

Statement of Faith Nancy D'Ippolito April 7, 2022

I believe in a loving God

- who created the world and all that is in it, including all the processes by which everything evolves and grows and dies;
- who came into the world to bring salvation after humans broke their relationship with God, each other, and creation;
- who continues to redeem, forgive, and love all of us, showering us with grace daily, even when we turn our backs on God and try to run away.

I believe that Jesus is both God and man and shows us the fullest expression of God's love and teaches us how to live in right relationship with God, ourselves, each other, and creation. Jesus is both Lord and Savior so following Him will often be difficult and require hard choices, but will always bring peace and joy.

Because God loves us, God gives us the gifts of the Spirit, and allows us to live into, grow in, and practice all the gifts of the Spirit: especially, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, forgiveness, gentleness and self-control. We exercise these gifts by treating everyone with love and compassion and by helping the vulnerable and the outcasts, by feeding the hungry, helping the homeless, healing the sick, clothing the naked and by standing up for those who can't stand up for themselves. These gifts also allow us to respond to the needs of creation so that we do the things we can to care for what God has given to us.

The Church is a family of support and a place for everyone and anyone to gather for worship and spiritual growth. It is our "home away from home" where we learn more fully and deeply about the God who loves us enough to die for us; where we learn more fully and deeply to live as God would have us live; where we learn more fully and deeply that God seeks us when we are lost and rejoices when we are found. It is through the preaching and teaching of the church that we learn that God meets us where we are on a daily basis and by grace invites us to become more fully the disciples needed to change to world.

In the sacraments God meets us and invites us into deeper relationships with God, with each other, and with ourselves so that we may take the love of God into our communities. By the waters of Baptism, we are brought into the community of faith, into the family of God. With the bread and the cup of the Lord's Supper, we are fed by the Lord on a regular basis and nourished by God's own grace and love with the strength and courage to go forth into our daily lives as empowered disciples.

I believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God. In the Scriptures we learn about God's love and plan for salvation that is made manifest in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. In the Scriptures we learn about the promises of God that are given to all who believe in God through Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. These promises include that God will be with us always, that we will inherit eternal life, and that we will participate in the resurrection.

The Scriptures are a dynamic revelation of God to all people in all times and places. Understanding the biblical text in its original language, context, time and audience is only the beginning of our understanding of how God is speaking to us today. These beginning places are important but not sufficient because God continues to speak to God's people in every time and place through the words of Scripture. We just need to open our hearts, our eyes, and our ears to understand what God is saying.

As Christians, we strive to live by God's will and not our own. We can do this by worshipping together, by praying, by reading the Scriptures, and by listening to what God has to say.

Romans 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

1Thessalonians 5:16:18 Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks always ...