

**Joshua Erickson**  
**Statement of Faith**

Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior. I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who is fully divine and fully human. It is my deepest hope and sincerest belief that Christ is the truth on which everything that I am, everything that I do, and everything that I believe is centered. I believe God's grace enables Christ to be the center of my life. I believe that God's grace was at work in my life before I was even aware of it. God has shown grace to humanity by sending Christ to die on the cross which set humanity free from sin. At the same time; every day I experience sin which so easily entangles and keeps Christ from being at the center of my life. It is then on a daily basis that I am aware of God's free gift of grace. It is that grace which allows Christ to become the center of my life again. There have been several times when I have been acutely aware of God's grace being at work in my life and allowing me to accept that God's forgiveness is real enough for me to forgive myself. This confirms for me that both humanity and creation are indeed fallen and need to be redemption.

I believe that God is the creator of what was, what is, and what will be. I believe that God created an amazing world which is a reflection of God's awesome majesty. The beauty of creation and the intricacy of the interdependent nature of creation both speak to the ultimate sovereignty of God. I believe that the ultimate sign of God's sovereignty and love is God's eternal plan to send Jesus Christ to save humanity and redeem creation.

It is the Holy Spirit who is my guide and advocate. The Holy Spirit has guided me throughout my life in ways that at times I could and at other times I could not understand. It was the Holy Spirit who was at work in my life as a high school student when I was called to serve full-time in the church. I believe it is the Holy Spirit who calls the church together and then sends her out into the world.

I believe that God's will for humanity is most clearly and uniquely revealed through Christ's birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and promise to come again. It is through the examination of the life of Christ that humanity is able to know what it means to be truly human and what it means that God's love for humanity and creation has no bounds. I believe that God had elected from eternity to send Christ to redeem a fallen human race and a fallen creation.

I am grateful for the gift of Scripture as it is the unique and authoritative witness. It is through the word (Scripture) read and proclaimed that the Word (Jesus Christ) is revealed. I am also grateful for the role that the personal reading of Scripture has played in my formation as a disciple of Christ. God has given to me through the pages of Scripture the gift of guidance as a leader in the church and also the needed nourishment to sustain my faith journey. I believe that the both the individual lives of the believers and the corporate life of the church need to be formed and reformed according to Scripture.

The church is the community of grace which God gathers together to be the people of God given the task of being Christ's witness in the world. The church is called to share the love of Christ with the world through both evangelism and service. It is when the church exists for others that the true church exists. This means that at times that the church is called to sacrifice in order to advance the mission of God in the world. I also believe that the church is present where the Word is preached and the sacraments are celebrated.

I believe that the sacraments are the physical signs and seal of God's grace poured out for all of creation. I believe that the sacraments confirm for the church the presence and promise of Christ. The church is called to celebrate the two sacraments of Lord's Supper and baptism. I believe in the real presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper and that it is a mystery of faith how that exactly works. I believe in baptism as a sign and seal of the forgiveness of sins and humanity's inclusion in God's covenant of grace.