



## HOPE

### **In Houston as it is in heaven**

We want to **live with God** and **join him in his mission** to proclaim the good news of Jesus' kingdom. Our prayer is Jesus' prayer — that God's will would be done on Earth, and in Houston, as it is in Heaven.

## VISION

### **A community following Jesus in Houston.**

We want to **be with Jesus, become like Jesus, and do what Jesus did** in the world. We want to do this all in community, scattered across the different neighborhoods around Houston.

## COMMITMENTS

### Follow Jesus

We believe that to be a follower of Jesus is to take up the life of an apprentice or disciple. At Apostles we talk about this way of life as centering around three goals: **be with Jesus, become like Jesus, and do what Jesus did.**

### Be in community

Throughout the week, we live in community where we eat, pray, learn, and share life together. **LifeGroups** are the primary place where we practice the way of Jesus, together, in Houston.

### Gather on Sundays

**We gather as a church** around the sacrament of communion; to pray, learn the Scriptures, hear the Gospel proclaimed and worship together as the people of God.

### Serve

We serve by demonstrating **self-sacrificial love to those both in and outside the church.** It takes dozens of servants to pull off the gatherings each weekend. We are a family, and like a family, we must all pitch in.

### Give

We give in order to partner with Jesus to serve our city. We dream of becoming a church **marked by radical generosity** with a significant portion of our budget going directly to evangelism (telling others about Jesus) and justice (serving and caring for the forgotten children of our city and our world).

## VALUES

We see ourselves as only a small part of the full expression of Christ's body in our city and world. We believe God's particular call on our community is expressed in our heart for:

### **Scripture**

We believe the Bible tells the extraordinary true story of the one true God, his plan to deliver us from the evil and chaos of our world and restore creation. It reveals his love for humanity and teaches us how to live with a holy God, which is only possible by grace through faith in the person of Jesus Christ.

### **Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit animates and empowers our life with God through His personal presence and work in our lives. The Spirit transforms us into the likeness of Jesus and enables us through his presence and gifts to experience, demonstrate and proclaim the fullness of life in his kingdom.

### **Children**

We share God's heart for the marginalize and forgotten, particularly for the forgotten children of our society — the poor, the orphan, and the abused — and long for them to know and experience the Father's heart of adoption.

### **Discipleship**

As we seek to follow Jesus Christ we commit to helping others follow Jesus by taking responsibility for their spiritual good.

### **Evangelism**

We share Christ's heart to "seek and save the lost." We long for others to know the good news of the kingdom and the fullness of life in Jesus.

### **Community as family**



We believe community is essential for our transformation and mission. Everyone has a place and a critical role in the life of our community.

## **Tradition**

We value our Anglican tradition not as dead ritual but as a treasure trove of godly practices, rhythms, worship and theology.

## BELIEFS

We affirm our belief in historic Christianity as revealed in the Scriptures and summarized in the three Creeds (the Apostles, the Nicene, and the Athanasian) and the Thirty-Nine Articles. As a community, we affirm the following beliefs:

### **The Holy Trinity**

The mystery of the Holy Trinity, namely, that the one God exists (Isaiah 44:6) eternally in the three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19); and has so revealed himself to us in the Scriptures.

### **The Lord Jesus Christ**

The full deity and full humanity (2 John 7) of our Lord Jesus Christ, God Incarnate (John 1:14), who by reason of his birth of the Virgin Mary (Matthew 1:22-23), sinless life (1 Peter 2:22), atoning death (Romans 3:25), bodily resurrection (Luke 24:1-3), glorious ascension (Luke 24:51) and triumphant reign (Hebrews 1:3), is the only Mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5).

### **The Holy Scriptures**

The trustworthiness of God's word (the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments) as illuminated by the Holy Spirit (1 John 2:20, 27) contains all things necessary for salvation, teach God's will for his world, and have supreme authority for faith, life and the continuous renewal and reform of the Church (2 Timothy 3:16).

### **Justification and Sanctification**

The justification of the repenting and believing sinner (Galatians 3:11) as God's gracious act (Ephesians 2:8-9) of declaring him righteous on the ground of the reconciling death of Christ, who suffered in our place and rose again for us (Romans 5:1-11); and sanctification as the gracious continuing activity of the Holy Spirit in the

justified believer (Romans 8:9-11), perfecting his repentance, nurturing the new life implanted within him, transforming him into Christ's image, and enabling him to do good works in the world (Galatians 2:20).

## **The Christian Church**

The Church as the Body of Christ, whose members belong to the new humanity (Ephesians 2:15, 19-22), are called to live in the world in the power of the Spirit (Romans 8:1-11), worshipping God, confessing his truth, proclaiming Christ (Acts 1:8), supporting one another in love and giving themselves in sacrificial service to those in need (Acts 2:42-47).

## **Spiritual Gifts and Ministry**

All followers of Jesus have received the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit (Acts 2:17-18, 33, 38-39) and are called to exercise their God-given spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12) in ministry, and to work, witness, and suffer for Christ (Romans 5:3-5); together with the particular calling of ordained ministers, who, by preaching, teaching and pastoral care (Acts 20:28-31), are to equip God's people for his service (1 Timothy 5:17, 1 Peter 5:1-4) and to present them mature in Christ (Colossians 1:28).

## **The Gospel Sacraments**

Jesus instituted two rites which his followers were to observe: baptism (a rite of initiation) and the Lord's Supper (a rite of remembrance) (Matthew 28:16-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-34). The visible and physical acts proclaim the Gospel and which serve as means of grace when received in faith (Romans 4:11, Ephesians 2:8-9).

In the ceremonial washing of baptism, we are cleansed from and forgiven of sin (Acts 22:16; 1 Corinthians 6:11), spiritual reborn into new life (Titus 3:5) and receive the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. Through baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit we are united with Jesus in his death, burial and resurrection and raised to new life in him (Romans 6:3-4).

In the ceremonial meal, followers of Jesus worship through the sharing of bread and wine as the body and blood of Christ. In this holy meal we recall his death and



celebrating our new covenant relationship with God through Jesus willing sacrifice on the cross. By faith we may feed on him in our hearts and offer ourselves to him in gratitude for our salvation, the power of his promises, and the gift of his presence in our lives. (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

The Lord's Table is not restricted to any particular tradition or Christian community but is open to all baptized believers who, being one in Christ, are free to celebrate their common salvation in the Lord, and express their common devotion to him.

## **The Return of Christ**

The personal return in glory of our Lord Jesus Christ at the end of this age for the resurrection of the dead, some to life, some to condemnation, for the glorification of his Church, and for the renewal of the whole creation (1 Thessalonians 5:1-4; Revelation 21).

## Our relationships

### **Our Relationship with God**

We believe in God the Father, Creator of everything, Who loved the world He created and sent His only Son to be our Savior. (Genesis 1:1; John 3:16)

We believe God the Son is Jesus of Nazareth, the Savior sent by God, Israel's Messiah, born of a virgin, fully man and fully God. (Mat 1:18; Philippians 2:6; Hebrews 4:15; Romans 8:3)

We believe God the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, quickens us from death to life, indwells all those who receive Jesus Christ by faith as Lord and Savior and continuously conforms believers to the image of Jesus Christ. (John 14:17, 14:20, 14:26; John 16:14; Romans 8:26; II Corinthians 3:18)

The will of God is our highest goal in every aspect of life (Luke 6:46-49) We must know the Word of God, understand it, be able to articulate it, and be ready to defend the faith at all times. (I Peter 3:15)

Scripture -We encourage every member of our church to become a prayerful student of Scripture, for it is the infallible Word of God written. (Matt. 5:17-20; II Timothy 3:14-17; Psalm 119:9-11, Hebrews 4:12)

Prayerful dependence on God - life with Christ can only be lived in the power of the Holy Spirit, whose fullness we seek daily. Prayer, both individual and corporate, must under gird all our life. Prayer focuses us upon the will of God, joins us to the heart of God, and releases through us the miracle-working power of God. (Phil. 2:13, 4:13; Matt 7:7-11; Luke 11:1-13; Luke 6:12)

Giving sacrificially of our money and time to the purposes of Christ, as an expression of our faith, is essential to our maturity. (II Cor. 9:19-23; Acts 19:8 Malachi 3:10)



## **Our Relationships with One Another**

An atmosphere of grace must pervade our life together. While we expect the highest and best of one another, we accept one another as forgiven and beloved of God. (Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 12:9-18).

We are a family - we need each other and rejoice in the gift of supportive, accountable, faithful, prayerful relationships (Mark 3:31-35; I Corinthians 12:12-27)

Nurture of children—we are committed to bringing our children to the knowledge and love of the Lord. (3 John 4, Deut. 6:6-7, Jude 3:4)

Growth is expected -anointed, scripturally sound, expository teaching, God-honoring worship, supportive relationships, purposeful discipling, daily obedience, wise counsel, prayer, and study are the ingredients we cherish as catalysts for personal and corporate growth in Christ. (Col. 1:28; Matt. 5:48; Romans 12:1-2)

Attitudes of joy in Christ, gratitude to God, trust, sacrifice, and an ongoing expectancy must characterize our life together if we are to fulfill God's purposes for us. (James 1:1-8; Luke 1:37; Psalm 100; I Thessalonians 5:16-18)

Leadership in the church is to be entrusted only to those with leadership gifts who exhibit consistent spiritual maturity, wisdom, godliness, and a willingness to sacrifice for the sake of Christ. (Acts 6:2-5; Nehemiah 1:2; I Timothy 3, Titus 1:6-9)

Involvement - our church must be actively involved in the culture, seeking to bring the mind of Christ to the issues and challenges of the day. (I Cor. 9:19-23; Acts 19:8)

## **Our Relationships with Others**

Authenticity of life - we all seek to live more like Christ, to be persons of integrity while seeking to grow in Christ, and to bear witness to Christ by our love for him and one another. (Matt. 6:33-34; 7:18-21; Ephesians 4:25-26; James 1:22-25, 5:12; Hebrews 12:1-2; Philippians 1:6)



Conversion - We long for others to come to know Christ as their Lord and Savior. Apart from Christ, people are broken, hopeless and dead in their sin. As we humbly and boldly reach out and share Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, we expect to see a steady stream of new persons becoming believers and joining our family. (John 3:1-6; Luke 15; Matt. 28:18-20)

Gifts for ministry - every believer has been given a gift for ministry and is commissioned by Christ to go and make disciples. The church functions best when each member discovers, develops, and deploys his own gifts in ministry, and we seek to help all members find their place to serve. (I Cor. 12-14; Eph. 4)