

Statement of Faith
Rev. Dr. Thomas Groome III

I believe in the One Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Father is Creator/Rule of the universe. God created all that is out of nothing making this world and us to glorify God and calling creation good. We are created in God's image intended to know and love God and neighbor. We have chosen not to glorify God and instead have rebelled by turning away from God's grace while seeking our own way of living. Our sin has separated us from God's intended relationship with us and one another. While God's holiness cannot bear our sin, God's love for us cannot bear that separation. God is ultimately moved to act on our behalf for our reconciliation.

God sent Jesus Christ fully divine/fully human; the Word of God made flesh, Emmanuel. He entered the world experiencing and sharing our needs, sorrows, joys and temptations, calling us to turn from our sin to the right relationship with God. He was without sin yet stood beside us in our sin and was crucified for us. Because of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection we are viewed by God as righteous and are justified. By grace through faith we receive forgiveness of sins, resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.

The Holy Spirit bears witness to the Triune God, proclaims God's forgiveness in Christ, move persons to respond in faith, repentance and obedience, initiates new life in Christ, reconciles us to each other and teaches the church to worship and obey God, empowers us to pray for the world, to share the Gospel in both word and deed.

The Bible is the authoritative and inspired witness to the character of God; the one witness that has no parallel and serves as our rule for faith and life. Through prayer and study the Holy Spirit illumines our hearts and minds to hear God's voice spoken to and through the community of faith.

Christians are called to respond to God's grace in community with others who profess faith in Jesus Christ. This faith community is the Church. Its mission is given form by God's activity in the world as revealed in Scripture and understood by faith. The Church is a means of God's grace by promoting stewardship of all God's gifts in creation, ministering to the needs of the poor, the sick, the lonely, the powerless, and engaging in the struggle to free people from sin, fear, oppression, hunger, and injustice.

Sacraments are the visible outward signs of God's grace, instituted by God and commended by Christ. God seals us in redemption, renews our identity as God's people and marks us for service in the world. Baptism is the sign/seal of our incorporation into Christ: a visible sign that we have entered a new covenant relationship and promise to live in continual faithfulness and discipleship. The Lord's Supper is a sign/seal of our communion with Christ crucified and resurrected. We join in communion with God one with all believers past present and future celebrating the real spiritual presence of Christ, remembering his death, proclaiming his resurrection.