

Being Christian

A Christian Formation Series at Toledo Mennonite Church

Inspired and based on the book Being Christian by Rowan Williams

Spring 2018

Session 1 - Being Christians; Baptism

Session 2 – Being Christian; Bible

Session 3 – Being Christian; Prayer

Session 4 – Being Christian; Communion

Session 5 – Being Anabaptist; Life of Peace

Session 6 – Being Anabaptist; Life of Mission

Session 7 – Being TMC; Membership Covenant

Session 8 – Being TMC; Vision and Values

Being Christian

Baptism † Bible † Communion † Prayer

Baptism = Literally to “dip in or under”
To sprinkle, pour, or immerse in water
Formal entry into the Christian Community

John’s Baptism	Matthew 3:1-6 John 1:24-28	What was it? Why was he doing it?
Jesus Receives John’s Baptism	Matthew 3:13-17	“Fulfill all righteousness” <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Baptism is a way in which Jesus identifies with fallen humanity• Baptism is the way Jesus assumes his role in God’s plan
Another Dimension	Mark 10:35-38 Luke 12:49-52	What kind of baptism is Jesus talking about? What added layer does this add to baptism?

Early Anabaptist spoke of a three-fold baptism:

1. Water – Repentance, obedience, life in the community of faith, gelassenheit
2. Spirit – Vitality, gifting, empowerment
3. Blood – Suffering, self-sacrifice, service, forsaking all for the gospel and the Kingdom

Romans 6:3-4 “Do you not know that all who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore, we were buried together with him through baptism into his death, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too can walk in newness of life.”

Compare: Genesis 1:1-5 and Matthew 3:13-17

“Baptism means being with Jesus ‘in the depths’: the depths of human need, including the depths of our own selves in their need – but also in the depths of God’s love; in the depths where the Spirit is re-creating and refreshing human life as God meant it to be.”

“If all this is correct, baptism does not confer on us a status that marks us off from everybody else. To be able to say ‘I’m Baptized’ is not to claim an extra dignity, let alone a sort of privilege that keeps you separate from and superior to the rest of the human race, but to claim a new level of solidarity with other people. It is to accept that to be a Christian is to be affected – you might even say contaminated – by the mess of humanity. This is very paradoxical. Baptism is a ceremony in which we are washed, cleansed, and re-created. It is also a ceremony in which we are pushed into the middle of a human situation that may hurt us, and that will not leave us untouched or unsullied. And the gathering of baptized people is therefore not a convocation of those who are privileged, elite, and separate, but of those who have accepted what it means to be in the heart of a needy, contaminated, messy world. To put it another way, you don’t go down into the waters of the Jordan without stirring up a great deal of mud.”

Rowan Williams from the book Being Christian

Believers Baptism AKA Credo-baptism

The practice of baptizing a person on the basis of his or her profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and as formal entry into a local Christian community.

Cf. Matthew 16:15-16

Peter’s confession is the rock upon which the church is built.

CoF – Article 11

We believe that the baptism of believers with water is a sign of their cleansing from sin. Baptism is also a pledge before the church of their covenant with God to walk in the way of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Believers are baptized into Christ and his body by the Spirit, water, and blood.

Christian baptism is for those who confess their sins, repent, accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and commit themselves to follow Christ in obedience as members of his body, both giving and receiving care and counsel in the church. Baptism is for those who are of the age of accountability and who freely request baptism on the basis of their response to Jesus Christ in faith

Examples of Baptism stories in Acts

Acts 2:41 – Mass baptism on the day of Pentecost

Acts 8:26-40 – The Ethiopian Eunuch

Acts 10:1-48 – Cornelius

Acts 16:13-15 – Lydia

Being Christian

Baptism † **Bible** † Communion † Prayer



What is the bible?

Law
History
Poems
Letters
Visions
Gospels
Parables
Prophecy
Genealogies
Travelogues

Written over 1000s
of years.

Depicting events that
took place over
1000s of years

Shakespeare's Sonnets
1525 Legal Ruling
1912 Census
Fragment of St. Basil
Pilgrim's Progress
Modern Blogger

And yet as eclectic, expansive, and diverse as this collection is, as hard as it can be to make sense of it sometimes, this is what God wants us to hear.

The bible is the collection of books that the church has identified as carrying the voice of God.

Reading or Listening?

Deuteronomy 6:4 – “Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God. The Lord is one. Love the lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.”

1 Samuel 3:10 – “Then Samuel said, “Speak Lord, for your servant is listening.”

Isaiah 48:17 – “This is what the Lord says – your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: ‘I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go.’”

Matthew 11:15 – “Whoever has ears, let them hear.”

Reading the bible is about listening to God in Jesus.

The Christian life is a listening life.

Christians are people who expect to be spoken to by God.

Many early Christians didn't have bibles. Their main way of interacting with the text was not to sit alone in a quiet space and read, but to come to a gathering of other Christians to hear the bible being read. Early Christians didn't so much read the bible as they *learned* the bible.

- They recited to one another
- They copied sections
- They memorized scripture (even imperfectly)

So think of the bible as containing the things that God wants us to hear; the things God wants us to learn. Think of it as stories of faith of people doing their best to listen to God and respond faithfully. Does that mean they always got it right? No. Does that mean God approved or liked everything that happened? No. But like a parable, as we listen to God speaking through the bible to us, it draws us in. It engages us. It takes us somewhere. And it leaves asks us: "Where are you in this?" "Who are you in this?"

On Biblical Interpretation

Bernhard Rothmann (1534)

"But if you wish to understand the Scriptures correctly, for this we will give you good advice. The content of the whole Scripture is briefly summarized in this: Honour and fear God the almighty in Christ his Son. This is the beginning of all wisdom. And in the same breath, that as Christ was obedient to the Father and fulfilled his will, we too should fulfill his will with trembling and quaking."

CoF – Article 4

"We seek to understand and interpret Scripture in harmony with Jesus Christ as we are led by the Holy Spirit in the Church."

Michele Hershberger

"Jesus is the lens through which we read the bible."

Exercise: Interpret Matt. 5:38-48, Matt. 26:50-54, and John 18:36 with Romans 13 and 1 Peter 2:11-17

Homework

Memorize the Lord's Prayer

or

Memorize Jesus' Baptism Story Mark 1:4-13 or

Matt. 3:1-17

or

Memorize the Sermon on the Plain: Luke 6:17-49

or

Scribe

or

Lectio Divina

- Calm and Quiet your mind
- Read a passage of scripture aloud to get familiar with it.
- Pray that God's spirit would illumine your reading of the text.
- Read the passage again quietly
- What word or phrase stuck out to you?
- Spend 10-15 more minutes in prayer. Allow that word or phrase to guide your prayer.

Being Christian

Baptism † Bible † **Prayer** † Communion

Spectrum questions:

1. Is prayer easy or hard?
2. Is prayer talking to God or listening to God?
 - a. Talking – Philippians 4:6, Ephesians 6:18-19, Psalm 86:6, Matthew 5:44
 - b. Listening – Mt 6:7-8, 32, Psalm 46:10, Psalm 62:5, Psalm 130:5-6
3. Should we pray for God to help us find our lost car keys?
4. Do “thoughts and prayers” make a difference?
 - a. James 2:15-17, 1 John 3:16-16 | 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Luke 18:1, Colossians 4:2-6

What do the following texts teach us about prayer?

Mark 14:36 Matthew 6:9 Romans 8:14-16 Galatians 4:6	John 17:20-23 Romans 8:33-34	Romans 8:26-27 John 14:16-17
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“For the Christians, to pray – before all else – is to let Jesus’ prayer happen in you. And the prayer that Jesus himself taught his disciples expresses this very clearly: ‘Our Father.’ We begin by expressing the confidence that we stand where Jesus stands and we say what Jesus says.”

“That, in a nutshell is prayer – letting Jesus pray in you, and beginning the lengthy and often very tough process by which our selfish thoughts and ideas and hopes are gradually aligned with his eternal action.”
Rowan Williams

1 Chronicles 28:9 2 Chronicles 15:1-4	Psalms 145:18-21 Proverbs 28:9	Isaiah 1:11-17 Jeremiah 7:3-11	Isaiah 56:3-7 Matthew 18:19-20 Acts 2:43
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Biblical Concordance of the Swiss Brethren, 1540

On Prayer

- OT: Deuteronomy chapters 6 and 10:12-22 | 2 Kings chapters 3 and 8 | 1 Chronicles 28:9 | 2 Chronicles 15:2-7 | Psalm 145:18-21 | Proverbs 15 and 28:9 | Isaiah 1 | Jeremiah 7, 11, 14, and 29 |
- NT: Matthew 6, 7, and 18:19-20 | Mark 11, 13, and 14 | Luke 11, 18, 21, and 22 | John 4:21-24 | Romans 8 and 12 | 1 Corinthians 11 | Ephesians 6 | Colossians 4 | 1 Thessalonians 5 | 1 Timothy 2 | 1 Peter 4 | 1 John 3 and 5 | James 1 and 5

Anabaptists and Prayer

There is not a lot of extensive writing on prayer from an Anabaptist perspective. Few 16th century Anabaptist leaders wrote directly about prayer. Why is that? Is it because Anabaptists don't pray or don't believe in prayer? Absolutely not! An Anabaptist perspective on faith assumes prayer. Early Anabaptists leaders challenged the institutional church in their day on many matters of faith and theology, but prayer wasn't one of them. Much of the Anabaptist tradition assumes and affirms the broad Christian wisdom and insight into the matter of prayer.

How to Pray

"Prayer is God's gift to the one who prays." Andre Louf

"Prayer is listening to God so much that we start to think God's thoughts and desire what God desires and love what God loves."

Michele Hershberger

The Lord's Prayer

Use as an outline for prayer.

Pray each clause

Help! Thanks! Wow!: The Three Essential Prayers

"I do not know much about god and prayer, but I have come to believe, over the last twenty-five years, that there's something to be said about keeping prayer simple. help, thanks. wow."

Anne Lamott

Help –	Mark 5:21-43, Psalm 86:1-7
Thanks –	Luke 17:11-19, Psalm 30:1-5, 11-12
Wow –	Luke 2:25-32, Psalm 136

Little pebbles

"Write down the 'little worries' that get in the way of your prayer. Do you fret that you are not right with God? That you may lose control when you pray? That you may have left the water boiling on the stove? Or, even worse, that you may not be qualified to pray? Ancient teachers on prayer referred to these little worries as scruples or little pebbles, that intrude upon our ability to walk confidently in the way of Christ. Perhaps by naming them you may be able to discard them or move beyond them in a more confident way."

Richard Foster

Pray the Psalms

The book of Psalms is Israel's, and Jesus', prayer book.

Read a psalm a day. Don't just read it to read it. Read it so that it guides your prayer.

Being Christian

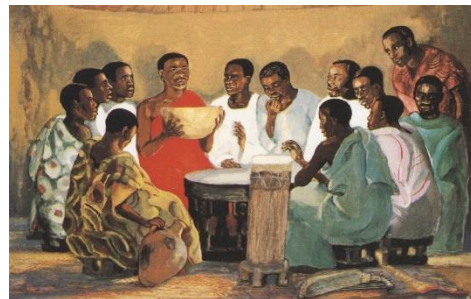
Baptism † Bible † Prayer † **Communion**



Important Passages about Communion:

Matthew 26:17-30 | Mark 14:12-25 | Luke 22:7-23

1 Cor 11:17-34	Abuses at the Lord's Supper	Rev 3:20	Open the door
John 13:1-20	Jesus washes the disciples feet	Rev 19:6-9	Wedding Feast of the Lamb
Luke 24:13-35	The Walk to Emmaus	Ex 12:1-28	The First Passover (see especially vv 25-27)
Acts 10:41	Apostles ate and drank w/Jesus	Isaiah 55:1-7	Everyone who thirsts
Acts 27:33-38	A storm at sea	Psalms 34:7-10	Taste and See
Mark 6:30-44	Feeding the 5,000 (and parallel)		



Communion Themes

Repentance
Union/unity
Forgiveness
Second coming
New life

Reconciliation
New creation
Death
Banquet table

New race
Hospitality
Sin
Social leveling

Rowan Williams

“We take holy communion not because we are doing well, but because we are doing badly. Not because we have arrived, but because we are traveling. Not because we are full, but because we are hungry”

Jesus is the host. We come as guests who have been invited by Jesus. And having been invited by Jesus, we are freed and empowered to invite others. Yet though we come as guests, we come as guests with the capacity to betray, deny, lie, cover-up, avoid, abandon, and forget, and so we come as guests in need of honest repentance.

Just as baptism is being with Jesus where Jesus is (in the depths of human sin and suffering but also in the depths of God’s love), so too communion is being with Jesus around the table, gathering, eating and drinking in Jesus presence.

16th Century Anabaptists

“Although it is simply bread, yet if faith and brotherly love precede it, it is to be received with joy, since, when it is used in the church, it is to show us that we are truly one bread and one body, and that we are and wish to be true brethren with one another.” Conrad Grabel

“All those who desire to break the one bread in remembrance of the broken body of Christ and all those who wish to drink of one drink in remembrance of the shed blood of Christ, they must beforehand be united in the one body of Christ, that is the congregation of God, whose head is Christ, and that by baptism.” Michael Sattler, the Schleitheim Confession

“The Lord Christ took the bread in the supper, blessed it, and broke it. This was as if he meant to say: ‘For as this bread is the support of the physical life,.. so also my body will support the life of your souls through the power of God...Again, as this wine makes the heart of man fresh and glad, so also my blood which in the love of God I shed for you. If you regard it, it will refresh you, make you joyful and fervent in love, so that you become completely one with me.’” Hans Denck

“We believe and confess concerning the Lord’s holy supper that is a holy sacramental *sign*, instituted of the Lord himself in bread and wine, and left to his disciples in *remembrance* of him.

“Do this in remembrance of me”

In what way is communion a memorial meal?

Is it just a memorial meal?

If it is only memory, then what role of the spirit? If it is solely about discipleship and walking the path of unity, love, and peace, what of the power of grace to do this?

Being Anabaptist

Life of Peace † Life of Mission

What do you think of when you think of peace?
What are some synonyms for peace?

Approaches to Peace Witness

- Nonresistance
- Conscientious Objection
- Non-violent Resistance
- New Narratives
- Active Peacemaking

The Radicals film clip (Nonresistance)

- Michael and Margarethe Sattler
 - Former Catholic priest and nun
 - Writer of Schleithem Confession
- Wilhelm Reublin – Anabaptist Leader who influenced Michael Sattler
- Martin Bucer and Wolfgang Capito – Reform Church leaders in Strasbourg

The sword is ordained of God outside the perfection of Christ... In the perfection of Christ, however, only the ban is used for warning and for the excommunication of the one who has sinned, without putting the flesh to death.

Schleithem Confession Article IV

Confession of Faith

We believe that peace is the will of God. God created the world in peace, and God's peace is most fully revealed in Jesus Christ, who is our peace and the peace of the whole world. Led by the Holy Spirit, we follow Christ in the way of peace, doing justice, bringing reconciliation, and practicing nonresistance even in the face of violence and warfare.

Peace and justice are not optional teachings, counsel that Christians can take or leave. They belong to the heart of gospel message

Hacksaw Ridge Film Trailer (Conscientious Objection)

- Desmond Doss – Seventh Day Adventist
- “While everybody else is gonna be takin’ life, I’m gonna be savin’ it. That’s gonna be my way to serve”
- Alternative Service. Civilian Public Service. 1W Service.

The Path of Most Resistance (Non-violent Resistance)

- Stories of Mennonite Conscientious Objectors who did not cooperate with the Vietnam draft.
- “The cup of noncooperation – an opportunity to witness” Dennis Koehn
- “To not be the quiet in the land” – Dan Lehman

German Mennonite Peace Committee (Alternative Narratives)

Christ is our fortress; patience our weapon of defense; the Word of God our sword; and our victory is a courageous, firm, unfeigned faith in Christ. Iron and metal spears and swords we leave to those who, alas, regard human blood and swine's blood as equal value.

Menno Simons

Moreover, the gospel and its adherents are not to be protected by the sword, nor are they thus to protect themselves... Neither do they use the worldly sword or war, since killing has ceased with them entirely.

Conrad Grebel

Examples of proactive peacebuilding

- Mennonite Central Committee – Relief, Development, and Peace in the name of Jesus.
- RAW Tools – Forging Peace, Disarming Hearts
- Mediation and Victim Offender Reconciliation
- Christian Peacemaker Teams – What would happen if Christians devoted as much to peace as soldiers devote to war?

Ron Sider – Evangelicals for Social Action – 1986 Speech to Mennonite World Conference in Strasbourg, France. The beginning of Christian Peacemaker Teams

<https://www.cpt.org/resources/writings/sider>

Those who have believed in peace through the sword have not hesitated to die. Proudly, courageously, they gave their lives... Why do we pacifists think that our way -- Jesus' way -- to peace will be less costly? Unless we Mennonites and Brethren in Christ are ready to start to die by the thousands in dramatic vigorous new exploits for peace and justice, we should sadly confess that we really never meant what we said... Unless comfortable North American and European Mennonites and Brethren in Christ are prepared to risk injury and death in nonviolent opposition to the injustice our societies foster and assist in Central America, the Philippines, and South Africa, we dare never whisper another word about pacifism to our sisters and brothers in those desperate lands. Unless we are ready to die developing new nonviolent attempts to reduce international conflict, we should confess that we never really meant the cross was an alternative to the sword.

And Finally

Many people can work for peace for a variety of reasons. But to be *Christian* peacemakers we must not separate our work for peace from what God has done in and through Christ.

Ephesians 2:14-21 2 Corinthians 5:11-21 Romans 5:6-11

Other important peace scriptures:

Matthew 5:3-12	Matt 5:21-26, 38-42	Matthew 26:47-56	John 18:36
Romans 12:1-21	1 Peter 3:11	1 Peter 2:21-24	Revelation 22:1-5
Isaiah 11:1-9	Micah 4:1-4	Jeremiah 29:4-7	2 Samuel 8:12

Being Anabaptist

Life of Peace † Life of Mission

“God is known to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Creator who seeks to restore fallen humanity by calling a people to be faithful in fellowship, worship, service, and witness.”

1 of 7 Statements of Shared Conviction by Mennonite World Conference

“We believe that the mission of the church is to proclaim and be a sign of the Kingdom of God. Christ has commissioned the church to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them, and teaching them to observe all the things he has commanded.”

Article 10 of the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective.

“The Whole Gospel for the Whole World”

Mennonites often use this phrase to remind others that peace is part of the whole Gospel.

As Mennonites, let us also remember to give witness to God’s reconciling love in Christ, and let us also remember Christ’s commission to make disciples.

“God is a missionary God... It is not so much the case that God has a mission for his church, as that God has a church for his mission. Mission was not made for the church, the church was made for mission.”

Christopher Wright

“The church began as a movement in Palestine, it moved to Rome and became a culture, it moved to Europe and became an Empire, it moved to America and became a business.” Unknown.

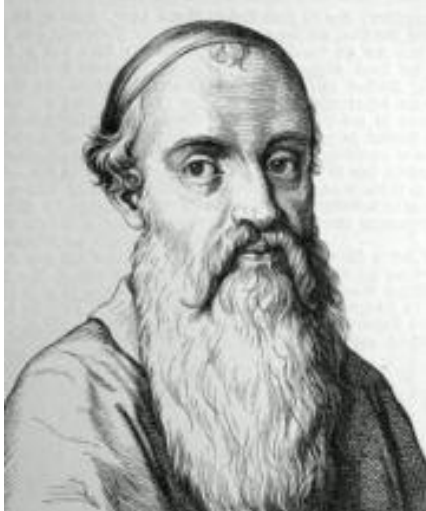
“Mission is the mother of theology.” Unknown.

Ephesians 2:14-21	2 Corinthians 5:14-21	Romans 5:6-11
Mark 1:9-15	Matthew 4:18-22	Luke 10:1-12, 17-20
Matthew 28:16-20	John 20:21-11	Romans 1:5 / Genesis 12:1-3
Deuteronomy 4:5-8	Isaiah 60	1 Peter 2:1-12

Half-Known Quotes



“No one can truly know Christ unless he follows him in life //
and no one can follow him unless he had first knows him..... Hans Denck



“True evangelical faith is of such a nature it **cannot lie dormant**, but spreads itself out in all kinds of righteousness and fruits of love; it dies to flesh and blood (1); it destroys all lusts and forbidden desires (2); it seeks, serves and fears God in its inmost soul (3); **it clothes the naked** (4); **it feeds the hungry** (5); **it comforts the sorrowful** (6); **it shelters the destitute** (7); **it aids and consoles the sad** (8); it does good to those who do it harm (9); b it serves those that harm it (10); it prays for those who persecute it (11); it teaches, admonishes and judges us with the Word of the Lord 12); it seeks those who are lost (13); **it binds up what is wounded** (14); it heals the sick (15); it saves what is strong (sound) (16); **it becomes all things to all people** (17). The persecution, suffering and anguish that come to it for the sake of the Lord’s truth have become a glorious joy and comfort to it.”

<https://themennonite.org/feature/true-evangelical-faith>

The Martyrs’ Synod

<https://themennonite.org/opinion/anabaptist-martyrs-dead>

August 20, 1527

Augsburg Germany

- A Gathering of 60 Anabaptist leaders from Switzerland, Austria, and Southern Germany
- Purpose: To come to agreement on central Anabaptist Teachings
- Result: A systemized plan to evangelize German-speaking Europe
 - Sent out in 2s and 3s
 - No comprehensive records survived, but the following is a partial list
 - Peter Scheppach and Ulrich Trechsel to Worms
 - Hans Denck and Hans Beck to Basel and the area around Zürich.
 - Gregor Maler to Vorarlberg
 - Georg Nespitzer to Mittelfranken
 - Leonhard Spörler and Leonhard Schiemer to Bern
 - Leonhard Dorfbrunner to Linz
 - Hans Mittermaier to Austria
 - Eukarius Binder and Joachim Mertz to Salzburg
- Legacy: Called the ‘Martyrs’ Synod’ because all but three of the participants were arrested or martyred shortly after the gathering.

Why?

Being TMC

“We believe that the church is the assembly of those who have accepted God’s offer of Salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. It is the new community of disciples sent into the world to proclaim the reign of God and to provide a foretaste of the church’s glorious hope. It is the new society established and sustained by the Holy Spirit.”

Confession of Faith Article 9 Summary Statement

Open Questions to Consider

- Why do people join churches?
- Why do churches receive members?
- Is membership a right or a privilege?
- Is “membership” even the right way to think about being part of a church?

Scriptures

1 Corinthians 3:11, 16-17 + Romans 12:3-5 + 1 Peter 2:4-5 + Hebrews 10:24-25 + Ephesians 4:1-6

3 Cs

Why do we have a public ritual of receiving new members?

re-Covenant	Amos 3:1-3
re-Commit	Luke 12:28-35
re-enCourage	1 Thessalonians 5:11
	Ephesians 4:29

Membership through a Mennonite Lens

Michele Hersberger in *God’s Story Our Story*

- Baptism and church membership are connected
- To be the Church is to participate with a real people, not a symbolic association
- God is creating a people, not a collection of individuals
- Support, Accountability, and discernment

“Membership in a church is different from membership in a club... Becoming a member of most organizations is a breeze... Most people join because it benefits them. Many want their club to keep “undesirable” people out.

“Membership in the church is not like that all... Membership is free. At the same time, the standards of the church are higher than any other group. It costs you everything – your life.

“And we don’t join a local congregation to get something... We do it because that’s who we are in Christ... Just think how different some worship experiences might be if people came with the desire to *give* something instead of to *get* something.”

Review TMC Covenant

Review Working Document of TMC Vision and Values

Toledo

Jeremiah 29:7 We care about this place, this city, this Maumee watershed because this is
Matthew 5:13-16 where we live and love. This is where we seek to be salt and light. This is
Matthew 6:10 where we proclaim with words and actions the good news of the Kingdom of
God in Toledo as it is in Heaven.

Mennonite

We are heirs of the radical Anabaptist reformation of 16th century Europe.
We are a peace church. And we are part of the world-wide Christian church
1 Corinthians 3:11 built on the foundation of Christ Jesus. At our best, we Mennonites have
always been dreamers who take the teachings of Jesus seriously. We don't
always get it right. We sometimes forget the grace and spirit of God and
Ephesians 2:8-10 think it all depends on our hard work and good effort. But we keep
1 Peter 2:9-10 dreaming en route to becoming people who are called out of darkness into
God's marvelous light.

Church

Colossians 1:15-23 We worship Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior, and we seek to live as a new
Galatians 3:28 community formed by his life, death, and resurrection. We are called
Luke 10:25-37 together by God's Spirit to love God, neighbor, and even our enemies. By
Romans 8:11 God's resurrection power at work within us, we desire to grow in Christ-
Micah 6:8 likeness, to worship God in spirit and truth, to seek peace, to build justice, to
serve others, and to live humbly.

Vision: Healing and Hope

God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

Our Mission

Acts 1:8	To seek Christ's peace in Toledo and beyond
	Our Guideposts for this:
Acts 2:42	Be the church
Matthew 28:19-20	Call all to be disciples of Jesus
Matthew 7:12	Read the Bible through the lens of Jesus
2 Corinthians 5:20	Live as ambassadors for Christ in our neighborhoods

We value...

Relationships that are

John 4:4-42	Hospitable, inviting, caring
Acts 10	Accepting of all no matter where they are on their faith journey
John 8:1-11	Mutually accountable through conversation, not coercion, manipulation, or abusive uses of power

Communal Space that is...

Romans 12:9	Honest and open and loving
1 Corinthians 12:14-20	Respectful of differences while seeking truth
John 3:1-21	Free to ask questions, express doubts, and release laments
	Encouraging for growth in Christ-likeness
	A balance of encouragement and accountability

Worship that is...

Isaiah 55:1	Open to all who are drawn to Jesus
James 1:19-27	Relevant to all areas of life
1 Corinthians 12:4-11	Authentically based on the gifts of the people, not on molds and models from elsewhere

Ministry and mission that is...

John 1:14	Centered on Jesus as the key lens through which we interpret the Bible
Luke 4:18	Incarnational, wholistic, and restorative
	Healing and hopeful
2 Corinthians 5:18-21	Faithful to the gospel by reconciling people to God and to one another
Luke 6:43-45	Measured by the character it produces within individuals