

Like all Christians, we treasure the Bible as the written record of God's communication of love to the world. It is the most wonderful book ever written for it shows us how to connect with God, know Jesus and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

While it is easy to understand what is needed for salvation, there are many parts of the Bible that are difficult to understand. When we read it, we ask the Holy Spirit to help us understand what it means. The Holy Spirit does this through disciplined study, inexplicable inspiration, and consulting with other Christians. To seek clarity we follow a few guidelines. We interpret a confusing passage by seeking how other Biblical passages speak to it. We ask, "How does this text show the love of Jesus? How does it teach God's reconciliation in Christ?"

We value scholarship in studying the Bible. "The Scriptures, given under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, are nevertheless the words of men, conditioned by the language, thought forms, and literary fashions of the places and times at which they were written. They reflect views of life, history, and the cosmos which were then current. The church, therefore, has an obligation to approach the Scriptures with literary and historical understanding. "* Our pastors are required to read the Bible in the original languages of Hebrew and Greek to find the most accurate reading possible and all are encouraged to study the Bible in an English version that is understandable to them. We read the NRSV in worship. We do not hold the Bible as "inerrant" but as the holy, true, and faithful witness to Jesus Christ who alone is inerrant. We encourage all to make regular Bible study part of their spiritual disciplines.

*Confession of 67