

## Rusty Benton Statement of Faith 2024

I trust and believe in the one absolute and triune God. I believe that all things have been created and are sustained by God's divine will, providence, and care. What part of creation can fathom the greatness of God? Creation exists in subjection to God and yet in the holy scriptures we are reminded that God has made humanity only a little lower than the angels. God's love for us is evident in the gifts of material blessings, understanding, the beat of our hearts, the breath in our lungs, the ability to love, and the redemption and salvation that has been made possible through Jesus Christ. We are given the chance to love the God we worship and know that this God so also loves us.

I believe in Jesus the Christ. Jesus is the fully human and fully divine Son of God and one person of the divine Trinity. On the night that he was born to the virgin Mary and her husband Joseph, angels joyfully proclaimed peace and hope to all of creation. I believe that Jesus is the perfect example of what it means to be a child of God. In his life and death, Christ set the example of what living in relation to God and others means. I believe that we should all strive to follow this example. In his death, Christ bridged the gap between creation and God that sin had created. Therefore, redemption with God is only possible through Jesus Christ. I believe that the grace and love given to humanity by God in Christ is through Jesus' sacrifice and cannot be earned or repaid. We can only respond in gratitude to God's love and enter into a relationship with God through divine love and mercy.

I believe the Holy Spirit is the person of the divine Trinity that is sent to creation by God to be with us and work in our lives. The Spirit offers us guidance, wisdom, power and love through prayer, scripture, Communion, community, worship, sacraments, preaching, teaching and of course service in God's name.

I give thanks for God's gifts given in the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. Jesus set the example for the church by being baptized and by offering the words of forgiveness and life as he shared a last meal with his disciples. We celebrate God's redemption and power each time we take of the bread and drink the cup knowing that our Lord's will for us is life abundant in the place of certain death. Baptism celebrates our unity and community as we proclaim that beyond our genes, our finances, our failures, or successes, we are drawn together by our common hope and belief that the greatest of all things is

the love that our God has for all of us. I believe that The Holy Bible is God's divinely revealed and inspired word to humanity. It is the revelation for all people that guides us to a greater knowledge and understanding of ourselves, our world and of our God. The scriptures are a unique source of inspiration, faith, and guidance. It is God's living word through which the Lord of all is revealed personally, historically and theologically to the church and the world.