

At Neighborhood Church, we don't pretend to know the mind of God, or understand all of the mystery that comes with faith in Him. We will forever be growing and learning. That said, what follows are statements that best describe who we are, and how we see our identities in Christ and our place in the Kingdom of God. While these are grounding beliefs, there is a great amount of diversity in our body, and we're always working to listen and learn from one another, and offer grace in disagreement. We believe that we can hold truths close while also living with the mystery of a God who is so much bigger than all of us. In short, as Ephesians 4 says, we seek to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which we have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Core Convictions of Neighborhood Church

Who is God?

We worship one God who is triune, expressed in three equal persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Who is the Father?

God the Father is the source and author of all love, goodness, truth, beauty, and wisdom. He is holy and is the creator and sustainer; as such, he has authority over his creation. He also is a relational God. We see that relational nature in his existence as trinity and in the ways that he reveals himself to and pursues relationship with people.

Son

We find God the Son in the person of Jesus, who became flesh, was born as a baby, and walked the earth as a Jewish man. He was both fully God and fully human. Now, Jesus reigns as the Lord of all things and serves as the mediator between God and humanity (1 Timothy 2:5).

Holy Spirit

Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit as a counselor who would be with his followers forever (John 14:16). The Holy Spirit is fully God, and his divine presence in the world serves to comfort, energize, and empower believers; convict humanity of sin; interpret Scripture; and align the Church with the mind and heart of God.

What is the role of Scripture?

Scripture--the Bible made up of the Old Testament and New Testament--is one of the ways God has revealed himself to humanity. It tells a seamless story of God's pursuit of his people. While Scripture was written by people, it was inspired by God and is authoritative, and useful for teaching, reproof, correcting, and training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16). We read and interpret all of Scripture through the life and person of Jesus.

What are the nature and state of humanity?

Humans were created by God in his image. While we still bear that image, our sinful choices draw us out of alignment with God's will for us, and away from communion with him. We need a

savior to bring us back into right relationship with God and then to teach us how to live. When we are in communion with God, we find that we are more fully who he created us to be.

What is the significance of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus?

Jesus is our Emmanuel, God with us. He chose to be born as a baby and to live as a man, experiencing the fullness of humanity. He loved, willingly suffered, rejoiced, and grieved, and in all of this he taught and modeled the way of living in God's kingdom. In an act of great love, he allowed himself to be killed, and then on the third day he rose from the dead; through his death and resurrection he conquered sin and death and became the only means of humanity's salvation.

How is a person saved?

Ultimately salvation is a gift from God -- we are saved by God's grace, through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). Salvation isn't solely a one-time, transactional event but an ongoing relationship with God, where we are continually being made into the likeness of Jesus.

What is the mission of God?

The mission of God is to bring humanity into full communion with himself and to restore shalom -- which implies peace, wholeness, and completeness -- in all creation.

What is the kingdom of God?

The kingdom of God is where we see the mission of God being carried out -- where, as Jesus prayed, God's will is being done on earth as it is in heaven. We speak of the kingdom of God as something that is both "already" and "not yet." There have been pockets throughout history, and still are today, where we see evidence of God's kingdom *already* here on earth. But there are many places where all is *not yet* made right. Because of that, we long for God's kingdom to come, we work for it to come, and we believe one day it will.

What is the role of the church?

The church is the physical means through which God is bringing his kingdom here on earth. While Jesus is no longer physically present among us, the church serves as his physical presence, both to those inside and to those outside the church. Jesus said that people will know we are his disciples by our love for one another. The church sees God's kingdom come on earth as we make disciples, fellowship together, do good works, admonish each other, and confess our sins to each other.

