

Statement of Faith, Margaret Dudley

I believe in the co-equal triune God the Creator, Father and Mother, Sustainer and Redeemer. God's grace surpasses all understanding, because humanity does not deserve it. While humanity strives for good, our own self interest stands in the way of justice and peace. God responds to the imperfection of humanity through a cycle of reconciliation, as demonstrated through the story of Israel in the Hebrew Bible. Ultimately the sin of humanity is reconciled through and in Jesus Christ.

I believe in Jesus Christ, who came to the Earth as a pauper, a teacher, a prophet, a miracle worker, and a savior. Through life he suffered under the Roman Empire, befriended the outsiders, the oppressed, the poor, and the sinners. He preached that those who are least likely to be blessed are blessed, and he challenged the social order by eating meals with both wealthy and poor. Christ took on death by being crucified and overcame it through resurrection. This act can be described in many ways: a sacrifice, a victory, a payment, but is ultimately beyond human understanding in displaying God's love for us. Through this reconciliation comes the ultimate completion with the aid of the Holy Spirit.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, which continuously works in our lives through the creation of the church and community of faith. The church is forever changing, and has flaws, but the Spirit works in the church to forgive and for the people of the church to forgive each other in peace. The Holy Spirit guides our understanding of Scripture, empowers us to spread the Good News, and gives us joy in the proclamation of Christ.

I believe in the Word of God, which is centered in the life and works of Jesus Christ, the Word incarnate. The witness of scripture is authoritative and unparalleled, and is testament to the Grace of God in Christ Jesus through reconciliation. The scriptures are written by people and are constrained to literary forms and places in history. They are however, inspired by God to point where God works in the story of redemption. Therefore, the church must approach the scriptures in a historical and literary perspective, and remain confident that God will speak to the church through scriptures in a diverse and changing world.

The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper are testament to the mysteries of God, and are ordained by Christ and the early church. The Lord's Supper of bread and wine allows us to participate in the death and resurrection of Christ, to partake of the heavenly banquet of the Grace of God, and to prepare for the service we are called to do in the world. The sacrament of baptism allows us to enter into a new life with Christ, receive the Holy Spirit's anointing in our lives, and to enter into a family of faith, where our faith will be guided and nurtured.

Scripture speaks of a new heaven and a new earth, one that we can wait for as the church. Jesus also mentions the kingdom of God, which seems to be both on earth and in heaven, and that he will come to judge all people. As Christians we are to actively buy serving the world and proclaiming God's kingdom in our lives until the day of glory.