

THE ESSENCE OF WHITE STATION



Dream and Create: Being a Vital Part of White Station Church

Imagine an artist all prepared to paint. Brushes, paints and easel are all ready to use. The desire is to create a captivating vision and share it with the world--to use the artistic gift God has given, but the artist seems to be stuck at the start. Why? There is no canvas on which to paint. Canvases are important to painters because they frame the portrait. The canvas places constraints on the painting, but within its frame the artist has freedom to dream and create.

God provides our spiritual gifts and asks everyone to use these gifts through involvement in a church. So picture yourself standing like an artist with

dreams, paints, brushes, and an easel but feeling a little embarrassed about having no canvas.

A church leader recognizes your gifts, embraces your creativity, and returns with a stretched canvas. "Go ahead and paint," the church leader says. You feel the freedom to paint on the canvas without fear or hesitation. You are doing what God brought you to this place to do.

At White Station our empowerment model of leadership encourages everyone to identify his or her gifts and then use them without hesitation. This document provides the frame, the beliefs and core values, that define the space in which we are free to

purpose

In this document you will find answers to questions you may have regarding the community of God at White Station. These statements intend to cover the basics--what we believe, who we are, and where God may lead us--while also seeking to lead YOU into Christian service through the Church of Christ at White Station (COCWS)!

Core Beliefs of COCWS:

- God created the world and continues to be active in relationship with it. *Genesis 1-2, Psalm 89:5-18*
- Jesus was born of a virgin, loved people, died on a cross bearing our sin, defeated sin by being raised from the dead, and is now enthroned at God's side until he returns again to destroy death and provide ultimate victory. *Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 1:26-38, Romans 8:31-39, 1 Peter 2:24, Romans 6:9, 1 Corinthians 15*
- The Holy Spirit dwells in all Christians, leads them in their walk, and provides them with gifts to serve. *John 1:24-34, Romans 8:9-17, 1 Corinthians 12*
- The Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is God's authoritative Word and reveals God's promises, mission, and expectations. *Romans 15:4, 2 Timothy 3:14, 2 Peter 3:1-2*

Central Experiences of COCWS:

- All people are sinners and need the cleansing from sin that God provided through Jesus Christ. *Romans 3:21-26, 5:18-21*
- When people believe in Jesus Christ and are baptized through immersion in water, God forgives their sins and places the Holy Spirit in them as they begin their new life relationship with God and their fellow Christians. *Acts 2:37-39*
- The church is God's people, who are cleansed by the sacrifice of Jesus and experience transformed lives. *1 Corinthians 1:1-9*
- The church, in relationship to Jesus, lives out his prayer for unity by calling believers into peaceful community. *John 17*

Worship at COCWS:

- Through worship we praise and give thanks for all God has done, is doing, and will do in the world and in the life of the church, and encourage one another in our Christian walk. *Psalm 100*
- Through prayer God hears, empowers, transforms, heals, and guides us even when responding in ways other than we might desire. *Philippians 4:4-7*

- The Lord's Supper is a weekly reminder of Jesus' death and suffering, a proclamation of his coming again; it is a communal meal that binds us to one another. *Matthew 26:17-30, Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26*
- We sing without instruments, raising our voices together to give thanks and honor to God. *Ephesians 5:15-20, Colossians 3:15-17*
- Preaching connects biblical truth to contemporary life. *2 Timothy 4:1-5*
- By giving financially, we acknowledge God's blessings and enable ministry to our community and the world. *2 Corinthians 8:1-7, Ephesians 4:28*
- We have a variety of worship services to serve the community in which we live and to meet the needs within the White Station church family. *1 Corinthians 9:19-23*

Organization at COCWS:

- We are an independent, self-governing church. *Acts 14:23, Acts 20:28*
- God calls all followers to use the gifts God has given them. *1 Peter 4:10, Romans 12:3-8*
- Ministry Leaders are men and women specifically chosen to assist in a particular area of service within the church. *1 Corinthians 12*
- Deacons are men specifically chosen as leaders in a particular area of service within the church. *Acts 6:1-4*
- The team of ministers provides professional leadership in preaching, administration, worship and children, youth and seniors ministries. *2 Timothy 4:1-5, 1 Corinthians 9:3-12*
- Shepherds (also called elders or overseers) are men who care for the body and provide spiritual leadership in a variety of ways. *1 Peter 5:1-4, Titus 1:5-9*
- The shepherds and team of ministers form the Leadership Team whose goal is to strengthen the church for Christian service and to provide direction for the future of the church. *Ephesians 4:11-13*
- We are committed to accountability and transparency in all these leadership areas including church finances and in the selection of volunteers among all age groups,

Relationships at COCWS:

- All Christians have full access to God through Jesus. *Hebrews 4:14-15*
- We are united in Christ as one body of believers. *Galatians 3:26-28, Ephesians 4:1-6*
- We practice racial, ethnic, social, economic, and generational inclusion. *1 Corinthians 12:12-13, Romans 10:11-13*
- We seek the development of deep friendships through the connections and shared learning experiences in our Bible classes. *1 Peter 3:15-16, 1 Corinthians 12:24b-27*
- We support God's plan for marriage and confront whatever weakens any marriage within our church family; we follow the example of God's grace in extending mercy and support to those who have experienced divorce. *Genesis 2:24, 1 Peter 4:8, Mark 10:1-12, Galatians 6:1-5*
- We love all individuals, support healthy relationships regardless of family status, and seek to strengthen all who strive to do God's will. *1 Thessalonians 5:9-11*

Heritage of COCWS:

- We are committed to seeking the unity of God's people by embracing the Bible as God's authoritative Word and seeking to be "Christians only but not the only Christians." *John 17:20-23, 2 Timothy 3:14-16*
- We remain committed to the central teachings of the American Restoration Movement as set forth by its leaders in the early 1800's.

Maturing through COCWS:

Ephesians 4:14-16, 1 Timothy 4:11-14

- We value the study of Scripture, and it occupies a prominent place in our life as a church family. We encourage Bible study in the home, and we are blessed to offer well-qualified teachers who teach Bible classes for all ages in Sunday school and mid-week Bible study. Men or mixed-gender teams teach mixed-gender adult Bible classes. Women teach women's adult Bible classes, and both

men and women teach classes designed to equip people for ministry.

- We value a strong children's ministry that nurtures and serves children and their families.
- We value a strong youth ministry that focuses on spiritual formation and development of teens through teaching and serving (e.g., foreign and domestic mission opportunities).
- We value a strong college ministry that serves Memphis area students at all schools, and we provide oversight for the Christian Student Center at the University of Memphis.
- We value young professionals, single adults and couples of all ages by providing Bible classes and opportunities to grow in relationships among their peers.
- We value a strong ministry of senior adults that emphasizes their worth and provides opportunities to serve, care, and reach out to others.
- We value Christian institutions of learning and have a long standing relationship with Harding Academy of Memphis and Harding School of Theology.
- We value public education and have adopted Colonial Middle School to serve its students, faculty, and staff.
- We value wholeness and health by providing counseling services through Agape Child and Family Services.

Being COCWS means:

- We will remain at 1106 Colonial Rd so that we may serve this community. *Matthew 5:14-16*
- We support ministry that leads the lost to Christ in our city and throughout the world. *Isaiah 49:6*
- We support ministry that encourages Christian maturity. *1 Timothy 4:7, 4:15*
- We support ministry among the poor of our city and throughout the world. *Luke 4:16-19, James 1:27*
- We will be a community of healing and reclamation for those who are addicted, abused, and oppressed. *Psalms 103:1-6,*

Future of COCWS:

- We commit to helping every member fully utilize his or her God-given gifts to the glory of God. *Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 12-14, Ephesians 4:11-13*
- We commit to encouraging spiritual growth in all our members through a variety of small groups. *Hebrews 10:23-25*
- We commit to blessing the community around our building and staying at 1106 Colonial Rd. *Acts 1:7-8*
- We commit to increasing our service to Colonial Middle School. *Acts 1:7-8*
- We commit to growing in our ability to use the Community Life Center to the glory of God, in the name of Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit. *Acts 1:7-8*
- We commit to reaching out even more effectively to our city. *Acts 1:7-8*
- We commit to becoming a church that plants churches in our city. *Acts 1:7-8*
- We commit to supporting fully more missionaries around the world. *Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:7-8*



THE CHURCH OF CHRIST AT
WHITE STATION

Our mission is to serve everyone in our diverse community, to lead the lost to Christ, and to help everyone become fully mature Christians.