**CFC Statement of Faith, DNA, Values and Culture**

**CFC Statement of Faith - what do we believe?**

* There is One true God who lives eternally in three persons – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
* The love, grace and sovereignty of God in creating, sustaining, ruling, redeeming and judging the world.
* The divine inspiration and supreme authority of the Old and New Testament Scriptures, which are the written Word of God fully trustworthy for faith and conduct.
* The dignity of all people, made male and female in God’s image to love, be holy and care for creation, yet corrupted by sin, which incurs divine wrath and judgement.
* The incarnation of God’s eternal Son, the Lord Jesus Christ born of the virgin Mary, truly divine and truly human, yet without sin.
* The atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross dying in our place, paying the price of sin and defeating evil, so reconciling us with God.
* The bodily resurrection of Christ, the first fruit of our resurrection his ascension to the Father, and his reign and mediation as the only Saviour of the world.
* The justification of sinners solely by the grace of God through faith in Christ.
* The ministry of God the Holy Spirit, who leads us to repentance, unites us with Christ through new birth, empowers our discipleship and enables our witness.
* The Church, the body of Christ both local and universal, the priesthood of all believers given life by the Spirit and endowed with the Spirit’s gifts to worship God and proclaim the gospel, promoting justice and love.
* The personal and visible return of Jesus Christ to fulfil the purposes of God, who will raise all people to judgement, bring eternal life to the redeemed and eternal condemnation to the lost, and establish a new heaven and new earth.

**Our DNA**

The DNA of CFC can be described as the unique way that CFC fulfills its mission ‘to be a Christ centred community, dedicated to impacting Belfast, Ireland and the nations with the love of God in the power of the Holy Spirit.’ The DNA comprises a deeply rooted set of values together with the culture and practices of the church.

**Values**

The values have been established by the Elders and are reflected throughout all the ministries and activities of CFC.

* **An emphasis on praise and worship.** Praise and worship are integral to the life of the church at a corporate, small group and individual level
* **The centrality of prayer and the word of God.** Our commitment to prayer is expressed through corporate prayer initiatives, small group gatherings and individual’s personal time with God. We believe that all scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Tim:3:16
* **An obvious ministry of the Holy Spirit.** The presence and power of the Holy Spirit is acknowledged and called upon throughout the life of church.
* **Relational Christianity.** There is a strong consistent commitment to healthy relationships where people can thrive in an environment of trust and both give and receive care.
* **A focus on body ministry and the priesthood of all believers.** Based on Romans 12:5, it is recognised that each person has a vital role to play in the body of Christ.
* **A heart for evangelism, reaching the lost and planting them into church.** There is a focus on evangelism and discipleship through intentional activities such as alpha and also at a personal level in everyday life. We are also passionate to support the growth of life-giving churches throughout Ireland where Christians can flourish in their faith.
* **A world vision with involvement in overseas mission.** As a church we currently work across Ireland, Europe, central and south-east Asia – providing support through prayer, teams and finances.
* **A concern for the poor and disadvantaged and a desire for social justice.** As a church we are committed to seeing this worked out in the life of every believer both personally and corporately. We currently partner with CAP, Oasis Caring in Action and a number of other locally based charities, in addition we regularly respond to global disaster appeals.
* **A prophetic voice to the nation, proclaiming anti-sectarian and non discriminatory Christianity.** We will not tolerate any expression of sectarianism or discrimination. We aspire to reflect through words and deeds, how God treats each individual with dignity and respect, regardless of race, religion, gender, beliefs, practices or social class.
* **The unity of believers, regardless of Church affiliation.** Evident in the unity within the church family and relationships and partnerships with other Christian churches and organisations.

**CFC Culture**

The culture of CFC is how we live out the values. The culture of CFC is evident from the attitudes and behaviours expressed throughout the life of the church.

* **Honesty:** We are real. We tell it like it is in our lives. We have a culture of openness and vulnerability.
* **Encouragement:** A place where someone says thanks to you for all you are doing. A place where people are encouraged to ‘*have a go*’ – a ‘*you can*’ culture.
* **Expansion:** We want to grow! 2 Peter 1:5-9. We want to grow in character and in love, but also to grow in the number of people becoming Christians, being discipled and allowing the love of God to transform their lives. There will always be room for you.
* **Excellence:** To be the best expression of what God created us to be.
* **Humility:** To genuinely praise and speak well of others and pray that their work will flourish and rejoice with them when it does.
* **Creativity:** Creativity is encouraged in everything we do, including creative ways of reaching people and creative ways of worship.
* **Flexibility**: An openness to accommodate diversity within the church and allowing people to have a go and learn from the experience.
* **Fun:** A people who take what they do seriously but don’t take themselves too seriously. We take time to celebrate individuals, teams and together as a family.
* **Inclusiveness:** We don’t expect people to behave, before truly understanding what they believe, in order to belong. Instead, we choose to give people the opportunity to first belong, then they become open to believing and we can journey together to help them become all God wants them to be. It means that like Jesus we will include those who think they are outside of His love and grace.
* **Generosity:** We are a people who give. There is a generosity of love, warmth and finances, always displaying a generous spirit and going the extra mile.

**Other CFC Practices:**

**Baby dedications:**

* standing with the parent(s) and family as they dedicate their child
* acknowledging and giving thanks for the child as a unique and precious gift from God
* placing the child into God’s care
* praying for a future personal salvation decision
* seeking God and sharing prophetically for the child.

**Believer’s baptism:**

* in obedience to Jesus command
* baptism by immersion is a public profession of faith in Christ

It is symbolic of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. It is a declaration to the world that we have died to sin and have been raised with Christ to walk in newness of life

(Matthew 3:13-17; 28:19-20; Luke 3:21-22; Acts 8:36-39; 16:31-34; Romans 6:1-4)

**Communion / Breaking of Bread:**

* remembering His death until He returns
* two elements: the bread and the cup. These elements are symbolic of the body and blood of Christ. Communion is a memorial of Christ’s sufferings on the cross and a celebration of our salvation

(Luke 22:14-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-34)

* we encourage the celebration of communion in both large corporate and smaller group gatherings and the presence of a Pastor or elder is not required.

**Marriage – we believe marriage:**

* reflects the relationship between Christ and the church
* is a covenant and spiritual relationship
* is a lifelong exclusive commitment between a man and woman
* is the only acceptable context for a sexual relationship
* should be promoted and celebrated in our local community and so we delight to conduct marriages for those who are not members of CFC but who believe in God and seek marriage within a church context. We believe we should not officiate at the marriage of a Christian with a non-Christian. (2 Cor 6:14-16)
* We require anyone being married within CFC to attend a pre marriage course – either in CFC or in another Christian context.

**Church Membership:**

We encourage people to make a personal commitment to the vision and values of CFC through membership. Someone is invited to become a member after:

* attending an Exploring Membership course
* a personal conversation with an Elder or senior leader
* demonstrating a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour
* expressing an understanding of and alignment with the CFC statement of faith
* expressing a commitment to being actively involved in the life of the church and playing their part in outworking our vision and values

The removal of membership is not taken lightly. If someone is living in such a way that is openly disobedient to the word of God, every opportunity is given to support and help that person restore their relationship with God and their Christian witness. A period of suspended membership may be suggested during this process. If, however that person is not open to change or help, their membership will be revoked. There is always a willingness and hope for future restoration.

Members are encouraged to support the church financially through the practice of tithing.