

GCPC Core Principles

God

The one whom we name as “God” is the source of all creation and the basis of our life together. God’s love is at the heart of our identity and purpose. We believe there is “one God and Creator of all” (Eph. 4:6a) and we also embrace the multitude of names and metaphors that scripture offers to reveal the Higher Power, the divine, the one God to our human understanding.

Christ

Jesus the Christ serves as our primary model and guide for daily living. As revealed in the scriptures, Jesus values authenticity, grace and compassion, empowering people to embrace those same sacred qualities. We are a Christ-centered community, which also recognizes that God speaks through people of other faith traditions and through non-believers.

Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the person through whom we access God, our Creator, and Christ, our Liberator. Holy Spirit is the Living God who reveals Godself in unique and poignant ways throughout history. The Holy Spirit engages creation in a variety of ways: sometimes encouraging, other times challenging, but always inviting an honest faith and genuine path. We believe the Holy Spirit is present in people of all cultures and religious traditions as exemplified in the story of Pentecost, the first mutual experience of the Holy Spirit recorded in scripture.

Scripture

Scripture is inspired by God and written down by people of faith. Scripture captures experiences of God’s people and teachings throughout history. Through prayer, study, reflection and interpretation of texts in the context of community, we believe God offers a profound and reliable way to develop and deepen our relationship with God and with one another.

Worship

Worship is the central, shared experience where we praise God and are transformed and renewed to serve. Our original purpose statement says that in worship we “gather all people in a caring, Christian community; equip people to develop a faith that works in real life; and send people to serve Christ in the world.” We express our joy and love of God through worship that is scriptural, creative, thought-provoking and honest.

Prayer

Prayer is integral to our worship experience and to our personal, daily walk with God. Scripture offers several prayers that exemplify how faith deepens through prayer practice. Music is a vital method of prayer in our faith community. In addition to traditional, contemplative forms of prayer, we acknowledge the call in scripture to “pray unceasingly,” (1 Thess. 5:17) which encourages us to integrate prayer in all we say and do.

Education

God reveals truth both in and outside the church. In addition to scripture and theology, we find great meaning in studying secular disciplines such as natural and social sciences, metaphysics, philosophy and the arts. We are called to explore the richness of God's creation with reverence and openness, welcoming all questions. In this way we love God with all our "mind" as well as our "heart and strength." (Duet. 6:5; Luke 10:27)

Peacemaking

Inspired by the life and teaching of Jesus, we pursue and practice peace at all levels, beginning with our own lives and communities and extending to the entwined ecosystems of the earth. We seek knowledge, skill and patience to create harmony and wholeness in the cacophony of strife and brokenness. "Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the children of God." (Matthew 5:9)

Inclusiveness

All people are created in the "image of God." (Gen. 1:27) God's love extends to all, regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, economic background, physical/mental ability or religious/political affiliation. The love of God extends to non-believers as well as believers. "I make this covenant with all who are here this day and also with all who are not here." (Deut. 29:13-14)

Justice

We seek to care for the outcast and the oppressed, the sick and the marginalized, offering the offering the love, mercy and compassion of Christ. "What is required of you, but to seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God?" (Micah 6:8) We are called to work for justice in all types of systems: economic, political, racial, educational, medical, environmental and judicial.

Nurture

It is our divine calling to nurture others, especially children and youth so fresh from God. "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the realm of heaven belongs." (Matthew 19:14) We encourage people of all ages on their faith journey; provide a safe, loving place of rest for those who are weary; shine a light for those who wander in darkness; share tears and laughter; provide companionship and give great thanks to God for the gift of each other.