

## Wildrdge- Brief Statement of Faith: (Revised 2/2023)

As a being in the world created and ordained by God, I believe that the world did not and does not begin with us, but with God, where God is the owner and we are the stewards. We are partners with God. We are to till the soil, care for the people, places, things, and we have a covenant with God for creation. With Moses, God said "I will be your God and you will be MY people."

Within *Creation*, nothing is to be rejected. I also believe that creation is a showing of grace to us. Everything that was created and ordained was done so by God, and is therefore connected to the gracious activity and holy activity of God. Creation, whether the pets we own, the corn we eat, or the stop light that was created by a man, is for our benefit. It gives us something to take care of. As it states in Genesis we are the tillers of the Earth and because of this we are given a command by God because the world is ours to help, cherish and take care of.

I believe in the *Trinity*. I believe that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are God who is three in one. I believe that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are there to help, love, and guide me through my life. I have seen and understand now more than earlier in my life where the trinity has shown up especially as I get older and have a more firm grasp on my theology and the theology of the church.

*Jesus* is the most relatable of the three. Christ went through the human death, but also rose again. I trust in Jesus Christ, fully human and fully divine, sent by God to walk among us. He gathered crowds and small groups, using the technology and familiar images of his day to convey God's love and reign to all. He particularly embraced those labeled by society as outcasts and unbelievers. In my personal faith journey Jesus caring for the outcasts, the marginalized. In my life the idea that Jesus delivers and supports all of creation and not the perfect parts of creation has strengthened my faith on many occasions. He visited the sick and comforted the suffering. As a pastor in the area of end of life, comforting the sick and suffering shows the closeness of Christ to us, and that Christ is there for us even in the most difficult of situations, when there seems to be no hope. Jesus also challenged powerful institutions, calling them out on oppressive bureaucracy and legalism, and back to the heart of their best traditions. In Luke and Matthew's gospels, we seen countless times wherever Jesus calls out oppressive systems, and offers a different way of caring about the world. Ultimately, he was subjected to betrayal, torture, and execution. He willingly accepted a fate he did not deserve, so that we might know mercy and grace, and through this act be once and for all awakened to God's love, saved and redeemed. I trust that God raised Jesus from death into life, giving hope and reassurance for the life to come, and the life today: We are a resurrection people.

Jesus promised that his presence would remain, even when his physical form did not. Because of this, I trust in *the Holy Spirit*, who comforts, guides, and binds together God's people in all places.

*God* is almighty, but sometimes seems distant. But God is always there to help us. God is also forgiving, compassionate, and understanding. I trust in one God who is the creator and sustainer of all worlds. I trust—even when I do not necessarily understand—that this one God is also somehow three: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As such, God reigns over all; God loves all.

I believe the *mission* and my call throughout the church is an example of stewardship. I am a servant of God, a steward of God's will that has been called to bring the love of Christ throughout the world. I believe my calling is with the marginalized community, those who are on the outside of not only society but also in the church. I further believe my call can change, grow, and morph, and in that way I am open to where this journey goes.

I believe in the power of the *sacraments* and the meaning they place upon my faith. The sacraments I believe proclaim grace, give us a place of community with God, and welcome us into the church.

*Baptism*, is a sacrament that I believe started my call. Through baptism, God claims us as beloved children and members of Christ's body, the church, washing us clean from sin as we renounce the power of evil and seek the will and way of God. In baptism we are called to a new way of life as Christ's disciples, sharing the good news of the gospel with all the world as an act of worship.

*Communion*, I believe that communally we remember the death and forgiveness of sins through this sacrament and the love of Christ that is a reminder when we partake in eating the bread and drinking the cup offered by God, our memory of the promises is made present by the Holy Spirit. The Lord's Supper is a sacrament of continuous growth, nourishment and new life. Just as humans need food and drink for nurture and sustenance, Calvin wrote that the Holy Meal is God's way of providing for our maintenance during the whole course of our lives after we have been received into God's family. Both sacraments provide a visible, in fact a graphic, way of presenting God's promises. Through this promise, we continue to proclaim the death and resurrection of Christ, in action, and faith.

*Scripture*, we read these things in God's written word, the Bible, which testifies to Christ, God's living word. I trust in the scriptures and the church as faithful guides to direct my paths closer and closer to God's Kingdom. As a minister, we are called to share the good news and the

scripture, which is “The rule of faith in life.” As a minister I will follow and uphold scripture and proclaim the words inspired by God.

As a follower of the Presbyterian tradition I seek to abide by the tenants of the *Reformed tradition* which are exemplified in our confessions. I seek to listen to the voice and heart of God in the Holy Scriptures, which is the unique and authoritative witness to the triune God fully and finally revealed in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. The Book of Confessions are, “reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do” and the foundation our our tradition.

I live in God’s world, I live to serve God’s will and follow Christ's example of forgiveness of sins, and embrace the Holy Spirit as it embraces us in our daily lives. I trust that God calls together faithful believers in every age to be the church: To worship, pray, fellowship, study, and serve one another and the world. I pray and believe that God, the sacraments, and the tenants of the reformed tradition continue to guide and direct my ministry on whatever path it takes.