

ALTO



REFORMED CHURCH

ARTICLES

What Must a True Believer Believe?

By Pastor Kevin Van Wyk

In 7th grade I went through a confirmation class at my church. For a year, I attended this class, was then confirmed, and became a member of the church. I don't remember much of this. I'm not sure if it just went over my head or if my bike accident in 9th grade erased my memory of whatever they confirmed. A few years later, I ended up in college believing I was a Christian, yet rejecting that God created the world, that the Bible was true, and that I was sinful. Yet, I confessed to be a Christian. So...

What must a true believer believe? It's tempting to think all that matters is to believe Jesus is your Lord and Savior. After all, it's right from Romans 10:9. But what does "believe" mean? Is it merely mental assent to a statement or is it more? Who is Jesus? What is a Lord? What is a Savior? What are we saved from and for?

Now, I don't want to diminish a child saying, "I love Jesus." In fact, if we properly understand the fullness of "believe," that child may be more on track than a Doctor of Theology. The heart and soul are as fundamental as the mind. This "believing" is only by the work of the Spirit in one's heart, soul, and mind. **We can't just rattle off a few simple truths and qualify as a true believer.** The heart matters!

Assuming there is genuine faith, what should a believer understand and accept as true? That's tougher than we tend to think. Fortunately, others have worked hard at answering this question. In light of their work, our elders have concluded that our Covenant Partners (members) need to affirm the following...

I believe in one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and confess Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord. I accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the supreme authority for faith and life. I accept the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed as essential truths of the Christian faith.

While we have explicitly called for understanding the trinity, salvation in Christ, and the authority of the Bible; we've also included three historic creeds for Covenant Partners to affirm.

But, can you get into heaven and not understand some of these truths? Certainly, children do not understand many of these things and it is this child-like faith that Jesus commends. We just can't remain infants in our understanding of the gospel, but must move on to maturity, understanding the fullness of God's work and character.

So, do you truly believe? Has your heart been powerfully and irrevocably stirred? Has your mind been fully convinced of the gospel? If so, then you are well on your way to being ready to be a Covenant Partner. In the coming months, I'll share more about the commitments of Covenant Partners. For now I encourage you to reflect on these core beliefs and creeds.

Prayer... Holy Spirit, move in me to stir up faith that transforms my heart and mind. Bring forth spiritual fruit that will bear witness to the world and to me that you have chosen me and called me as your child. Amen.

Small Groups

By Pastor Doug Shotsky

[Acts 2:46-47a - 46](#) Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, **47** praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.

The Equipping Adults Team has been praying, thinking, discussing and

planning together how we can best help the church fulfill the mission we've been given by our Lord to be and make disciples. We believe at this point the Lord is leading us, not to recreate the wheel, but instead to emphasize and utilize small group ministry, which has not only been in our church for years, but was how the early church fellowshiped and grew in their faith.

God has created each of us as a part of the body of Christ, so we were made to need one another. I don't know about you all but there are times when I'm lonely, hurting, or angry and need others to lift me up and encourage me. At other times I'm excited, hopeful, and passionate, and I need others in my life to share this journey with. Even if we think we don't need others, we have to remember that others need us. So from now until this fall you will hear a lot about our plan to launch new small groups.

So many groups in our church have been a vital part of fellowship and growth for so many over the years. So whether you are young and single, married with kids, empty nesters, widowed, or any other phase of life, our prayer is that you will allow God to use you in the lives of others. We will be conducting a short survey during the Mother's Day service on May 8th to gather important information to help us know how to better set up groups this fall. I love all of you and want you to experience the fullness of the grace of God as He has designed for us.

Mission Trip Brat Fry Support

By Jessa Ter Beest

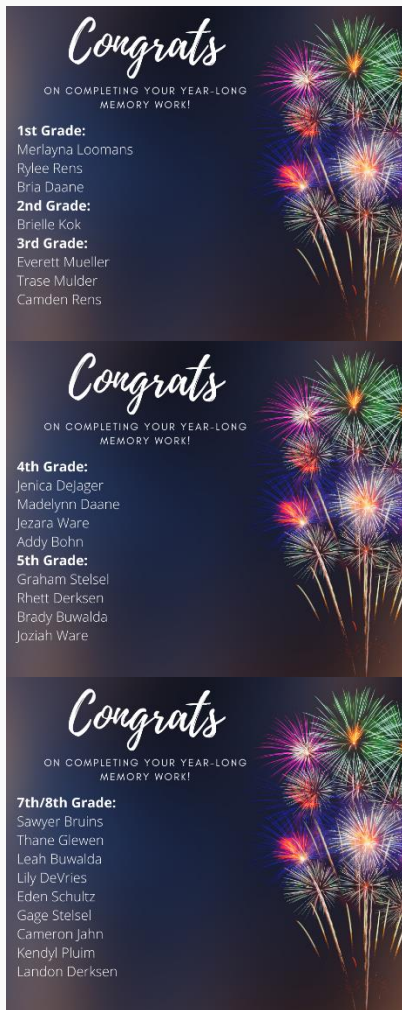
We want to give a huge thank you to everyone who came out to support our high school mission trip team at the brat fry Easter weekend. We were able to make \$4000 toward the Jamaica trip (June 11-18) which gets us so much closer to being fully funded!

The place we'll be serving at is a school for deaf children in Jamaica, so we'll be participating in bilingual (Jamaican Sign Language) worship and spending time with the people there learning more about their lives, helping with some on-site projects, playing with the kids, telling our stories and listening to theirs with the sign language we learn ahead of time, while building Christ-like relationships that bridge the gap between America and Jamaica, and the hearing and deaf communities.

The theme for the week is “Redemption”. We’ll be talking about how we are all a part of God’s big story of redemption and how this mission trip is a part of that story while He redeems our lives and theirs for His glory. God has a plan for each of us and He intentionally intersects our stories with others to build His kingdom. As you can probably tell, it’s going to be a full week of listening to, learning from, and loving on the kids we meet at Caribbean Christian Centre for the Deaf, and there is going to be a great opportunity for growth within our group. We would love it if you would pray for this mission trip experience. Pray for the group of us who are going (names listed below) – that we would be open to learning from the community we’re visiting and grow closer as a group and closer to Jesus. Pray for the staff who are living at Knockpatrick and will be leading us during the trip. Pray for the community members we will meet – that we can love and honor them well. Pray especially for the kids we’ll get to do ministry with – that they would connect the love we show with the love Jesus has for them. Finally, pray that we will experience this mission trip week and God’s story of redemption for our lives in a fresh and effective way.

Mission Trip Team: Larry Brewer, Ruth Brewer, Ashlan Bruins, Rylan Bruins, Libbi Campbell, Hannah Derksen, Evie Ganske, Garret Glewen, Isaac Glewen, Bethany Guell, Wyatt Guell, Jack Lemmenes, Stephanie Lenz, Nolan Lenz, Ryan Lenz, Anna Lenz, Evey Mouw, Doug Shotsky, Marlaina Shotsky, William Shotsky, Victoria Shotsky, Jeremiah Shotsky, Jessa TerBeest, Kevin VanWyk, Zack VanWyk.

Congrats to our Bible Class Students



Library Update

By Sharon DeMotts

The wind is blowing, the sun is shining, but any moment it could be raining or snowing. The weather is certainly unpredictable, that's nothing new.

The church library is always new and exciting. Many changes are happening. New books have been ordered and will be filling the shelves soon. Our youth section is expanding. The 4K kids look forward to choosing fun books each week and a new resource center is in the works.

Along with all the new changes, we still have a vast amount of older books from all your favorite authors, fiction and non-fiction. Its fun to just take a little time to browse through, and how convenient is it to run downstairs on a Sunday morning or after a weekday meeting to grab a book? We are so lucky to have this wonderful resource available and we invite you to come check it out.

MESSAGES

Thank you for your generous donation for the Ukrainian Crisis.
-Volunteers for Orphan Grain Train

EVENTS

Alto Reformed Church
May 2022

May 01 **Congregational Discussion on Bylaw Updates**
Join us at 3pm to discuss bylaw updates, our vows, what "disseminated to hell" means, voting options, election process, responsibilities of the consistory, and more.

May 08 **Elementary Kids Lead Worship + Last Day of Sunday School**
Join us at 9:30am as the kids lead worship followed by a fun last day of Sunday School at 10:45am.

May 15 **Youth Service**
Join us as the Middle and High Schoolers lead worship at 9:30am.

May 15 **Covenant Partnership Class**
If you are interested in joining us in Jesus' mission at Alto, we'd love to talk with you about who we are and what it means to be a Covenant Partner. Take a look at our Covenant Partnership packet available at the Information Center. Then join us at 11am-1pm for lunch.

For detailed information:
Call 920.348.5505 or email office@altoreformedchurch.org

NEWS

Baptisms

4/23/22 - Hannah Derksen

4/23/22 - Wyatt Guell

Births

4/13/22 - Croix Steven, son of Tyler & Michielah Loomans