

## Jeromey Howard Statement of Faith

I believe in the Triune God – The Creator, Sustainer and Redeemer of all things. I believe that by the Holy Spirit, God calls people to Jesus Christ, God's only Son, who is experienced as both our brother and our Lord. And that in Christ all humanity is offered purpose and salvation. I believe that God's purpose has been and always will be present; that it is fully revealed to us in the incarnation, life, ministry, death, bodily resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

I believe that Jesus Christ was both fully human and fully divine, that he fulfilled the Hebrew Scriptures. Jesus freed the captives, healed the sick, cast out demons, gave a voice to those who had been silenced and brought the good news to all. By unyielding obedience to God, Jesus Christ was betrayed and abandoned by those closest to him, arrested, tried, tortured and executed. In his death, he took upon himself the full force of all the violence and sins of humanity; all while asking God to forgive those who would slay him.

I believe that Jesus Christ truly and fully died, was buried and on the third day was raised from the dead by God his father, overcoming the powers of sin and evil. This fulfillment of God's promise, the resurrected Jesus, was witnessed first by women devoted to following him and then by his disciples and others. Jesus then commissioned his followers to participate in the mission of God; calling them to make disciples of all nations and baptizing them in the name of the Triune God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe that through the fullness of Christ, God offers us salvation. That even in the brokenness and sinfulness of humanity we are justified by grace through faith alone. That through our relationship with God we are freed from the powers of death and sin; in the literal, political, social, economic, cultural or psychological form.

I believe that the mission of God continues today by the power of the Holy Spirit, through the creation and sustaining of a world-wide community, the church. The Spirit claims us to be God's people. The Spirit frees us from the power of sin and death to do God's mission In Jesus Christ, the Living Word. The Spirit guides our faith and life through the reading of the Scriptures. The sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ways we express our entrance into and our ongoing life in the family of God, expressing thanksgiving and praise for the divine grace offered to us through Jesus Christ.

I believe in our baptism we die with Christ and that we are reborn in the life of Christ, the life of God. That in this death and rebirth we conquer, through Christ, the kingdoms of this world and allowed to live in the kingdom of God.

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In the Lord's Supper we are given the grace filled gift of participation in the family of God, remembering the broken body and the shed blood of Jesus Christ; the cost that was paid so all of us are able to be called daughters and sons of God. I believe that when we participate in the sacraments we are joyfully anticipating the return of Christ and the coming reign of the Kingdom of Heaven.

I believe that there is nothing that can separate us from the love and grace of the Triune God. There is no human force or action that can overcome God choosing us, Christ dying for us and the Holy Spirit working in and through us. In all this we are called to be a part of God's work in the world. The utter joy that is brought forth in the face of such love and grace I can do little but offer a prayer of "Thank you."