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# GUIDING PRINCIPLES — of — THE CENTRE

- The Independent Church of Australia •
- The Independent Church in New Zealand •
- Het Esoterisch Christelijk Centrum •

## RELIGION IS NOT ETHICS.

*Morals are the outcome of a deep spiritual life rather than the other way around. We aim for freedom, not a freedom to do what one pleases, but a freedom which lifts the mask from one's personality and brings one into the joy of real living. This is pure religion, for it binds one with another and the binding of souls is what religion is really about.*

*from the Declaration of The Church of the Mystic Christ  
29<sup>th</sup> November 1975, Rev Mario Schoenmaker*

**W**E HAVE BEEN DRAWN TOGETHER as members and friends of The Centre by shared aims and values which we want to display, practise and engender in our communal, personal and professional lives. The practice of these guiding principles assists us to achieve the purpose for the founding of The Centre and for our individual membership of it. This document articulates these aims and values ...

### THE CENTRE WAS FOUNDED:

- To perceive the vision of Christ within us and around us.
- To set people free.
- To make the able more able.
- To be a contemporary occult school.
- To manifest and develop the Priesthood according to the Order of Melchizedek.

**People choose to become members of The Centre** in order to uphold these purposes. In this process they receive many blessings and knowledge. They do not join The Centre to receive but, rather, to give of themselves with purpose and to be part of a fellowship which is dedicated to living out the spiritual philosophy: Christ is in you, the hope of glory.

A Centre member is a person who is striving to become the best they can become. They love the work, not for the reward but for what they can become. Therefore they are generous on all levels and know the power of sacrifice. They are aware of their ego and selfishness and yet seek to know the reality of their being and what true freedom is. A

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Centre member is striving to live in the presence of God, to be aware of the sacredness of each moment and experience, and so to assist in the work of reconciling all things to God.

Members make promises to live in the spirit of love and understanding with all human beings. They strive to apply the laws of spiritual life to combat ignorance and destructive thoughts. They accept the responsibility of being members of The Centre by upholding the standards set forth in Christ, and being active in proclaiming the gospel and assisting others so they may become whole in body, mind and spirit. Members promise to realise that “Nothing is impossible with God”. They promise to uphold The Centre’s ministry physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. These responsibilities of membership bring privileges.

Those who are not members of The Centre are free to participate in public activities, to receive and to learn. There are no restrictions on who may receive the grace and truth of Christ. Non-members are not bound by the responsibilities freely undertaken by members of The Centre and are also not privileged with what has been entrusted to us by virtue of the living out of our membership. This difference is reflected in our communication with and expectations of visitors and friends of The Centre.

## OUR AIMS

The statement “Christ is in you, the hope of glory” expresses succinctly the great mystery at the heart of this earth. It speaks of the end point of evolution and of the raising up and perfecting of every aspect of the human being. To live as spiritual pioneers, to point to future human potential and assist in the unfolding of evolution by consciously enacting the Christ impulse is our aim. Specifically, we are now working towards developing the consciousness of the Age of Brotherhood, where our own

happiness and well-being will be totally dependent on the happiness and well-being of the other. We could sum this up as: to become children of God, co-workers of Christ and true fraters and sorores.

## OUR VALUES

We value freedom, spiritual individuality, clear seeing, wholeness and reconciliation. We have a love for the ancient traditions and mysteries but are not bound by them. We like to know why we do certain things. We do not blindly follow rules. We want to live our lives intelligently and consciously with thought for the ethics and morality of each situation and activity, and mindful of the purposes of evolution.

## HOW WE LIVE OUT OUR PURPOSE

The purposes, aims and values of The Centre are expressed in the areas of creativity, education, fellowship and worship in our community, personal and professional life.

The Centre's wholemaking ministry is to set people free to more fully express their divine nature and true potential. This is accomplished in many ways: through teaching, counselling, community, sacraments, prayer and meditation, spiritual healing and the laying on of hands. Individual creativity develops our individual gifts and assists us to appropriate the spiritual teachings. There is a wholemaking power in gathering together in the name of Christ to experience the spirit and truth of Christ.

Through studying metaphysical principles and esoteric knowledge, we come to know the spiritual laws that govern life in the flesh (such as karma) and can learn to accept each soul's responsibility for the situation they have created and the stages that exist on the journey.

## THE PRINCIPLES WE APPLY TO OURSELVES

- We take responsibility for ourselves, for our own thoughts, feelings, speech and actions. Regular times of

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meditation, prayer and conversation with fraters and sorores assist us to bring our experiences before the throne of grace and develop new perspectives and insights.

- We realise that “the Lord has yet more light and truth to break forth from his word”. We acknowledge that our knowledge is imperfect and we continue to study the holy scriptures and spiritual teachings so we can grow in the truth.
- We practise a spiritual point of view, focusing on what is good and right rather than what is wrong. Our purpose and task is not to poke around in the wounds of our imperfections, but rather to find salve for our eyes so that we may truly see.
- We learn from the example of our great High Priest, Jesus Christ. His relationships, interactions and life’s journey inform and guide our understanding and response to life.
- We know that in all things God is working for good with those who love him and who are called according to his purpose. We know that we are being conformed to the image of Christ. We also know that this is a co-operative effort and that “God will force no soul to heaven.”
- We understand that the word – speech and language – is a divine gift and we use this gift responsibly.
- We also understand that love is not speech but is portrayed in deeds and actions.
- Spiritual development is a process in which we are active rather than passive. It helps to have definite goals.
- Our yes is yes; our no is no. We do not make statements or promises we can’t keep.
- We strive for a balanced lifestyle of work and play, study and recreation, so that we may be whole in body, mind and spirit.
- Knowledge of self, others and the world is freemaking.

- We progress and learn through time. Therefore there is a need for perseverance, endurance, steadfastness and patience. We do not expect instant results, but work in an orderly way towards transformation.
- We aim to maintain our composure in the face of both joy and sorrow.
- We recognise that it is possible to grow in our capacity to love, and we earnestly desire to love more fully and freely.
- Love is expressed through faith and trust in others; love is to embrace the other person and say, “I believe in you. I do not doubt you whatsoever.”
- The most simple, basic activities can be transformed into powerful and significant experiences through love.

## PRINCIPLES WE APPLY TOWARDS OTHERS

- All human souls will be treated with respect, kindness and patience and with the knowledge that Christ is in them. We do not make differentiations based on gender, age, cultural background, religion, race or sexual preference. We honour the soul.
- We see each other from a holistic point of view rather than simply a psychological or physiological point of view. We acknowledge that every human being is a spiritual being who is evolving towards perfection. Each being has a history, a present and a future; each of us is the product of our own creativity and each of us has freedom of choice. Each of us will bear the consequences of our decision-making. “Perfect justice rules the world.”
- We acknowledge evolution and that each soul has chosen to be here in order to progress. Purpose is at work in every situation and it is our task to discover that purpose. Every situation is unique. It has never occurred before. There is something for all to learn. There is no good that is always the good and there is no evil that is always evil. We encourage thoughtfulness and an

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expansive sense of the soul’s journey.

- We endeavour to meet every human being with trust and without skepticism.
- We refrain from unnecessary criticism of others and self. “There is therefore now no condemnation in Christ.”
- What we don’t want done to ourselves, we don’t do to others.
- We aim not to possess or enslave and neither will we be possessed or enslaved. Love must be expressed in equal terms.
- We do not set down an accepted or prescribed code of behaviour. True morality arises out of spirituality, spirituality does not arise out of morality.
- We value each soul’s individuality and creativity and encourage individual understanding and expression of spiritual principles by providing spiritual education and opportunities to experience the spirit in worship and devotion.
- We do not insist on our point of view. We do not convert others to our way of thinking.
- As servants of God we are not here to give people what they want. We are here to give people what they need.
- We communicate directly. The Word of God is living and active, and as fraters and sorores we must be active with each other. Through our words and actions we can combat ignorance and destructive thought and bring another back to the truth, the reality of their being.
- We respect each person’s intelligence. We also do not underestimate people’s stupidity and tendency not to read. We further recognise that people can be very sincere, but sincerely wrong.
- We encourage people to come to their own answers, free from group consciousness.
- We are patient and kind. We understand the circumstance in which people sometimes find themselves and can be flexible.

- Every person is responsible for their own transformation. We do not practice do-goodery. We have compassion, we pray, we cry for the pain of others, but we do not do for others what they can do themselves. We bear our own burdens and assist others in bearing theirs.
- Each human soul has the right to make their own mistakes and the right to rectify their own mistakes.
- Each human being has the right to live as they want to live or have to live. We cannot make their decisions or their rules.
- We do not believe in the value of technology or mechanics when it comes to spiritual life. There is no “do this” and “don’t do that” and you’ll be right.
- If anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation. The old is done away with. It has all become new.

## RELATIONSHIPS WITH CO-WORKERS

- All members of The Centre have – of their own volition – made vows and promises and have received spiritual gifts. They are accountable for this. They are to be treated with respect, kindness and patience and with the knowledge that Christ is in them.
- Members who have entered one of the Orders (Initiate, Deacon, Priest) are considered leaders of the community and responsible for exemplifying the vows and duties they have undertaken.
- There is a natural hierarchy within The Centre which is born of the authority that comes from experience, knowledge and taking responsibility. Those who take the greater responsibility have the greater authority and are treated with respect. In the words of Reverend Colin, our co-founder, “The person who says, ‘I will’, might. The person who says, ‘I have’, has!”
- In spiritual law, the higher serves the lower and the lower upholds the higher. In any household, there are, to use biblical terms, “fathers, young men and young children”. Each plays a vital role in the household –

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- engendering, maintaining and bringing new life.
- The community is enriched through the expression
- of many different gifts. Humility is the correct
- valuing of yourself and your capacities and gifts –
- not too highly, nor too lowly – and taking on responsibility in accordance with that. To neither overstate nor understate our abilities and gifts is very helpful.
- The Centre is self-cleansing. Through fellowship with one another we can right our erroneous thoughts and become “centred” once again.

### WHEN THERE ARE PROBLEMS

- Count it all joy, brethren, when you encounter various trials and testings.
- In everything God is working for good with those who love him.
- Remember you only ever confront self. As within, so without. Feelings are fickle and changeable. Respond, don't react.
- We create our own atmosphere. I am responsible for this. Here is an opportunity.
- Go directly to the source. Communicate. Where there is no communication there is no love. Investigate. Be impartial. Communication, to be received, must be acknowledged.
- There is no such thing as a perfect church or a perfect community of people. Where Christ is at work, the Devil works overtime.
- The more we fight, the more unrest we create, the further God is from us. Draw near to him and he will draw near to you.
- If you need help, you must ask. Bring your needs to God, first and foremost, in prayer. In calling for help you recognise your need. Be clear what your motivation is in asking for help.
- Feelings of inferiority arise because of a lack of

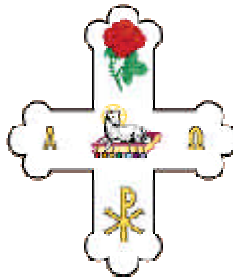
discipline of self to achieve what the other has achieved.

- Love is not jealous or rude. Jealousy is a mental illness.
- Envy is anti-truth, anti-Christ, anti-freedom. It enslaves the soul.
- It is possible to be angry and not to sin.
- Do not put up with nonsense.
- We are not sentimental. Sentimentality is anti-evolutionary and makes the weak weaker.
- Do not give unsolicited advice or counselling. If help is wanted it will be asked for.
- Judgement is a spiritual ability of the soul. It resolves and moves situations forward. Often though, making judgements has the effect of separating people and assists in the formation of cliques in a negative sense. Understanding and mercy, patience and being slow to judge assist in the formation of brotherhood.
- *Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven."*

(Matthew 18:21-22)

- Truth can be known but good can only be done. Therefore what is good can be only be known once it is done in a particular situation. There is no good that is always and in every circumstance good. To do the good, therefore, calls for our discernment, intuition and will to act.

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