



## OUR FAITH

Since our founding, the Union Gospel Mission of Yakima has existed to bring the unique hope of Christ to people struggling on the streets. Our very existence as an organization is an expression of our faith. Over the years, we've had various and multiple ways of practically enacting our Christianity, particularly in regards to clients, partners, and employees.

In our services to clients, we love, serve, and respect people "right where they are." We follow Christ, but we don't require those we serve to do so. Spiritual care is offered, but not mandated as a condition of food or shelter.

With our volunteers and partners, there are many ways to participate. Some types of volunteers and partnerships really do require alignment of beliefs. Others may only need the absence of open disagreement. The Mission delights in being as broad a conduit of care as possible for the community.

In employment, we view all of our permanent staff as ministers of our mission, co-creators of our culture, and witnesses to the transforming power of Christ. As a community of believers centered on knowing and serving Jesus Christ, our religious beliefs, life in community and Christian values represent the heart of the Mission, informing and shaping the substance and style of all we do.

**OUR BELIEFS:** As source material, the Statement of Faith of the Yakima Union Gospel Mission relies entirely upon the text of the 66 books of the Bible, the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. As such, we believe:

1. The Bible alone is the inspired, infallible, authoritative and final Word of God; constituting unchanging truth for all people across time, place and culture.
2. That there is and has always been only one God, undivided, yet eternally existing in three co-equal persons: Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. God is love, because He lives in eternal relationship within himself.
3. God created humans in His image. We are therefore made for three specific personal relationships: loving God, loving oneself, and loving one's neighbor as oneself. He made humanity expressed in two complimentary and immutable sexes, male and female, each displaying features of His nature. For their joy and well-being, God commanded human sexual expression to be completely contained within the marriage of one man to one woman, equally naming every other expression sinful.
4. Though made without sin, humans sought to govern themselves free from God's loving guidance. They sinned, as have all persons since. Sin breaks relationship with God, self, and others, appropriately condemning humans to God's righteous judgment. But sin and separation were not God's destiny for people.
5. Forgiveness for our sins and reconciliation with God, self, and others is available because of Christ's substitutionary, sacrificial and atoning death on the cross. God knowingly planned this salvation for us from before creation. Only faith in Christ accesses this grace; forgiveness cannot be earned by good works.
6. Jesus Christ, fully God and fully human, inaugurated the inbreaking of God's Kingdom through his death and resurrection. His Church is all who have responded in faith to God's grace in Christ. He has made them heirs of his Kingdom, indwelling them by The Spirit.
7. The Church has been given the grace to proclaim and labor within God's expanding Kingdom of Salvation, until the Lord Jesus comes again, as He promised to do. At that time, He will judge the living and the dead, and receive His own to be with Him forever in heaven. Those who have chosen to remain separate from Him in life shall remain separate from Him eternally in Hell.

**OUR ACTIONS:** These beliefs create ministerial expectations of all who hold them. As such, we freely and willingly accept that:

1. We have asked for this privilege and opportunity (Jas 3:1) to represent equally (Pr 24:23) to all persons the good news of God's redeeming love shown in Christ Jesus (Jn 3:16-17)
2. Biblical teaching about the Image of God (Gen 1:26) and Jesus' command to love our neighbor as ourselves (Mt 22:39) means YUGM does not tolerate any discriminatory (Lk 10:25-37) or demeaning behavior in the delivery of its services. We are serving Christ himself when we serve our neighbors in need (Mt 25:31-40).
3. We seek for God to direct us to situations of need—physical, spiritual, emotional, etc., and ask God how we can be a part of meeting that need (Mt 25:31-40). This may involve offering prayer, spiritual support, and even an explanation of the reasons for our own Christian commitment (1 Pt 3:15).
4. While all Christians are on a journey of spiritual and personal growth (Js 3:2; 1 Jn 1:8-9), we seek God's power (2 Tm 1:7) to live lives that can serve as examples of a new creation (Mt 5:16), directed by the incarnate (Col 1:27) and written Word of God (2 Tim 3:16-17),
  - By seeking to live out biblical instructions for interpersonal relationships, including promoting positive communication (Eph 4:29), avoiding gossip and slander (Jas 4:11), and pursuing reconciliation and conflict resolution (Mt 5:23; Mt 18:15ff);
  - By pursuing the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22–24) and Christlikeness (1 Jn 2:6; Phil 2:5) as our relational standards;
  - By avoiding anything in our personal, romantic or professional lives that would undermine our Christian testimony, our Statement of Faith, or bring reproach on the name of Christ (1 Jn 2:3-5; Gal 5:19-21; Eph 4:29; Eph 5:3-5; etc.)
5. We need to pursue spiritual disciplines and growth in Christ while we are away from work, including regularly gathering with other believers for worship, fellowship and growth (Heb 10:25) so that we arrive with a surplus of spiritual assets from which to minister (Jn 7:38; Ps 51:10-13).
6. We represent a broad range of Christian tradition and fellowship, and so we choose to focus on what we share in common (1 Cor 15:1-5), rather than our differences (Tit 3:9; 2 Tim 2:23), and we choose always to speak with respect and goodwill in regards to those differences.

**NOTE:** For the purposes of this document and all other YUGM policies and procedures, the term “Evangelical” is used to describe someone who has a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ and who positively affirms the content of this section.

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