

Becky Durham
Statement of Faith

I believe in God the Father, the one Jesus called Abba and the giver of the Spirit, who gives life to all humanity in every time and in every place and who designed the beautiful earth and the expansive universe. I believe that God created humans in God's own image and God yearns to provide all good things for creation. Yet in the effort each makes to rule his or her own life and not yield in obedience to God, which the Scriptures call sin, each human finds that he or she is spiritually separated from God.

I believe in Jesus Christ, the very Word of God the Father and the one who promised his disciples the Holy Spirit, who is our human brother and redeemer. I believe Jesus called humanity to follow him and lived a life that witnessed to the radical, accepting love of God the Creator. I believe he ministered to those who were on the margins of society and called his disciples do the same. I believe that because of this witness and ministry, he was violently tortured and crucified. Death did not have the final word, however, and Jesus overcame death and rose again, forever reconciling the fallen, sinful humanity and God. I believe that Jesus Christ is coming again, and that his second advent will usher in God's Kingdom, where all evil in the world will fall away and creation will be fully restored.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, given by God to fulfill Jesus' promise of comfort and guidance to his disciples. I believe the Spirit is active among the Body of Christ, enlightening each mind with understanding and empowering each believer to live faithfully, creatively, peacefully, and wisely.

I believe that the Trinitarian God--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit--conspires with those God chooses, and that it is through the faithful witness of these elect, in partnership with the Holy Spirit, that the gospel of Jesus Christ is shared and humanity comes to know the love and care of the Creator. God is providing a way to be reconciled with all of humanity through the work of the son, Jesus Christ, and the witness of his disciples. I believe that God equips each human with gifts and talents that can be used in this witness and work.

I believe that God, through the ministry of Jesus Christ, has given the Church sacraments to serve as visible, experiential reminders of God's great love and calling. The ordinary elements of water, bread, and wine are a way for the Church to connect with the Triune God, as well as with believers in every time and place, remembering Christ's ministry and grace.

In the sacrament of Baptism, those who are claimed by God in Jesus are marked with water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as a sign and seal of God's covenant with us in Christ Jesus. This sacrament is for all of the elect, regardless of age or ability to express belief.

In the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, disciples of Jesus are nourished in faith as a sign and seal of God's grace. This meal is the joyful feast of God's people in every time and every place and it unites us not only with each other, but with Christ who is fully in God's presence.

I believe that God gave the witness of the Holy Scriptures and the gift of the stories of his chosen followers throughout history to compel disciples in gratitude and service. The Old and New Testaments are complicated, intricate works of art, penned by human authors and inspired by God Almighty. I believe the Holy Spirit is an active teacher that enlightens the minds of people who read the words of Scripture.

I believe that the Body of Christ, the Church, is called to minister in the way of Jesus Christ, offering the world compassion, hope, and acceptance. God calls the Church to the

margins of society, to love those who are without love and to lift up those who are forgotten or downtrodden. I believe that God calls the Church to live in peaceful contrast to the ways of the unreconciled world. To be great in God's Kingdom, one must be willing to be a servant of others, to live humbly, and to live a life of obedience to God.

I believe that in all circumstances, we each belong to God who created our bodies, intellects, and souls, who redeems us through his Son, Jesus Christ, and who inspires and equips us for service to God and to creation through the Holy Spirit.