HORIZON
CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Statement Of Faith

We believe - the only true basis of Christian fellowship is Christ's (Agape) love, which is greater than any differences we possess, and without which we have no right to claim ourselves Christians. -- 1 Jn. 3:14; 4:7-11; 1 Cor. 13:1-8; Gal. 5:22-23; Jn. 13:34-35; 15:12-13; 1 Pet. 4:8; Rom. 13: 8-10; 14:19

We believe - worship of God should be inspirational. Therefore, we give a great place to music in our worship. -- Ps. 33:1-3; 95:1-2; 100:1-2; 147:1; 150:3-6; 2 Chron. 5:11-14; Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:18-19

We believe - worship of God should be intelligent. Therefore, our services are designed with great emphasis upon the teaching of the Word of God that He might instruct us how He should be worshipped. -- Jn. 4:23-24; Rom 12:1-2; Neh. 8:8; Acts 2:42; 1 Tim 4:13; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 4:2; Ps. 19:7-8; 119:7; Col. 3:16

We believe - worship of God should be fruitful. Therefore, we look for His love in our lives as the supreme manifestation that we have been truly worshipping Him. -- Jn. 15:5, 8-12; James 2:18-20; Mt. 5:16; 7:16-20; Col. 1:9-10; Rom. 6:22; 12:9-13; Gal. 5:22-23

We believe - in the inerrancy of the Scriptures, that the Bible, Old and New Testaments, in the original autographs, is the inspired, infallible Word of God, a complete and final written revelation of God. -- 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21; Heb. 1:1-2; Ps. 12:6; 19:7-9; 119:160; Pr. 30:5; Jn. 17:17; Mt. 5:18; Gal. 1:11-12; Acts 20:27

We believe - in one personal, transcendent, and holy God, the creator of all, who is eternal, and who manifests Himself in three separate persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. -- Deut. 6:4; Is. 45:5-6; Ps. 24:1-2; 145:18; Mt. 3:16-17; 6:9; Is. 6:1-3; 1 Kings 8:27; Gen. 1:1; Col. 1:16-18; Jn. 1:1-3; 14:16-17; 2 Cor. 13:14

We believe - that Jesus Christ, though fully God, became a man for the suffering of death, that He is the promised Messiah, born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, provided for the atonement of our sins by His vicarious death on the Cross, was bodily resurrected by the power of the Holy Spirit, ascended back to the right hand of God the Father, and ever lives to make intercession for us. -- Jn. 1:1-3, 14; Col. 2:9; Heb. 1:8; 2:14-17; 4:15; 7:25; Jn. 4:25-26; 20:28; Phil. 2:6-8; 1 Tim. 2:5; Is. 7:14; 9:6-7; 53:3-6; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 Jn. 3:5; Rom. 5:8-9; 1 Cor. 15:3-8, 20; Acts 1:9-11

We believe - after Jesus ascended to Heaven, He poured out His Holy Spirit on the believers in Jerusalem, enabling them to fulfill His command to preach the Gospel to the entire world, an obligation shared by all believers today. -- Jn. 14:16-17; 16:17-18;
Luk 24:49; Acts 1:4-5, 8; 2:1-4, 33, 38-39; Eph. 4:8-10; 5:18; Joel 2:28-29; Mt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15; Rom 8:14-17; Gal. 5:25

We believe - that all people are by nature separated from God and responsible for their own sin, but that salvation, redemption, and forgiveness are freely offered to all by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. When a person repents of sin and accepts Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord, trusting Him to save, that person is immediately born again and sealed by the Holy Spirit, all his/her sins are forgiven, and that person becomes a child of God. -- Rom. 3:10, 23; 5:1, 12; 6:23; 8:1; 10:9-10; 14:12; Is. 59:1-2; Ezek. 18:20; Eph. 1:7, 13-14; 2:1-3, 8-9; Ps. 51:5; 103:10-12; Jn. 1:12; 3:3-7, 16; Tit. 3:4-7; 1 Tim. 2:3-6; Acts 2:38; Col. 1:13-14; 1 Jn. 1:7-9

We believe - in the person and work of the Holy Spirit who indwells, seals, and empowers every believer, baptizing them into the Body of Christ. We further believe that the Holy Spirit will come upon any believer who asks in faith, enabling him/her to preach the Gospel in power. We also believe all of the gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in the Scriptures are valid for today if they are exercised within the scriptural guidelines. We believe that love is more important than all the gifts, and that without this love all exercise of spiritual gifts is worthless. -- Jn. 14:16-17; Rom. 8:9-11; 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 12:4-13, 31; 13:1-13; 14:26, 33, 40; Gal. 4:6; 5:22; Eph. 1:13-14; 3:16; 4:4-6, 11-12; 30; 5:18; 2 Cor. 1:21-22; Acts 1:8; 4:31; Zech. 4:6; 1 Thes. 1:5; 1 Pet. 4:10-11; Col. 3:14

We believe - Jesus Christ is the head of the Body, His church, and that church government should be simplistic rather than a complex bureaucracy. We desire to be led by the Holy Spirit in all the functions and directions of the ministry of the church. -- Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:15-16; 5:23; Mt. 16:18; 20:25-28; 1 Cor. 12:12-27; Mk. 10:42-45; 1 Pet. 5:2-3; Acts 14:23; Jn. 16:13; Rom 8:14; Gal. 5:25; Col. 2:18-10; Prov. 16:9; Ps. 127:1; Zech. 4:6

We believe - in a personal devil called Satan who, along with all his evil angels, called demons, is destined to spend eternity in hell, and who now seeks to deceive the believers and defeat the work of God, but who can be resisted by believers who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, protected by God, and interceded for by Jesus Christ our Lord. -- Job 1:6-7; Mt. 4:1-11; 25:41; Rev. 12:3-4, 9-10; 20:1-3, 10; 1 Pet. 5:8-9; Eph. 6:11-12; Is. 14:12-15; Ezek. 28:12-17; Jn. 8:44; James 4:7; 1 Jn. 3:8; 4:4; Rom. 8:9-11; Heb. 2:14-15; 7:25

We believe - that the nation of Israel has a special place in God's plan and that all the promises of God to Israel will be fulfilled. -- Gen. 12:1-3; 15:18-21; Ex. 19:5-6; Deut. 7:6-8; Ps. 105:8-11; Ezek. 36:42-48; 37:21-28; Amos 9:14-15; Mal. 3:6; Micah 5:2; Rom. 11:1-2; 11:25-29; Zech. 12:10; Mt. 19:28

We await - the pre-tribulation rapture of the church, and we believe that the second coming of Christ with His saints to rule on the earth will be personal, pre-millennial, and visible. This motivates us to holy living, heartfelt worship, committed service, diligent study of God's Word, regular fellowship, and participation in baptism by immersion and in the Holy communion. -- 1 Thes. 1:10; 3:13; 4:16-17; 5:9; Jn. 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:51-52; Phil. 3:20-21; Rev. 1:7; 3:10; Luk 21:36; 22:19-20; Acts 1:9-11; 2:42; Zech. 14:4, 9; Jude 1:14-15; Rev. 19; 20:1-6; Is. 9:6-7; 1 Jn. 3:2-3; 2 Pet 3:11-14

We seek - to teach the Word of God in such a way that its message can be applied to an individual's life, leading that person to greater maturity in Christ. -- James 1:22-25; Mt. 7:24-27; Luk 11:28; Neh. 8:8; 1 Tim. 4:13, 16; 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Pet. 2:2; Rom. 8:29; Gal. 4:19; Eph. 4:11-15; Heb. 4:12; Jn. 17:17; Mt. 28:19-20

We reject - doctrinal viewpoints or spiritual phenomena which are based solely on experience. We look to the Word of God for the basis of all our faith and practice. --
2 Tim. 3:16-17; Ps. 19:7; 119:105; Mt. 4:4; Col. 2:8; 1 Thes. 5:20-21; Deut. 13:1-3; Gal. 1:8-9; Mt. 24:24; Rom. 10:17; Prov. 3:5-6; Eph. 4:14-15; Rev. 22:18-20

The Distinctives Of Horizon - "Hills Worth Dying On"

THIS IS NOT our statement of faith, instead this helps define the positions and motivations that make HCF distinct from other portions of the body of Christ.
We have our statement of faith on our website and volunteer application.
These 13 Distinctives are positions we take a stand on here at Horizon Christian Fellowship.
The phrase "Hills Worth Dying On" originates from military strategy, where holding a specific, high-ground position is crucial enough to justify heavy casualties.
(2Timothy 1:13-14) – "*Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.*"

Horizon La Crosse, a distinct ministry

4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.
1 Corinthians 12:4-6 NKJV

- As our "Identity in Christ"(2Cor 5:17) is important, so it is for a local church (1Tim 3:15)

- Referring to bible believing, born again bodies of believers; we are one body, but distinct ministries . . . "If Calvary Chapel (Horizon) is exactly like the church across the street, it would be better to simply merge the two. But if there are distinctives that make it different, then it has a unique and special place in the plan of God."(cc Distinctives pg. 5)
    - (i.e.) different families live in different homes, not opposed- just different

- We are a non-denominational church but we are associated (by choice) with "Calvary Chapel Association" in which a relational bond of likeminded ministry is formed for encouragement and accountability.

- We are an autonomous local church - at my departure from Indy, my sending pastor, Bill encouraged me not to put new wine into old wineskins . . .(Matthew 9:17)

The Distinctives

View & Listen Online at horizonlacrosse.org/distinctives or on the app in "About Us"
(We have already linked many messages related to the distinctive topics, with many more to come as we continue to go through the Word Verse by Verse.)

1. **A call to the Ministry** – (1 Timothy 3, Acts 6:1-7)
    a. Who calls? – (Gal 1:1) – A minister is qualified not by education, not by will, not by the will of others, not motivated by a job, paycheck etc. but by God.
        i. Our goal for you is (Acts 13:1-5, Ps 32:8).
        ii. We simply agree with God in laying on of hands (1Tim 5:22-25)

(Note: We will generally not allow service until after 4-6 months of attending HCF, we want to get to know you, for you to know us and to be sure you are resting in the Lord. For if you cannot rest you will not serve from an overflow and that would be detrimental to you and us).

iii. How do you know? (Jer 20, 1 Cor 9:16).

iv. Also, each believer is called to a local church body (1 Cor 12:18)

What is Ministry? – (Mark 10:42-45, John 13).

v. If anyone thinks ministry is a pulpit, title, office, or job, a means to feel needed, or to be noticed by men(Mt 6), a have to instead of a get to, or is above any task we care very little to have them serve here at HCF.

2. A Simple church Model - (Book of Acts – (Rev 2:1-7)

Not History but "Original Design"(Like the telephone game, we don't look to church history to define our model, we look to the original message laid in Acts)

1. (The Book of Acts) – grid for our leadership

ii. The early church was a "simple" and Dynamic church(Acts 2:46)

1. (Acts 2:1-4) – Initiator of a simple church
2. (Acts 2:42) – The foundation of a simple church stands on 4 legs: Teaching of The Word, Fellowship, Breaking of bread and Prayer.
3. (Acts 2:43-47) – Overflowing practice of a simple church.
4. (Acts 2:47) – The result of a simple church.
5. (Acts 4:13) – Simple people God uses in a simple church.
6. (Acts 6:1-7) – Growth of a simple church.
7. (Acts 13:1-4) – Missions in a simple church.

iii. Distinctives – "The Divine Ideal is in the book of Acts . . . It's a church that is led by the Spirit, teaches the Word, and develops oneness or fellowship (koinonia). It's a church that breaks bread together and prays together. The rest is His work-He will add to the church daily those that should be saved." And the GOAL (Acts 3) –In contrast to the simple church ". . . taking the credit or receiving applause. That's the shortest path to the end of the anointing of God's Spirit"

3. Church Government – Jesus is the Head of His church - (Col 1:18)

"Church government should be simplistic rather than a complex bureaucracy".

a. **(episkopos) = 1Tim 3:1** pastor led – the rule of an individual pastor, elder, Bishop.
   i. Problem, man can't lead men well on his own, centralized unchecked power.
b. **(presbyteros) = Acts 14:23** elder board – the rule of a group of men "voting on things" etc.
   i. Problem, the pastor can become a hireling, hired by the board and directed by the board to do a "job". Again, men don't rule men well.
c. **(Congregational) = Exodus 16:2, Num 14:1-3, Corinth?** Where the congregation rules things never goes well, sheep don't direct shepherds.
d. **(Theocracy) – (Col 1:18), Exodus 18, Numbers 11, Exodus 17:12-14) God's Goal for the early church -** Moses, Israel and the NT Ideal is a hybrid of (episkopos) and (presbyteros) lead by the Head(Jesus). – "I believe God's model is that the pastor is ruled over by the Lord and recognized by the congregation as God's anointed instrument to lead the church, with the board guiding and directing. Complimenting this is the role of the assisting pastors. They are there to minister to the spiritual needs of the people on a daily basis.

i. Practically at HCF – far as I can see, Jesus wanted to plant HCF in La Crosse, God has called me (Matt) to serve here(1Cor 1:26), We have an elder board of Godly men that serve HCF spiritually, hold me accountable, lift my arms and help me discern God's will for HCF, and I don't make big, or financial decision unless we are in agreement, or can concede.
ii. Turn the power pyramid upside down - (Mk 10:42-45)

e. We do believe in <u>strong, servanthood, male leadership,</u> - - at HCF women will not be elders, nor teach scripture over men. . . (1Cor 11, 1Tim 2-3, Eph 5) This is not about ability nor value but simply obeying the Word of God. We see in Titus 2 women are to teach other women and children

f. <u>Deacons</u> - 1 Timothy 3 gives qualifications for both elders and deacons, character first . . .
   i. Eph 4:11-12 – though we have people who function officially, we avoid titles, and believe every believer ought to be a deacon, HCF is not a one man band (1Cor 12). . . "God doesn't need you but we do".

g. "No church membership" – There is one body (1Cor 12), you are God's people (Acts 20), and you can only be born into it (John 3), it is a spiritual relationship, not a political one.

h. **NOTE: as a Theocracy we believe it is of utmost importance that every believer have an autonomous individual, abiding relationship with Jesus Christ (John 15:1-5) hears the voice of God and searches the Scriptures (Acts 17:11) and God will direct all of this in unity (1Cor 12). . . In a perfect world like Moses I would heartily say (Numbers 11:29) – "Then Moses said to him, "Are you zealous for my sake? Oh, that all the LORD'S people were prophets and that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them all"**

4. **<u>Empowered by the Spirit</u>** – (Acts 1:4-8) – We are Charismatic **not** Charis-maniac
   a. We believe in the empowering of the Spirit at or subsequent to salvation for service (John 14:17, John 20:22, Acts 1, 2, 8, 9, 10-11, 19). = Para, en, epi
   b. We believe the gifts of the Holy Spirit are for today, and necessary as the Scripture never says they will pass away (Acts 2:39, Acts 28, 1Cor 12-13) but that they should be done decently and in order (1Cor 12-14). 1 Corinthians 14:40 Says "Let all things be done" **AND** "decently and in order"
   c. We do not emphasize experience over Truth, instead Truth will produce experience.
   d. The greatest evidence is (Gal 5:22) Love, (John 7:37-38) an overflow.
   e. "I am most grateful for this promise, because when it comes to our next point it takes all the stress off of us. (Zechariah 4:6 Not by might, nor by power but by My Spirit says the LORD of hosts)"

5. **<u>Building the Church God's Way –</u>** We believe the Church, including HCF, is God's invention, plan, and work not ours – (Matthew 16:18, Psalm 127, 1Cor 3:6-7).

a. We aren't motivated by numbers but fruit, we don't count heads – (2Sam 24)
b. CC Distinctives - " . . . . a relaxed casual style. There isn't a lot of spiritual hype. The pastor doesn't try to motivate people carnally nor is apt to shout at the congregation. This stems from the belief that if the Lord doesn't build the house, they labor in vain who build it. A lot of hype and pressure aren't really going to do the job. We simply trust in the work of the Holy Spirit and that Jesus is building His church as He said He would."
c. "We have discovered that whenever you strive to gain, you must strive to maintain what you have gained."
d. We are "minus the hype. There isn't the carnal pursuit of new programs or spiritual hype to try to appeal to people. We trust in the Word of God and teach it and rely upon it. It's the foundation upon which we are built. It's inexhaustible. There's no burnout with it. The Word of God just keeps going on and on."

e. For finances –
    1. We don't take offerings – (2 Cor 9:6-7, Matthew 6)
    2. We trust God – (Psalm 50, Matthew 6)
    3. "where God guides God provides"
    4. "God's work, done God's way, will never lack God's supplies"

f. For volunteers –
    1. We pray (Matthew 9:38) so that (2 Cor 9:6-7).

6. A Grace Place -

It only makes sense (Eph 4:32), and it emulates the ministry of Jesus (Luke 4:18).

a. We desire to be paramedics, not police officers.
b. Always looking to restore the fallen and wayward to Jesus (Gal 6:1-2)
c. (Gen 30:32) – we will take all the speckled and spotted sheep . . . (Mt 9:12-13) the sick, (Mt 9:36) the weary and scattered without a shepherd, (1Sam 22:2) the distressed, indebt, and discontented to make the mighty army of the Son of David, and (1Cor 1:26-30) the weak, foolish, have nots in order to confound the wise and bring glory to God.
d. (Rom 14-15) – also a place where we aim to be gracious to one another in extrabiblical, external gray areas. . . . allowing the Lord to be the judge. . . (i.e.) music, smoking cigarettes, clothing, etc. . .

7. Priority of the Word - CC Distinctives ". . . endeavor to declare to people the whole counsel of God." "In the majority of the Calvary Chapels(Horizon). And the most successful ones you'll find systematic teaching of the entire Word of God, going through the Bible from cover to cover.". . . "Simply teaching the Bible simply"

a. "The whole Bible makes a whole Christian" – (Acts 20:27, Mt 4:4).
    i. With very few exceptions, on Sunday we study the New Testament straight through, Wednesday is the same with the Old Testament.
b. SIMPLE INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY . . . Scripture interprets scripture
    i. Observation – Interpretation – Correlation – Application

c. This means we don't get to teach pet topics, nor avoid difficult passages, you will be fed a well balanced diet.
d. God picks the message, no pressure on the pastor to select a particular scripture.
e. It's not the fast way, no flash, but it's the fruitful way (Mark 4) and it takes time to grow a seed. . . . "I planted the seed . . . But God made it grow. . . .!
f. The bible alone is sufficient (2Tim 3:15-17).
g. It's where we see Jesus (2Cor 3:18) and become more like Him. . . This leads us to our next point . . .

8. Jesus front and Center – (John 5, Heb 10, John 16) -
a. (Rev 2:1) – We have 7 lamps behind the stage, a reminder that Jesus walks in the midst of His church.
    i. "if Jesus' presence is ignored nothing matters, but if Jesus' presence is acknowledged, nothing else matters"
b. Avoid distractions . . . – Distinctives – "We dissuade any practice or behavior that would distract people from focusing on Him."
    i. i.e. – teaching, worship, décor . . .

9. The Rapture of the Church – (John 14:1-3, 1Cor 15:52, 1Thess 4:17) –
a. Scripture says "But I do not want you to be ignorant…" (1Thess 4:13)
b. It matters because it changes the way we live and what we look for (Luke 21:28)
c. Distinctives – "The rapture refers to the time when Jesus is going to come, without warning, and take away His church from the earth. After the rapture, the Lord will pour out His wrath upon this sinful world."
d. We take a literal approach to the book of Revelation with an easy to understand outline! (Rev 1:19 John wrote what he saw-The Risen Jesus, the things that are - The Church Age, and the things that will be after the Church - Rev 6-22) and believe it is to be taught in the church today – (Rev 22:16)
e. We reject replacement theology, which says that the church has replaced Israel, and believe the tribulation is a time in which God is dealing with Israel as He has promised (Dan 9-70th week) and is essential for the hope of the gospel we believe (Rom 11) that Jesus will return pre-millennial and will yet fulfill His promise to Israel and set up His kingdom for 1,000 years (Rev 20) from Jerusalem.
f. We believe the imminent Pre-Tribulation rapture is important for 3 reasons
    i. Produces purity (1John 3:2)
    ii. Produces urgency (Romans 13:11-14)
    iii. Produces comfort and hope (1Thess 4:17-18, Titus 2:13, Lu 21:28)
g. SO WHAT IF YOU DON'T AGREE . . . We still love you, you're welcome to attend and serve at HCF, probably won't be in a teaching role, and you may miss out on a simple crown (2Tim 4). **Listen here: Revelation 4:1-2 Part 1 & Part 2**

10. Continuing in the Spirit – (Gal 3:3) – We don't want to get stuck in ruts, trying to perfect what began in the Spirit with fleshly efforts (such as fleshly education, organization, or efforts of man power).
a. I think it's good that we remain the simple church of Philadelphia . . . (Revelation 3:7-13)

b. We are not opposed to Spirit filled education but Calvary chapels are overwhelmingly pastored by pastors who didn't go to college, lucky if they graduated high school, but are spirit filled men who know the bible and have a doctorate in the "school of Jesus" like the disciples (Acts 4:13).. .. even Paul (Phil 3:7-8). . .

11. The Supremacy of Love – (1Cor 13, John 13:34-35)

a. Bible focused, Spirit filled (1Thess 1:5), and wrapped in Love (Eph 4)

b. Without it we become annoying, useless and ineffective (1Cor 13:1-4, 1 Cor 8:1)

c. Most important to us is do you know "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so . . ." (John 4:19) and that it overflows (2Cor 5:14) . . .

d. I hear it often, and I pray it continues, "those people are the most loving group of people I have ever been around."

12. Striking the Balance – We accept that we don't understand everything, but we do trust Him and His Word – (Prov 3:5-6, Psalm 131).

a. i.e. Arminianism Vs. Calvinism - - depends on the verse, God is sovereign and has free will AND man has free will. How that works is up to Him.

b. i.e. Once saved always saved - - If you're not in the right relationship with God, you need to be.

13. Ventures in Faith: Win – Disciple – Send

a. If we win people to Christ (Mk 16:15), Disciple people in Christ (Mt 28:19-20), but it goes nowhere and we fail to send people for Christ (Acts 1:8) on ventures of faith; we become a stagnant pond, or fat sheep with poor health.

b. We believe God is at work, and want to be a part of what He is doing. . . (i.e.) 1 Samuel 14 - Jonathan and his armorbearer

c. For me it's as simple as Ask – Seek – Knock (Luke 11) . . .

d. Experiencing God – "The major turning point is where many people miss out on experiencing God's mighty power working through them. If they cannot understand exactly how everything is going to happen, they won't proceed. They want to walk with God by sight, not faith. To follow God, you'll have to walk by faith because without faith, it is impossible to please Him (Heb 11:6)."

e. We've seen this when starting Sunday services in a dance studio, FOL in riverside, moving to the train station, moving into this building in 2025.

f. As my pastor Bill was always saying "WHAT IS THE LORD DOING?" . . . get on board (Eph 3:20).

g. If you are looking for comfortable and cute plans it's not HCF. . . we don't want to be stuck on past victories but God's plan's for today (Phil 3:14-16). . . . We invite you to join.

CONCLUSION:

- There is so much pressure today to give ground, but we choose to stand on these hills, let us keep returning to our first love Rev 2:1-7, & following the blueprint laid out in Acts.
- This is HCF, we are not the only church, we ask you to pray and ask Him to direct you.
- Our volunteer/employment opportunities: horizonlacrosse.org/volunteerinfo

""To know Him, and make Him known"