

## From Our Pastor...

### United by What We Believe

#### *Part 4 of the Series*

For more than twenty years, Ingleside has been a remarkably united church. Across those two decades, we have learned some important truths about our unity – some of which I am recounting in this series of articles.

In part 1 of this series, I offered three answers to the question of why we should talk about this topic now. Part 2 focused on the fact that the Bible says that our unity is both a gift and a goal. Last week we looked at seven dimensions of our spiritual unity.

This week I am reminded that we are ***united by what we believe***. When the Apostle Paul speaks of “the unity of the faith” in Ephesians 4:13, he is affirming that we are one in the doctrinal truths that we believe and confess.

At Ingleside, the foundation of our ***doctrinal unity*** is our affirmation of the truthfulness and authority of Scripture. The first of our “Articles of Faith” states:

*We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and, therefore, is and shall remain to the end of the world, **the true center of Christian union**, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried (emphasis added).*

Then, in eighteen more paragraphs, our “Articles of Faith” summarize the truths we understand the Bible to teach.

So, for example, at Ingleside we are united by our affirmation that there is one God – we are monotheists, not polytheists or pantheists.

At Ingleside, we are united by our belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died on the cross for our sins, was raised from the grave, ascended to the Father, makes intercession for believers now, and one day is coming again personally and visibly as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

At Ingleside, we are united by our confession that we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone – he is “the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through him” (John 14:6).

Some churches diminish doctrine because they believe it divides. We believe, however, that without “instruction in sound doctrine” (Titus 1:9) there cannot be genuine unity and deep fellowship in the faith. Whether we are young or old, a newcomer or an old timer, a worshiper at 9:30 or 11:00 a.m., God intends for our common confession of faith to be a key element of our unity at Ingleside.

I’m grateful to be part of a church family with great diversity, yet united by our free and wholehearted assent to the cardinal doctrines of our faith – “the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3, ESV). Remember, *the best is yet to come!*

Your Pastor and Friend,



Tim McCoy