of leaders to accomplish our God-given calling of serving in the Church and in the world.

Christian higher education is a central part of the mission of the Church of the Nazarene. In the early years of the Church of the Nazarene, institutions of Christian higher education were organized for the purpose of preparing women and men of God for leadership and Christian service in the global spread of the Wesleyan-Holiness revival. Our continued commitment to Christian higher education through the years has produced a worldwide network of seminaries, Bible schools, colleges, and universities.