



WORD OF LIFE INTERNATIONAL

What is a Word of Life church?

This document is a brief summary of what Word of Life is and is not intended to be seen as an exhaustive description or comprehensive account of what we believe. We intend to develop and deepen the various formulations in this document, but we would like it to serve as a foundational approach to who we are.

The Foundation of the Church

Our perspective is that the Christian Church came into being on the Day of Pentecost. In accordance with what is written in Acts 2:42, we believe that there are certain foundational elements that go to form the basis of the Christian Church: the Apostle's teaching, Fellowship, the Breaking of Bread and Prayer.

Word of Life

Word of Life is a Christian evangelical movement that began in 1983 in Uppsala, Sweden. Over the years, it has developed and expanded into various regions of the world. From its beginnings as a local church, Word of Life has grown to become an international church movement based on the vision: *"Equip God's people with His word of faith, show them the spiritual weapons they have, teach them to use them and send them out in victorious battle for the Lord"*.

This mission has expressed itself in different ways depending on the time of events and cultures in which they have been implemented. However, it can be clearly discerned that there are certain key traits that characterize Word of Life and the churches that have emerged from its ministry. We can append the epithet "DNA" to these characteristics and state that this DNA is central to what Word of Life is and does and what hallmarks Word of Life churches.

Word of Life Churches

We do not believe that any congregation lives in a vacuum or on a remote island, but that it needs to be part of a network, a family, along with other congregations. In this affinity there is a common theology, community is created and mutual support is given. For the Word of Life churches, this community is being expressed in WOLI.



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We believe that Word of Life churches need to cooperate across many areas and here is where the national Word of Life Centres and associations of congregations can play a major role. These Centres can, for example, take on a lot of responsibility for coordination and joint ventures within media and missions and in practical training and theological education for pastors and leaders.

The Word of Life DNA

The Gospel

A Word of Life church preaches the Gospel. It is through faith in the message of the Gospel that people are saved and receive eternal life. The Gospel is preached, not only verbally but also by way of a Christian lifestyle.

The message of salvation, the Gospel, is under constant attack and our mission includes its defense, apologetics. We stand for faithfulness to the Scriptures as the inspired Word of God such as the Christian church has understood it since the time of the Apostles. Defense of the Faith responds to attack from Christian liberal theology as well as other religions, ideologies and philosophies that want to ban, to question, to undermine or redefine the Christian faith.

Faith Teaching

A Word of Life church teaches and imparts faith. *The just shall live by faith* (Romans 1:17). *For we walk by faith, not by sight* (2 Cor 5:7). *All things are possible to him that believes* (Mark 9:23). *For with God all things are possible* (Mark 10:27).

Faith Teaching is more than mental assent to certain dogmas and principles which in and of themselves are important. It emphasizes God's trustworthy promises which convey a spirit of faith, a faith that overcomes the world (1 John 5:4); a faith that casts mountains into the sea (Mark 11:23) and that yields victory over the circumstances encountered by a believer. Faith teaching aims at helping the believer to live in a personal relationship with and in imitation of Jesus Christ, and gives practical instruction for a Spirit-filled and supernatural Christian life.

Faith teaching is not a complete theology, but rather an aid and catalyst to a life of faith that can be implemented in various denominational and theological



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atmospheres, a spiritual touch and enrichment that enhances the spiritual life of believers in various environments.

Life in the Spirit

A Word of Life church is marked by the life and supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit. It works to bring the believer into a life led and filled by the Holy Spirit, who is one of the Persons of the Trinity (the Godhead).

The Christianity of the Book of Acts was marked by the supernatural with signs, wonders and miracles and of the Holy Spirit's manifestation in believers and in the life of the church. We believe that this life and the Gifts of the Spirit are for the believer of today (1 Corinthians 12:4-11). The Holy Spirit wants to equip the believer with power to be Jesus' witnesses even to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8), whilst at the same time being of assistance to the weak in their prayer lives (Romans 8:26- 27). The Holy Spirit leads us into a Christlike life, bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22- 23).

Missions

A Word of Life church gets involved in the Great Commission! (Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-18). Every congregation and every Christian is called to pray for, give to and go out into missions. For this purpose, the Holy Spirit has been given them to reach their hometown, their region, their homeland and out into the world as far as the Lord leads (Acts 1:8). All this is missions. This commission incorporates the inspiration, recruitment and mobilization of believers to commit themselves to missions as well as to send them out. The church also has a mission to give the missionary and the missions project support financially, in prayer and in practical ways.

The Great Commission includes evangelism, discipleship training, Bible teaching, humanitarian and social work and church planting, both at home and abroad.

Unity

A Word of Life church is called to serve all the people of God and to join Jesus in His own prayer for unity among the believers (John 17:21). Unity is the



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very essence of life in the Trinity and should also characterize life in the Body of Christ. Secure in its own identity, blessing and calling, a Word of Life church has an attitude of inclusion and recognition of other Christians, even where it is not treated the same way by others. A Word of Life church is neither sectarian nor elitist in its attitude to other Christians, but rather seeks to counteract fragmentation and arrogant attitudes. It chooses instead to stand in dependence on God and the greater Body of Christ. Such an approach focuses more on what Christians from different traditions and contexts have in common than what separates them. This needs to be done on a solid Biblical foundation and with spiritual discernment. Here there is a will, despite different use of language and even theological standpoints on individual issues, to understand the other's beliefs in an unprejudiced way, which can then lead to mutual enrichment. It makes room for interaction with other Christians on central Christian issues both in defending and manifesting the Christian faith and Christian ethics. Unity such as this is a testimony to the world, strengthens the Church and brings glory to God.

Besides the shared vision and DNA, a Word of life church adheres to the faith statements expressed in the document "Faith Statements of Word of Life".