

VIDEO 1

JESUS-CENTRED



We start not with ourselves, but with God. We believe in the God who reveals himself through Father, Spirit, and Son. Baptists have always emphasised ***Jesus as the One that we are called to follow***, the One who reveals God to us, and the One through whom God is reconciling all things. Jesus is the head of the church, we are his body, and he is therefore the centre of who we are and all we do. ***Jesus is our ultimate authority*** and we always seek to be led by him.

This take on authority comes from the very beginning of our story in history. We were part of the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century and then those who were later called “Dissenters” in England. Because while other groups appealed to Popes and Kings to set the agenda, formulate creeds and write traditions, the early Baptists were different. They focused on the fact that ***Jesus reveals himself to all people, at all times, in all settings***. They believed that *everyone* can be open to hearing him speak.

This idea has been carried through to today, as we too are invited, here and now, to listen and respond to Jesus. This means our churches and organisations don’t all look, feel and operate in the same ways. Our common core values frame all that we do, but in practice there will be some diversity, flexibility, and even sometimes messiness. But our shared goal is always to listen to Jesus and to follow his lead.

We believe that every follower of Jesus has been gifted with the Holy Spirit, enabling us all to hear the Spirit's voice. When we gather as churches and organisations, we seek to **discern the Spirit's leading together**. We do this by taking time to grow in our own faith and in our relationships so we can listen well to one another, trusting that the Spirit is at work among us.

This also means listening intently to the Scriptures. We believe they are inspired by God and through them he continues to **reveal himself to us today**. We trust the Bible as the source and authority for our faith and practice. We seek to be formed and re-formed by entering into and living out of the biblical story. We listen to the Spirit speaking to us today as we engage with the Bible and together, we interpret it as a community. We want to spend time hearing its words, reading them, reflecting on them, speaking them and sharing them as a community. As we do this, God's word transforms us.

So, we are led by the Holy Spirit, formed and re-formed by the Scriptures, and we are centered on Jesus. This the foundation we return to again and again, giving us confidence and hope. This is at the heart of our values.