

Statement of Faith

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My faith is rooted and grounded in God's incomprehensible love, and to speak of what I believe is to begin and end with love. In the mystery of grace, God comes to us as we are and shows us who God is and who God would have us be. I believe in God, who in love creates all that is, all that has been, and all that will be. God who creates does not abandon us to ourselves, but keeps and sustains us, granting us life and purpose. God has made us in God's image and desires to be in relationship with us. Out of this loving desire, God, who is eternal, timeless, and without beginning or end, acts in history to be in communion with us.

The Gospel of John records that Jesus loved Martha. I know that love, too, and I can proclaim with the other Martha that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, the One coming into the world. I believe in Jesus Christ, fully human and God with us. Jesus has shown us face to face how God loves us and what it is to live the love of God. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ are gifts of grace, an eternal "yes" in response to the "no" of a broken and fearful world. The risen Christ speaks to me in parables, prays with me in the Psalms, and shows me the way of ministry.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, God continuing to work in the world today. The love of the Spirit, like the breath of God, makes music out of our lives. The Holy Spirit directs us always toward the love of God and calls us to a life of faithfulness – calls us to live in tune with God's intention for us.

Jesus has given us two commandments: love God, love each other. God gives us a way to understand what this means, in Word and Sacrament. We come to know and love God through our encounter with God in the Word: the written Word of scripture, the preached Word of the Good News, the proclamation of the Gospel we make with our lives. In bread, wine, and water, the Sacraments make tangible God's offer of grace, transforming us and calling us beyond ourselves to love God and one another.

We cannot understand this love in isolation, however. Just as God gives us Word and Sacrament as ways of knowing and signs of grace, so God gives the gift of the Church as a community. Through the Church, the Body of Christ, we are led by the Spirit to live the love of Christ, connecting us to God and to each other. We can never do this on our own. We will always fail, because we are timid and fearful, or arrogant and self-sufficient. God asks more of us than we want to give; God asks all of us. Cramped by small imaginations, we say no to what God asks. This refusal is borne of fear, not of faith; it is sin. But God continues to love us and forgive us and bless us, to give us glimpses of who God creates us to be. When our eyes are opened to this then we are able to receive the boldness of faith that God offers.

My faith itself is a gift from God, a gift of love. And that godly gift calls me, all my days, to seek the Love that is always seeking me.

Amen.