

Statement of Faith
Rev. Dr. Shanell T. Smith (Ph.D.)

I believe and have faith in the Triune God who is manifested to us in God the Father, God the Son – Jesus Christ, and God the Holy Spirit.

I believe that God the Father created the world and made us in God's image. God established a relationship with humanity because of God's sovereign freedom and not because of any merit on our part. God constantly forgives and renews us despite our shortcomings and our sinfulness. When we confess, our God is gracious and merciful and forgives our sins. God never gives up on us.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Begotten Son, fully God and fully human. I believe that Jesus Christ is the Word of God. He is what God has to say to us. Christ is God's tangible message of salvation, love, forgiveness, and holiness. His life, death, and resurrection make our relationship with God possible. His walk on this earth was a holy example for us.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ's promise of peace and power to His disciples and to us. The power of the Holy Spirit unites us to the grace of God in Jesus Christ, and calls and empowers the Church for mission in the world. The Holy Spirit intercedes for us when we do not have the words or strength to pray (Rom. 8:26-27). The Holy Spirit is God's continued presence with us, and gives us revelation and understanding of the Holy Scriptures. It is the Holy Spirit who encourages us and empowers us to live in obedience to God's Holy Word.

I believe that the Holy Scriptures are God's authoritative Word for the Church. The Scriptures are the inspired Word of God that witnesses to God's self-revelation to us. The adherence and obedience to the teachings of Scripture transforms our lives and provides a guidepost for the healing of our broken relationship with God. The church affirms that the Word read and preached and obeyed is the core of Christian worship. Reading and meditating on the Scriptures are a part of my personal worship which enables me to apply it in my daily walk with Christ.

I believe that Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, and provides all that is necessary to fulfill its mission in the world. The Church is called to provide nurture, shelter, and spiritual fellowship among the people of God. It is called to bring more persons into the body of Christ, and teach them what Jesus commanded. The Kingdom of God is already, and not yet. The Church presently strives for a better world through mission and outreach that demonstrates God's love, as it looks forward to the ultimate triumph of God.

I believe that Christian life is a personal response to God in which we offer our lives, spiritual gifts, abilities, and material goods. We are to respond to God with thanks and praise in words and deeds. We are to participate and offer ourselves to God in the worship of our Lord. A Christian life is not one that is attained or created by one's own volition, but by God's pre-election and sustaining grace.