

**FCCV is a Bible based Christian Church, full of hope, acceptance, compassion, and great faith. You will discover meaningful worship, different traditions, mission and ministry opportunities, joyful praise, sincere prayer, thought provoking lessons, and a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. All people are welcome to share in the Lord's Supper, and to unite in the love of our Savior. We can't wait to meet you!**

## **OUR IDENTITY**

We are the First Christian Church Valdosta, an independent, non-denominational Christian Church.

## **HISTORY**

The Christian Church originated on the American Frontier during the early 19th Century. Its first leaders were Barton Stone and Alexander Campbell, Presbyterians who reacted against sectarian frontier religion and urged a union of all Christians founded upon the restoration of New Testament Christianity. They advocated adult baptism by immersion, weekly observance of The Lord's Supper, and autonomy of the local congregation.

## **PRACTICES**

FCCV accepts new members through a confession of faith, baptism or by transfer of membership from other Churches. We have two worship services; a traditional service is held on Sunday morning and a casual service on Wednesday evenings. Members often come to both. Communion is observed every time we meet to worship. The communion table is open to all who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of their life. It is a place where we come to experience the power of God's love and the grace of Jesus Christ in the breaking of bread and the drinking of the cup. Our gathering at the communion table is the central focus of our worship experience.

Creeds may be used from time to time, but none is seen as the test of a "true believer." We hold true "Where the Bible speaks, we speak, and where the Bible is silent, we are silent", which means each person is challenged to study the scriptures and to seek God's will for their life. We are Christians only, but not the only Christians.

Our church is a place of common ground for people with diverse denominational backgrounds. We practice unity and inclusion at the Lord's Table, all are welcome.

## **BAPTISM**

Peter said to them," Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:38 (NRSV) Just as the baptism represents the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, it symbolizes the death and burial of the old self of the repentant believer, and the joyous birth of a brand new being in Christ. Those who founded the Christian Church movement taught baptism by immersion as the accepted form.

\* Baptism is a public act by which the church proclaims God's grace, as revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, through the use of a visible sign of God's gracious initiative and the human individual's response in faith. With other Christians we affirm that baptism is at once a divine gift and a human response... The meaning of baptism is grounded in God's redemptive action in Christ, it incorporates the believer in the community in the body of Christ, and it anticipates life in the coming age when the powers of the old world will be overcome, and the purposes of God will triumph.

\*From "Word to the Church on Baptism," Commission on Theology, 1987

## **COMMUNION**

For I have received of the Lord what I have also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me. In the same way he took the cup also after supper saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread, and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. I Corinthians 11:23-26 (NRSV)

The practice of Communion echoes the Passover feast, when Jesus shared bread and wine with his disciples on the eve of his crucifixion.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the living Christ is met and received in the sharing of the bread and the cup, representative of the body and blood of Jesus. The presence of the living Lord is affirmed and he is proclaimed to be the dominant power in our lives.

## **OUR CONFESSION**

We confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and proclaim Him Lord and Savior of the world.