

Green Leaf Community of Appalachia, Inc.

Historic Christianity

We are adherents of historic Christianity as professed by the Apostle's Creed and the Nicene Creed. (While not without its own difficult questions to answer, we find historic Christianity to be the most consistent, complete, and humane of all the other options. And it is by far the most hopeful. We also find it to be intellectually satisfying, spiritually robust, and personally helpful.)

Meta-narrative

We are in wonder at the biblical story arc of creation, alienation, redemption, and restoration. It is God's meta-narrative - a story of God, God's people and God's purpose. He has sovereignly woven us into this story through Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

(1) Creation

The Triune God created the world as it was meant to be...good, undefiled, pure, a reflection of all things perfect. Humanity was made in His image and enjoyed a sinless, unbroken relationship. God created humanity to flourish in all respects including spiritually, emotionally, mentally, physically, socially, sexually, personally.

(2) Alienation

A catastrophe happened when sin entered the world. Adam and Eve, all humanity, and creation itself felt the effects of rebellion against God. This major disruption in God's order ushered in death, brokenness, suffering, disease, evil, abuse, and separation from God. This alienation continues as humanity ignores God and lives in moral rebellion.

(3) Redemption

Jesus' incarnation (life, death on the Cross, and resurrection) was an infinitely costly rescue operation to redeem those alienated from God. Individuals are forgiven of their sins and become a new creation through faith. Through Christ the stage is set for a just society and for the burden of creation to be lifted.

(4) Restoration

We anticipate the restoration of all things when heaven and earth are united in perfect harmony, creation is set free from bondage, evil is restrained and then abolished, believers receive glorified bodies and ultimate victory over sin, injustice toward the poor and marginalized is made right, death loses its power, and there is peace on earth and good will to humanity. As Christians, we live in a way that reflects the many benefits of God's coming Kingdom.

Scripture

We affirm that the Bible is the inspired Word of God.

Human Sexuality & Marriage

God created human beings to enjoy the gift of sexual intimacy within the vows of a marriage covenant. We believe that all sexual activity and sexual intimacy outside of marriage is a distortion of God's intended purposes. We believe that God established the marriage relationship between one genetic male and one genetic female.

Life

Humanity was made in the image of God. We promote a culture of life by placing a high value on the unborn child, the terminally ill, people with disabilities and the dying.

Societal Characteristics

We believe the society in which we live is in transition. While it was once religiously oriented, Caucasian dominated, and politically conservative with nuclear families and Judeo-Christian values; it is now becoming morally relativistic, ethnically diverse, politically liberal, sexually variant, and cosmopolitan oriented.

Apologetics

Because of changing societal characteristics, unbelievers often will not consider the Good News until their "defeater" questions are addressed. We think that the presuppositional approach to apologetics (which tries to help people see the inconsistencies of their belief system on their own terms and takes them to the logical extent of their presuppositions) will be the most effective approach in our conversations with others. The work of apologetics is only finished when the door has been opened to evangelism.

Evangelism

The assumption we should operate from is that the recipient no longer has a biblical framework, guilt of sin, or standard of truth. Evangelism is done in an on-going conversation through a relationship where truth claims are given as an invitation to consider.

Worship

Worship gatherings are a participation-oriented experience - it is the work of the people. We believe leaders need to be thoughtful to invoke reverence and ask, "Did we encounter God today?" It enhances our worship when we remember what God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) has done and look forward with anticipation to what He will do.

Prayer

Talking with God is a profound moment and a life-transforming experience. In prayer we honor God, intercede for others, and find grace to help us in our time of need; therefore, it is our deliberate intention to provide opportunities to pray when we gather.

Teaching

Our teaching of Scripture focuses on discovering who Christ is, who we are in Him, and what He is doing in our lives, our communities and in the world. It is both intellectually rational (using propositions that stimulate the mind) and emotionally interactive (using art forms that engage the heart such as art, poetry, story music and symbols).

Story

Much of Jesus's teaching was in the form of story which created readiness in people and nudged them toward receptive insight...so we value the use of story. Stories cause us to drop our guard and invite our participation (we relate to the characters, feel the emotion, get caught up into the drama, and without expecting it we may identify some reality about ourselves).