

## WE BELIEVE

The Church of God (Anderson, Indiana) is a worldwide movement of people seeking to fulfill God's desire for the church. We are committed to studying the Word of God and faithfully living it out. We are committed to *being the body of Christ* in spirit, word, and deed. We commit ourselves to *the mission that Jesus Christ gave every believer*: to make disciples of all nations. We seek to love and serve all people, beginning with those within our sphere of activity and influence.

The Church of God movement appeared in the 1800s in the midst of the broader American Holiness Revival. The pioneers of the Church of God hoped to restore a more biblical understanding and practice of what it means to be the church.

One of our early church songs says: "The Bible is our rule of faith and Christ alone is Lord." That still summarizes the core belief of most Church of God people. While we have been hesitant to issue any official belief statements, these beliefs reflect the heart of the Church of God movement:

- **Salvation makes us members of the body of Christ.** We believe that the church is composed of every person who has accepted Jesus Christ as Savior. We enter into the life of the church, not by joining a denomination or a human organization, but by committing our lives to Christ.
- **The body of Christ is one, here and now.** We believe that God calls all Christians to live in unity and peace. While Christians may not agree on all things, we can embrace the spirit of Christ in caring concern for one another. Jesus is our common foundation, and love is our only creed!
- **All members of the body of Christ are to live a holy life.** We believe that God's standard of life for all Christians is one of moral purity and godliness, to live as Christ. As God's people, we represent Christ in this world.

In addition to these beliefs, we embrace these core biblical values:

- **The Lordship of Jesus Christ.** There is one Lord, God's Son, Jesus Christ, over the church, so Christ is the church's ultimate authority in all things.
- **The Great Commission.** Each of us is called to fulfill Matthew 28:18–20, making fully devoted followers of Christ—disciples—who will then teach others to follow him.
- **The Great Commandments.** We are called to fulfill Matthew 22:37–39, not only loving God with our entire being, but also loving all that he loves.
- **The Holy Spirit's Work.** God's Spirit equips believers with unique gifts that enable us to carry out the mission of Christ in the world. At the same time, the Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control in every believer (Galatians 5:22–23), which demonstrate the Spirit's presence within us.

- **Stewardship.** All of life is to be used for the honor, glory, and service of God.

While we have this core identity, you will find a great diversity of thought and practice within the Church of God. Despite our differences, we share a journey of faith, growing together into the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:13). We worship, serve, and grow together as citizens of God’s kingdom. We celebrate our life in Christ and embrace our call to be the body of Christ to our world—all to the glory of God.

The following resources available from Warner Press are recommended for those who desire to learn more about the beliefs, practices, and history of the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana):

- *Following Our Lord*, by Barry L. Callen
- *I Saw the Church: The Life of the Church of God Told Theologically*, by Merle D. Strege
- *Meet Us at the Cross*, by Laura and Oral C. Withrow
- *We Believe*, by the Faculty of Anderson University School of Theology
- *What We Teach*, by Barry L. Callen
- “Tell Me About” Doctrinal Series, by Arlo F. Newell
- *The Quest for Holiness and Unity*, 2nd edition, by John W. V. Smith and Merle D. Strege