

## Statement of Faith- Jessie Light

I believe in the holy mystery, the blessed Trinity- Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer- joined in sacred perichoresis; the Godhead is above us, in us, with us and for us always, both immanent and transcendent. God is the source of life-giving love, abundant grace, and ever-present mercy.

God the creator envisioned and fashioned a good creation, a unified community where all people bear the image of God uniquely yet equally. In response to God's gift of life, humanity is called to jubilant stewardship of the earth, to persistent peacemaking and justice-seeking, and to radical hospitality, interdependence and reconciliation. Despite our best efforts, we fall short of God's call to care for creation and neighbor. Unable to mend our own fragmented existence, we cry out for redemption though we do not deserve it.

Like a potter molding clay, God reshapes our chipped and broken lives into new, whole vessels. Just as we are created by grace alone, we are also justified by grace alone. God the redeemer, Jesus Christ, is fully human and fully divine. Living among us, Jesus came to uplift the oppressed, the exiled, and the needy. Teaching and preaching, forgiving and healing, and speaking the truth to power, Jesus modeled God's love and God's will to a weary world. Proclaiming the good news of radically inclusive love, Jesus was unjustly condemned by sinful humanity and violently crucified. On the third day after his mortal death, God raised Jesus from the dead, "breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal."<sup>1</sup> The tomb is empty, and the risen Christ meets each of us on the road to Emmaus; though he is always in our midst, finally we recognize Immanuel in the sharing of bread and cup. The communion feast is a gathering place for the people of God, a reminder of the redemptive grace of Christ's life, death and resurrection, and a taste of the new heaven and new earth; for everyone born, there is a place at the table.

Bearing witness to Christ, God the sustainer, the Holy Spirit, enlivens and awakens us. The restless Spirit reminds us who and whose we are, opens our ears to the cries of people marginalized and long-forgotten, and empowers us to work with others for a world where justice rolls down like water. In the waters of baptism, we receive the gift of new life in the Spirit and are claimed by the triune God. The Spirit binds us together as members of one body, and liberates all to participate in divine re-creation. Led by the Spirit, the church is the community of believers in every time and place that "serves and suffers but also celebrates and hopes."<sup>2</sup> At its best, the church offers hope, healing, and home.

Emboldened by the Spirit, invited and commissioned by Christ, and in responsive thanksgiving to the grace-giving God, we seek to live faithfully by honoring and serving the triune God in all things. Because we are woven into the great and mysterious story of God, faith is thus "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."<sup>3</sup> This interwoven story of God includes the narratives of those who have attested to faith in all places and times. The Bible is the received testimony of people of God in a particular time and place. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the Bible becomes Scripture for our communities and helps us to discern the ever-speaking voice of God.

Amidst all that was and is and is to come, nothing will ever separate us from the love and grace of God-Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. To God be all glory.

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<sup>1</sup> A Brief Statement of Faith, *Book of Confessions*.

<sup>2</sup> From *Faith Seeking Understanding* by Daniel Migliore, 265.

<sup>3</sup> Hebrews 11:1, NRSV.