

WHAT IS AN ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



PERHAPS YOU MAY HAVE HEARD EACH OF
THE WORDS BEFORE: **CHURCH**, **PRESBYTERIAN**
— EVEN **ORTHODOX**. BUT WHAT DO WE MEAN
BY PUTTING THEM TOGETHER? WHAT IS AN
“ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH”?

“ORTHODOX” IS AN OLD WORD THAT MEANS
STRAIGHT TEACHING. AS ORTHODOX
PRESBYTERIANS, WE BELIEVE WHAT THE
BIBLE TEACHES — THAT GOD THE FATHER
GAVE UP HIS SON JESUS CHRIST TO DEATH
ON A CROSS TO PAY THE PRICE FOR THE SINS
OF HIS PEOPLE. WE ALSO SEEK TO FOLLOW
WHAT THE BIBLE COMMANDS.

THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
TRIES TO LIVE CONSISTENTLY WITH THE
PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIANITY AND TO
SHARE WITH OTHERS THE GOOD NEWS OF
SALVATION THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

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THE
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PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

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● A CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is a Christian church. At the most basic level, this means that we believe what the Bible says and try to put it into practice.

Though the Bible is a long book, we believe that the heart of its message is fairly simple: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). There is one God. He exists eternally. He is three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In the person of Jesus Christ, God the Son entered human history. Why? Because the entire human race had rebelled. This rebellion is what the Bible means when it speaks of “sin.”

● NO BETTER WAY?

Most of us don’t think of ourselves as “sinners.” When we compare ourselves to others, we tend to think that we are “pretty good people.” But haven’t we all acted selfishly? Haven’t we all done things that we know are

displeasing to God? But Jesus, the one who never acted selfishly, who never disobeyed God, lived and died so that selfish people like you and me would be delivered from our sin and selfishness, and transformed into new people.

Of course, there are many other religions in the world that share some common concerns with Christianity: a quest for God, answers to the problem with evil, what happens to us after we die, and a hunger to know the meaning of life. Facing these questions, various religions give different answers, but they are agreed that salvation is something we must earn. Success depends on our effort. But, how can selfish people ever be devoted to something other than themselves? And who would reward us for it? Is there no better way?

● CHRIST PROCLAIMS A BETTER WAY.

All our efforts at self-deliverance are doomed. *But there is good news!* In the person and work of his Son, God has already done



everything necessary to save us. By his life, death, and resurrection, Jesus secured forgiveness of sins and eternal life for all who desire it. He offers new life – his own resurrection life – to all people, which we receive by faith, trusting him as our only King and Savior.

In trusting him, we are transformed and begin to live new lives. Though our practices may at points resemble those of world religions, our motive is completely different. Other religions command us to earn acceptance. Christianity teaches that we live new lives because we have been accepted already through Jesus! This is why Christians call the

message of the Bible “good news” (gospel). As a Christian church, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church is committed to proclaiming this gospel of Jesus Christ to all people. And we welcome into our fellowship all who believe in our Savior.

● A PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is also a Presbyterian church. In its essence, this means that we are confessional and connectional.

We are confessional. Every church has some understanding of what the Bible teaches. The only question is whether they make it official by putting it in print. In the Orthodox Presbyterian Church we insist on being transparent about what we believe the Bible teaches. That is why we publish our confession, the Westminster Confession of Faith, and Larger and Shorter Catechisms. While these documents summarize Bible

teaching, they never take the place of the Bible itself, which is always our primary standard and final authority.

We are connectional. We also express our connectional character by our intentional structure. Congregations in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church are led by their elders, who serve on the local (session), regional (presbytery) and national (general assembly) levels. At every stage, our church government provides accountability and connects each congregation to the worldwide mission of the church. Together, we seek to establish the worship of God and take the gospel to all people everywhere.

● A GROWING CHURCH

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is a growing church. In North America, we plant new churches in small towns and large cities (Home Missions and Church Extension). Overseas, we send and

support missionaries who work to raise up churches led by local people (Foreign Missions). At home and abroad, we publish books, pamphlets, and magazines aimed to help Christians to know, love, and serve Jesus better (Christian Education).

Perhaps this last point is the most important thing to remember about the Orthodox Presbyterian Church: *we live to glorify and enjoy God forever as our chief end.* In making this commitment, we recognize that there are many ways in which we fall short. We are not a perfect church, nor are we the only Christian church. Yet it is our sincere desire to be honest and consistent in our life, worship, and witness — the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

