

Statement of Faith - Barry W. Williams

January, 2020

I believe that God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit are the one, triune God.
My faith is rooted in the theological understandings of the Reformed Tradition.
My ecclesiology and polity are definitively Presbyterian.

Those statements are compelling for me, but they may not be particularly helpful for a council of the Presbyterian Church USA in the need to know how I will live in, and serve, within a presbytery. So, the following reflections, along with my Faith Journey, may help the Presbytery to know a bit more about how I will serve “after the example of Jesus Christ.”

I believe that God’s loving grace desires a relationship with each of us, and all of creation. It is because of God’s steadfast love that Jesus walked this earth to teach us how to live, to serve, and to express gratitude. His example and teachings are authoritative guidance for me and for all who carry the name of Christ.

I believe that God’s continuing presence is known in the Holy Spirit's work, who calls for us to repent of our capacity and tendency to sin, and to move to the recognition of Jesus as our Lord and Savior of our lives, temporal and everlasting. The Holy Spirit emboldens us to do God’s work on earth. We do Christ’s work, individually and together, willingly out of love and gratitude for God. Our love for God should manifest itself in ways that reflect God’s love—we are called to be kind, compassionate, forgiving, generous, hospitable, and prophetic.

I believe that within and through the Church we use our gifts to minister, support, strengthen, encourage, and to hold each other accountable. Together we are able to do works we are unable to do individually. We are charged to recognize and confront personal and systemic injustice in our world.

I believe the Lord’s Supper is where we not only remember Jesus’ sacrifice for us, but experience Christ’s presence. It is itself a celebration, where all are welcome to the Table, and it is a “feasting with the saints” in anticipation of the Great Banquet to come. Baptism is an outward and visible sign of our welcome into the family of God. For me, these sacraments, done in community, celebrate our relationship not only with God but with one another as members of the Body of Christ.

I believe that Scripture is the unique and authoritative word of God. Scripture teaches, encourages, directs, convicts, and challenges us. My study of scripture informs how I worship God, learn about God, hear God’s voice, and follow God’s leading. I continue to learn how to examine, confess, correct, and heal the many places where I “miss the mark.”

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Thanks be to God!