

## **A Brief Statement of Faith**

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**Retired, honorably!**

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I am theologically orthodox and the **Apostle's Creed** expresses my faith perfectly. On July 1, 2016 and the days that followed, I experienced the fullness of my Christian faith. At 7:30, the morning of that same day, I entered surgery for a triple by-pass and aortic valve replacement. A six-hour surgery took nine. In my recovery I experienced a reaction to the plasma that was given to me, my blood pressure dropped drastically, I developed pneumonia and I was placed in an induced coma for three and a half weeks. During that time the faith that my parents shared and that I have learned to grow in and love was made real in my ordeal.

*I believe in the church universal and the communion of saints.* It was the community of faith that supported me through my medical ordeal and the prayers of God's saints in North America, Central America, South America and the African continent were raised to the throne of Grace on my behalf.

*I believe in the Holy Spirit.* As I walked through the "valley of shadow of death" the Holy Spirit ministered to my spirit and I distinctly recall saying to my self, "*This is good! This is not bad!*" The Holy Spirit ministered to my spirit and I sensed that "*Blessed Assurance*" that we sing about.

*I believe in the Bible as the Holy Word of God.* In my recovery, I suffered hallucinations and evil visions caused by the medication. One night, in particular, I recall closing my eyes to sleep and saw what seemed to me to be evil spirits that haunted and taunted me. The nurse called the chaplain, Heather Cameron, a Presbyterian minister. Heather held my hand and read from the Psalms for 15

minutes. I asked her to keep reading for another 30 minutes. I closed my eyes to “*test the spirits*” and all I could see was the back of my eyelids. I promptly fell asleep. I believe in the Bible.

***I believe in the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.*** During my ordeal, and though my mind was unconscious, my spirit was very much alive I recall my spirit calling out for “*the light*”; the light of it’s salvation. God was not ready for me and the devil surely didn’t want me.

***I believe in the consummation of history at the end of time when Christ will return for His church,*** if not today, perhaps tomorrow. Until that day, we are called to continue to teach and preach and to be reminded that, “*God is not a respecter of persons*”.

***I believe that we can no longer continue to exclude a wide swath of God’s children on the basis of our prejudices and biases.*** The late Dr. Jorge Lara-Braud once said, “*Homogeneous churches in a heterogeneous society are an ecclesiastical heresy.*”

***I believe that Christians must embrace the diversity that is a reality in American society today!*** There is enough biblical evidence to suggest that we have historically been on the wrong side regarding issues of inclusiveness. If we are to err, let us err on the side of grace.