

FIREBIRD SPIRIT WHITE PAPER:

A Network of Faith, Hope & Love in the 21st Century

July 23, 2024

VISION STATEMENT:

Sharing the Transforming Spirit of the Firebird, we are an online Community of Hope that connects individuals as well as resourcing existing churches seeking to become hope generators in the model of Jesus and the first-century church.



YOU MIGHT BE ONE OF US IF YOU ...

- Answer “none of the above” when asked your religion;
- Like Jesus but are tired of judgment and fear sermons;
- Think that questions are good things and you want to share them with like-minded people searching for deeper meaning in life;
- Don’t necessarily identify as Christian but appreciate that Jesus was counter-cultural in his liberating teachings; **OR** You love Jesus but people around you don’t seem to know the same Jesus that you do;
- Are searching for an expression of the Mystery on your spiritual journey;
- Are just tired, and believe in the power of Hope to bring new life and new possibilities.

WE ARE ...

... a casual, progressive, and evolving online Community of Hope - individuals and groups - guided by the Spirit of inclusion, compassion, forgiveness, justice-love, and the All-ness that is the Universal Presence called by many different names.

OUR GOAL ...

... is to establish a network of Faith, Hope & Love across the country and encourage the development of organic, grass-roots expressions (Acts of Hope) that are both virtual and in local communities.

WE ARE ...

- **AUTHENTIC** - Made up of real people who are learning, growing and supporting each other,
Not Glitzy - Created on some soundstage with lots of “props.”
- **SEEKERS** - Blending scholarship with 21st century experiences.
Not pushing a political or religious agenda.
- **RESPONSIVE** - Developing and creating programs and platforms in response to the needs and interests of our participants.
Not Pre-packaged.

A COMMUNITY OF HOPE - A creative and nurturing web for (r)evolutionary, inclusive seekers, connected by the Spirit as we travel on our spiritual journeys. As our awareness grows, our connection with each other provides a supplemental enhancement to our faith journey.
Not what we grew up with as “church.”

Our Community of Hope is not necessarily a replacement for your faith practices, or current community but we are open to a new definition and model for how we are called to live the Way in the 21st century.

OUR SHARED PRINCIPLES ...

- All people are beloved of a Universal Presence (called by many different names) whose essence is within each of us and which longs to be in relationship with humanity and all of Creation.
- The Universal Presence longs to be in relationship with humanity and all of Creation and as we grow in that relationship, we become more aware of the Oneness connecting every living thing. We refer to this as the Beloved Community.
- The Creator’s Presence is another name for Love and as nothing is greater than the Creator, nothing is greater than Love – not fear, hatred, nor any human-made condition – and Love Wins in the end.
- The Beloved Community is connected by the movement of the Spirit calling us to act with compassion as we work for just and equitable standards for all.
- The Way of Jesus began as a collection of people from different cultures and communities. Throughout history, his teachings have found new expressions for embracing the marginalized, giving voice to the voiceless, and welcoming the stranger. Our Community of Hope is a version of the 1st-century church in the 21st century. The Way has come full circle.

- We are committed to seeing each other, respecting each other, listening, and being present to each other. People of good faith can disagree without being disagreeable and the process of building consensus is preferable to the divisiveness of “taking sides.”
- All people have gifts -- a calling, and purpose waiting to be made manifest in the world.
- The Spirit is always present, inviting (but not forcing) us to be our best selves through constantly seeking, learning, adjusting and growing.
- Jesus and others came to show us Ways/Paths to be in relationship with Spirit and to grow along our spiritual journey in the Beloved Community.
- “Worship” is defined by the worshiper; what has meaning for one may not have meaning for another. We embrace the tenet of the Christian Reformed Tradition that “God alone is Ruler of the Conscience.”
- We are called to be in community with each other along our spiritual journeys, but our communities may change as we grow spiritually. We are not limited to only one community at a time. Therefore, the Community of Hope may be someone’s primary spiritual connection, or it might supplement what that person is already doing with another community.

OUR “BUSINESS MODEL?” ... AN ECONOMY OF GRACE ...

We invite you to pay what you feel our programs are worth to you based on their cost to create. No fee is required for participation in any of our Firebird Programs, and we count on those who are able, offering a little more to cover the costs for those who cannot offer anything.

PLEASE TELL YOUR FRIENDS!

We’re not alone anymore! We are finding each other through
Firebird Spirit and the Community of Hope!

***A first century model for the twenty-first century
Beloved Community!***



MISSION	METHOD	MODEL
Helping people and groups find hope through the movement of the Firebird Spirit	Living the creative, supportive, inclusive and hope-filled relationships in our world today	Connecting individuals and Acts of Hope as an Evolving Way in the 24/7 world of today

LIFE IS HARD. HOPE CAN HELP.

Firebird Spirit

The Way for the 21st Century

Jesus was:

- Welcoming and Inclusive
- Living in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-language world
- Realistic yet Hope-filled
- Challenging old ways
- Creating community
- Deepening relationships (with God, with Others, with Self)
- Changing the world one heart at a time

So are We.

Join Us in the Firebird Movement!