



*Eden*

Baptist Church

# core distinctives



# CORE DESTINCTIVES

## OF EDEN BAPTIST CHURCH

### **God-Exalting Worship**

We purpose to joyfully magnify the splendor of God in every aspect of our daily lives. All of life is worship. Our corporate worship is calibrated to exalt God, not man. With Spirit-filled zeal and reverent joy, we strive to stir up holy affections for God, not arouse the flesh.

We encourage substantive worship that is saturated in God's revealed Word and holds aloft the torch of the apostolic faith passed down through the centuries. We strive to employ music and lyrics that are distinctive and vibrant, mixing new expressions of devotion with songs of historic import that bind us to God's people through the centuries.

In preaching and teaching, in the reading of Scripture and historic confessions, in giving and praying, in witnessing baptisms and communing together in the Lord's Supper, we gather to delight in God and herald as a community: "God is great and greatly to be praised!"

### **Centrality of God's Word**

We purpose to saturate our daily lives and corporate environment with God's Word. Our teaching and preaching is expositional in nature; that is, we labor to be faithful to the authorial intent of each book in its original language and historical context. Believing the Bible is God's authoritative and inerrant word, we receive it as our very life—zealous to mine the revelation of its entire council and to defend that body of biblical doctrine against the inroads of worldly philosophies and the heterodoxy of religious impostors.

### **Vital Union with Jesus**

We purpose to live our daily lives in faithful response to our living union with Jesus Christ. As born again followers of Jesus and chosen

by God for progressive sanctification into the image of His Son, we rejoice to see every aspect of life as fundamentally transformed by the gospel.

Justified by faith in Jesus' death to pay the penalty of our sin, and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, we encourage one another to root out indwelling sin and to practice spiritual disciplines in promotion of zealous affections for God.

Redeemed by Christ, we strive to live holy lives in moral distinction from the world, promoting a culture of biblical discernment that repudiates legalism, is averse to spiritual indifference, and tempered by grace.

### **Spiritual Shepherding**

We purpose to live our daily lives as under-shepherds of Jesus, rendering spiritual care to His people. As spiritual shepherds are commissioned to lead, feed, protect, and care for the flock of God, so the members of the flock are called to devote their lives to encourage one another's vibrant relationship with Christ and His church. Whether in corporate worship, small groups, one-on-one relationships, or family life, it is our focus to oversee one another's spiritual progress by means of admonition, mutual confession, edification, prayer, and both formative and corrective church discipline.

Crucial to this shepherding environment is the systematic development and recognition of a body of biblically qualified shepherds who exercise pastoral oversight as men of God in the self-denying interest of the church's spiritual health.

### **Servant Oriented Stewardship**

We purpose to live our daily lives under the conviction that God is the maker, giver, and sovereign Lord of every gift, and that we will stand before our Savior to give account for our management of these blessings.

Corporately, we express our joyful worship of God by habitually giving tithes and offerings of our material prosperity as an antidote to idolatry and as a direct investment in eternity. We also employ our spiritual gifts to build up the body of Christ in sacrificial service to one another and His cause.

Crucial to this service-oriented culture is the development and recognition of deacons who model servant-leadership to the assembly by shouldering specific physical needs for and with the believers.

### **Local Church Based Evangelism**

We purpose in our daily lives to proclaim the gospel of salvation by faith alone in the crucified, risen and reigning Christ. Both locally and globally, we strive to honor God's design for local churches to evangelize the lost, uniting new believers to their folds through baptism, and thus incorporating them as active, accountable members of a local body of covenanted believers.

Since conscious faith in the exclusive power of Jesus to save sinners from God's wrath is utterly essential, we consider spiritual cooperation with anyone who denies the gospel to be an act of disloyalty to our Savior. While we engage in compassion ministries to display the love of Jesus, we maintain that the gospel is not spread apart from the proclamation of repentance and faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ and the biblical discipleship of those who become His followers.

### **Pervasive Prayer**

We purpose to live our daily lives in prayer. Prayer is integral to our church culture. We pray every day, in every church service and at virtually every meeting. We pray silently and publically, privately and corporately, over food and with fasting, brief prayers and through extended seasons of watchfulness. We pray regularly for one another by name and for the evangelization of the nations.

Prayer for us is not a dutiful ritual or a means to psychological wellness. Prayer is nothing less than communion with the living God.

It is our active cooperation with God's eternal purposes—defiance of things as they are in the interest of what God promises they will someday be. Prayer is our importunate plea for God to contend for the glory of His name among the nations. Our intentional pleasure is to live together as a praying people until Jesus returns and answers all our prayers, and His.