

NEW MEMBERS COURSE BOOKLET



COURSE OUTLINE

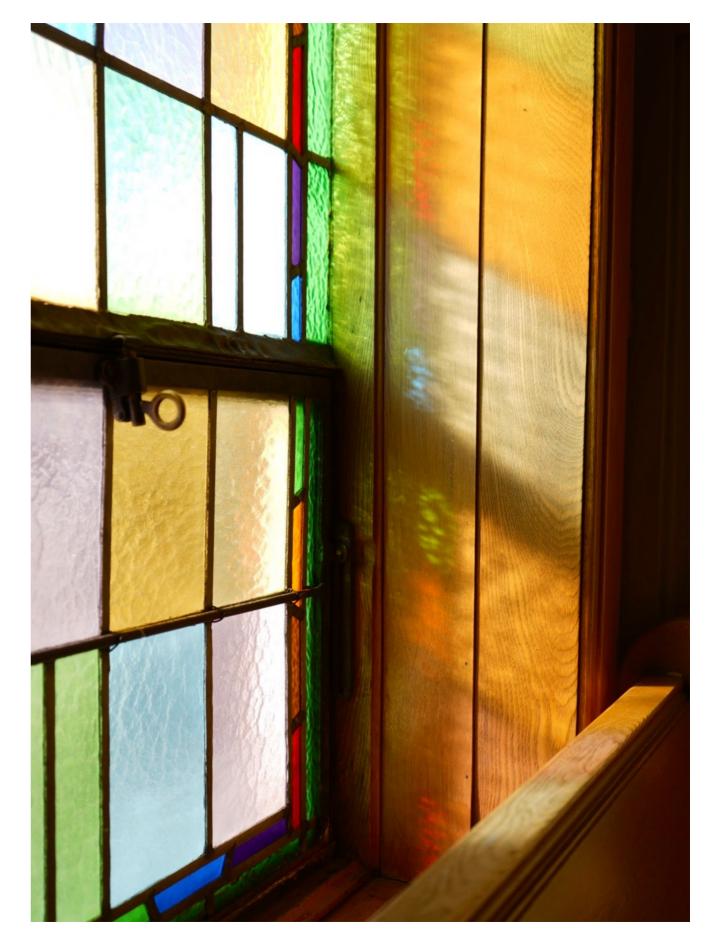
* 3 hour-course

LESSON ONE - 1.5 HOURS

- Bethany's History
- Bethany's Beliefs
- EMCC Articles of Faith & Practice
- Seven Markers of The Way of Jesus

LESSON TWO - 1.5 HOURS

- Bethany's Core Values
- Bethany's Purpose Statement
- Bethany's Vision of Church Renewal



LESSON ONE

BETHANY'S HISTORY

The groundwork for Bethany began in 1807 with the arrival of Mennonite settlers in Waterloo County, led by Joseph Schneider & Benjamin Eby. They arrived with the hopes of settling a new homeland, which would soon come to pass.

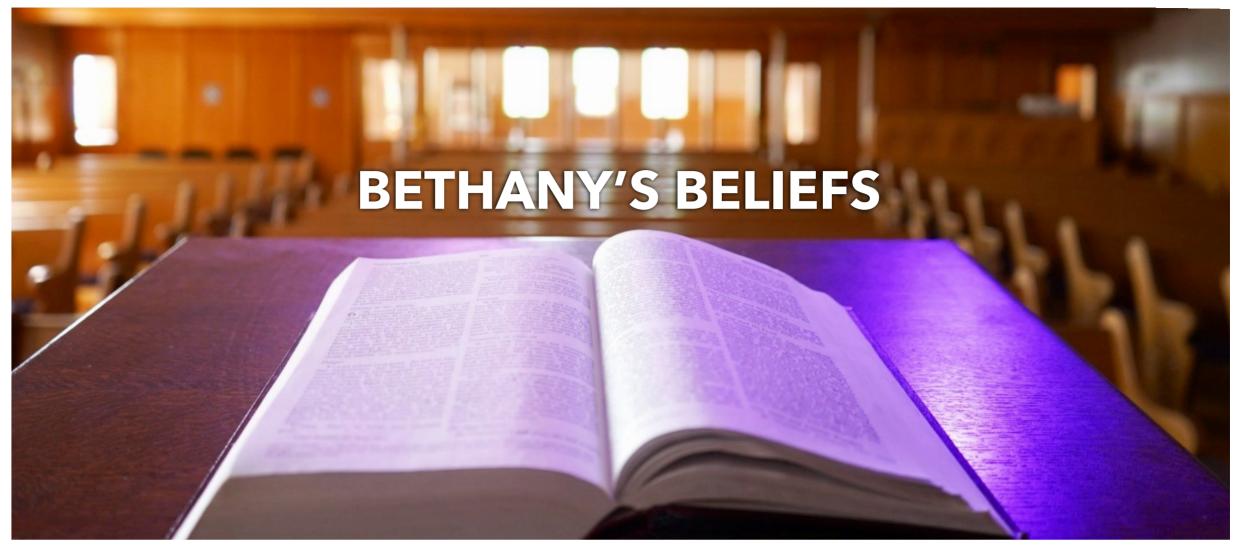
In the 63 years after being settled, the community which consisted of Ebytown, Sand Hills, Berlin & Kitchener continued to grow. In 1852, Berlin was named the county seat for Waterloo County. By 1870, the county had grown enough to be designated as a town. Forty-two years later in 1912, it grew to city status. On September 1, 1916, this thriving community's name was changed from Berlin to what we now know as Kitchener.

Many things transpired in those years. Suddaby School opened its doors in 1857 and was enlarged to 12 classrooms. Businesses began to grow, popping up between Weber & Church streets, and from Cedar to Ontario streets. Lancaster street was the easterly limit of the town.



In that time, 12 new churches were built. Among them was a church called Bethany, which was built on a half-acre of land for \$200. In 1877, Bethany was a part of the newly formed United Mennonite denomination. In 1947, the name was changed again to United Missionary and, finally, to The Evangelical Missionary Fellowship in 1993.

From the very beginning, Bethany was a church deeply involved in both local and foreign overseas missions: Sending and offering support to members of the congregation on missions; supporting local churches by offering use of the building; and partnering with one another to reach the community.



* Our beliefs are in line with the EMCC, which are specified in the Articles of Practice.

ARTICLES OF PRACTICE

1. ORDINANCES

The Christian ordinances are two in number: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They are the outward rites appointed by Christ to be administered in each local church, not as means of salvation, but as visible signs and seals of its reality. NOTES

a) BAPTISM

Baptism by water is the symbol of one's union by faith with the Lord Jesus Christ – in death, burial, and resurrection. Baptism constitutes the public confession of these spiritual realities to the world and is the answer of a good conscience toward God¹. It is administered, preferably by immersion, to those who have been born again by faith in Christ and who present evidence of the genuineness of their salvation².

1) Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:36-41; Romans 6:3-5 | 2) Acts 8:12-13, 34-39

NOTES

b) THE LORD'S SUPPER

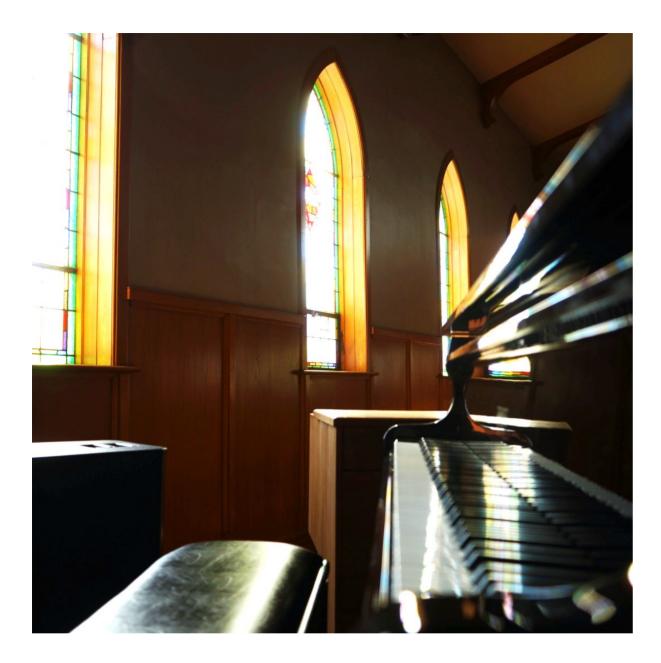
The Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ Himself on the night of His betrayal¹. It is a memorial of Christ's death; a centre of communion and fellowship; a testimony to saving faith; and a visible token of Christ's redemptive covenant. The Lord's Supper is observed only by believers and consists in partaking of the consecrated emblems of bread and the fruit of the vine. These symbolize the death of Christ for the remission of sins – and our continual dependence on Him for life and sustenance – until He comes². While the Lord's Supper is open to all true believers, we are strongly exhorted to examine ourselves and "only then eat of the bread and drink the cup³."

1) Matthew 26:26-30 | 2) 1 Corinthians 11:26 | 3) 1 Corinthians 11:26

2. DIVINE HEALING

God is able to heal; therefore, we ought to pray for the sick¹. Although healing cannot be demanded of God, it should be sought according to Scriptural instruction. God heals in three ways: 1) Through the natural processes of the human body which may be aided by medical help; 2) Through the supernatural intervention of God bringing healing to the body; and 3) Through the death and resurrection of the body to a glorified state².

1) Matthew 12:15,22 | 2) James 5:13-16



4. CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

In recognition of God's ownership of all things¹, believers should practice systematic and proportionate giving – adopting the tithe as a minimum expression of their stewardship². They should regard Christian liberality as a privilege and sacred duty, and freely give of their substance for the spread of the gospel at home and abroad, for the maintenance of the local church, and for the support of the agencies and enterprises of the denomination.

Believers should also dedicate themselves, their time and substance to God, and to the advancement of His kingdom. Christians are encouraged to spend time in Bible study, prayer, and in sharing the gospel³."

1) Genesis 1:1, 14:18-23 | 2) Malachi 3:8,10 | 3) 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 8:9-12, 9:6-8

3. THE LORD'S DAY

The Lord's Day¹, which commemorates the resurrection, is for private and public worship and for rest from unnecessary work. It should be devoted to spiritual development, Christian fellowship, and service². It is essential to the permanence and growth of the Christian church and is important to the welfare of society.

1) Matthew 28:1; 1 Corinthians 16:2 | 2) Isaiah 58:13-14; Hebrews 10:25

5. DEDICATION OF CHILDREN

God is concerned for the well-being of children¹ who are under the atonement of Christ². We encourage the formal dedication of children in a public, church service.

> 1) 1 Samuel 1:24-28; Matthew 19: 13-15; Luke 2:21-22 | 2) Mark 10:13-15; John 3:16-19; Romans 5:13

6. MARRIAGE, SINGLENESS, FAMILY& HUMAN SEXUALITY

As human beings (men and women), we are created in the image of God. God saw that His creation of humankind was very good. As a result, we have intrinsic worth and are found to be equally valued by God.

We believe God established the church as a family of faith in which we are each sons and daughters. We are established, rooted, fulfil our ministry and find maturity in Christ within this family of faith. We also believe the family of faith is where the goodness of being either single or married is to be honoured. We recognize that God has created human beings for relationship with Him and with each other. God's intention is for people to be blessed through families: both the family of faith and the family into which God has placed us. God created the family to be the cornerstone of social order.

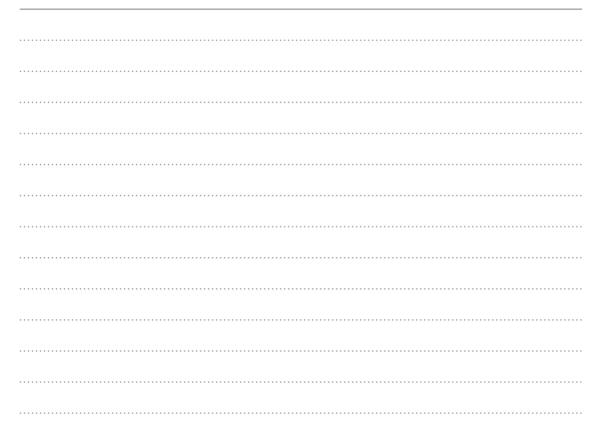
The home is a divinely established institution¹ (in which the husband is the head)² that serves its members by the law of love. In it, the husband and wife are to work together to raise their children in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord³." Obedience to parents is to be rendered by children in the spirit of mutual respect and love.

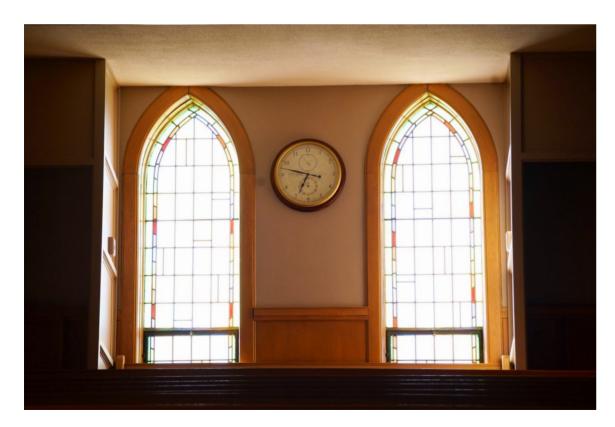
Marriage is part of God's design in establishing the family. We believe that marriage is a lifelong covenant between one man and one woman. This heterosexual union⁴ is the only appropriate relationship within which the joy of sexual intimacy is to be expressed. We affirm such marriage as God's design for a lifelong loving relationship, sexual intimacy, and the birth and nurturance of children. Christian marriage is intended for those who share a common faith in Christ⁵. Such a marriage is blessed of God.

Since the EMCC believes the Bible defines marriage as being a covenant union of one man and one woman, the EMCC only recognizes covenantal heterosexual unions as marriages. Therefore, ministers are forbidden to perform ceremonies or make any public comment that would give any indication to the contrary. Genesis 2:23-24
Ephesians 5:22-25, 28; Colossians 3:18-21
Deuteronomy 6:4-9
Genesis 2:23-24; Romans 1:26-27
Deuteronomy 7:3; 2 Corinthians 6:14-17

NOTES

NOTES





DIVORCE

Divorce is viewed in the scriptures as contrary to God's will¹. Christians should seek by forbearance and forgiveness to preserve the marriage bond. Persons, divorced and remarried, who give evidence of being genuinely born again, are eligible to be received into membership in the church.

Divorce between members of the church is an occasion of great tragedy. Such conduct brings the teaching and reality of Christian reconciliation under reproach and offenders are to be disciplined. The church shall provide counsel and take proper disciplinary action, giving consideration to appropriate aspects of local church discipline. Care should be exercised that such action be as redemptive as possible for all parties involved.

Ministers are to refrain from performing marriage ceremonies where one or both parties are divorced. However, ministers are permitted, at their discretion, to solemnize the marriage of a person whose previous marriage partner committed adultery, who is recognized as living a genuine Christian life, and where there is good evidence that a true Christian marriage is intended.

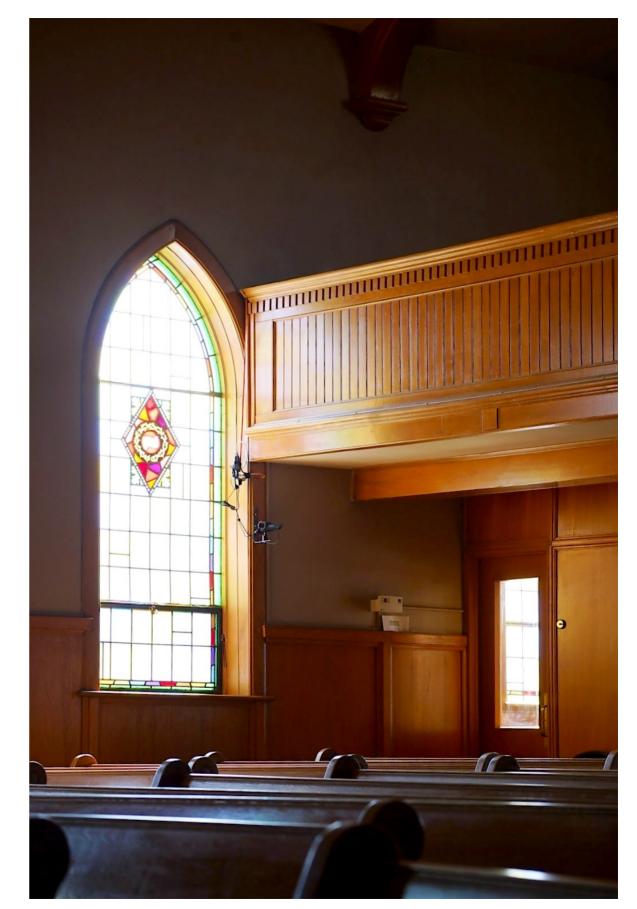
> 1) Genesis 2:24-25; Malachi 2:15-16; Matthew 5:31-32, 19:3-12; 1 Corinthians 7:10-16

8. PRACTICES AND CONDUCT

Believers are not to be conformed to the view and lifestyle of the world of which they are a part¹, but, on the contrary, are to function as salt² to prevent the spread of moral corruption, and as light to dispel spiritual darkness. High standards should therefore be set for their personal and collective life including the following:

- Their disposition and attitudes be characterized by godliness and the fruits of the Spirit which are love, joy peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control³.
- 2. Their social relationships bear witness to Christ, their entire conduct reflecting the spiritual ideals of Christianity rather than the world. They shall not engage in sexual relations outside the bonds of marriage; shall not marry unbelievers; shall not hold membership in oath-bound secret societies; and shall not compromise Christian principles in partnerships⁴.
- 3. Their bodies be treated as temples of the Holy Spirit⁵, thus making it consistent with both Christian testimony and sound principles of health, to prevent negative influence and injury to their bodies through inappropriate practices of substance abuse⁶.

Romans 12:1,2 | 2) Matthew 5:13 | 3) Galatians 5:22-24 |
2 Corinthians 6:14-16 | 5) 1 Corinthians 3:16,17, 6:19, 20 |
1 Corinthians 6:12-20



9. ATTITUDE TOWARD CIVIL GOVERNMENT

Civil government is ordained of God¹ for the welfare of society to promote and protect the good and to restrain and punish evil². Therefore, we consider it the duty of Christians to pray for rulers and for those who are in authority over them, and to give due loyalty, respect and obedience to them³. Christians are also encouraged to take an active interest in government at all levels. Where the demands of civil law would militate against the supreme law and will of God, Christians should obey God rather than man⁴.

1) Daniel 4:17 | 2) Romans 13:1-5 | 3) 1 Timothy 2:1-4 | 4) Acts 4:13-20, 5:27,28 human government, both in times of war and in times of peace. Therefore, we are to exercise tolerance and understanding, and respect the individual conscience with regard to participation in war.

1) Matthew 5:43-48 | 2) Romans 12:14-21, 13:1-4

11. OATHS

A Christian's life should be so transparent in its honesty and integrity that his or her word can be fully trusted without swearing on the Bible in judicial situations¹ or taking the Lord's name in vain².

1) Matthew 5:43-48 | 2) Romans 12:14-21, 13:1-4

10. ATTITUDE TOWARD STRIFE & MILITARY SERVICE

Believers are to love their enemies, do good to them that hate them¹, overcome evil with good, and as much as possible, live peaceably with all men². Therefore, it is not fitting for the Christian to promote strife between nations, classes, groups or individuals.

Sincere Christians have conscientious differences as to their understanding of the teaching of the Word of God, with reference to their responsibility as Christian citizens to

NOTES

HISTORY OF THE EMC

The foundation for any church ought to be based on the Life, Death and Resurrection of Jesus. Just as the early church waited on the power of the Holy Spirit and received power, we also operate this way. While the events of Acts happened thousands of years ago, we believe the Holy Spirit continues to empower the church today. This is important for every church, because God's intention is for growth beyond the days of the apostles, throughout time, until His glorious return.

The roots of the Evangelical movement arose, as most changes do, out of a faithfulness to the word of God and for that to be demonstrated in people's lives. With any new move of God, there are those raised up to carry the torch. Some of the earliest theologians who recognized the flawed teaching of the Catholic Church, such as John Wycliff and Martin Luther, became emboldened. As God began this shift, many rallied to the cause and reform began.

As the reformation continued to gain momentum, more leaders rose up, such as John Calvin and Ulrich Zwingli. Along with the ramp up of reformation came a group that would be called the Anabaptists. As thoughts on salvation by faith were brought to the church, the Anabaptists further insisted that people should be baptized as adults, with knowledge of what it meant. This, like many reformations in the church, brought great persecution and led to these reformers being martyred for their beliefs. Fast forward 200 years and we see the reformation of the church jump ahead again. This shift began with a small group of students from the Oxford Church in England. This movement would produce believers calling themselves Methodists because of their methodical application of the scriptures. Among these were two, now very well known Christians, named John and Charles Wesley; one a preacher and the other a hymn writer. They and their newly named Methodist believers travelled around singing in open fields, preaching in jails and anywhere the Lord would lead them, leading to a spiritual awakening that would continue to transform the world.

This brings us to the founding of the Evangelical Missionary Church we know today. As revival continued, it made its way into the Mennonite community, where many came to faith in Jesus. This led to the formation of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church, which began to spread through evangelism and westward migration.

In 1947, they would take on a new and more familiar name, The United Missionary Church. It grew, having numerous conferences both in Canada and the USA. In the United States they took on the name The Missionary Church Association. In 1969, this group merged with their Canadian counterparts, forming The Missionary Church. Lastly, in 1988, the church in Canada separated to become The Missionary Church of Canada, while maintaining fellowship with their brothers and sisters in the United States and around the world.

ARTICLES OF FAITH

ABOUT THE BIBLE

We believe that the Bible, consisting of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, is divinely-inspired, infallible, entirely trustworthy, and the only final authority in all matters of faith and conduct. The Bible, as originally written under the inspiration and supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit by human authors, is the Word of God, the supreme source of truth for Christian belief. The Bible reveals who God is, exposes who we are in light of His holiness, proclaims God's merciful salvation, and teaches and trains Christ's followers how to grow in relationship with God and others.

ABOUT GOD

THE FATHER

We believe in the one true, living, and holy, God who is a self-existent, eternal, personal Spirit eternally existent as a trinity of three persons — Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These persons are distinct but inseparable: one in essence, power and glory. God is the transcendent and immanent Creator, Sustainer and Ruler of all things visible and invisible. We believe that the Father is eternally the Father of the Son, the author of salvation, and now the Father of all who are born again into new life through faith in Christ.

THE SON

We believe in Jesus Christ, in whom the divine and human natures are inseparably united. He is truly God and truly man, the eternal Son of God in the flesh, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He came to reveal the Father, announce the arrival of God's Kingdom with word, miracles and deeds, and to offer Himself up as a sinless atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world. He was physically raised from the dead and then exalted to the right hand of the Father.

In fulfilling the earthly mission of His first coming, Jesus demonstrated a life of victory on our behalf over Satan and sin; provided the only way for people to be rescued from sin; and opened the way to live a holy life as participants in the Kingdom of God. He continues now as the only Mediator between God and humanity. Jesus will, at the Father's appointed time, come again in power and glory.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the Holy Spirit who is fully God and – while not to be confused with the Father and the Son – remains one with the Father and the Son, in majesty and glory. The Holy Spirit convinces us of the need for a saving relationship with God, and engages every person who trusts and follows Jesus in a life-giving relationship. Through His indwelling presence, the Holy Spirit gives the believer spiritual life assurance of Christian life. The Holy Spirit gives all believers the ability to accomplish God's purposes for their lives, through spiritual abilities and gifts to use for God's glory and the service of others.

NOTES	

We believe that God created humankind in His image, male and female, to enjoy a loving relationship with Him and with one another. God specially created humankind as the climax of His creative work on earth, and established family based on the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman, as the building block of human community. We believe individual human lives are to be valued from conception, because God loves each one at every stage of life and desires that each one will come to know and love Him.

Through human rebellion against God, we have fallen and have come to be marred by a sinful nature. Humanity, apart from Christ, is now spiritually dead, and unless born again through Christ, cannot see the kingdom of God. We, in our own strength without grace, cannot do good works pleasing and acceptable to God or bring glory to Him as we were designed to do. Through the finished work of Christ and God's grace, and by experiencing the influence and empowering of the Holy Spirit, individuals are enabled to exercise their will to accept God's gift and will. Personal acceptance of Christ's redemptive work results in a restored relationship with God and freedom to fulfill our created purpose through the power of the Holy Spirit.

ABOUT SALVATION

We believe that in spite of our rebellion, God still loves all of humanity and has mercifully extended His life-giving grace toward us. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, people who believe in Him are forgiven of sin and declared righteous (justification), are made spiritually alive (regeneration), and are set apart into a neverending relationship with Him as holy people who are being renewed in the image of God (sanctification). True belief will be evidenced by heartfelt repentance from and godly sorrow for sin, complete trust (faith) in Jesus Christ as Saviour, and surrender to His will as Lord. Spiritual life will result in spiritual fruit, shown by in a life increasingly marked by love for God, fellow believers and the lost. Salvation is God's gracious gift, to be accepted through faith, through which the believer can be assured of personal salvation which speaks to the past in the forgiveness of sins, to the present as a continuing walk with Christ, and to the future with the promise of resurrection life. Our assurance is in our continuing relationship with Christ by faith. As a result of the saving grace of Christ, the believer can experience a Spirit-filled, Spirit-gifted, and Spirit-led life of victory over sin. In submission to the Spirit the believer's life will show increasing alignment with the Great Commandment and Great Commission of Jesus.

ABOUT THE CHURCH

We believe that the true Church consists of all people everywhere who have been reborn through personal participation, by faith, in the death and resurrection of Christ, being called out to become part of the body of which Christ is the Head. The Church is the evidence of God's saving work and a strategic part of God's plan to reflect His grace, proclaim His truth, and extend His care to the world. The people of God have been sent on mission to the world — to love and worship God in a spirit of unity, to teach the Word of God, to celebrate Baptism and Communion, to encourage all people to follow Jesus, and to participate in the ever-growing kingdom of God.

ABOUT THINGS TO COME

We believe that God intervenes in the affairs of this world. At the time of God's choosing, Jesus will bodily return to the earth in power and glory to judge and rule the world, as God's Kingdom is fully and forever established. We believe the promise of Scripture that God will create a new heaven and a new earth which will be the eternal dwelling place of those who have been made righteous in Christ. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all humanity to stand before God for final judgment. Those who have trusted in Christ will be raised to life eternal in God's presence and receive the promised reward.

		[NC	TE	S		

NOTES

THE WAY OF JESUS 7 MARKERS

These seven markers characterize a follower of Jesus whether they are just starting out or have been on that journey for a lifetime. None of them stand alone; each are interdependent on the others, like the strands of a rope combine to form one strong cord. In simple terms, this is what following Jesus looks like:

	HIS LIFE	I have begun following Jesus, and am depending on the Spirit of Jesus in my journey.
\rightarrow	HIS MISSION	I am being sent by Jesus to bless others and invite them to follow Him.
	HIS CHARACTER	I am becoming like Jesus in my attitudes, behaviours and character.
\bigcirc	HIS LOVE	I am learning to love God and love others.
	HIS TEACHINGS	I am learning the teachings of Jesus.
	HIS DISCIPLES	I am helping someone and someone is helping me to be a reproducing follower of Jesus.
	HIS COMMUNITY	I am participating in a community of followers of Jesus on mission to the world.

LESSON TWO

BETHANY'S CORE VALUES

ABIDING IN CHRIST

Abiding in Christ means that we are spending time each day with Jesus, leaning on and drawing our strength from Him. In John 15, Jesus shares the imagery of "The Vine and The Branches". Jesus is the vine and we are the branches. Without Him we can do nothing, but with Him we can have fruitful lives.

BELONGING IN COMMUNITY

We believe that just as each one of us is born into a family, we are also a part of the family of believers. This means we each find fellowship, encouragement and a place to serve.

CHURCH IN RENEWAL

Bethany is a church in Renewal, learning to walk intimately with God. We submit to God to renew our minds, so that we can know His plans and purposes, as individuals and as a church community.



BETHANY'S PURPOSE STATEMENT

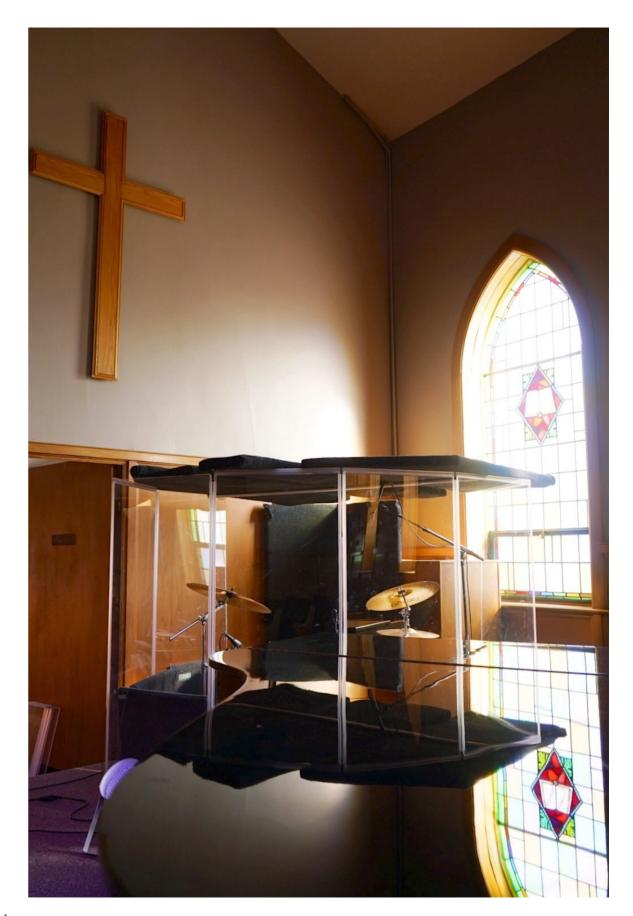
EVERYONE IS WELCOME AT BETHANY

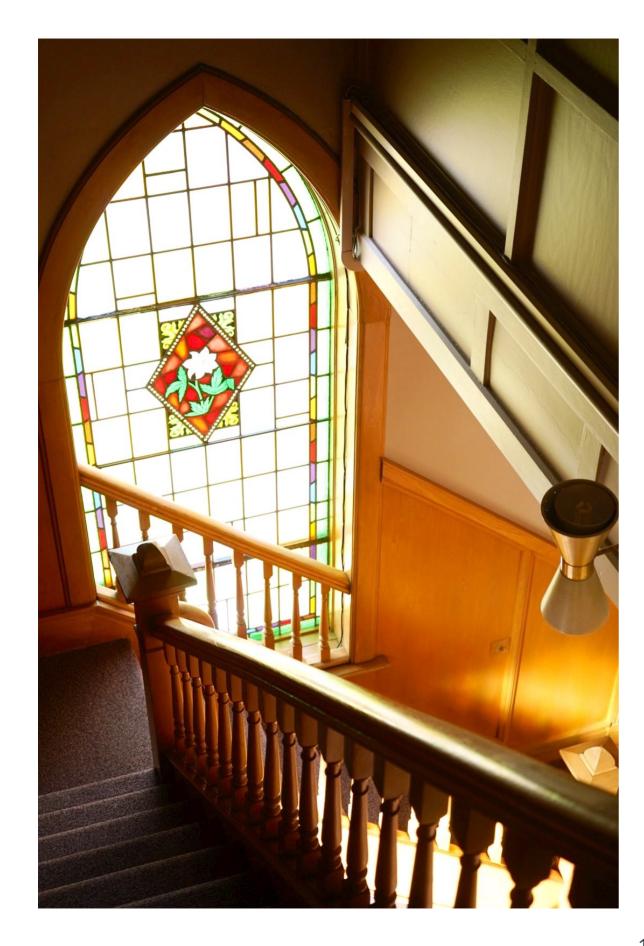
Bethany Church has something for everyone. Church isn't for perfect people. It's for hurting people, for hungry people, for ordinary people, for growing people. It doesn't matter your background: your ethnicity, your religious or nonreligious upbringing, or what you've been through. You are welcome here.

BETHANY'S VISION OF CHURCH RENEWAL

Pastor Ray Doerksen (Founder of Church Renewal) described church renewal as a return to ancient paths (Jeremiah 6:16). In other words, the goal is for the people of Bethany to walk intimately with and to learn to abide with God. God has a plan and purpose for every area of our Christian life, and desires that we grow in our knowledge of Him. Our aim is to learn to hear His voice in everyday life.

Twice a year, we plan to host a "Hearing God Seminar" where people are welcome to learn about and experience church renewal. After people participate in the seminar, they are invited to join an Abide Small Group, which consists of fifteen lessons addressing a variety of real issues that believers will encounter in life. This is a wonderful opportunity for people to grow in their relationship with God and with one another.





NOTES



519-745-0151

info@bethanyemc.ca www.bethanyemc.ca

160 Lancaster Street East Kitchener, ON, N2H 1N2