

Christian Life Camps Bay - Membership Notes

This gives more detailed information on the Story, Message, Distinctives, Vision and Beliefs of CLCB.

Our Story

- In 1926, this church began as a non-denominational local church in Camps Bay.
- In 1977, this church formally became *'The Camps Bay United Church'*, which included Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Methodists.
- In 2011 our church constitution was broadened to allow the calling of a pastor from a wide range of Evangelical expressions.
- At that time the church was also given the name *'Christian Life Camps Bay'* (CLCB).
- Our current pastor was appointed by and receives covering from the Association of Vineyard Churches in SA.

Our Message

1. Salvation through Faith in Christ Jesus.

- A one sentence summary of the whole message of the Bible (*2 Timothy 3:15*).
- The message of the Bible under four big headings: Creation, Fall, Salvation, New Creation. Salvation is the main part of the story.
- The death of Christ for our sins and his resurrection from the dead for our salvation, is *'of first importance'* (*1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Romans 4:25*).
- *1 Timothy 1:15 (ESV) 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.'*
- *Romans 3:23-26 (ESV) 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.*

2. First Steps of Salvation

2.1. Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ

- This is our key step to receive salvation. *'Salvation (is) though faith in Christ'*. It is *'to be received by faith'* (*2 Timothy 3:15; Romans 3:25-26*).
- Saving faith is summarised as FAT faith in *Romans 10:9-13*.
 - ✓ Facts about Jesus accepted: *'that Jesus is Lord and ... that God raised him from the dead'* (v9)
 - ✓ Acts of commitment done: *'confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord'* (v9) and *'call on the name of the Lord'* (v13)
 - ✓ Trust in the Lord begun: *"Everyone who believes (or trusts) in him will not be put to shame."*(v11)

2.2. Repentance towards God

- 'Repent' (Greek - Metanoia) means a change of mind that leads to a change of lifestyle (*Luke 3:8; Hebrews 6:1*).
- The prodigal son in the story in *Luke 15:17-20* is an example of repentance.
- Repentance involves:
 - ✓ Realising that I have sinned and that I need a saviour (*1 Timothy 1:15*).
 - ✓ Confessing our sins and seeking God's forgiveness (*1 John 1:8-9*).
 - ✓ Turning from sin and serving Jesus (*1 Thessalonians 1:9*).

2.3. Baptism in water

- Water baptism expresses our faith in Christ and marks our addition to and membership of the Church (*Acts 2:41; 1 Peter 3:21*).
- Baptism symbolises death to our old life and rising to new life in Christ (*Romans 6:3-4*).
- *Acts 8:36* asks, *'What prevents me from being baptized?'*
(If you are not yet baptised, may I suggest that you speak to our leadership and start arranging to be baptised. If you are already baptised, and are now recommitting your life to Christ, you might want to renew your baptismal promises as an expression of your faith in Christ.)

2.4. Receiving the Holy Spirit

- When a person receives Jesus by believing in him as Lord and Saviour, the Holy Spirit causes a new spiritual birth as a child of God (John 1:12-13).
- This new believer comes alive with Christ, and relates personally to God in prayer as 'Abba, Father' (Ephesians 2: 4-5; Romans 8:15).
- The Holy Spirit also wants to repeatedly come upon us to empower and gift us to witness for Jesus (Acts 1:4,8; 2:4; 4:8, 31; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11).
- We receive this baptism and filling of the Holy Spirit by believing in Jesus and allowing the Spirit to control us (John 7:37-39; Ephesians 5:18).

2.5. Devotion to prayer, scripture, fellowship and worship

a. Devotion to Prayer

- The evidence that Saul had experienced new life in Jesus Christ was that he began "praying". (Acts 9:11).
- We need to devote ourselves to a daily time of prayer as we seek 'our daily bread' from God (Matthew 6:6-13; Colossians 4:2).

b. Devotion to Scripture

- The Scriptures are God produced, true, 'profitable' (2 Timothy 3:14-17; John 10:35) and relevant for today (Hebrews 3:7-10; 4:12-13).
- We need to be devoted to the reading, hearing and obeying of Scripture (Matthew 22:31; Matthew 7:24; Matthew 28:20; James 1:22).

c. Devotion to Fellowship

- We need to meet regularly with other believers and actively share in the life of a local church. (Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:24-25).
- We need to support the ministry of our church with our time, talents and treasure (Hebrews 10:24-25; Matthew 25:14-30; 1 Corinthians 9:13-14).

d. Devotion to Worship

- The OT Sabbath was a celebration of Creation and the Exodus and the earliest Christians set aside "the first day of every week" as "the Lord's day" to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus (Exodus 20:11; Deuteronomy 5:15; Matthew 28:1; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Revelation 1:10).
- We set aside a special day and time each week for corporate worship, so that our entire lives will be orientated around God and lived to his glory (Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 2:16-17).

Our Distinctives

1. God in Three Persons, Blessed Trinity

- We believe in one God, who exists as three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:20).
- We experience the Holy Trinity in salvation and in prayer (1 Peter 1:2; Ephesians 2:18).

2. The main and the plain of the Bible

- We are always asking, "What does the Scripture say?" This will determine what we believe and how we behave (Romans 4:3; 2 Timothy 3:15-17).
- We major on the main, plain message of the gospel of the cross and the resurrection for the salvation of believers (1 Corinthians 15:1-11).

3. Come Holy Spirit

- We worship the Holy Spirit as the Lord and always seek more from the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:17; Luke 11:13).
- The Holy Spirit gives life, fills, empowers, gifts and produces fruit (John 3:6-8; Ephesians 5:18 Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11; Galatians 5:22-23).

4. The now and the not yet of the kingdom of God

- The kingdom is the dynamic, saving reign of God, which has already come to earth in Jesus and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:28).
- The kingdom has not yet fully taken over everything, and this leads to the kingdom tension of the already but not yet (Matthew 6:10).

5. Come as you are but don't stay as you are

- We seek to welcome all and we also seek to call all to become repentant, changed followers of Jesus (Luke 5:27-32).
- The ministry of the church is done by believers who have already travelled some way along the road of repentance (Psalm 101:6).

6. Everyone gets to play

- The five-fold leadership ministry exists to equip the saints for the work of ministry (*Ephesians 4:7-12*).
- We want all our people to get trained and released in doing the works of Jesus (*Matthew 10:1, 7-8*).

7. Worshippers of God and rescuers of people

- Worship and witness are the main ways in which we love God and neighbour (*Matthew 22:37-39*).
- We are committed to finding culture current ways of worshipping God and making disciples of Jesus (*Matthew 28:19; John 4:23*).

8. Naturally supernatural

- We minister in the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:7-11).
- We avoid hype, weirdness and other-worldliness in our speech, behaviour and ministry (2 Corinthians 4:2; 5, 7-12; 6:4-10).

9. Remember the poor

- We take seriously the Scriptural instructions to “remember the poor” (*Galatians 2:10*).
- We show practical love to others in need (1 John 3:17-18).

10. Plant churches that will plant churches

- We are committed to evangelism and one of the best ways to spread the gospel is by planting churches (*Acts 14:1, 6, 20, 22-23, 26-28*).
- A church plant is a group of disciples, getting established in a local neighbourhood as the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 1:2; 12:27).

11. My brother is never my enemy

- This is a united church of three denominations and its constitution allows the calling of a pastor from a wide range of Evangelical expressions.
- We affirm that “we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another” (*Romans 12:5*).

12. Lord, keep me on a short leash

- We encourage our members to meet regularly with one another for mutual encouragement (*Hebrews 10:24-25*).
- We value oversight in ministry from leaders and elders who in turn are accountable to other leaders and to the Lord (*Hebrews 13:7, 17*).

(At CLCB, the elected elders and appointed minister are responsible for the leadership of this church, under the oversight of the three denominations, Presbyterian, Congregational and Methodist. The current pastor was appointed by, and receives oversight from, the Association of Vineyard Churches in Southern Africa).

Our Vision

1. Be Changed: Our Vision of Healing

- Our vision is for people to be **changed** as they experience the most important **healing** of their relationship with God (1 Peter 2:24-25).
- We also pray for physical and psychological healing, which is a sign of Jesus’ authority to forgive sins (*Mark 2:1-12; Matthew 26:28 Luke 24:47*).

2. Be Nice: Our Vision of Honour

- Our vision is to be **nice** and to **honour** all people by welcoming and calling them to follow Jesus in repentance and changed life (*Luke 5:27-32*).
- The ministry of the church is done by believers who have already travelled some way along the road of repentance (*Psalms 101:6*).

3. Be Used: Our Vision of Harvest

- Our vision is for all our members to be growing their **harvest** of righteousness, which refers to growing in spiritual maturity (2 Corinthians 9:10).
- Our vision is also for all our members to be **used** by God as they play their part in gathering the harvest of souls (*Matthew 9:37-38; 28:18-20*).

Our Belief

1. God

- The infinite, personal God created all things and made humans in his image in the beginning. (*Deuteronomy 33:27; Genesis 1:1, 26-28*).
- The one true God exists as a Trinity of three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (*Matthew 28:19*)
- We are commanded to love God with our all and to love our neighbour as ourselves (*Matthew 22:37-39*).

2. Revelation

- God is revealed, generally in creation, especially in the history of Israel, and supremely in Jesus Christ (*Psalms 19; Hebrews 1:1-2*).
- This special and supreme revelation is recorded, explained and applied in Scripture, which is God's inerrant written word (*2 Timothy 3:15-17*).

3. Sin

- God is pure and holy and sin separates people from him (*Isaiah 59:2; Habakkuk 1:13; 1 John 1:5*).
- By nature, humans are sinful and spiritually alienated from the life and love of God (*Genesis 3:1-6; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:1-3; 4:18*).

4. Jesus

- Jesus, who is God the Son, became man, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary (*John 1:1, 14; Matthew 1:18-25*).
- Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross for the sins of the world and rose from the dead (*2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 4:25; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4*).

5. Faith

- By faith in Jesus we are justified, which means that we are put in the right with God (*Romans 3:23-25, 4:5; 5:1*).
- We are saved by believingly receiving and hold fast to the gospel of Jesus' death for our sins and Jesus' resurrection (*1 Corinthians 15:1-4*).

6. Repentance

- Linked to faith in Jesus is the need to repent, which refers to a change of mind and a decision to live God's way (*Mark 1:14-15; Matthew 3:8*).
- Repentance is a life of turning to God and his way and turning away from idolatry, evil and sin (*Luke 13:3, 5; 1 Thessalonians 1:9*).

7. Help

- In Christ, help comes from receiving and being controlled or filled by God the Holy Spirit (*John 14:15-23; Acts 1:8, Ephesians 5:18*).
- The Holy Spirit makes us like Jesus by new birth, indwelling, incorporating, enabling prayer, producing fruit and giving gifts (*2 Corinthians 3:17-18*).
- (For further study: *John 1:12-13, 3:6-8; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 12:13; Romans 8:15; Galatians 5:16-25; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11*).

8. Baptism

- Water baptism expresses our faith in Christ and marks our addition to and membership of the Church (*Acts 2:41; 1 Peter 3:21*).
- Baptism symbolises death to our old life and rising to new life in Christ (*Romans 6:3-4*).

9. Obedience

- As followers of Jesus, we learn to obey God's word, share with God's people, worship and pray to God (*Acts 2:42, 43, 47*).
- As followers of Jesus, we also love our neighbour and play our part in bringing Jesus' healing power and loving message to all (*Acts 2:43, 47*).

10. Giving

- Giving shows that we honour God more than other things (*Proverbs 3:9; Matthew 6:24*).
- Giving to support God's work is 'commanded' by the Lord and it is 'the fruit that increases to your credit' (*1 Corinthians 9:13-14; Philippians 4:16-17*).

11. Holiness

- Believers in Christ are on a life-long journey of being progressively transformed into the image of Jesus (*1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Corinthians 3:18*).
- Sanctification, or growing in holiness, involves being changed by the Holy Spirit and obeying the word of God (*Galatians 5:16-25; 2 Timothy 3:15-17*).

12. Finality

- When believers die, they rest in Christ and will rise from the dead and receive a share in the new creation (*Daniel 12:13; Philippians 1:22, 23*).
- At the end of this world, Jesus will return and the new creation will be perfected (*1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 24; Revelation 21-22*).