

Statements of Faith

John 10:22-30

Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand."

As you listen to excerpts from each of our confirmand's faith statements, you will hear words of faith from God's faithful followers. These 13 are the sheep that have heard the voice of Jesus and who follow their shepherd, believing that in the end he will give them the gift of eternal life.

You will hear the faith of young men and women whose parents have now fulfilled their baptismal vows to raise and nurture these young people in the Christian faith. You will listen to words of Christian men and women who are ready to affirm their baptisms and assume responsibility for their relationship with Jesus Christ and His church. Listen to their faith . . .

Nicole Engelhart

Stories

Oh, where to start. How about Redeemer? Good choice. When we last went to Redeemer, I was honestly wondering what we will have to eat afterward, what we will do there (they did not give us much details), and where in the world Megan was (I lose people really easily). I never knew what a spiritual impact it would have. We went inside with the tons of bags we had and eventually sat in the pews of the chapel there. They gave us instructions (I was on gift wrap) and we went to

our respective places. I thought that I had the easy job since it was, after all, gift wrapping. I thought that there would not be that many presents. Was I surprised!! So many people donated things for Christmas. Then I compared the amount to what I got. Even with the many gifts, I realized the amount each person got was still less to the things I got for Christmas. Walking over to the table, I looked through the donated items. They were mostly stuffed animals and little toys I would not give a second glance if I received them on Christmas day. It dawned on me that some children were so poor that they would be happy to receive these things and consider them as presents. Certainly redefines my cell phone.

Once we were done, it was time to serve dinner. We all piled down to the boiling kitchen/dining room area. A ton of people were already there sitting down and waiting for dinner to start. Megan and I made our way to the cookies and waited for announcements to start. When the announcements ended, we said a prayer. I could not help but to look at the peoples faces. A woman right in front of me had her eyes closed and was looking to the ceiling-the Heavens if you will. She was so intent in the prayer, and I saw the happiness that filled her. She was so thankful for us to be coming and was so happy. She was thanking God for our arrival. The prayer was over and she went into line for dinner and when she passed us for a cookie, she smiled and thanked us. I was just happy to help her and to please God. I know that if I please someone else, I will be pleasing God also.

Another story I have (will I ever be out of them?) is when we went to the nursing home last year. I was on my flute playing "Jesus Loves Me" and "Amazing

Grace". We went to the second nursing home and we played our songs. After we finished playing "Jesus Loves Me" this one woman spoke up and said, "That was very nice. I remember singing that at church when I was younger. . .it has been 90 years." I just remember being shocked. A woman, at least 90, maybe 95, still remembering the song. Lead me to question if I shall remember these church songs after many years.

I also noticed at the nursing homes that when we got to prayers such as the Lord's Prayer and psalms such as the 23rd Psalm, the seniors mouthed them along with us. It amazes me how long faith sticks with you. Even if you have not been to church for a while, it sticks with you. I compare it to the love of God. If you have been "out of contact" or swayed from your faith, God will still love you, no matter what.

Lord's Prayer

This holds as one of the most powerful things in my faith. I completely remember when I was learning it, how my mother would have me say it every night before bed, making paper apples to put the prayer on. To me, the first petition means that God is my Father and I am one of his children. His name is holy and we are to keep it holy. "Your Kingdom come" says that when we have our turn to go into the eternal kingdom, we can have the godly life in heaven. "Your will be done, on earth as in heaven" means that we need to carry out God's will. God gives us daily bread even without prayer to all his people who follow Him. We ask it though to realize that we do get bread, or luxuries in my mind, and

make sure we give thanks. Forgiving those who sinned against us is tough. But we need the strength to love our neighbors even when they hate us (one of the hardest things to do in middle school, trust me). "Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil." To me, that means that when we are having a bad day, or if we are in trouble, we can count on God to make our day brighter if we tell Him about it. Deliver us from evil says that He saves us from the devil when he tries to corrupt us on our faith journey. "For the Kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen." Everything is God's: His kingdom, His power, and the glory that we give him. It all belongs to him.

My faith has taken me everywhere and I have experienced so much throughout the years. I hope that with guidance from God and friends, my faith will grow more and flourish.

Billy Petersen

I believe that God is our almighty Father, the creator of light, dark, and life. He is an all loving God who loves us so much, that he sent his one and only son, Jesus Christ, to die on a cross to free us from sin. He guides me, and is always there for me in everything that I do. He only wants the best for me, and he wants me to love my neighbor as much as I love myself. I believe that Jesus, his only son, was a very valiant man when he was here on Earth. He loved us so much, that he willingly suffered and died for us on the cross to free our sin. Three days after he had died he rose to be seated next to his father in heaven. To me, this is incredible what he did, and I pray to him whenever I am in a most problematic time. I believe

that the Holy Spirit is something that is just as important as God and Jesus. Though people do forget about the Holy Spirit. It is what comes down to us in communion, it blesses the wine and the bread, the body and blood of Jesus. It is the bridge connecting me to God, a part of mind and spirit, it is the voice of God preventing me from sin. Having the Holy Spirit in my life is a gift from God. It assures me that I will always be safe when I have hope, spirit, and God.

My family has helped me through my faith a lot during these two years. I am very thankful that they guided me through my incredible journey. They came to church with me, helped me with sermon notes, and talked to me about my faith. I thank you all, and I hope that what you have taught me, I will remember for the rest of my life. My friends have also helped me in my faith. They have talked to me about certain things when my day was not going well, and some are actually going through the same thing as me, so we like to discuss bible stories, and verses even in school. There are too many to name so I just give my thanks to all.

Ending.

As I have strove in my faith the past two years, I will continue to strive for the rest of my life. I have grown so much with God and I will learn new things every single day about my faith that will help me. And when the time comes that I will pass away, I know that I will go and live in Heaven for eternity with God.

Amen.

Matthew Smith

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you shall find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For whoever asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.” Matthew 7:7-8

This bible verse means a lot to me. The first part, "Ask and it will be given to you", means that if you ask God for forgiveness and grace he will give it to you. "Seek and you will find", means you need to be open to God by praying to him and he will give you joy and happiness when you need it. The third part, "Knock and it will be opened to you", means that when you die Jesus will be there with open arms to welcome you. It also means his door is always opened to you when you want to talk to him in prayer. As for asking and receiving, God doesn't give us everything we want or ask for but he does give us everything we really need like love, forgiveness and grace.

My faith has changed a lot since I first started Sunday school. My parents taught me how to pray, what The Lord's Prayer was, and they taught me about God and Jesus. In Sunday school I learned bible stories and the books of the bible. I remember getting a bible in second grade. I also remember the first time I took communion. My faith got stronger because I learned things from my Sunday school teachers and talking to my parents. One event that tested my faith was when my Grandma died. I was so upset that she had died. I was mad at God for letting her die. I prayed so hard for her cancer to go away and it didn't. My parents had to

keep telling me that God doesn't come down and take cancer away. They told me God had heard my prayers, and Grandma was in heaven where there was no pain. Understanding that God did hear my prayers helped me when my fish and hamster died and especially when my friend's eight-year-old sister died from cancer. Sometimes life is very hard to understand, but God is always with you during the great times as well as the really bad times.

Another experience that changed my faith was the trips I took to Redeemer. My Mom took me and my brother and sister to Redeemer for Vacation Bible School one year. It was fun doing games with the kids who came to Redeemer. We also went as a class two times. Redeemer trips always remind me to be grateful for what I have and I should never complain about what I don't have. The people who go to Redeemer are so grateful for everything we do. Going to Redeemer is what Jesus told us to do which is to love one another.

I think that my family and the important people around me have made a huge impact on my faith and the person I am today. I believe my faith will continue to grow as I get older and God will be with me forever.

Michael Bemer

I remember learning the Lord's Prayer, the Apostle's Creed and the Ten Commandments during confirmation class. I will remember these commandments because every time I sin will know which commandment I have broken, than I ask God for forgiveness. Sermon notes have helped me a lot and at the beginning of the year I really didn't care about sermon notes, but now I am trying harder because

my Dad reminded me that he too went through the same thing and his “positive encouragement” (nagging) helped me to take what I feel are better sermon notes

One of the reasons I picked my bible verse was when the confirmation class visited the nursing home. I had to recite John 3:16 and as I was reciting it, the nursing home residents joined in with me. This really touched my heart and made me realize how special and well known this verse really is.

This verse will always be special to me. It was the first verse that I memorized and this verse will always be in my heart. It makes me feel special to know that God loved us so much that he sent his only son for us, and because of him, we will have eternal life in heaven after death. Wow, that's awesome!

Samantha Lisy

The one story I love was when I went to the nursing home and I got to hold up pictures of animals and people. I got to pass out songs on the paper and to sing with them. That strengthened my faith by sharing the love of God. My other story is the crop walk because all of the churches came to help stop hunger. We all walked 5 or 10 miles. That helped me by telling me that life is not always perfect.

Baptism to me is when a baby comes in to the world and is ready to be a child of God. After you are baptized you are now following God down his path and you will never be alone. You will be in light and you can feel the love coming from God. It's important to me that when we are forgiven of all the bad things we've done God will take that away forever. The Apostles' Creed to me is that God was everything and that we all care for and love him. The Lord's Prayer to

me is when he is forgiving our sins, we remember that he is with us always. The Ten Commandments to me is that our Lord made the rules and we have to follow them forever.

Melissa Bemer

I have learned many things about the Bible and God during church and confirmation. We would always learn something new during every confirmation class. Some of the things that I remember from class are the Ten Commandments, the Apostle's Creed, the books of the Bible, the Lord's Prayer, and many stories of the Bible.

The Ten Commandments have taught me what is wrong and what is right. The commandments were made to help us in life. I will never forget that I should always honor my father and mother. Also, I have learned from Mrs. Herald that saying God's name in vain is unacceptable during class and disrespectful to God. Now I know that I should never say His name in vain because that is disrespectful.

The Apostle's Creed is one of the things I will always remember from confirmation class. I was supposed to say the Apostle's Creed in front of the whole class, but instead I had to stay after class and say it because I didn't memorize it on time. It is important that I memorized this because we say it all the time in Church.

Memorizing the books of the Bible was a big help to me. Now every time I am reading the Bible and looking for a verse it is much easier to find because I know the order of all the books of the Bible. Also, I will never forget the Lord's Prayer. I have said it over and over it will never leave my brain. The Lord's Prayer

is very important because we say it in Church all the time and because it is the prayer Jesus taught us.

Sermon notes were one thing I was good at. Pastor Doug and sometimes other Pastors would do the sermons and they were just amazing. They all had their own meaning to me. I'm going to miss taking them because it always gave me something to do during Church. Before I had to take Sermon notes I didn't really pay attention in Church. Sermon notes have helped me pay attention and understand what the Bible verses were about. Sermon notes have taught me that when you pay attention and listen, Church goes by much faster and I enjoy it. I would always do better than my brother and draw on the back which was fun and I'm going to miss that.

I believe that God created everything, including us. I also believe that God is eternally present as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that God cared about us so much that he gave up his son to die for us. He sacrificed his son for us so that our sins will be forgiven. Also, I believe that one day Jesus will come again back to Earth. I also believe that God is always there for me when I need Him and I know that I could have a conversation with Him anytime I want to. I believe that the Holy Spirit works in us and lives in us. I also believe that God is the one that I could come to for help when I need help.

Redeemer is one of the things that have changed my life. Our whole confirmation class had gone to Redeemer a couple of times and it was a great experience. We had to separate clothes, hand out coffee mugs, and serve the meals

for the people. Sometimes the people stunk and made me realize how fortunate we all were to be able to take showers whenever we need or want to.

Then I had to hand out mugs with Haley. We handed them out to all the people and it was just amazing to see how happy their faces got when they received it. Then there was this one lady who we remember handing a mug and she told us that she never got one. She told us that she had gotten-up to go to the bathroom and someone stole her mug. We knew she was lying because she never had moved from her seat. We gave her another one anyways because we felt bad for her. I then realized that there are people in this world that are unfortunate and cannot afford things like some of us.

We then got to serve the food. It all was going good until this one man yelled at me for not giving him enough meat. There was very little meat left and lots of potatoes. I gave him more meat like he had asked. He was obviously starving and just wanted food. I realized that there are people in this world that cannot afford to buy food for themselves or their family. Then I realized how grateful I was for what God has given me. There are places like Redeemer that help feed people who can't afford food. I am glad that I participated in helping the people at Redeemer. It made me happy when I saw how happy they looked when I served the food or gave them a mug. It was a great and humbling experience for me.

It has been a great time in confirmation and I will miss it all. Because of confirmation I am now closer to God and happy with my relationship with him.

Ian Sullivan

This is my bible verse and I chose it because it puts my emotions of how God feels about me into words:

"I remember the devotion of your youth, how as a bride you loved me and followed me through the desert through a land not sown." Jeremiah 2:2

Devotion, that's a very powerful word. Many definitions this word has, but that depends on the person. To me it shows a strong showing of appreciation towards something or to someone. Depending on how you show it, that determines if you have devotion to a person or a thing. Devotion, that one word tells my story of how I became a baptized child of God.

It was a long ride home from the grocery store. My brother Shane was talking about his friends that go to Sunday school. Then he blurted out, "Can I see my friends in Sunday school" Then my mom said ok, I thought she was being sarcastic. Later when she drove into the church parking lot I found out she wasn't kidding. I had a grudge against church. I thought it was a waste of time. Over time my feelings towards church changed. Now today I feel it is a powerful spiritual journey.

One Wednesday I was at confirmation class. Mrs. Hearld drew a tree with branches on the chalkboard. "Jesus is in every one of us", she said as we discussed the ancestry of Jesus. We all drew our names on the branches of the tree. We all came from Jesus, he is with us.

My sermon notes influenced me a lot. Like when I was an acolyte I

wrote how people were taking Holy Communion. It inspired me that all of these people came to worship Jesus.

Micah Gunkelman

"Listen, my son and be wise and keep your heart on the right path"

Proverbs 23, vs. 19

I interpret this verse to mean that I will have to make my decisions by picking the right ones and the ones I enjoy.

My faith has never changed. It probably has just evolved from going to school and church. I know what I know now from learning how the earth was created in science class and church. They probably are both true. We had to start somewhere, so I do believe in God.

I have no huge life changing events I can remember. My life is boring to talk about, nothing happened or affected me. If something does happen I deal with it and move on.

My grandpas both died a while ago. I don't remember them and I didn't know them that well, but I know I didn't cry when I went to their funerals. I don't have any sad stories, so as I get older I will gain life experience and many things will happen to me that will affect me.

Actions are more important than words, like asking for forgiveness then doing it again is dumb and you do not deserve to be forgiven. I feel the things you do are more important in this world and the lives I affect. Hopefully this is the way

people will remember me. I hope to do great things and many people will remember me, but I don't know.

Nathan Tracy

My faith has changed a lot. When I came here, I thought that my parents were mad at me because I didn't like coming and I didn't think that there was some guy in the sky that created the world and everything that I knew. As I grew up, I began to realize that it is important to come to church because you need God. God is someone to turn to if you don't want to talk to anyone else. I also began to understand what the pastor was talking about during the sermons and I could relate some of them to my own life.

My Grandpa dying changed my faith temporarily. I didn't believe in God for a while because I figured if there was this nice guy that could do anything then why would he let my Grandpa die. I realized a little bit later that everyone has to die and it doesn't make God bad if someone dies. In fact, it was God who helped me get through the tough times that I had when my Grandpa died. Another thing that changed my faith was going to Redeemer because I saw all the people there and I saw that God created a place for people having trouble to go and get food, shelter, and clothing. It made me see that He helps everyone. It helped me see how lucky I am.

A Bible story that I like is David and Goliath. It is about Goliath who was 9 feet tall and had armor and a sword, and David who had a slingshot and no armor. David hit Goliath with a rock with his sling shot and then cut Goliath's head off so

he wouldn't have to go to war. I liked that this story proves that it isn't about being the biggest or having the most to be powerful, it is because of God being with you that can get you through anything.

My faith helps me when things are bad. I can talk to God and tell him anything without being judged. After I talk to God, I always feel better, stronger, and more confident about any problems that I am having. I can also learn life values at church.

Olivia Markowski

One of my favorite Bible verses is Galatians 5:22-23. But the fruit of the spirit produces love, joy, peace. He makes us patient, kindly, good, faithful, gentle and gives us self-control. There's no law against such things.

I believe this verse is like guidelines to live by. What would the world be like if we all lived by the "fruit of the Spirit?" I know without love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, I would be living a pretty bad life. I love my family, friends, and God and I know my family, friends, and God love me. I am joyful just knowing God loves me and forgives my sins. I am joyful knowing how much I am loved by my family and friends. I wish everyone lived a peaceful life. Unfortunately, in today's world, peace seems to be impossible to accomplish. If everyone lived in peace this world would be such a better place. We all need to be patient. My parents are patient with me, even when I do something that makes them angry. God is also very patient and forgiving. Kindness is something very good. We all should show kindness and goodness.

Everyone has goodness in them. God knows that for sure. We all need to be faithful. If I did not have faith in God, my life would probably be terrible. I know God is always listening to my prayers. Be kind and gentle to people around you. We should always have self-control. We should try to control our temptations to sin.

I believe that God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit are all three in the same. I also believe that they are all three present around us on a daily basis.

My faith has grown since I started going to Sunday school especially these past two years while in Confirmation class. I always believed in God but I never really understood Him. I still have much more to learn about Him. I trust God and I know that He will always help me and guide me through my life. The Bible should be our text book for life and a guide in making decisions if life. I will always be committed to God. Praying is now part of my daily life. I pray for my family, friends, and anyone in need of prayer. God forgives all my sins and I know I also need to be a forgiving person.

My visits to the Redeemer Center opened my eyes and heart to a lot of things that I have always taken for granted. Helping people less fortunate than me made me feel good inside. I remember giving food to a young child at the Redeemer Center and they looked so grateful for the food and they smiled a huge smile. My faith helped me get through the death of my grandma Markowski. My grandma was very sick and was suffering for a while. When she passed away, I was relieved to know that she was no longer suffering and in God's Kingdom.

Faith is a very important aspect of life. It is a belief, trust, and loyalty to God. If a person has no faith then they don't have Jesus Christ in their heart.

Colton Norgrove

“My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken”

What this bible verse means to me is that God is always with me and looking out for me. Even if things don't always turn out the way that I want or expect them to. Many times I wish that God will have a situation go my way when it does not, I might not be happy about that but deep down I know that there was a reason. There is a lesson to be learned if maybe things don't go my way.

I believe that my faith has pretty much stayed the same for me. Although every day I learn new things about the bible, Jesus and God. There are many ways in which God helps us and is always there for us, even though we might not think he is with us, he always is. There are many times when things don't go my way or maybe a family member is having problems and I pray that God will help me or that person, overcome an obstacle or just be there when things are rough. Because when it comes down to it, God is always there.

My faith helps me when times are a bit rough or even when something good happens. God is always there to turn to.

Kendra Ingram

I remember when we first started doing the candles. I liked that because it helped me remember that God is with us at all times and he is my light.

It also made me think about when I was in Mrs. Revilock's class and I sung "This little light of mine." I also remember when I went to Redeemer. I was so scared. But I felt really good inside after I did it because I seen God's work and love when we did. I also saw us reaching out our hands to help. When I looked at all the peoples face I saw happiness. I felt like Jesus feeding like 5,000 people with 2 fish and 5 pieces of bread. (It was something like that).

My faith has changed a lot since I was in the nursery. It has changed because when I was younger I really didn't pay to much attention to the Sunday school teachers. I would just look at the walls and blur out what they were saying until I went into Mr. Spanagel's class. I didn't do it then because he was really loud and he would always call on all of us. I didn't want to not know the answer when he called on me because I wasn't listening. So I started to pay attention and I learned about different things in the Bible. Now in Sunday school I know a lot about the bible. I am soon to be confirmed so I have faith in myself. That even when I'm not in confirmation that I will continue on my journey to faith and to help others.

Haley Luther

Another time where my faith has grown was when we went to Redeemer. The first year I went, I didn't really know what to expect. I was scared and excited at the same time. I was glad I was able to help so many people in need, by giving them a well cooked meal, clothes, and food baskets. I ended up serving the food, and was faced with people of all ages. I was in a state of shock to see so many kids living in these horrible conditions. But even though they may have been facing

these conditions, I saw expressions of hope. Knowing that they may not know when their next meal would be really hit me. I knew that back home, I had a pantry full of food, and everyone there probably had little to nothing at all.

I had gotten many thank you's from the people there. I knew that they weren't just thanking us to be nice, or thanking us just for the meal. They were thanking us for being there, and taking time out of our busy lives to help serve them. By the end of the night, I realized that we should take the time to help others like God wanted us to do. I knew that God was there that night, and He was probably proud that we took the time to help those in need.

When I went to Camp Mowana, I knew that it was going to be a spiritual journey, and that our faith in God would grow. The pastors at camp taught us about faith and creation, and by the end of the week, I truly felt that I had a deeper and stronger relationship with God. I learned that God is always there, and that my faith will keep growing after Confirmation.

My faith helps me, because believing in God has given me more strength, knowing that if you mess up, God will forgive you. So, if I feel that I have messed up, I am always reassured that, through faith, God will forgive me.

From past sermon notes and meditations in class, I've learned many valuable, spiritual lessons. Throughout Confirmation, I learned that we should build one another up through faith, and teach others about that faith. I've learned that being a disciple means being ready when Jesus comes, and to follow him willingly. When Jesus was looking for disciples, he was looking for one thing: the willingness to

follow. Another thing I've learned was that God has blessed us through faith. We have all been adopted into God's family. We need God in our lives to lead us in faith. We should be reminded that God is in the faces of everyone, and is always around us. We should talk about our faith and share our beliefs with others, because that is what God wanted us to do.

My faith has changed since I began Sunday school, because I now have a better understanding of God and what he set out to do. I believe that God has a plan for everyone and everything. I believe that eternal life is the greatest gift from God, and that if you believe in Him, you will be saved. I trust God more, and I trust that he will be there in time of need. God will always be a part of me. I believe in Him 110%, and know that he is my rock and my comfort. Without God, I think a part of me would feel like it is missing. God has so much love for us that it feels like he is a part of you. God will provide, and he will be there every step of the way, and Sunday school has really helped me believe that.

I believe that God created this world for a reason. He is our only God, and we should worship and praise him. I believe that He sent Jesus Christ, his only son, to earth, that he can teach us about God.

I think Confirmation has made me closer with God, and I have a better understanding of God and His Word. I know that my journey through faith doesn't end here. I will continue to praise God, and learn more about Him throughout my life.

#815 – I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light