



Act Justly. Love Mercy. Walk Humbly.

DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

p1

Six:Eight (derived from Micah 6:8) is located in Ardmore. It is committed to a core set of beliefs that reflect the historic, orthodox beliefs of Christians through the ages. These are the beliefs in which we have unity and on which we base our decisions.

We meet as a large community Sunday mornings for teaching, sharing, and worship. During the week we break down into smaller 'Community Groups' loosely based on where we live geographically. These groups are devoted to nurturing the family of faith, study of the Scriptures, and being a practical blessing and help to those outside our community by seeking to bless and support local neighborhood initiatives already in place. Our vision is unconventional, in the sense that we want to begin with a centrifugal rather than centripetal model; externally vs. internally focused. This endeavor should prove to be culturally relevant to those that have given up on, or never experienced the 'Church'.

Are you on a spiritual journey, disillusioned, curious, or skeptical of Christ followers? If so, you are welcome here. We want to be rooted in history, relevant to the moment, and a revelation for the future. We want to be obedient to Jesus, to live as Jesus did, and to manifest Jesus in this world. To us, community, grace, the story of God, and passionate worship all matter greatly.

PURPOSE, VISION & MISSION

p2

PURPOSE

To live in obedience to Jesus' teaching and commands

To follow Jesus

VISION

To live as Jesus did, in word and deed. Awakening others to their own spiritual journey with him

To live as Jesus did

MISSION

To be the hands, feet, & voice of Jesus' in the Ardmore/Havertown area and beyond.

To manifest Jesus

VALUES

pp3-6

Each value is defined on the following pages. Following each value is a description of what a mature Christian looks like in light of that value.

COMMUNITY MATTERS

Every person is infinitely valuable to God; we value people and what each person brings to the table. We welcome the curious, disillusioned, and the skeptic. Faith is an adventure to be lived; we are here to help each other on that journey. We intentionally seek to serve one another & the surrounding community in the practical love & message of Jesus. Our decisions together are based on faith, risk, and love. We are a prayerful community, led by the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures. We are externally focused, engaging the surrounding community mainly through *their* established avenues of service. Our commitment to community drives us to plant new families of faith as far as we can reach.

Mature Christians in community are open, available, reliable, and sought for counsel. Positions of leadership are unimportant, and are taken with utmost humility. More importantly, they serve naturally out of a heart of God. Influence in relationship is more important than the institutional structure; the power of love vs. the love of power. They value others enough not to shy away from loving, healthy confrontation, and always seek reconciliation when needed. They are quick to admit their faulty heart and attitudes in situations. Even when things are very hard, there is a solid hope and realism exhibited by them. They do not isolate themselves from those outside the faith community; they realize the importance of bringing the Kingdom to others. Prayer, reliance on the Holy Spirit, and words/ideas which reflect God's Word, are indicative of their nature. As a result, they can easily and gently lead others in understanding their spiritual poverty and need for Christ. They serve where needed, not complaining, and seek communally beneficial answers on all issues. They see themselves less as an individual, and more a part of the family of faith - self is diminished. They may frustrate others since what is important to everyone else is not important to them - they are seeking God. They do not act alone or in isolation, but open themselves up to the grace and direction God offers through the faith community. Patience in the process of spiritual formation is evident in their lives with others. Out of grace they sacrifice themselves for others which sometimes looks illogical. They do not burn out and are very aware of their boundaries. They give freely in all ways.

GRACE MATTERS

Grace is the great distinctive of the Christian faith. Our regard for each other is born out of what we believe to be true of God as revealed in the story of Jesus. Therefore, we value authenticity, integrity, love, kindness, gentility, forgiveness, encouragement, serving others in sacrificial ways, etc. We value deeply Jesus' command to love your neighbor as yourself. We live dependent on God's grace daily.

The mature Christian is deeply rooted in, and understanding of, God's Grace in their lives. This enables them to fail and not be crushed; it bolsters a sense of humor towards themselves and others even in difficult situations. It also drives them away from seeking things that 'puff up', such as position, power, or control. They love God completely; not compartmentalizing their lives, but wholly giving everything over to him. They love themselves correctly; having learned to ask themselves if they want to be healed, or want abundant life. They have learned to respond to the Holy Spirit in order to address their personal issues, and embrace the suffering necessary to experience that life. They also love others as themselves; having learned to look at others with dignity and grace, even when conflict happens. They treat others the way God has treated them, and do not shy away from the negative consequences of sin and its repercussions in relationship. Forgiveness, clear communication, process, truth, the feelings of others, and reconciliation are paramount in their dealing with others. They have learned to ask the question of 'why' for themselves and others to address the idol of self in all situations; they do not make up 'rules to follow' but drive towards the deeper issue of grace in light of Christ.

STORY MATTERS

We are rooted in the Scriptures, the Story of a loving God pursuing his children. It is a story in four parts, what it was like (*creation*), what happened (*fall*), what it is like now (*redemption*), and what it will be (*restoration*). The central character is Jesus who lovingly bore in himself our judgment, and guides us by his timeless teaching. This story extends through his followers in history. It encompasses and speaks to all issues of life, restoring our relationship to God, and bringing freedom & joy where there was once none.

The mature Christian in the issue of Story is not only knowledgeable of God's Word, but has allowed it to influence, and guide, all aspects of their life. They see themselves as rooted in the biblical story, which is larger than themselves, beginning in creation, and ending in the hope of restoration. They are not only able to 'quote' or lead a person to certain ideas or verses, but more importantly, are able to apply them in ways that are refreshing and challenging to the soul. Their world view is shaped by the story of God, how they view life, and reality; it is born out of this holistic story. They do not try to impress with their knowledge, but if one listens closely to the mature Christian, they can hear that their words are bolstered with the ideas and verses of Scripture. They no longer dwell on the elementary teachings, but have moved onto deeper issues of the faith. They do not try to impress, but are just 'being'.

PASSION MATTERS

In response to the grace extended through Jesus, we value a lifestyle of holistic passionate worship. We seek to offer ourselves as living sacrifices to him in all areas of life: corporately & individually. One experience of this can be found in our weekly gathering in which we strive to create an open, relaxed, interactive & creative atmosphere. However, our worship extends into *every aspect* of our personal lives in what we believe, value, how we live, think, and treat others. We avoid busyness, but work hard for the joy that has been set before us in Jesus. Our passion for worship extends to the holistic value of God's creation in its entirety.

The mature Christian in the issue of passion sees all of life as their spiritual act of worship. They have grown past the empty notion that worship is found only in song on Sunday mornings. They value creation, people, and all of life. Their decisions, inner thoughts, and heart life, are all a sacrifice to God. They have come to realize that consistent good treatment of others, and how they interact with the Holy Spirit are more profoundly worshipful experiences than occasional 'worship gatherings'. They make Kingdom Choices, which may seem illogical on a worldly standard, and are based on their calling and Scripture. However, these choices are not in isolation, they are based on God's Word, interaction with the Holy Spirit, and the faith community. Worship and passion for God, as reflected in Christ, is a lifestyle, not an event for them. Their passionate worship in all areas drives them outward to take the good news to their neighbors, family and friends.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

STATEMENT OF FAITH

pp7-8

SixEight stands firmly in the center of historic Christian teaching. We affirm the Apostles', Nicene and Chalcedonian Creeds, which reflect Christian orthodoxy and the clear teaching of the Bible.

We believe that **THE BIBLE** in its entirety is God's word. The Old and New Testament Scriptures are divinely inspired, truthful, authoritative, and infallible in matters of faith and practice. 2 TIMOTHY 3:16, 2 PETER 1:20-21, 2 TIMOTHY 1:13, PSALMS 119:105, 160; 12:6, PROVERBS 30:5

We believe in **ONE TRUE AND LIVING GOD**, eternally existing in three persons, equal in power and glory: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This triune God created all, upholds all, and governs all.

We believe in **THE FATHER**, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, goodness, mercy, justice, and love. We believe that he involves himself actively in human affairs, that he hears and answers prayers, and that he saves from sin and death all who come to him through Jesus Christ. GENESIS 1:1, 26-27; 3:22, PSALM 90:2, MATTHEW 28:19, 1 PETER 1:2, 2 CORINTHIANS 13:14

We believe in **THE SON, JESUS CHRIST**, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born to a virgin. We believe that Jesus is fully God and fully man. He is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being. He is the perfect model of humanity as God intended it to be. We believe in his miracles, teachings and sinless life; his substitutionary atoning death; his bodily resurrection; and his ascension into heaven. We believe that when Jesus first came to earth he inaugurated the fulfillment of the **KINGDOM OF GOD**. He is the living and sovereign Messiah King, advancing God's reign throughout every generation and throughout the whole earth today. MATTHEW 1:18-23, ISAIAH 9:6, JOHN 1:1-5, 14:10-30, HEBREWS 4:14-15, 1 CORINTHIANS 15:3-4, ROMANS 1:3-4, ACTS 1:9-11, 1 TIMOTHY 6:14-15, TITUS 2:13 JOHN 3:16, 1 JOHN 2:25; 5:11-13, ROMANS 6:23, 1 CORINTHIANS 2:7-9, REVELATION 20:15, 2 CORINTHIANS 4:15

We believe in **THE HOLY SPIRIT**, who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower for ministry all who believe in Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit is an abiding helper, teacher, and guide, and that he indwells every believer in Jesus Christ. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit and the exercise of all the biblical gifts of the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 3:17, John 16:7-13; 14:16-17, Acts 1:8, 1 Corinthians 2:12;3:16, Ephesians 1:13, Galatians 5:25, Ephesians 5:18

We believe that all **PEOPLE** are created in the image of God; this secures and establishes their value. Yet all people are also sinners by nature and choice, and are therefore under condemnation. We believe that God forgives, regenerates, and makes righteous those who repent of their sins and place their full faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Genesis 1:27, Psalms 8:3-6, Isaiah 53:6, Romans 3:23, Isaiah 59: 1-2, Ephesians 2:13

We believe that **SALVATION** is a gift of grace from God, received by faith and yielding new, abundant, and eternal life. Romans 6:23, Ephesians 2:8-9, John 14:6; 1:12, Titus 3:5, Galatians 3:26, Romans 5:1; 10:9-10

We believe in **THE CHURCH** universal, the living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members.

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ committed two **ORDINANCES** to the Church for believers: baptism and communion.

We believe in the personal, visible **RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST** to earth and the consummation of his Kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body and the final judgment of both the living and the dead. We believe in the eternal punishment of the unrighteous, who will be separated forever from the presence of God. And we believe in the eternal blessing of the righteous, who will be united forever with the God who loves them and has redeemed them. At the end of time, God will reign in glory over a new heaven and a new earth, recreated by his mighty power, where he will be forever worshipped, enjoyed, and loved.

We believe in **Eternal Security**. It is grace and the keeping power of God that gives this security. Salvation is affected and maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. John 10:29, 2 Timothy 1:12, Hebrews 7:25, 10:10-14, 1 Peter 1:3-5

THE STORY, OUR STORY

p9

The sun will shine brighter when the darkness has passed. God has written every one of us into the creation story. There is only one story, and we are a part of it. That story began in creation and shows us how things ought to be; how we were meant to live in intimate relationship with God reflecting his loving character in creation.

However, things are not how they ought to be, sin entered the world in ‘The Fall’, and since that time the world has been a story of continual darkness with only shades of what it was meant to be; gloriously reflecting God’s love in all of creation. It is how it is now, fallen; we are fallen, separated from God in spiritual death. The world is filled with death, hatred, racism, poverty, and selfish ambition, all things contrary to God’s good character. Our soul longs for reconciliation with God although we may not even understand that longing at times. We strive but cannot get there. We try but fail. We move ahead but fall short. We grasp at philosophies and ideas that prove empty over time. And, many of us, seek to fill that longing with temporary things like sex, drugs, alcohol, and many other fleeting pleasures; pleasures that were God-created and misused in our effort to ‘not feel’ any longer. Things that satisfy only shortly and never last.

It is not until God reaches into our hearts and reclaims us through the death of Jesus Christ that we can know him again. He pays the price that sin demands to bring us back into relationship with him again. He conquers death, that looming inevitable thing that is a direct result of ‘The Fall’. In that gracious process we are transformed, and continually grow in our knowledge and understanding of his ways, and purpose, for our lives as a community of Christ followers; as the Church. Joy abounds when we are obedient to his call and our hearts are transformed in the hands of a gracious God. God can be our Father once again through Christ. If we will only respond, he will reclaim us.

The story continues though as we live in a world that is being reclaimed itself, the sun will shine brighter after the darkness, God is in process of bringing all things back to himself. It is what all people want, peace, and God is peace. We can have it through him. Heaven will come again, and we can be in the story forever if we give our lives to Christ.