

## Statement of Faith for Christine Dempsey

I believe in God who is my hope, and as the Psalmist says, “my strength and my shield.” God is great, beyond all that is discernable and knowable. Yet, God came down to us through Jesus Christ as revealed in the Bible. I am awed by God’s presence and guidance. God is eternally one in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They are distinguishable in their distinct personhood but always work together. Their divine relationship is part of God’s very being, which is defined not only by the persons within the Trinity but in creation. The relationships between the persons of the Trinity reflect God’s perfect love, and I feel this love as God cares for me and nurtures me.

God is the creator who cares for, guides and sustains creation. While God cares for all creation, God gave humans a special place as caregivers. I, too, am called to be a caregiver, to take care of God’s people and the world I inhabit. I believe that all of God’s people are equal as we were all made in God’s image. As a child of God, God calls me into relationship. Yet, like all humans, I fall short of God’s glory.

God has saved us by sending his only son, Jesus Christ, the eternal Word, to redeem us. I am overcome at this sacrifice of Christ on the cross. It is the wisdom of God. “It is wiser than human wisdom.” (1 Cor. 1:25) Jesus lived a full life, and, even though tempted remained sinless. In dying on the cross, he atoned for our sins, and in his resurrection and ascension, he provided a new hope, a victory over death and the promise of eternal life. We all fall short of God, but the resurrection reflects God’s sacrificial love despite all of our shortcomings: “God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.” (Rom. 5:8). Thus, I can, through God’s grace, live in joy and peace.

The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, is one with God the Father and Jesus Christ and is the person that moves me to know and respond to God. The Spirit is always present both in my daily life and in the witness of scripture. The Spirit provides clarity as to how the Triune God is working in me daily. It is through the Spirit that I pray, understand scripture and respond in the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Faith is a process. I have been justified in Christ by his life, death, resurrection and ascension. Yet, it is through the power of the Spirit that I am sanctified and deepen my relationship with God. When I accept that I can do nothing by myself, I learn that I must rely on God’s sustenance and guidance. My spiritual development has come by adopting the spiritual discipline of listening for God’s guidance through prayer, worship, and reading the Bible.

I believe in God’s sustaining and sacrificial love, the promise of eternal salvation, the equality of all people, the revelation of Christ through scripture, the priesthood of all believers, the providence of God, the hope for “restoration of all things.”