

Statement of Faith Rev. Hallie Hottle

I believe in one Holy and Triune God, worthy of our worship, hearer of our prayers and cries and rants. I believe that God is big, so big that we cannot fully comprehend, an eternal mystery I will spend my life both seeking and fleeing from. I believe in a God that is always pulling us forward, revealed in the Biblical text by continually calling people into new life of fullness and reconciliation. I believe this God loves us, despite ourselves, and because of this extraordinary love God came into the world as Jesus Christ, and persists as Holy Spirit.

I believe in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God, miracle worker, prophet, teacher, empire problem-maker, completely foolish, completely perfect. The life of Christ is to be our model, and the death of Christ a reconciling of our small lives back to our giant God. We are justified by grace through faith in this foolishness. I believe Jesus Christ was a revolutionary, and that to truly follow, we must be a little more revolutionary ourselves.

I believe the Holy Spirit to be real and working in the world today, waking us when we fail to pay attention, and interceding on our behalf when we are unable to pray. I believe this unexplainable tongue of fire that appeared at Pentecost is still sweeping the world today, speaking in all languages, and revealing the Holy to all who have eyes to see.

I believe in a world that is good, made by God, but quick to rebel. I believe we live in a time when we literally need to turn our swords into plowshares, and to remember to see the image of God in all. I believe in a world that would benefit under the simple and most important commandment to love God and neighbor. God has given us a new way of being through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and this is the Good News the world is waiting to hear.

I believe the Church to be the Body of Christ in the world today. I believe Christ called the Church into being and is her only authority. Built upon a fallible disciple, I believe we could do well to remember that She's never been perfect, and need not be. I believe in a Church without walls, without divisions, big enough to love all, humble enough to be the weak with the weak, a people and not a place.

I believe myself to be called as Teaching Elder in the Presbyterian Church (USA). Despite this call, like Jonah, I'm inclined to run away; like Moses I'm not fully fit for the task; like the disciples, I can be a little dense; like Mary, I'll never understand why, but am humbled and grateful nonetheless. I am thankful for a God who created me, and who calls me again and again, and forgives me.

I believe in the authority of Scripture, not a witness among others but a witness without parallel. I believe in Baptism and Holy Communion, signaled and promised by Christ himself, visible signs of God's invisible grace. I believe in the creeds and councils of our predecessors. I believe that my exclusive belief in Christ calls me to be inclusive in my love of everyone. I believe that the most important thing for a Christian to do is to love God, help neighbor, speak truth, and to do all this in boldness, professing that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior.