

Statement Of Faith - Patricia Ramsden

I sat in the waiting area outside of ICU, praying and talking with a family

about their grief and their fears. I believe that God was with us as the Lord gave them the courage and faith they needed to get through the next few days. I laughed along with the entire congregation as a four year old came running down the aisle in church for the children's sermon shouting "Wait for me." I believe God was with us in our joy and laughter..

I believe God is our creator and is all powerful, all knowing. Out of that power and love for us, God sent His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who makes us whole. We see the grace of God through Christ as He said even from the cross, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

It is true that we often do not realize the evil that we do. It is seen in the brokenness of a young child growing up in abuse or in the exploitation of others for greed and profit. It is seen even in words of gossip or the refusal to help those in need. Whatever our sin, great or small, God in Christ calls us to repentance, forgiving us and telling us to go and sin no more. Our hope and our certainty as we grow in faith is in the resurrection to eternal life which is ours through Christ who Himself was risen from the dead.

Even as He prepared Himself and His disciples for His death upon the cross, Christ told them that He would send to them and to us a comforter, a counselor, a strengthener in times of trouble and need. He would send to us the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. Through the Spirit we receive many gifts including but not limited to patience, joy, love, self-knowledge, strength,

faith, wisdom and self control. Through the Spirit we can live as Christ taught us to live by loving the Lord our God with all our strength, mind, and heart and our neighbors as our selves.

The church is also a gift from God and is God's witness to the world. While the church is imperfect as we are imperfect, it is the witness to faith and love to a broken world starving for the good news we have to share. When I was in Guatemala on a mission trip, one of the men we helped as we planted seeds with him row after row told us that when He looked upon us he saw the face of God. Such is the ministry and work of the church --- to be the face of God.

May you know how much God loves you

The Rev. Dr. Patricia Ramsden
Personal History 2021

I was born in the small town of Glendale, West Virginia and spent my first 7 years growing up in a holler in the mountains of the northern panhandle. At age 8, we moved to Moundsville, WV where I lived until leaving for college at West Liberty State College. I worked my way through college supplemented by grants and scholarships. The most transforming of those jobs was doing piece work in a non-union garment factory.

In college I majored in English, Secondary Education, and Special Education and was awarded a teaching internship at the University of Arkansas in English. I was pursuing my PhD there when I received a job teaching English, Drama, and Technical Report Writing at Madisonville Community College, a part of the University of Kentucky. It was there that I became Chair of the Humanities Division and developed an interest in Higher Education Administration. I enrolled in Vanderbilt University's weekend program for college administration and while working on my doctorate became academic dean for Hazard Community College still within the University of Kentucky system.

It was while I was serving as dean that God called me to the ministry, and to be honest, I did not want to go. I was on a fast track in my career and my goal of becoming a college president. And besides, it hadn't been that long since women in our denomination could be ordained as Ministers of Word and Sacrament. Then one day, as I was driving, I realized that the most important thing in my life was my relationship with God, and if this was what the Lord wanted, it was what I wanted too. The rest is history and is discussed in my professional vitae.

I am the most fortunate of women and I have loved being a pastor. I have fallen in love with each congregation I have served and they loved me through good and hard times. While my official designation is honorably retired. I do not believe one ever retires from the ministry.

I have always been single and have no children. I am, however owned by a cat, Katherine Elizabeth. My birth family was highly abusive and has broken off contact

with me. I have spent years healing from past trauma and have learned to embrace it and use the gifts I have learned out of that experience. I in no way believe that God intended nor desired for that past pain to occur, just as I do not believe the Lord causes evil in our world. Instead God redeems evil. But I do believe the Trinity works to bring good out of the worst evil we can devise. The cross is the proof of that!

I am now living in Scotia Village and am thoroughly enjoying myself. I look forward to being an active member of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina.