

“Faith Statements”

John 15:9-17

Our gospel reading is one that I’m often asked to read at weddings. Jesus is in the Jerusalem upper room with his closest friends where he’s finished his last supper and says; “This is my commandment, that you love one as I have loved you”.

You’re going to hear a lot about God and loving one another in our confirmand’s faith statements. They have taken that message into their hearts. We are blessed to hear their words, to learn from their faith, as they prepare to affirm their baptisms in the Rite of Confirmation.

Ben Delaney

Isaiah 41-10 -- Fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed for am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand!

This is the Bible verse I chose. It tells us not to be afraid because God is with us all. Everything we do whether it be trying a new activity, sport, class at school, or even something as simple as a roller coaster at Cedar Point, God is with us. God makes us stronger, and he helps to support and guide us in our daily life, and it really feels good knowing God is always with us. Since I began Sunday School, I have become much closer to God. Before Sunday School I was only once, maybe twice a month. Now I go twice a week. Spending time during Wednesday night’s learning about being a Christian. It has taught me so much about my religion and what it means to be a Christian. I remember when I was little, I was so excited for fourth grade. Not because of being close to middle school, to meet new friends or anything of the sort. I was excited for fourth grade to finally take communion and to eat the bread my mom and dad said tasted good. it is this kind of excitement and curiosity that has brought me closer to God and

what has made me happy and proud to be a Christian. My faith also helps me every day. For example, recently I had my midterm testing. I was incredibly nervous for these tests. I had studied for hours and hours in preparation but when I walked into the testing room, I was still very nervous. Within the first 15 minutes I noticed I was falling behind as I could hear classmates of mine flipping pages of the packet our test was in while I was only halfway through the first page. I didn't want to fall behind anymore even though it wasn't a race to the finish. I put my pencil and calculator down, took some deep breaths and asked God for his guidance to first finish the test and second to do well on it. In the end I finished both tests with 95% on both tests. This is definitely a spot where I commonly use my faith. One thing I remember from one of my earlier sermon notes I wrote is that it is always good to talk to God. There is never a wrong time. That's the great thing about our religion is that there really never is a bad time to talk to God. You could be anywhere in the world. In the air on a plane, in church, or in your own home. So, to wrap it up, I believe that God is my one true God, Jesus Christ died on the cross to save me from my sins, and that the Holy Spirit continues to guide me every day of my life..

Logan Kessler

Bible Verse: Joshua 1:9 -- I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous: do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

I picked this verse because God helps me be strong and courageous. When I am unsure or frightened about anything I can trust this verse. I know God is with me forever.

I like to look at the pictures-when-I-was Baptized: I am happy to -see how my family came together for me! I did not attend Sunday School a lot when I was younger. I didn't

understand about God and the stories about God's people. I am glad that I came to Confirmation Class and did not quit. Confirmation Class taught me some Bible Stories, The Ten Commandments, The Apostle's Creed and the Lord's Prayer. I learned who God is and what He does. I learned about being a Lutheran. This is my faith. I like that I found another group of friends and adults that is my church family.

A special sermon that I remember is from Jeremiah 29:4-7 which tells about change. I know that change will happen. I need to be strong when it does happen. I need to find a way to accept change and keep my faith.

My faith in God helps me. Through faith I learned to depend on God and pray more often especially when my Mom is sick. Because I have faith in God, I know He is with me and will help me do the right things at the right time. My faith will help me answer questions.

I enjoy helping others. Packing bags for the needy or homeless, serving food, setting up and cleaning up for events and visiting the Nursing Home were great! God wants us to serve others.

I want to thank Pastor Doug, Pastor Brad and my confirmation teachers. Thank you to my Grandma, Papa, Mom, Dad and my Aunt Rachel for helping me. **I know that God is with me wherever I go.**

Alaina Urvay

Bible Verse – 1 Corinthians 13:7 . . . Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Feelings of love can apply to many things in a person's life. It can apply to objects, people, animals, sounds, smells, and much more. Sometimes those feelings can get messed up

though. An event that happens in your life can change those feelings in some way. For example, if someone you love does something to harm you, maybe those emotions for them can change. The human brain will eventually forgive that person because of the love you have for them. I hope that person will change and become better. Another example is if someone dear to you dies. Your love for that person will endure so much grief, but the feelings you have for the person will always be there.

God will always be by your side to assist in times of need. My grandfather died a couple of years ago. It was a hard time for me. God sent signs that his spirit remained in my life always watching over me. For example, my mom would always point out a cardinal that appeared in our yard after he died. It was hard to believe he was gone but I continued to feel his love through God.

With believing in Jesus Christ, God, and the Holy Spirit you must have faith. My faith is always believing in God, and knowing he'll always be there when I fall. Even in my bad days I know that God is by my side, and everything will be ok. My faith helps me with knowing I'm never alone, and I'll always have two things to fall back on, my family and God. With being in Sunday school, my faith has changed. I didn't go to church a lot before joined confirmation classes, so I learned a lot about how God can help me grow and how he helps me be a better person.

My favorite sermon note was one on January 14th of this year. This sermon was about how the gospel reaches everyone and no one is left out. It emphasized the importance of putting faith into everyone, to treat everyone equally. Not every place looks like it would have good people in it, but it does. The main points of this sermon easily made it into my top ten. A

lot of people always judge people on their looks or where they come from, but that doesn't define a person. Everyone should be loved, treated equally, and fairly. No one deserves to be judged just on what's out of their control. I like to see all people as equal and know that each and every person has something to offer in their own way. Every person deserves love.

At every service and at the end of every class we recite the Lord's Prayer. With how much I say it, should know it word for word by now. In a service with saying the Lord's prayer, and the Apostle's Creed, it makes me feel closer to God in some ways. Also, being Baptized also makes me feel closer to God. These types of things just have the effect of making you feel closer to God every time you say or do these actions.

A time that has really affected my faith was when COVID hit in 2020. It was a rough time where I didn't really talk to many people outside of my family. I lost some important friends to me at the time, and everything was going downhill. Most of the time I wasn't doing much. was just on my phone; in bed. During the end of it though, when things were getting better, I realized that God was making it better. That he was releasing us from the pain of staying in our houses for months on end. That's truly when my faith was at its peak. The pandemic was something to have lived through. Most people needed faith during that time. think so many suffered from being isolated and not being able to associate with •the world like they normally did. Having faith was important as many did not know who to turn to. I believe those who may have experienced depression during that time may have benefited by having faith in God and through prayer.

Throughout the time I have been in confirmation classes, I want to thank Mrs. Rachel, Mrs. Karen, Pastor Doug, and everyone else that helped me to get to this point. I am thankful

for those people, and ('m glad I got to have this experience. I have learned a great deal and feel I have another support group in my life. have come to realize the importance of believing in God and having faith, especially in times of despair. I have also come to acknowledge the importance of also appreciating what have and thanking God. It takes bad times to realize the good times. Life is a balance, and that balance involves having faith and always acknowledging God's presence.

Lucy Havel

Micah 6:8 – He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

To me, my confirmation verse means a lot to me because it is asking what simple things the Lord is asking you to do to succeed in your life. All he is asking you to do is three simple things: to show justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with my God. This verse can stretch so much more by our Lord asking me to care and love everyone. This is so important to me because I am so much of a family person. One simple verse in the Bible for me can show how I can continue standing by God and walking by his side to further my education with Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Lord. You make your choices based on you and you end up taking the path God wanted you to take.

When I was little, I used to hate going to Sunday School. Honestly, I just wanted to go into the nursery and play. Now even though I do have to get up earlier than I would like to , it does become worth it. If you would have told me 5 years ago, I would have been confirmed and going to church almost every single Sunday I would not have believed it, but it was all

worth it because I have learned so much and I will be able to realize God is with me and I'm not alone.

Even a simple story like acolyting can be shown as a way my faith has shown because at the start of it. I didn't get what all the bowing was for and why we needed to light candles. Now it makes sense that we want to worship our God and show him what he means to us. Before I was just a nervous 7th grader acolyting for the first time and now I'm an 8th grader going into high school and lighting candles and walking down the aisle with a cross isn't meaningless anymore. My faith helps me be a better person. Realize that yes, I will sin sometimes, and everyone has or will. It makes me think about myself and how loved I am, and everyone wants to be loved but I am loved by more than just my family. Jesus loves me and so does God. It helps me think how I need to be held responsible for my actions. To me your life and having good by your side all starts with baptism. When you get baptized, yes you may not remember but your family does, and God does because it marks when you started your successful path with God. Through the years you hit special marks like learning the Apostle's Creed, the Lord's supper, the Lord's Prayer, and even the Ten Commandments. When I was learning these things, I never really thought much about them but writing about how I feel about them really made me think about what speaks to me when someone says these words. They all show how through each of these things that I have said or done God is always with me. They show how God does love me and he is supporting me through everything I go through. Saying this show him how I love him and even though I might not know it at the time he is right there, and I could be going through a tough time and maybe saying a prayer or saying a simple word or two could open my eyes.

I would not have been able to do this without the support of my Sunday School teachers, my grandma, my parents, and my confirmation teachers. I am glad that everyone pushed me hard enough to go through with this. Thank you all.

Alex Crane

Everyone, no matter who, has a talent, or a gift. We just have to admit our sins to god, and use our skills to help him, and love our neighbors. That is what being a Christian is.

An example of this is the story of Saul, who was a pharisee, and he wasn't using his time to serve something good, to serve god. However, Saul became an apostle, became a Christian, became Paul, and served the Lord. Every person has something, no matter what, that can be used to help God. For me, I think this story is a good reminder that you can always tum to God. God loves you, and he is always and has always been offering help, and faith to you. You just have to accept that offer.

I believe that everyone is always forgiven by God, through Jesus. God sent Jesus to earth, to live among people, and in the end, to save us from our own sins, and forgive everyone. I believe that the Holy Spirit is always with you, even if sometimes it doesn't feel like it. A story I like to think about that relates to the Holy Spirit is from when I was a baby. My mom was driving at an intersection, and I was in the car with her. The light had just turned yellow, and she was going to keep going through, but my mom says that she heard someone yell "stop", and she slammed her car to a stop. A moment later, a car speeds through the middle of the intersection being chased by two cop cars.

My faith has changed a lot since I started Sunday school. When I was a toddler, the only thing I knew about faith is that God loves you. Now I know that Jesus died for our sins, and that

God is always willing to reach out to us and meet us where we are. I can trust God to guide me and help me learn to love and accept everyone.

I want to thank my Grandma and Grandpa, my mom and dad, and my Aunt Tina for always being there to support me in my faith journey.

Reed Gallo-Tolbert

Colossians 3:15. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful."

In my eyes, this verse is important to all. It means God made Jesus to save our sins. From that, he lives in our hearts. Jesus is everlasting within us. He can be more connected with us through communion.

Communion is one of the Sacraments. Another one is Baptism. I was 9 months old when I got Baptized. Baptism is an important factor in every Christian's life. It signals God saying, "Welcome to the family!" During your Baptism, there may be prayers read.

That brings me to the next part of my faith statement. The Apostle's Creed is a common church prayer. What you may not realize is that the Apostle's Creed is a faith statement. Many of the sentences start with the phrase, "I believe." This shows we've been reading a faith statement this whole time. This helps me learn what my faith means.

We wouldn't know this without the Bible. The Bible is filled with stories that teach lessons. My favorite Bible story is Moses. It talks about how he was raised by the pharaoh's daughter, led the slaves out of Egypt, parted the Red Sea, collected the Ten Commandments, and finally lead the people to the promised land. The people trusted him, and I trust in God.

Some of these stories may be included in a sermon. Pastor Doug or Pastor Brad may use these stories to teach a lesson. From Pastor Doug helping Honduras immigrants, to Pastor Brad sharing his experiences with a newborn. The list goes on. Sermons are more important than you think.

When all of this comes together, they create my full faith. can then understand why I go to church and Sunday School, meet new people with the same faith, and acolyte for church. It can help me understand others. It can help me understand my family. With all that, I can firmly say, "I believe."

Alexis Vegh

When you're a young child, before you've even started Sunday School or confirmation, you wonder why your parents take you to this strange building where you're forced to sit and be quiet for an hour. You think, "What's the point?" However, once you enter Sunday School, you begin to learn why we worship God. You learn even more in confirmation and by the time you get confirmed, you've completed your studies about God and ready to explore your faith on your own.

One of my favorite sermon notes from a sermon on December 11th, 2022. It spoke of how one can be a proper worshiper of Jesus, like the wisemen were. They traveled miles and miles to go see Jesus' birth, and brought gifts for their King. The reason this was surprising was because Jesus was a Jew. But the wisemen didn't care, as they were looking for a Messiah and believed Jesus to be the one who would deliver that to them. They also teach us how to be a follower of Christ. I'm sure it took a great deal of optimism to keep following the star that marked Jesus' birthplace. But in the end, I'm sure they found it worth it. Jesus would grow to be

the King of Jews, He would become a teacher, and He would die for us. So, despite Jesus' religion and upbringing, he accomplished many great tasks.

"I believe in the Holy Spirit," a line from the Apostles Creed. The Holy Spirit, God, and Jesus Christ are "three in one" as my Sunday School teacher said. As we recite the Apostles Creed every Sunday, we say that we believe in all three. But what do we actually believe in? For me, I believe that God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are a personified version of love. Just like how the Holy Trinity is everywhere, love is everywhere. When you feel love in your life, you're feeling Jesus inside you, helping you, and guiding you.

My faith helps me because it gives me hope when I'm going through a hard time. It can make me feel better knowing that God is with me in my rough patches. He guides me to feel love and happiness, which is what He's best at.

When you're a baby getting baptized, you're becoming one of God's children as well as your parents. You're being accepted into God's family and being loved as such. When Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice by dying for our sins, he used bread and wine to become his body and blood. Each time we take Holy Communion, we are thanking Jesus for his sacrifice and remembering him for it. In the Apostle's Creed, we state all we believe in. It's important to say what we believe in so others can learn about it too. You can be like your own preacher in a way. The Lord's Prayer is letting God know that we trust can continue to worship God. We want to make sure we remember him often to thank him for everything he's done for us.

A story that has changed my faith is one my mom tells me all the time. My mom was in the hospital room with my grandma and my grandma looked up to the sky and her eyes kind of sparkled. My mom says she smiled really wide and looked absolutely overjoyed. Just after that

my grandma passed away with my mom in the room. That really affected my faith because it confirmed, for me, that heaven is an absolutely wonderful place.

All these things combined shape my faith. But before I end my Faith Statement, I'd like to thank my mom, my late dad, my stepdad, and all my Sunday School teachers who taught me so much. And of course, thanks to Pastor Doug for providing such wonderful sermons for my sermon notes.

May the peace of God . . .

#720 – You Are Called