

Statement of Faith
Rev. Nancy B. McLaren

I believe in God, even when I doubt, even when the world aches, I believe in God. God is ineffable: beyond human comprehension, infinite, and uncontainable. God is imminent: the essence of life, the heartbeat of each living thing, source of love, and in the tiniest details of Creation. I confess that though I do not understand it, God is three in one: the Parent, the Child, and the Holy Spirit, the Reconciler, Creator, and Redeemer. The mystery of the Holy Trinity reveals the many ways God is. By God's grace, God reveals God's nature through various sources. Within the canon of Holy Scripture we glean insight into how God acted historically. Human experiences of God, revelations from the created world, Church traditions, poets, musicians, artists of all kinds can also direct our eyes to God. From these sources, I piece together a statement of hopeful belief. In God's tri-unity, God created and creates all that is and continues to be, and invites us into the work of continual creation, charging us with stewardship of Creation. God was revealed to humanity through the life of a child, Jesus Christ, born in a particular place and time. Jesus made meaning out of human life by revealing the way God wishes for humans to experience life: abundantly, lovingly, justly, humbly, and on the path of flourishing. Jesus' life casts the darker sides of human nature in sharp relief: while God is with us, we also bear brokenness and limitations preventing us from sharing fulfilled lives. The Holy Spirit hovers over the waters of Creation and Baptism, blesses, anoints, and beckons. On the day of Pentecost the church celebrates the movement of the Spirit among the earliest disciples, who were called into unity. The Holy Spirit is at work when two or more are gathered to worship and when God's grace is revealed in surprising ways. Despite our countless divisions, I affirm that the triune God calls forth one body of Christ. The church is rightfully composed of people of varying cultures, bodily and mental abilities, ethnicities, nationalities, genders, sexual orientations, and ages. Rich diversity deepens and empowers the church. Church life is marked by many seasonal events, and particularly by the mysterious sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, both celebrated with and by Jesus in his lifetime. Baptism marks the beginning of incorporation into the body of Christ. When witnessed in community, all gathered are reminded of their own baptisms and responsibilities to one another as children of God. When we commune together, gathering around the table in God's name, we celebrate the nourishment we receive from our lives in a community. This sacrament recalls, with a sense of bounty and humility, a particular incident in Jesus' historical life. We also learn to give and receive with abundance, to affirm the bodily experiences of living and sharing with one another. God continuously calls and invites us to live boldly, courageously, humbly, and mercifully.