

Emily Sutphin's Statement of Faith

I believe in the one Triune God: Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit.

God the Creator is the Divine Parent of the universe and all living beings. Our Creator's creative work continues daily. Our Creator is infinitely wise, eternal, holy, and perfect beyond comprehension. Our Creator created the universe because it was pleasing to do so. Our Creator modeled humankind in God's image and charged humankind with caring for one another and creation. However, humanity repeatedly rejected their Creator and failed to do God's will. Therefore, our Creator ordained leaders and prophets to encourage people to turn back and remember their God. When humankind rejected these leaders and prophets, our Creator sent God's Son, Christ, to reconcile us to God.

Jesus, the promised Messiah and Christ, was sent from God to bring salvation to all people. In Jesus' incarnation, God became flesh and dwelt among humankind. Fully divine and human, Jesus preached the Good News to all people and performed signs and miracles. Yet, many people rejected Jesus' radical teachings and demanded his death. Jesus was crucified, died, and was buried. After three days, Jesus rose again. His resurrection demonstrates God's power over sin and death. God's reconciling act in Jesus is a holy mystery that we approach through many metaphors, such as sacrifice and atonement, but we can never fully understand. One day, Jesus will return to bring God's Kin-dom to completion on earth. Until God's Kin-dom comes in fullness, God calls Christians to worship God and share God's love with all of humankind through word and deed.

The Holy Spirit is the third expression of the Triune God sharing the same divine essence as the Creator and Christ. The Spirit guides our interpretation of Scripture and equips people with gifts to assist them in ministry. The Spirit unites us with God and one another and sends us forth into the world to serve with acts of love. The Spirit is wherever people are gathered in God's name.

The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper are two acts God calls the Church to perform. Baptism is the sign and seal of God's covenant with God's people. The waters of baptism are representative of God's creative purpose and cleansing power. We are baptized once, marking the beginning of our new life in Christ. In contrast to baptism, we are called to regularly perform the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is observed in remembrance and thanksgiving of Christ's death and resurrection. The cup and bread are holy, mysterious symbols of Christ's blood and body. Participation in the Lord's Supper unites Christians across time and space.

The Holy Scripture is God's Word revealed in the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament bears witness to God's faithfulness to God's people. The New Testament depicts the ministry of Jesus, the formation of the early Church, and the movement of the Spirit. The Old Testament provides a greater understanding of the New, and the New Testament brings clarity to the Old. The Bible was written by human beings inspired by the Holy Spirit. Thus, the Bible's authority is from God, who speaks to us through the authors' words. Inspired by the Spirit, the Bible requires Spirit-guided interpretation. Therefore, God calls us to approach God's Word in the Bible with prayerful hearts and open minds.