

STATEMENT OF FAITH

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I believe God is One, Holy, Creator and Redeemer; there is no other. God is the Creator of all that is, not subject to pre-existent matter or condition.

As the created ones we are to worship, obey and honor our Creator. This one and only God is the threefold reality of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe in the sovereignty, holiness and gracious love of God. There is nothing outside of God's control and providence. God's sovereignty governs all things. It is God who initiates. Always the "yes" of God's graciousness involves a "no" against human waywardness.

I understand the atoning action of Christ in the three-fold office of prophet, priest and king.

We must give attention to the narrative sequence of the offices –

- A prophetic ministry in Jesus' life, teachings and healings;
- A priestly ministry in passion and death;
- And a royal ministry in resurrection and ascension.

Justification and sanctification are two moments in the one act of reconciliation in Christ. In him we are justified, sanctified and redeemed.

The role of the Christian is not to earn salvation but to witness to a salvation already accomplished and enacted in Jesus Christ. We are called to work out the implications of our salvation through a life of loving service.

Through the Holy Spirit come adoption, repentance, regeneration, and freedom in Christ which evokes the will to grow in our likeness to Christ.

- The Spirit provides confidence in the trustworthiness of God's Word for our lives.
- The Spirit inspired the biblical writers and enables us to read and interpret the Bible for ourselves in community.
- The Spirit gives various gifts to each person and a sense of calling in keeping with Christ's summons to "follow him."

It pleases God to use earthly materials – *water, bread, and fruit of the vine* – in the reconciliation of the world to God.

The sacraments – Lord's Supper and Baptism – are the *visible, holy signs and seals instituted by God* so that by their use God may make us understand more clearly the promise of the gospel and put God's seal on that promise.

The church begins with God's gracious call to be people called out and engaged in God's mission in the world. The grounding of the church is God's action.

The church is a community/institution which God provides as an agency for God's saving, justifying, and sustaining activity and to be the instrument of healing and reconciliation in the world.

Jesus Christ is the center of the church, the head of the body, and the visible church as defined by one who emptied himself, taking the form of servant (Phil. 2:7).

God continues to speak a good word to us today; it is the word that life in community rests firmly on, one foundation that endures –

the gracious calling of all creation into community through Jesus Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The nature of the church is finally not a doctrine, but a life lived in, from, and by the Word of God. It is the life of a people who are in relationship with Jesus Christ which defines who we are.