



KING'S CROSS CHURCH

King's Cross Church Story of Belief

Introduction

At King's Cross Church we have a *Story of Belief*. We believe God loves to speak. From the very beginning of the Bible, we see God create through speaking. In the New Testament, God's ultimate act of love – Jesus Christ – comes to us as a “Word made flesh” (John 1:1-18). At the same time, we believe that God has made us to be “story people.” We share our life and make sense of our life through the stories we tell. As a church, we strive to understand and live out the story of God, and God's people, in the world.

Our beliefs are not simple, sterile statements. Instead, these beliefs form the story we know and tell about God and about ourselves as God's people. We believe God's work in the world is one fundamentally based upon love. God's ultimate desire is to bring everyone, and all of creation, into intimate relationship with one another and with God.

This is our *Story of Belief* and represents how we, as best we can, understand God's loving work in the world. At the end, you'll find additional ways to learn more and explore how you might join your story to our larger story here at King's Cross.

Creation

The Story begins with God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – who created everything: from the edges of the cosmos to the innerworkings of the atom. God created humanity in God's own image and designed us to live in intimate friendship with one another and with God. Out of God's love humanity received responsibility and work, to cultivate and care for creation, as a gift from God.

Brokenness / Sin

Sadly, humanity was deceived and came to distrust God. Rather than trust God's goodness, and the boundaries God placed upon them, the first humans decided to place themselves as the “god” of their life. This was the first instance of sin, and sin fractured the world. Humanity's relationship with God, one another, and itself became broken. A cycle of shame, guilt, and fear began and continues to this day, a cycle which ultimately leads to death.

Promise / Pursuit of God

But God did not turn away from humanity or creation. The story of the Bible is the story of God's relentless pursuit of humanity's redemption. God invited the descendants of Abraham and Sarah into a special relationship called a covenant. God became their God, and they became "the people of God." God made it clear to Abraham, Sarah, and their descendants that they would become the path through which all people from all nations would be blessed. This blessing culminated in the arrival of the Messiah: Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

Christ / Salvation

Jesus is unlike anyone before or after Him: both fully God and fully man. He is simultaneously the son of God and the son of Mary, who was a virgin. His public ministry focused upon, and was characterized by, the love of God and the need for everyone to love both God and their neighbor. Jesus lived a perfect life – one free from sin and therefore one in full relationship with God, others, and Himself – and therefore was able to do something no one else could: repair and restore the brokenness of the world.

Yet many of those in authority found Jesus' ministry and preaching radical. They eventually persuaded the authorities to kill Jesus. He died a criminal's death on a cross: an innocent and sinless man. He willingly offered Himself as a ransom for all. In doing so, Jesus took upon Himself the weight of all brokenness from all people across all time. But Jesus' story did not end there.

Resurrection

On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead, a living conqueror of death itself. Because of His life, death, and resurrection, we too have the hope of life eternal: a restored relationship not of brokenness but wholeness. For in Jesus and through Jesus, we believe all people may be made whole again: with God, others, and themselves.

Future Hope

We believe Jesus now sits with the Father waiting for the culmination of God's redemptive work: a new heaven and a new earth. Jesus will come again to bring the Kingdom of God to Earth in fullness, remaking the world, at which time He will remove all remaining evil and brokenness. This new creation will be the final breaking of the long cycle of shame, guilt, fear, and death. The future promises instead, an eternity as God originally planned: one of love, intimacy, and meaning.

Present Work

This future hope guides and shapes our lives today. While the world still contains brokenness and pain, God is working through Jesus and through God's people to restore what was broken. Because we believe this story ultimately ends in wholeness, we are a people marked by joy, laughter, and hope!

As we wait for the return of Jesus, God has empowered those who follow Jesus as their Lord and Savior to carry the Good News of Jesus' gracious love, defeat of death, and ultimate return. Those who declare Jesus as Lord belong to the Church (sometimes called the Church Universal) and often belong to local, smaller churches.

We see ourselves as one of many communities on mission. Empowered by God's gift of the Holy Spirit, and guided by the gift of Scripture, we are charged with the wonderful work of living as an example of God's future plan for all creation, while inviting others into this story—God's story. We strive to embody God's promised future by being a community grounded in sacrificial love, courageous trust, selfless generosity, and unending adventure.

King's Cross Distinctives

We believe the story you've just read is The Story of God's work in the world, and we believe all churches – indeed all of creation – is caught up in it. Beyond this great big story, you may have some questions about how we at King's Cross do our best to live faithfully as the people of God. Below are a few distinctive ways King's Cross Church sees various matters of life and faith.

- The Bible
 - We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God and useful for teaching, correcting, and growing in life and faith (2 Timothy 3:16). The Bible contains the foundational story of God's loving creation, humanity's fundamental brokenness, and God's gracious work of restoring life and connection between individuals and God.

- Priesthood of the Believer
 - We believe wholeness/salvation comes to us through the belief in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection and the decision to turn the leadership of our life over to God (Romans 10:9). In this way, Jesus transforms our brokenness into wholeness and allows us to approach God directly with joy and confidence (Hebrews 4:16). These believers become the people of God whom God calls a "royal priesthood" (1Peter 2:9). While all may approach God directly, we believe other believers play a crucial role in one another's lives. It is other believers – who like the priests of old – help love and serve others by embodying the love and grace of God. It is through these relationships of love and care that Christians help others find their way to God.

For this reason, we hold "Belonging" as a core value. We believe the Christian life is meant to be lived in community and with the help of other believers.

- Baptism
 - We believe baptism is an outward sign of an inner transformation. In this way, it serves as an important symbol – following in the example of Jesus (Mark 1:9-11) – of a believer’s public profession of faith. We celebrate what is often called “Believer’s Baptism” where those who have decided to make Jesus the Lord of their Life follow in his example with baptism by immersion.

- Men and Women in Ministry
 - We believe men and women are called according to God’s purposes, and both men and women serve, lead, and shepherd equally within the life of our faith family and throughout the Kingdom of God.

- This City and The Cities of the World
 - We believe God longs to utilize the people of God (the Church!) to be a blessing to the people of the world (Genesis 22:18). This occurs when the people of God seek the “peace and prosperity of the city” where God has sent them (Jeremiah 29:7). For King’s Cross, this means we seek the peace and prosperity of Tullahoma and Southern Middle Tennessee. We strive to know our community, serve its needs, and advocate for its future – both as individuals and as a church family – all while sharing the hope of wholeness in and through Jesus Christ.

We believe God calls and equips us to take the gospel message to the ends of the Earth so that all may know. We continue the work began by the Church in Acts who lived out this mission: "and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The Good News is too good not to share! King’s Cross is committed to embodying the Great Commission Jesus gives us to make disciples of all people and to baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:16-20).

Adopted by the Shepherding Council and Pastor Scott Claybrook, November, 2021.

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