



Welcome

Thank you for taking more time to get to know us. We hope that you have been encouraged by your time with us, and we trust this pamphlet will help you discover more about who we are as a church.

Our Mission & Strategy

Our mission is to pursue Jesus together. The Bible says,

“Christ died, and He died for all, so that those who live would no longer live for themselves, but for Him Who for their sake died and was raised” (2 Corinthians 5:15).

Believing in this truth compels us to live in three simple ways.



Exalting God



Edifying His Church



Evangelizing the World

In this booklet, you will discover some of the ways we seek to live out our mission and strategy. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at any time.

What is the Gospel?

When we speak of the gospel, meaning “good news,” we are referring to the biblical story of God’s plan to rescue people from eternal death.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Everything was perfect. God created Adam and Eve and placed them in the garden. He did this for man’s ultimate good, because He knew man would experience no greater joy than in worshiping Him. However, man decided to elevate self and creation over the Creator. As a result, all of humanity fails to uphold God’s law. Banned from the garden that God had placed them in, Adam and his wife lived in a fallen world facing God’s punishment—eternal death. But God made Adam a promise. One day an Offspring would come and crush the Devil, making all things new again. This Offspring would pay the price for Adam’s sin by taking upon Himself God’s punishment that sinners deserve. Through the years, Adam’s descendants failed to uphold God’s law time and time again. But one day a virgin gave birth to a boy who was the long-awaited Offspring. His name was Jesus. He is the Son of God Who came to this earth to fulfill God’s promise and make all things new. Jesus went to the cross, died and rose again to pay the penalty for not only Adam’s sin, but for the sin of all mankind. Through Jesus, people are forgiven of sin and pardoned from God’s punishment. Anyone who trusts in Jesus is welcomed into God’s presence to worship Him forever. This is the gospel.





Who We Are

We are an eclectic community of like-minded believers who exist to Exalt God, Edify His Church and Evangelize the World. This church is not the building, but it is the people who gather in it. We gather together here at Ventura every week and commit to one another as we praise and glorify our God through the finished work of Jesus Christ.



As God's children, our desire is to see Jesus exalted in the lives of members and visitors who gather here to worship. Jesus is the answer to every cry of hurt, regret, guilt, and fear. In Him there is hope and life. So we share this good news with those around us. He is Lord and He is drawing men, women, and children into His loving arms.



Gospel Focus

As a group of believers pursuing Jesus together, we are a church centered around the person of Jesus Christ. This congregation represents individuals from all walks and paths of life that come together to worship *ONE GOD* on the basis of the saving work of Christ. No two people are alike here, and the unity in the midst of diversity reveals that Jesus is the one who has freed us to glorify God together.



As followers of Christ we hold fast to the Bible and seek to follow after Jesus as a community. Ephesians 4:11-14 says,

"And He (Jesus) gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes."

A Place for Everyone

Jesus bought His bride (the church), but at a tremendous cost—His precious blood and life. Jesus is the Son of God Who sacrificed His own life so people could be set free. All who depend on Him as their personal Savior *are* free, and are now immensely loved by God as His children.

We may come from different backgrounds or may be in various stages of life, but together we boast in the gospel of Jesus. This gospel unifies us because it tells us that each and every one of us is loved by God Himself. This gospel challenges us to grow together in humility and grace. We don't seek to emphasize personal preferences or traditions, but instead we seek to praise God through Jesus by the power of the Spirit.

We recognize that we are all weak, sinful and in need of God's saving grace. Don't hide behind the mask that you are not good enough. Don't hide behind failures or believe the lie that God can never forgive you because of what you have done. All of us are here because we need His forgiveness and grace!



Our hope is to encourage one another to rejoice in the Savior who loved us and gave himself for us.

Discipleship

Because we are a people pursuing Jesus together, we strive to grow in our study of the Scriptures and to dive deeper into understanding God's mission for the church. Through prayer times together, mutual encouragement in our daily lives and study of God's Word, we desire to train up men and women to be disciple-making disciples. Our hope is that Ventura would be a training ground for God's people to grow and spread the gospel. Ephesians 4:15-16 says,

"Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him Who is the head, into Christ, from Whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love."

This is our desire. This is our aim. Let's Pursue Jesus Together!

Sunday Morning Prayer

Each Sunday morning at 8:45 a.m., people gather together to pray and ask for God's grace on the service that is about to take place. We pray that God would cause all people who gather here to rejoice and praise His name.

Sunday School

Each Sunday morning at 9:30 a.m., we have the opportunity to pray and study the Word of God in a small-group context. We offer something for all ages. For adults, we divide into different topical classes. For teens, we go through biblical studies and devotionals. For children, classes are age based and span from 4 to 11 years in age. Each class dives more deeply into the Scriptures and reveals how the gospel of Jesus is central to our lives.

Children's Discipleship

As part of our mission, we also encourage children to hear and learn about the Word of God in a church-family context. Teaching times are designed to help kids understand a Christ-centered theology, promote cross-generational integration and encourage parental discipleship.

Our *Children's Sunday School* works through *The Gospel Project* curriculum which identifies the gospel through the whole of Scripture.

Sunday evening *Kid's Time* consists of various studies including *What's in the Bible*—helping children to dive deeper into knowing God.



THE
**GOSPEL
PROJECT**
FOR KIDS

Men's Discipleship

Each week, men meet together to discuss what God is teaching them and to also encourage one another through Bible memory and prayer.

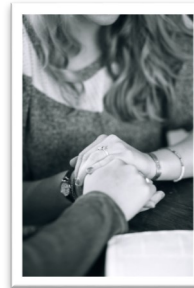
These are some of the opportunities for men to get involved with discipleship:

- *Men's Training Grounds*
- *Men's Book Discussion*
- *Men's Accountability & Prayer*

For more information regarding discipleship or if you would like to join, please contact us at men@venturabaptistchurch.com

Women's Discipleship

During the school year, we offer a variety of women's Bible study groups that meet twice a month. There are also other opportunities for women to fellowship, pray for various needs and encourage one another in a group context.



- *Women In Touch*
- *Ladies' Bible Study*

If you would like to join one of these groups or would like more information on women's ministries, please contact us at

ladies@venturabaptistchurch.com.

Sunday Night Service

At 6:00 p.m. every Sunday evening, we gather together to sing, study the Word and pray corporately. We also provide an opportunity for children to grow spiritually in a child-focused setting. During this service we study topics relevant to our church family and personal lives. We also provide a time once a month to hear a personal testimony from a member.

Mid-Week Fellowship

Several gatherings take place throughout the week at various homes for group study, fellowship and prayer. On the first week of each month, we meet together on Wednesday night for Praise & Worship at the church. All other weeks we meet in various homes. Find out which group meets closest to you and we will connect you with that group.

Our desire in these discipleship settings is to model the Acts 2 church and spur on spiritual growth and unity amongst God's people.

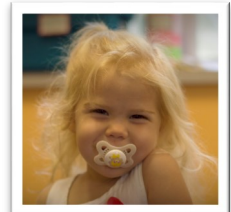
How to Connect If you'd like to get involved in any one of these opportunities, please see a greeter, or talk to David Pollard. We would love to have you participate and join us in our time around God's Word.



Child Safety

Here at Ventura, our children are protected in a safe environment. Ventura has partnered with Brotherhood Mutual Insurance group for accountability and training.

We take this training *very* seriously as we want our children's safety to be of utmost importance. Unfortunately, these kinds of training programs have become necessary in churches across America as we live in a fallen world. This is just another reminder that we are not yet home, but look forward to the day when our Lord and Savior returns to restore a perfect world and execute justice on all evil. Until that day, we take precautions to care for our children's well-being.



How do we protect our children?

It is our church policy to train all of our youth workers and make sure they are competent to work with children. Anyone who works with children must undergo a background check and must sign an accountability agreement with our church.

Once people have cleared the background check, we have them go through the Safe Haven Training course. In addition, all youth workers are required to go through an annual Safe Haven training and informational class to ensure everyone is current on Safe Haven policies and procedures.

Local & Global Missions

The Great Commission

Jesus gave all those who follow him a mission: to spread a passion for the glory of God to the whole world, through the gospel message. After Jesus rose from the dead, he said,

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20).

This mission was intended for followers of Jesus. As His disciples, we reach out to people around the globe as well as to people and ministries in our own local community through various ways. We do this because Jesus is the greatest missionary of all. He left Heaven to come to this earth, to show God's love and to draw people to see their need for Him. It is our prayer that God would empower us to be a training grounds to imitate Jesus' love and to point many others to His compassion, forgiveness and grace. We desire that the flame of God's glory would begin right here in the hearts of people at Ventura Baptist Church and spread throughout the world.

How to Connect

Discovering Ventura Class

This class is an opportunity for people to get to know a little more about who we are as a church—our history, our beliefs, and our mission. Pastor Timothy teaches this class on Sunday during the Sunday School hour periodically throughout the year. We encourage everyone who attends Ventura to go through this class and gain a better understanding of who we are as a group of believers. If you would like to participate, please speak to Pastor Timothy or any greeter for more information.

Ongoing Opportunities

There are opportunities to connect with the people of Ventura each week. People gather to pray, fellowship, and study God's Word. Some of these gatherings take place in homes while others are at restaurants. Some take place in the morning while others are in the evening. We hope that the diversity of these gatherings makes it possible for you to participate in at least one fellowship.

- Sunday School
- Sunday Morning & Evening Service
- Mid-Week Fellowships
- Ladies' Bible Study
- Women In Touch
- Men's Book Discussion
- Men's Morning Prayer

What We Believe

These are the views which every member affirms as the core beliefs of the church and which each member does not deny.

I. The Scripture

We believe that the Bible, composed of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, is the Word of God. The original manuscripts were verbally inspired by God, as holy men were moved by the Holy Spirit to record God's special revelation to man. Divine inspiration extended equally and fully to all parts of Scripture. We also believe that the original manuscripts were free from error. We believe that the Bible is the supreme, authoritative, and infallible rule of faith and conduct. The Bible is the written Word testifying to the Living Word, Jesus Christ. The Bible can be properly understood through careful study under the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

II. The Triune God

We believe that there is One True and Living God. He is holy, all-glorious, unchangeable, sovereign, eternal, immortal, invisible, and He is worthy of all worship. God is transcendent yet imminent, needing nothing outside of Himself yet delighting to reveal Himself and relate to His creation. We believe that God eternally exists in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ), and God

the Holy Spirit. These three are of one essence, yet each executes distinct offices as persons. All three Persons are equal in every divine perfection, and are all equally worthy of glory, majesty, and honor.

III. God the Father

We believe that God the Father is the creator and sustainer of all creation. He exercises sovereign headship over all creation, providence, and redemption. By His mercy and grace, He decrees and sends forth the Son and the Holy Spirit. He also hears and answers prayer, and has planned to save from eternal death all those who come to Him through faith in Jesus Christ, His Son.

IV. God the Son: Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ is divine; the eternal Son of God. He is the Creator who also sustains creation by the word of His power. He is the Messiah foretold by the prophets, who brings God's Kingdom and reconciles sinners to God. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and lived a sinless life. He took upon Himself full human nature, uniting divine and human natures in one Person, both natures being whole, perfect, and distinct. In the gospel message, we learn that He voluntarily suffered and died on the cross as a substitutionary, wrath-appeasing, atoning sacrifice for sin according to the will of the Father. We believe in His bodily resurrection and ascension into heaven; where He is now our interceding High Priest, Mediator,

Shepherd, and King. We believe in the personal, visible return of Jesus.

V. God the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is divine. He is the Lord and Creator who was promised by Jesus to also be the Counselor and Comforter to all who follow Christ. We believe that without the Holy Spirit people would not be able to glorify God. With the Holy Spirit, we have immense power to obey and honor the Lord. He ministers to every believer by regenerating, indwelling, baptizing, sealing, convicting, sanctifying, and empowering for life and godliness. He gives spiritual gifts to believers to glorify God and edify both the universal and local church.

VI. Mankind

We believe that a historical Adam and Eve were created good and originally lived in perfect communion with God. However, Adam and Eve, by voluntary transgression, sinned. Because of Adam's disobedience the entire race was alienated from God and all creation suffers from its effects. This results in not only physical, but spiritual death which is separation from God. All human beings, by physical birth, possess a sin nature and are therefore actual sinners in thought, word, and deed; and man, as such, is condemned to Hell and utterly unable to remedy his lost condition by himself. Man's only hope of redemption is by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Mankind as Male and Female: Both Adam and Eve were created in God's image, equal before God in their persons and distinct in their genders. Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of the created order, and resonate in every human heart throughout all time. Ultimately, distinctions in gender display the glory of God; and in marriage, the uniting of a man and woman reveals both the mystery of the relationship between Christ and the Church and also the glorious relationship of leadership, submission, and mutual love within the Godhead.

We believe sexual relationships are to be confined and celebrated solely within the marriage covenant between one man and one woman. The principle of a male headship, which includes a unique, sacrificial and loving leadership, exhibits the character of Jesus. The principle of female submission, which comes from a desire to sacrificially love, exemplifies the church's relationship to Christ. These distinctions are intended to be applied in the family and in the church - revealing what is good, beautiful, and best for individuals and society at large.

VII. Salvation of Mankind

The Plan of God: We believe that from all eternity God determined in grace to save guilty sinners from every tribe and language and people and nation. We believe that God rescues those who by grace have faith in Jesus, and that He will one day glorify them.

In love, God now commands and implores all people to repent and believe on Jesus.

The Gospel: We believe that the gospel is the good news of Jesus and it is the power of God that leads people to salvation. We believe the gospel is not proclaimed if Jesus is not proclaimed, and we believe that the authentic Jesus has not been proclaimed if His substitutionary death and resurrection are not central to the message. For the gospel to be accurate, it must be in accordance with the Scriptures, pointing people to the historical and eternal Jesus Christ who is also the Lord who reconciles sinners to God.

Redemption in Jesus: Jesus perfectly obeyed his heavenly Father, lived a sinless life, and performed miraculous signs. We believe that by his incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus Christ acted as our representative and substitute. He did this so that in him we might become the righteousness of God: on the cross he canceled sin, propitiated God, and, by bearing the full penalty of our sins, reconciles to God all those who believe. By his resurrection Christ Jesus was vindicated by his Father, broke the power of death, defeated Satan, and brings everlasting life to all his people; by his ascension he has been forever exalted as Lord and has prepared a place for us to be with him. We believe that salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved.

Conditions of salvation: We believe that salvation is found in no one else and nothing other than Jesus Christ. By the sovereign grace and mercy of God, Christ purchased people on the cross. When a person comes to repentant faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, apart from any work or merit, he or she receives all the promised saving benefits of God, including forgiveness of sins and eternal life. We therefore affirm that believers cannot boast in their salvation, but instead boast in Jesus Christ who has become their wisdom, righteousness, holiness, and redemption.

Justification: When someone trusts Jesus for salvation, that person is pardoned of all their sins and declared righteous in God's sight forever. This forgiveness and righteousness comes to us not on the basis of our righteous works, because we had none. Instead, this pardon and righteousness comes because Jesus, at the cross, took the wrath of God in the place of sinners and imputed to the believer His own righteousness. Therefore, a believer is "in Christ" instead of "in Adam," being a part of a new and redeemed race.

Adoption: We believe that anyone who is justified is also adopted into God's family and now possesses the rights and privileges of a child of God. Being a part of God's family ensures that a believer is included in God's kingdom, causing us to eagerly await the finalization of our adoption. We believe the doctrine of adoption reminds us that those in God's family are loved, cherished, and delighted in by God Himself.

Sanctification: We believe that God’s salvation sets a believer free to worship God in every aspect of their lives. We also believe that God promises to cause a believer to persevere in their pursuit of God’s glory in their daily life. The doctrine of sanctification teaches us that the believer is completely sanctified in this life in that he is positionally set apart unto God as a “slave of righteousness” instead of as a “slave to sin.” This doctrine also teaches us that the believer will be progressively sanctified in this life as he grows in grace and is transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Glorification: We believe that the Bible guarantees a day when all who believe will behold the glory of the Lord and then experience the redemption of their bodies. The presence of sin will be eradicated at the future glorification when we behold His glory. In that day when Jesus returns, those people whom Jesus has saved will finally be completely free from all of sin’s destructive effects.

VIII. Baptism

We believe that the ordinance of water baptism is an act of obedience instituted by Jesus Christ. Baptism should be observed solely by all who are true believers in Christ. As a church family, our common practice is baptism by immersion. Baptism testifies to our union with Jesus and to our reconciled relationship with our Triune God. Baptism speaks to one’s faith in the crucified, buried, and

risen Savior, and confesses one’s death to sin and newness of life. We also believe that baptism confesses one’s spiritual entrance and union with the universal church, which is also referred to as Christ’s body.

IX. The Lord’s Supper

We believe that the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper consists of the elements of bread and the fruit of the vine. The physical elements of food remind us that Jesus is our eternal sustenance and hope. The Lord’s Supper is (1) a continuing rehearsal of being a part of God’s new covenant on the basis of Jesus and not ourselves, (2) a memorial of his suffering and death, and (3) an anticipation of Jesus and His Kingdom to come. It is to be enjoyed by all repenting believers until Jesus comes.

X. The Church

We believe that the Church is the body of Christ, of which He is the head. Every believer is born again and baptized by the Holy Spirit into this body; thus being children of God, citizens of God’s Kingdom, and members of God’s universal church. The universal body of Christ is organized into local assemblies composed of professing believers in Jesus Christ who seek to pursue Jesus together as disciple-making disciples. Since Jesus is the Lord and Savior of His church, we believe that a truly Christian church centers its pursuit of life and godliness on Jesus

Himself. This committed assembly associates together in order to exalt God, edify His church, and evangelize the world. Members of a local church are called to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace and to love one another sacrificially and fervently.

Exalting God - Worship is humbly entering into the presence of God, in Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, guided by the Word, for the purpose of reverencing and adoring the supreme value and beauty of God. We worship through song, prayer, praise, thanksgiving, communion, service, giving, fellowship, evangelism, and the Word.

Edifying His Church - We are called to build one another up in our pursuit of Jesus through mutual partnership and fellowship with other genuine believers. As a part of this fellowship, we believe that discipleship is vital. Discipleship is helping other believers follow Christ more closely and grow in Christ more deeply. It involves teaching the Word, modeling Christ-like behavior and spiritual disciplines, and practicing church discipline, when necessary.

Evangelizing the world - Evangelism is the proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ to the world. Jesus Christ gave the "Great Commission" to his disciples, and as His followers, He has sent us out into the world to be His ambassadors and witnesses. We are called and privileged to love our neighbors, to make disciples of Jesus Christ, and to proclaim the praises of God to the world.

XI. The End Times

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will return, appearing in the sky and bringing final retribution. The dead in Christ will rise first, and the remaining believers will be caught up together with them to meet Him in the air. When Jesus returns, he will gather together his one bride, the Church, consisting of Jews and Gentiles alike. We affirm that there will be a judgment day when the Lord justly judges every human being who ever lived. The wicked will be condemned to eternal, conscious punishment and death in the Lake of Fire; and the righteous will live forever with God in the New Heaven and the New Earth. Married to Christ as his Bride, the Church will be in the presence of God forever, serving him and giving him unending praise and glory. Then shall the eager expectation of creation be fulfilled, and the whole earth shall proclaim the glory of God who makes all things new.