

## **A STATEMENT OF FAITH**

**Lisa Larges**

I believe in the fullness of the expression of grace in the one God manifest in three persons sovereign, Christ and Holy Spirit.

I believe in the sovereign God who, in love called all things into being, creating all that is seen and unseen. This God is the ground of our being, source of life, the rock to which we cling. I take solace in the mystery that though this God is wholly other from me, I am fully and completely loved by God as is all of God's creation. There is nothing that is in me that is not known by God, and God's good purpose for my life and for the whole of life is to live in love according to God's will.

I believe in Jesus Christ the full expression of the love of God made manifest to us in the life and witness of the one Jesus of Nazareth. Through him unfolded the mystery of the incarnation, God becoming flesh: Fully human and fully divine. God's graciousness towards us is revealed to us in that God emptied God's self, coming to us as a newborn child of the son of Mary and sojourning with us in all of human life. This Jesus proclaimed the realm of God, challenging all temporal authority, calling all persons to repentance, subverting power, teaching, healing, and daily communing with God. Through him, God's love for us and graciousness towards us, were fulfilled and our redemption from sin was accomplished. Through Jesus, justice and mercy were made one. Through his birth, life, death, and resurrection the way of salvation was made known to us, and the work of salvation was complete.

I believe in the Holy Spirit who sanctifies our lives by calling us daily to repentance, leading us to turn from sin, and guiding us to a holy life marked by the rule of love. It is by the work of the Spirit that our hearts are held captive to the Word of God revealed through the Scriptures. Through the Spirit we are called together into fellowship with one another in this community of struggle and witness called the Church. Through the Spirit and by the Spirit alone the Christ is revealed to us in each person, and a reverence for life is restored.

In sovereign love and by the power of the Spirit, God gave us the Holy Scriptures. It is by the work of the Spirit that we find in Scripture the living Word disclosed. In them is contained the narrative of a chosen people, God's intention of covenantal relationship, and the nature of God which is for us. By the Scriptures we come to know and to love the one Jesus, the Word of God in flesh.

Through the Scriptures and by the power of love we are convicted of sin by which we cast God from the center of our lives and live under the false notion that we can remain apart from the love of God. This sin permeates our being, breaks the bonds of trust, and thwarts the way of love. Evil wrought by sin is manifest in society as oppression, violence, greed, the destruction of God's good creation, and the objectification of life.

I believe there is but one thing greater than the despair of sin and that is the certainty that nothing will separate us from the love of God. God's love was completed in Jesus, and through his life, death and resurrection the way of redemption was revealed to us. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, emboldened by the love of Christ, through faith alone we turn again to God and are restored to right relation with God, our neighbor and all creation. Daily we seek God's boundless forgiveness and through love seek to live more deeply into God's good pleasure for our lives.

Through the Spirit we are bound together in the one body of Christ known as the Church, and together we are commissioned to proclaim the unbounded good news that God's love is for all. As one body we are strengthened by the gifts of the sacraments. In Baptism, we are joined to the fellowship of believers and in communion we partake with the first disciples in the great feast of the realm of God proclaimed in Christ's death, resurrection, and return. Together as believers we constitute the holy priesthood, each one called to serve and honor God. The whole of our vocation is summed up in the appeal of John: beloved, let us love one another. This is to be our work until God's mystery is made known when all of time shall be redeemed and creation restored by the resounding Word of God's holy and everlasting "Yes!"