

## Statement of Faith - Bradley M. Roth

I believe in the one triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that God always was, and always will be; without God there would be nothing. God created the world out of nothing, and continues to create and sustain the world in gracious providence now and in the future, all for the manifestation of God's glory. God alone is worthy of worship. I believe God is a God of love. God is relational and wants to be an active and intimate part of our lives, as attested to: through those who God spoke to in the Old Testament, through the relational life Jesus led, and the way the Holy Spirit speaks to us and intercedes for us in prayer. God is in no way the author of evil or sin, as God opposes all evil. God's justice prevails over all things through the righteous reign of God. God continues to govern creation so that all things work together for good for those who love God.

I believe Jesus is God's self-revelation, born of the Virgin Mary, lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and then rose from the dead. Jesus is the Lord and head of the church. Jesus is the perfect expression of what humanity was designed to be. Because Jesus was both fully human and fully divine, his death was the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Salvation is God's work through Jesus Christ to reclaim humankind and all creation from sin and its consequences. Our salvation lies solely on Christ's righteousness and atonement for our sins. We are justified through faith alone in Christ Jesus, and through our repentance we are reconciled to God through God's grace. This grace cannot be earned; it is a gift of God and not as a result of works. Without God's intervening grace and salvation through Jesus, all humanity would be lost and condemned. Jesus is to be the center of the church's worship, mission, discipleship, and proclamation.

I believe in the Holy Spirit. Even as the Spirit of God hovered over the waters at creation, the Spirit is active in our lives today, enabling us to receive forgiveness and in turn forgive one another. The Holy Spirit gives us the power to represent Jesus in spite of our sinfulness. I believe that the Holy Spirit works in and among us on a daily basis, guiding, empowering, and speaking in and through us. As the Bible is the authoritative Word of God, scripture is still alive for us today as the Holy Spirit interprets scripture for us. Through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, we are transformed and changed more and more into the image of Christ.

Christ gave the sacraments of Baptism and The Lord's Supper to the church. Through the sacrament of Baptism we are engrafted into Christ. We are claimed by God in the waters of Baptism and washed clean from our sins. As we accept God's grace, our old life of sin is washed away, and a new life has begun. Through baptism, the church celebrates the renewal of the covenant God has made with God's people, and acknowledges that the one baptized is now a part of the covenant community of faith. Our recognition of infant baptism is a clear sign of God's grace, and reminds us that God reaches out to us even before we are able to respond in faith.

As we celebrate the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, we remember the saving death of our Lord Jesus Christ until He comes again. This Supper is a celebration of the reconciliation of God with humankind, and us with each other. We celebrate the sacrifice Jesus made for us on the cross, and receive the benefits of His resurrection as we remember that Christ lived for us, Christ died for us, Christ lives in us, and Christ will come again. We are strengthened spiritually through the partaking of the elements of the bread and the cup, to go out into the world and do the work the Lord has called us to.

As humans we are sinful by nature because of the first sin of Adam and Eve, and therefore cannot overcome our sinfulness without God's help. Our acceptance of God's grace through faith is merely allowing God's love to rain down on us. God's grace cannot be earned and requires nothing but the acceptance of that grace. Because of the unconditional love of Jesus Christ and the grace of God in our life, we are moved to live our lives according to the will of God. And as we do the will of God in the world, we are a witness to the sacrifice of Jesus, and the love of God.

The church is called to be a beacon in the world, bringing truth and light to our local communities and reaching out to the whole world by developing disciples of Jesus Christ. God has given us all different talents and abilities, and as a disciple of Christ, every believer is called to participate in Jesus' priestly ministry. The church is to continue the reconciling work of Jesus Christ in the world, empowered through the work of the Holy Spirit, with Jesus as the head of the church. The Bible is the first and final authority for the church in all areas of faith; it is God's written Word, inspired by the Holy Spirit.