

*Statement of Faith, Rev. Scott Mitchell*

I believe in our Creator, the Triune God revealed to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God brought all things into being that they might live in, and glorify, the One who made them. God marked humankind's special place in the universe by forming us in the Divine image to care for Earth, and to praise, love and enjoy God forever.

I believe that by sin, through the Fall, we human beings shattered the image of God imprinted on our souls, thereby squandering this divine gift of relationship, and alienating ourselves in judgment from both God and neighbor.

I believe in Jesus Christ who, as God's only begotten Son, bore in his person and work the Good News of salvation, kingdom come and resurrection hope. Entering our world as the full revelation of the Father and his will, Christ in his earthly life and ministry showed humanity how to live in God's new kingdom. Christ's death and resurrection freed humankind from the burden of sin and, by forgiveness with repentance, has restored us to a whole and loving relationship with God. Indeed, Christ's conquering of death by resurrection becomes the very promise of our own resurrection into eternal life. Christ ever lives that we may have grace, life and joy in abundance.

I believe in God's Holy Spirit as the gracious Advocate promised us by Christ. In the aftermath of our Lord's ascension, the Spirit has taken up residence with, and in, us, comforting, guiding, encouraging, challenging, giving us faith, hope and love.

I believe the Bible in Old and New Testaments to be God's inspired Word, the authoritative and trustworthy written source by which God discloses himself and his will in human history. Scripture is the grand schoolmaster who points us to Jesus Christ—the center of our faith and the Lord with whom we have a saving relationship.

I believe the Church is God's gracious provision for a loving, supportive, accountable and unified community in the world, through which we are called and enabled to live out our faith in God. Along with proclaiming and living out the Good News of Jesus Christ, the church devotes itself to "the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

I believe that baptism and the Lord's Supper are the sacramental means by which the Church responds to the grace of God. In baptism, new believers acknowledge their trust in the salvation and lordship of Christ, and joyfully enter the community of faith. In the Lord's Supper, the fellowship of believers remembers the passion of Christ, and celebrates the presence and unmerited favor of the living Lord in our midst.

I believe that our present life in Christ is but the first fruits of a loving relationship that will continue past our death and into eternity with God. I believe that Jesus will come again one day, in a mysterious yet unmistakable way, and in this glorious and gracious return will reconcile all of creation to God. Therefore I live in the abiding hope of my Lord Jesus.