

## Statement of Faith

Mary Barrett Speers

I believe in One God, whose name is I Am and I Shall Be, and of whom we are all wanted, sought, and cherished children. This God, who is the ground and true end of all being, is the source of love and life and all things good, and made, by Word and by hand, everything we can touch, taste, see, smell, hear, or imagine. The steadfast love of God flows over, around, and through all things forever.

I believe that God is faithful, and that even as we are created in the image of God, so is faith created in us whether we choose to put it back in God or in some other thing. God takes an astonishing risk in giving us faith together with imagination, which is the ability to form in our hearts an image of things past and future; and will, with which we can choose for good or for evil.

I believe in the Word Made Flesh: that in Jesus of Nazareth, God came in Christ to rescue the world from sin. By word and by example Christ taught us to live as we were intended to live: glorifying God and enjoying God forever. On account of our sin—our betrayal of God's trust of faith, imagination, and will—Christ suffered and died, yet was raised again whole and in glory. Christ is present with us still in the Spirit: in our daily lives, in Word and in Sacrament, and speaking to us in our inmost hearts.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the breath of God, the wind brooding over the face of the deep, a forth-spreading within us that cannot be contained. With that breath God cried out, "How good!" and with the blast of that wind God bares the face of our sin, and with that Spirit God re-forms us and re-claims us, children of God from beginning to end.

I believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the living word of God: through them God not only speaks to our hearing, but also sends, if our senses are truly opened, sight, touch, smell, and taste—if we receive the truth of the Scriptures in the Spirit, with faith and right use of the gift of imagination.

I believe that the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are given to us as bodily means of the inbreaking of the Spirit, through which we are touched and transformed by the continuing presence of Christ. The Sacraments are given within the church because the church itself is both corporeal and spiritual, both of the world and not of the world. To us they are as necessary and as inseparable as body and breath.

I believe the church is, everywhere and in all conditions, the Body of Christ. As the Holy Scriptures contain the record of God's saving history, so do the confessions of the church contain a record of the response of the church to that history, reminding us that we are a church reformed and ever reforming.

I believe that insofar as we are of the world, into the church Christ calls us out of the world, bathing us, feeding us, teaching us, and binding us together. But lest we get too comfortable, Christ calls us out of the church into the world, children of God, members of the only body Jesus has. As the body breathes in, it breathes out, sending us out to do the work of Christ in the world that God loves, in the grace and power of the Holy Spirit and to the glory of God's Holy Name.