

Faith Statement For Presbytery Of The Yukon - February 2015

⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—⁹not the result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

These words of the Apostle Paul summarize the basic message of the Christian faith. God reaches out to sinful human beings in love, offers us the gift of forgiveness for our sins, and invites us into a relationship with the God who has created us and given us life. God does so not because we are worthy of that love or because we have done anything to deserve that love. God offers these gifts not only to us but to all people throughout the world. These gifts are not to be used only for ourselves but are to be shared with all who surround us. God takes the initiative and creates faith in us through the work of God's Holy Spirit. As people of God, we represent God and are called to make God's presence known in the world in ways that enable this world to become more like the world God designed it to be and intends it to be.

The grace of God and the love of God are made known most clearly in Jesus, the Son of God. Jesus took on our human flesh and blood so that he might demonstrate the way in which God desires humans to live. As a human, he experienced all that we experience except sin. He was tempted as we are and suffered as we do. He experienced both the joys and the sorrows of human life. Therefore he is able to identify with us in all circumstances and is able to assist us in all times of need. He promises to be with us always. He is the mediator between humans and God and intercedes with the Heavenly Father on our behalf. On the night before he died, he gave his disciples a new commandment that they love one another as he has loved us. The next day he revealed the depth of his love by dying for us on the cross so that we can be certain that nothing - not even death - can ever separate us from the love of God as made known in Jesus. Through his resurrection from the dead, he overcame those powers and forces that seek to prove that they are more powerful than the love of God made known in Jesus. We demonstrate our love for Jesus and our relationship with him by reaching out to share the gifts we have received from God with those in need around us both locally and throughout the world.

The relationship that we experience with God through Jesus brings us into a relationship with others in that entity we call the Holy Christian Church. The church is the Body of Christ and the means through which God continues to make God's living presence known in the world. Within the church, we are called upon to support and encourage one another in our mutual ministries. As we unite together with one another and work together with one another within the church, we are able to do much more together than any individual Christian or congregation or denomination can do by itself. In this way, God multiplies the unique gifts each person receives from God and uses those gifts in ways that bring good into the world.

God's grace, God's love, God's forgiveness, and God's presence are made known in the words of that Book we call the Holy Scriptures. Those words reveal the promises of God and call us into a living relationship with God. They provide guidance and instruction for living as the people of God. They point us to Jesus - the Word of God who became flesh - and urge us to learn from him, listen to him, follow him, and walk with him all the days of our life. They remind us that the life we now share with Jesus and with one another within the church never ends.

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