



## **What We Believe...**

**God:** We believe in one God that is made known to us in three ways - as the Father, as the Son and as the Holy Spirit. Because of this, we understand and identify God as being a Holy Trinity, or three in one. ([Mark 1:9-11](#))

**God, the Father:** We believe that God the Father has always been and will always be. God the Father created and creates everything out of nothing. In love, God sustains creation and desires an intimate relationship with all people. We call this part of God, "the Father" because that is how Jesus addressed the One who sent him. ([Genesis 1:1-3](#), [Mark 14:35-36](#), [Matthew 6:9-15](#))

**God, the Son:** We believe that God became known to humanity in the person of Jesus. Jesus Christ, being completely human and completely divine, lived life as a servant and teacher. Jesus, given to us by God, was crucified and died on a cross - a punishment we deserve for our sins - in order to show the power of Sin and the depth of God's love for all creation. Jesus was raised from death in order to show us the even greater power that God has over the sin and death that threaten to consume creation. ([John 3:16](#), [1 Peter 2:24](#))

**God, the Holy Spirit:** We believe that God has given the Holy Spirit to creation and that the Holy Spirit works in and through all that God creates. The Holy Spirit is an active power that works outside, above, in and through the lives of people so that God is made known to us and so that we can have faith. ([John 14:15-31](#), [Galatians 5:22-23](#))

**The Bible:** We believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. Through the books of the Bible we come to know the nature and character of God. The Bible shows us the many ways that God has related to creation throughout history. We use the Bible as our basis for understanding our relationship to God and one another. As God's Word, the Bible transcends time and cultural contexts, forever making itself applicable and relevant to our lives in the world. ([2 Timothy 3:16-17](#), [1 Peter 1:20-21](#))

**Prayer:** We believe that the heart and center of us as individual Christians and as the corporate body of Christ is ongoing communication with God - called prayer. For us, prayer includes adoration, confession, thanksgiving and asking God to supply our needs. An important part of prayer is listening. All that we are and all that we do is grounded in prayer.

**Sin:** We believe that Sin separates us from God. Sin is our rebellion against God's will and manifests itself in broken relationships with God, with others and with ourselves. Our very nature leads us to sin by what we think, say and do. God's desire for us is that we turn from Sin and toward a relationship with God. ([Isaiah 59:1-2](#), [Romans 5:12-14](#), [Romans 6:23](#))



**Grace:** The grace of God is the means by which we are forgiven and drawn into relationship with the God that we worship. God's grace is something so good and so powerful that we cannot possibly earn it. Because of our sinful nature, we trust completely in this grace to bring us into present and eternal relationship and communion with God. We strive to make all that we do a response to the undeserved gift of God's grace to us. ([Ephesians 2:4-10](#))

**Faith:** We believe that faith is also given to us by God. Faith is our ability to believe and to trust in God as one who forgives sins and gives eternal life to us. Faithful lives are those that strive to do works of love, mercy and justice out of gratitude and as examples of God's love for us. We respond to God's Word and live lives of faith in order to demonstrate God's love to the world, not to earn it for ourselves. ([Romans 4:13](#), [Galatians 2:16](#), [Ephesians 2:4-10](#))

**Baptism:** We believe that, through Jesus, God has commanded us to baptize others in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Baptism is a sacrament whereby water and the Word come together as a sign to us and to the world that God adopts us as children. Because God, not humanity, acts through baptism we believe that baptism can happen for both infants and adults. ([Matthew 3:13-17](#), [Matthew 28:16-20](#))

**Holy Communion:** We believe that, through Jesus, God has commanded us to share the sacrament of Holy Communion with one another. The bread and wine of communion represent the body and blood of Jesus. We remember Jesus every time we share the Lord's Supper and we believe that he is truly present with us in the bread and wine. Through the sharing of communion we are reminded of Jesus' love and sacrifice for us and ask for God's continued forgiveness of all our sins. We invite all baptized Christians to share this meal with us because we know that God's love and grace transcend any limits that humanity might impose upon itself. ([Matthew 26:26-28](#), [1 Corinthians 11:23-26](#))

**Bethel Lutheran Church:** We believe that, as a church, we are a gathered community of people who believe in and live by the teachings of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Bible. Bethel's Lutheran affiliation is with the [NALC](#) (North American Lutheran Church) and is now an active member of the Heartland Mission District covering Indiana & Kentucky. As brothers and sisters in Christ, we are also a part of the Church Universal – the community of believers throughout the world who preach, teach and live in and by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We acknowledge and respect the different ways that other communities interpret and live out the Gospel even as we are forever striving to become one with them all in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. ([Romans 12:3-8](#), [Ephesians 4:11-16](#))