

Virginia "Ginna" Bairby Statement of Faith

I believe in God the Parent, Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer of the world. God is the source of all life, love, and being. God is at the same time incomprehensibly mysterious and as near to us as our own breath. God created the world to be good, and although chaos and evil persist, I affirm that God's creation is ultimately good. God in providence sustains all life and guides the world toward perfection and completion.

I believe that God created humanity in God's own image and called us good. However, I know the reality of original sin; even before we are conscious of our sin, we participate in the corporate sin of humanity. As we mature, we bear not only original sin but also the actual sins that we knowingly commit when we do that which does not serve love. We are sinful in every aspect of our being, and our sin begets brokenness and separation from God and from one another.

I learn about God through Holy Scripture, the lives of ordinary saints, and my own experience of the miracles of existence, compassion, and redemption. I affirm that the ultimate Revelation of God is Jesus Christ - the Word made flesh and the human embodiment of God.

Jesus lived a life of complete obedience to God's love and justice, and for this reason we call him our Lord, the Christ, the very Son of God. Jesus taught radical love for all people, proclaiming that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Threatened by his divine inclusiveness, the religious and political powers of his day crucified him. In the ultimate act of obedience to God and love for humanity, Jesus emptied himself unto death on a cross so that we might be reconciled to God and one another. And yet on the third day, his disciples joyfully proclaimed that Jesus had risen - the ultimate victory of good over evil, of life over death.

Through the cross and the power of the Holy Spirit, we experience regeneration, in which we freely receive God's grace, and sanctification, in which God moves in our hearts to make us more like Christ and extend that same grace selflessly to others.

The Church is the fellowship of those who meet God in Jesus Christ. The Church is called to be a community of reconciliation that proclaims the Gospel in all times and places and participates in Jesus' ministry of Kingdom-building. The Church is called to denounce and reform oppressive structures and work for the liberation of all people. Through worship, prayer, study, and service, the church lives in the grace of Jesus Christ and acts out God's purpose in the world. Through the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, we receive grace that compels us to live as Christ's disciples.

The world that we know is finite and will come to an end. Our tradition offers diverse answers to what will happen, but none of us truly knows how God's purposes will be realized. However, I firmly believe that God intends for all of Creation to enter the fullness of God's Kingdom. In faith, I trust that love will prevail.