

“Faith Statements”

John 15:1-8

“Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches” (John 15:5).

As you listen to excerpts from our 8th grade confirmation faith statements, you will know that each of them abides in Christ and Christ abides in them.

We thank each of your families and your Sunday School and confirmation teachers for helping to prepare you to affirm your baptism in the Rite of Confirmation.

Logan Apathy

Luke 10:27 . . . ²⁷He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself."

I picked this verse because it shows how to become closer to God and how to love others as Jesus loves you. To me, this verse means that we should not only love God but come closer with him. We should love others too.

From our sermons, I remember our words mean a lot and that God is always with us even though we may not be able to see him.

Dakota Bohrer

I believe God never gives us more than we can handle because he knows how much we can handle before we “break” or fall. I believe that Jesus Christ cared about others and he saved lots of people because he died so all our sins could be forgiven. I believe the Holy Spirit is like

a guardian angel or a guide that helps us do the right thing or leads us to eventually do the right thing.

My faith had changed a lot since I started Sunday School, as I became older, I learned more about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. I began learning more about what Jesus did in his life, about Adam and Eve, about Moses' journey out of Egypt, about Noah's Ark, and many other stories about the events that led up to Jesus' birth.

I learned so much about my faith during Sunday School and confirmation class. Our church does so much for others, and I would love to see other people join. I wouldn't be who I am today if I hadn't gone to church and learned everything I have about my faith.

Kees Harmon Wagner Driesen

I picked 1st Corinthians 13:7 as my favorite Bible verse because it means that love and hope are everlasting and all-enduring and because I think that love is important. If you are a loving person, you can do many good things.

Of the Bible stories I liked the story of creation. It was very interesting to me because it showed how the world was developed. The story of Adam and Eve taught me not to take something that doesn't belong to me. Adam and Eve took the apple that did not belong to them. This had bad consequences and they were exiled.

The story of Lazarus impressed me. It taught me to share with the poor people.

My faith has helped me to become a kinder and calmer person. Sometimes I have to resort to prayer to help me in a bad situation.

The activities that I enjoyed during confirmation was helping at Redeemer Crisis Center and buying clothes for the homeless.

Ayva Encarnacion

Sunday school taught me that I am created in God's image and don't need any one's opinion besides him and my mother of course. Without my mother I wouldn't be able to practice my faith. My faith has been practiced because of my mom. My mom has been through thick and thin for me. Without her I wouldn't be able to practice my faith to the absolute fullest. I was asked to write what the Lord's prayer and the Apostles Creed meant to me and here is my answer. The Lord's Prayer means a lot to me because it is an easy prayer to say and it's easy to me to say anytime and it's very easy to memorize and say. The Apostles Creed is something I cherish because it's a reminder in what I believe in and what my faith believes in. In Sunday school we learned a lot about Bible stories and my personal favorite was about Moses and the Red Sea, it proves to us no matter where we are, who we are with; we are protected by God. When he was with his people God granted him the capability to part the Red Sea which other people couldn't do besides Moses because he has a strong faith in God. It taught us that God is always with us and always around us whenever we need him and or want him, he is always there to either listen or help. I've used God as an outlet when I've been down in the dumps. It's really helped me emotionally to think when nobody else cared, God does. God always cares and doesn't talk bad about us behind our back. He loves us unconditionally and his love has no limit. I believe God is a very powerful thing in my day-to-day life. I talk to God privately in my thoughts and it makes me feel so good to be able to think someone or something is out there listening to me and its very comforting. I think my faith in general is a big staple in my life. And it's become one of the biggest things in my life. Some of my friends are suicidal and I try to help them with the word of God. God helps me and my friendships grow. I've learned that God loves

us for who we are and gives us special gifts for what his plan is for us. I thank God every day for the wonderful friendships I have and will forever be grateful for God. As I wrap up my faith statement, I would like to thank Pastor Doug, My Sunday school teachers and my wonderful Mother and Grandmother for having my faith blossom. You guys helped me find my faith and I will forever be grateful.

Zachary Hines

Covid-19 has severely affected the world. Many shops have closed, stores have gone out of business, and areas being locked down. It has affected me greatly with school, sports, and especially with the church. All the services have been online, and we haven't been able to do any trips to help people. I enjoy being helpful and wish that we could have helped people at nursing homes and Redeemer Crisis Center. There are many things all of us have missed out on and that we wish to do. God will make sure everything is going to be okay.

I remember as a young boy not really paying attention or caring about what was happening at church. Eventually, I started actually listening and thinking about what Pastor Doug was saying about God and that He was going to be an important part of my life. I took things he has said into consideration. I thought about how God was the answer to problems or questions I just couldn't figure out. I've learned more and more about God, and I knew that I wanted Him to be a part of my life and wanted to follow Him and His ways. I want to be more forgiving which can be really hard to do at times. I want to be more patient with myself and others. I'll try my best to adjust to these ways, and I want to live by these ways for the rest of my life.

I believe that baptism is important as your first introduction to God's world that makes you a member of His family. believe that the Lord's Supper is very important as it shows that Jesus is willing to bless you and give Himself up for you as He did on Good Friday. He showed that He loves us and treats us all like his sons and daughters with an unbreakable love for each and every one of us.

Jacob Florio

2nd Corinthians 4:16 . . . So we do not lose heart, even though our outer nature suffers decay, our inner nature is renewed day after day.

This Bible verse stood out to me because it is very true with my life sometimes. This verse shows how people or other things try to bring others down. This only affects our outside because God is within us, protecting our inner nature, helping us push through hard times. This Bible verse also shows how life is never perfect, everyone has bad days. Eventually the “bad days” start to add up. Some people can’t keep up with the stress that these bad days produce. But, when we connect with the Lord, he fills us with peace and love. He renews our inner nature and makes us whole again.

The things I remember from sermon notes and meditations in class is how we would group up and write or read Bible verses together. Also, during come classes someone would ask one question and then we would go into a whole new topic based on that question, having a conversation about the question for at least 5 minutes. Sometimes we would have competitions or games in the class. For some of the games we would have to guess what the object had to do with us, the Bible, or the Holy Spirit.

So far in my life the only major event that changed my faith was Covid. When everything was closed all Summer, it gave a lot of free time. Sometimes I would use this free time to learn a little, sometimes about God and what phrases in the Bible meant. This caused me to become stronger and believe in God.

Trevor Hines

Faith for me when it really started to take off was when I was with Mr. Spanagel. When I was with him at the beginning of his class, I never took faith in God seriously. As the class progressed, I really started believing in my faith in God. Then when I started in 7th grade with Ms. Karen, I had more faith in God than in the past years. When I started community service and going to Redeemer Crisis Center, I started realizing that God's love doesn't always come from Him. It can come from His children too. I love all the activities we did in church and the bible stories we read out loud in class. The year 2019 looked way different than 2020-21 with confirmation and school. It took a toll on personal lives as well. We all lost people, many due to covid-19. I lost a few very good friends in 2020-21. Fortunately, Jesus is watching over all of us and we're safe in His house. A quote written by William H. McRaven helped me get through school in 2020. "If you can't do the little things right, you will never do the big things right." I do wish that confirmation continued longer, but it's been a fun journey. I am going to be proud of myself when I become a church member.

Justin McDonnell

The verse I picked is Hebrews 12: 1 "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let

us run with perseverance the race that is set before me." I picked this verse because it resembles my life. Some things this verse means to me are, having God, my ancestors, my family, and the Divinity community looking over me and living the life God has chosen for me.

My faith has changed a lot over the years I have been going to Divinity. Before I went to church, I just thought that God and Jesus were made up of people. However, after many years at Divinity I realized that God made the earth and every living and nonliving thing. Then I learned about Jesus' stories like turning water to wine and feeding 100's of people with a little bread and fish. But the most important story I have heard about God is that he sacrifices himself for us. After I heard all these stories I instantly started to believe In God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

Haylie Regovich

Faith. Faith is the belief in God, belief in what God has done, belief in Jesus, belief in the Holy Spirit. Faith is something that can change throughout a lifetime. I know for a fact that my faith has changed throughout my Sunday school years. When I first started Sunday school, I was young and all I was doing was singing little songs about God and Jesus that I didn't understand. I just thought God was God and that was about it. I didn't realize God's importance back then but now I do. I know His importance, His significance, and His power. I now know that He has the ability to do amazing things. Now I also have a stronger connection with God that I hope grows even more throughout my life.

I think taking sermon notes and going through all of the many lessons during Sunday school benefited me and grew my connection with God. Sermon notes help me understand the sermon and its deeper meaning. I would remember little things from each sermon whether it

was that God created the world with just words, the meaning of a word such as secularity, or the fact that no one is outside the reach of Jesus. This all advanced my faith a little more.

My faith and this bond I have with God helps me and gives me guidance. If I ever need someone to talk to who will just listen to me, I can talk to God. If I'm stressed, I can talk to God. If I'm upset, I can talk to God. Even when I'm happy I can talk to God, and so on. Just believing in God helps me get through so much.

Allyson White

Micah 7:8, "Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy; when I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be light to me." When I look at this verse, it tells me that God is always with me even during the bad times. He has been guiding me through my entire life. He has been helping me through the good and the bad. Every day, I am reminded that no matter how badly my day had gone, I still have a fresh new start the next morning. I am also motivated to be the light in other people's lives so I can keep them moving forward. God gives us others to bring joy into our lives through friends, family, and even strangers.

When I first got into confirmation and heard about sermon notes, I was expecting to not like it at all because I would have to pay closer attention to the sermon and also wake up earlier on the weekends. It turns out that it wasn't as bad as I expected it to be, besides the waking up part, but it really helped me learn about the world around me. It was great to learn that God's love is sent in many different ways.

One way I saw God's love was when we went to Redeemer. When we went, I got to help out with cooking and serving. We put a ton of warm meals with warm smiles to those who

probably didn't have that much hope. I could see we made people's days when we helped out. I also felt a sense of wholeness after we left so it was a win, win for everyone.

My belief has been greatly affected by the environment around me. Every day, I can see how Jesus impacted our world to make our lives better. We are now forgiven because he sacrificed himself for everyone. These times have been hard on everyone since the chaos going around. I've learned more about myself during this time of reflection. I have gotten better at adapting to new situations.

When Mrs. Rachel asks our class to think about something good that happened that week before our class, it gives me time to reflect on everything good that happened that week. It gives me a chance to ignore the bad and bring out the good in the darkness. Once I have something I focus on it, so my week seems better than just looking at the bad. God gives us light even during the bad.

Lauryn Scanlon

The outside world has helped with my faith, but confirmation class has been the start of it. I've made lots of blessings and memories on the way, and it's sad to put an end to it. I will remember the lessons that were taught in our classes. One of them that stuck out to me was when we started to read the book of Matthew. In the book of Matthew, it gives information on the beginning of Jesus and His teachings. In Matthew 6:43-48, It gives some good advice for loving our neighbors. I loved when Mrs. Karen taught this lesson. This information has guided me throughout my years. It may seem like a good idea to yell at someone, but you have to love them even if it hurts. Confirmation used to not be a big deal to me until realized all the .

memories I've made from just a single classroom. I will never forget when my class took a trip to the nursing homes to sing songs and feed the residents. I'm unsure what we sang to everyone but will cherish the looks on everyone's faces. The residents were so happy, and I felt happy with them. This moment gave me a sense of joy that I will always remember. The little things in life, especially things God gives us, matter the most. My brother Justin and I used to come into the church and help with the community meals and sometimes my Confirmation class would come. I thought at first when we arrived it was boring, but as I left it was extraordinary. I loved the feeling of everyone's joyful presence. I had a fun time doing this little task without Covid being around. It's such a blessing to know everyone has been fed in the communities. One of the last things I remember is the friends I've made. It's been difficult communicating since quarantine, but the adventures beforehand were the best. When I first went into the confirmation class, I was nervous because I didn't know anyone. As time passed, I've had so many good experiences with everyone. Confirmation may seem like it's just a word when in reality it means so much more to me.

Last of all, without everyone's help and encouragement at the church, I wouldn't be able to continue this journey. When I'm in a dark place in my life, Church and God is always my happy place. There are a lot of people in my life that have helped me throughout my faithful journeys, so I'd like to thank them. I would like to thank my parents for taking me up to church classes. It may seem like a small thing, but it has a big impact on me. I wouldn't have started my faith without my parent's help. Also, I would love to thank my teachers that have guided me throughout my years in confirmation. Mrs. Karen, Mrs. Rachel, and Mrs. Traci have all taught me valuable lessons that I show in my daily life. Words mean a lot to me. Lastly, want to say a

big thank you to Pastor Doug. His sermons have helped me so much in my life. His sermons mean the world to me, and without them, I wouldn't be able to learn how to be strong. Going and listening to the sermons online or in the church is forever going to be a moment I'll cherish. I remember I was in 7th grade when Pastor Doug and someone from the crowd had a Christian rap battle. It was so funny and very fun to watch. It's a little memory I will carry with me wherever I go. Without the sermons or words of advice from him, my faith wouldn't be here. Thank you, Pastor Doug, for getting me right with God.

May the peace of God . . .

#720 – We Are Called