

1. Speaking about God,

- 1) I believe that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is the creator of the universe and became flesh in Jesus Christ.
- 2) I believe that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is one way of describing the one true God who is worshipped by different religions by different names and that this God is the source of all the world's religions.
- 3) I believe that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob experienced the power that connects all the universe together and that is found in everything everywhere and they called this power God and worshipped it.
- 4) I'm not really sure that there even is a God.
- 5) The stories about God are ways the ancient people explained the things they couldn't understand in the universe. What they called God, we call nature.

2. When we talk about the Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

- 1) We are describing the three ways that God throughout history has interacted with the world. In the Old Testament he was God the Father. In the New Testament the Father became the Son and we experienced him as a fellow human. And when Jesus ascended into heaven God chose to become a Spirit who could live inside each of his followers.
- 2) We are talking about the three Gods of Christianity. God the Father created the world. Jesus Christ is the son of God the Father. And the Holy Spirit is the God that the Father and Son send into the world to finish their work.
- 3) We're talking about the mystery of the Trinity in which the three distinct persons of the Godhead (Father, Son and Spirit) share the same essence.
- 4) It's easy to get confused. There is only one God, the creator of the universe. Jesus Christ was a human being that God filled with his presence to teach the world about himself. And the Holy Spirit is our way of describing the power of God at work in the world.
- 5) We're dealing with the way the Church has traditionally attempted to explain the unexplainable reality of God. Other religions have tried to explain the reality of God in other ways, but this is the way that is most helpful to Christians.

3. When it comes to Jesus,

- 1) I believe there really was a man named Jesus from Nazareth. When he was baptized God's Spirit filled him, giving him special power and wisdom. He was a great prophet and teacher that reminded the people about the truth about God and the importance of loving each other. His teachings threatened the religious rulers of his day, so they killed him to try to shut him up, but his followers created a religion based on his teachings that changed the world.
- 2) I believe that there really was a man named Jesus from Nazareth. He was the eternal God, made in human flesh. His miracles proved that he was God and he gave his life to save the world from their sins. After his resurrection, his disciples finally realized who he really was and begin spreading the word about what he had done.
- 3) I believe there really was a man named Jesus from Nazareth. His teachings hinted at a new way of living. His followers were so impressed by what he taught them that they began telling stories about him to make the truth he taught more believable. We can find hints of his original teachings in the Bible if we look carefully and get past the stories his followers added in.
- 4) I believe that a group of first century Jews wanted to get Judaism back on the right track, so they created stories about this man they called Jesus who was also, according to them, somehow God. They took the worldview they believed and put their words into Jesus' mouth to give their viewpoint authority. And then they threatened everyone who didn't believe with hell so they could force their views on everyone else.
- 5) I believe that there really was a man named Jesus of Nazareth, and he really was God in human flesh. He taught a radical new way of living that changed the world and many books were written about him and his teachings. In the Bible we find the official record, approved by the church that backs up their interpretation of Jesus. But to get the whole picture you also need to read the other books that the church took out of the Bible and tried to destroy.

4. I believe that Jesus Christ died,

- 1) To show the world how serious the consequences of sin really are.
- 2) To take away the sin of the world.
- 3) To destroy hell forever so that no one will go there.
- 4) Because the Jews didn't like what he was saying and wanted to shut him up.
- 5) Because it made for a good story.

5. When we celebrate Easter, we are celebrating,

- 1) The fact that even though the Jews and the Romans killed Jesus, they couldn't kill his message. Jesus lives on in the hearts and minds of his followers, and his spirit appeared to his followers to encourage them.
- 2) The fact that Jesus and his followers beat the authorities. They tried to kill Jesus, but failed, and after Jesus recovered from his injuries, he returned to his followers stronger than ever.
- 3) The fact that Jesus' disciples fooled the world. They managed to sneak past the guards, steal Jesus' dead body and convince the world that he came back from the dead.
- 4) The fact that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. The Romans killed and buried him, but God brought him back from the dead and this resurrected Jesus met with his disciples for 40 days.
- 5) The confusion of Jesus' followers. The Jewish authorities moved Jesus' body to keep them from stealing it, and when the disciples found the empty grave, they made up stories about him being raised from the dead, even convincing themselves that they saw him in person.

6. When Jesus ascended into heaven,

- 1) Jesus' spirit went back into the spiritual realm where he lives with God in a non-material heaven.
- 2) God, who left heaven to become a human being, left earth and went back to being God in heaven.
- 3) The disciples stopped imagining that they saw Jesus and had to come up with a story to explain why their hallucinations stopped.
- 4) Nothing happened. The stories about Jesus' death and resurrection were just stories written by his followers after their teacher's death to make him seem more believable.
- 5) Jesus' body left the earthly realm and entered the heavenly realm where Jesus, in his body, sits with God and prays for his followers.

7. The Holy Spirit,

- 1) Is the church's way of explaining the spiritual force that binds everything in the universe together.
- 2) Is the church's way of describing the spark of divinity that exists inside every human being, giving us life and waiting to be reunited to God.
- 3) Is the real presence of God, active in the world, continuing to direct human beings to the truth.
- 4) Is a personification of reason, the sense inside each and every one of us showing us what is right and wrong.
- 5) Is a convenient story, invented by the church to keep people under control.

8. The Bible,

- 1) Is a book, written by humans to put into words what they believe about God. If we are careful, we can find in it the truth about God, at least as much as human beings can understand him.
- 2) Is a collection of the stories, legends and poetry of Judeo-Christian civilization.
- 3) Is the word of God that he either delivered by hand to the leaders of his people (the ten commandments God handed Moses on the mountain) or dictated to his prophets who wrote down his message word for word as he spoke it to them.
- 4) Is one of many different books by which God tried to get his message through to the world.
- 5) Is a collection of writings, written and collected by human authors as God's Holy Spirit directed them so that we would have everything we need to know about God.

9. What is sin?

- 1) Sin is both the ways in which we break God's commands, and the attitude that says we are free to do our own thing rather than just do what God says.
- 2) Sin is the unavoidable difference between finite humanity and an infinite God.
- 3) Sin is a concept invented by the church to use guilt to control people.
- 4) Sin is our mistaken understanding of God, the ways what we think about God falls short of what God really is and what God really wants.
- 5) Sin is the pollution from the bad things that we do which, if we don't wash from our souls in Jesus blood, will keep us from going to heaven when we die.

10. Jesus' death saves us because,

- 1) When we ask, Jesus covers us with his blood so that when God looks at us, he sees Jesus and not us.
- 2) On the cross, Jesus took the punishment for every sin ever committed. Jesus was convicted in God's court and served our sentence so that we don't have to.
- 3) Jesus' death is the payment that settles our debt with God and puts a credit of righteousness on our account.
- 4) In dying on the cross, Jesus came to where we are so that we might be united with him, and having been reunited with him, we might begin to live again.
- 5) Jesus death proves once and for all how bad sin is and also how much God loves us, inspiring us to turn from our wicked ways and to live differently from now on.

11. Jesus died...

- 1) For everyone in the world, so that no one will go to hell and that everyone will go to heaven.
- 2) For everyone in the world, so that whoever believes in him will escape hell and go to heaven.
- 3) For the elect, so that God, by his sovereign power and infinite wisdom could save those he chose to go to heaven.
- 4) For his message. The truth he taught was so radical the religious powers tried to silence him, but Jesus refused to be quiet and because of that they killed him.
- 5) For nothing. It was a senseless act of violence committed by a ruthless government power that couldn't stand the way Jesus threatened their control on Judea.

12. To be saved, I must

- 1) Say the sinner's prayer, asking Jesus to forgive me of my sins and come live in my heart.
- 2) Repent. I must be truly and deeply sorry for my sins, ask for God's forgiveness and seek to live a different way.
- 3) Be baptized. By being baptized, I accept what Jesus did for me and his death satisfies my debt to God.
- 4) Do good. By doing good I can prove that I love Jesus and God will reward me for it.
- 5) Do nothing. If it depended on what I do, my salvation would be by my works, instead of just trusting what Jesus already did for me.

13. I believe that without Jesus

- 1) We have no hope. Only his death and resurrection makes it possible for us to be saved.
- 2) We have our work cut out for us. It is possible for us to do good and live right, but without Jesus' help it's almost impossible.
- 3) We have other options. Other religious teachers point the way to God, and it's possible to find him these other ways. But living in Western civilization like we do, following Jesus is probably easiest.
- 4) We're better off. We can focus on doing good and living right without all the extra baggage of guilt and religious rules.
- 5) Is the only way to go. The stories about Jesus are nothing but lies designed to distract us from the truth and trap us into serving the authorities in our world.

14. Living a life without sin from now on, but in which we never again intentionally choose to do what we know is wrong (i.e., not to never have sinned, but to stop sinning with God's help),

- 1) Is an impossible lie. To even suggest such a thing is possible is to overestimate our own goodness and underestimate our need for God's grace.
- 2) Is a helpful goal. We will never achieve it, because we will always make mistakes, but as long as we are aiming high we will do better than if we aim low.
- 3) Is a possibility. There are certainly more Christians who fall short of this than who make it, but it is an option if we try really hard.
- 4) Is our birthright. Jesus Christ died to make this kind of life possible, and settling for anything less is to fall short of God's best for our lives.
- 5) Is absolutely required. As long as we are constantly asking for forgiveness rather than obeying God to begin with, our life is something less than Christian.

15. The church

- 1) Is a human institution more concerned with its own power and influence than with the work of Jesus Christ, and as a result more often gets in the way of what God wants to do in the world than actually helps advance God's cause.
- 2) Is a helpful option. Some people need the support that comes from being around other people who believe the same way and for them, the church is a helpful way to reinforce what the Bible teaches.
- 3) Is an absolute necessity. Between our need for the church to encourage and support us, and the way the church needs us to accomplish Christ's work in the world, there is no excuse for not being a part of a church.
- 4) Is the way to heaven. Jesus told his apostles what they bind on earth will be bound in heaven, so if the church doesn't approve of us, we will never find approval in heaven.
- 5) Is a risky business. Yes, you must be a part of a church, but you also need to make sure you are a part of the right one. There are a lot of people out there who think they are going to heaven because they are a part of a church, but they're due for an unpleasant surprise when they discover their church wasn't teaching the truth and they are left out.

16. At some point in the future,

- 1) Jesus Christ is going to come back to earth, gather up the souls of the Christians who are still living, and take them to heaven to live with God and all the souls of Christians who have already died. Then God will destroy the earth once and for all and will send the wicked to hell.
- 2) Jesus will return, the dead will be resurrected, all humanity will be judged and the world will be transformed. Heaven will come to earth, and God will make his dwelling among the righteous, while the wicked will be cast into hell.
- 3) God will take the souls of humans to live with him forever in heaven when they die, meanwhile, on earth things will go as they have been on pretty much forever with each new generation being given responsibility for the earth.
- 4) God will continue to guide the world and keep things running, while the souls of those who die are absorbed back into him and we lose our individual identity in him.
- 5) God will continue to make the world a better place by sending the souls of those who die back into the world in new bodies, punishing the wicked by giving them hard lives and rewarding the righteous by giving them lives of importance and influence.

PERSONAL QUESTIONS:

What age group are you in?

- 1) Junior High (Grades 6-8)
- 2) Senior High (Grades 9-12)

How long have you been coming to Water's Edge?

- 1) I'm a visitor and can't remember the last time I was here
- 2) Less than four months (in other words, since some time after Christmas break)
- 3) Less than a year (I started coming this school year)
- 4) More than a year
- 5) Since I was first allowed to come when I got into 6th or 7th grade

How often do you come to Water's Edge?

- 1) Pretty much every week
- 2) As often as I can, but I have to miss as many services as I make
- 3) Every once in a while depending on what I'm doing or who I'm hanging out with
- 4) Almost never.

In what ways are you involved in the Middletown Church?

- 1) Water's Edge is pretty much the only thing I ever do
- 2) I come to Sunday Worship most Sunday Mornings
- 3) I come to Sunday School most Sunday Mornings
- 4) Every once in a while I come to church on Sunday Morning for worship and/or Sunday School
- 5) I go to church camp most summers.