

The most fundamental understanding of the Christian message for me is the transformative power of the Cross, through which our sins are forgiven, and our salvation is assured.

I believe that God is omniscient, omnipotent and sovereign. God has existed forever. God gives me and every living creature the breath of life. God is my constant companion. God loves me and every human being with immeasurable love, and God knows each of us down to our core and our being (Psalm 139).

I believe that Jesus Christ is God's own son, human and divine. Jesus had a three-year powerful, transformative ministry. His teachings and actions angered the religious leaders and governmental authorities, who had Him killed. On the third day after His death, God raised Jesus Christ from the grave. Jesus Christ's encounters with others, after this event, along with the gift of the Holy Spirit, began the Church. Jesus has promised to return to earth, an appearance to which we all are looking forward to, and all of Creation will be realized in all its fullness (Isaiah 11:6-9 and Matthew 19:28). God raised Christ from the dead and set Him above all rule and authority, all power in heaven and on earth, not only now but also in the age to come.

I believe in the Trinity, God the Creator, God in Jesus Christ, and God the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit seeks an active relationship with us and teaches us, guides us, convicts us, comforts us, and gives us spiritual gifts (John 14:16-17, John 14:26, and 1 Corinthians 12:1-11).

With respect to sin, from the beginning of time, we as humans have been disobedient and have broken God's original plan for and covenant with us. To draw us back to God, God came down in the person of Jesus Christ, who demonstrated how to live, love and serve others. Then God took every sin that has ever been committed or will be committed, and in the person and body of Jesus Christ, died a horrific death on the Cross so that we might all be saved from our sinful nature. Despite our good creation, the enslaving and destructive power of sin that is opposed to God's will and way, and to human flourishing, places us in need of the greater power of God's delivering freeing, forgiving and enabling grace. We, as believers, through an act of confession, recognize this extraordinary sacrifice on our behalf, and we experience God's redeeming forgiveness and grace.

I believe Scripture is the authoritative source of Christian teachings. Scripture is the rule and guide of faith and life. Scripture teaches who God is, what God has done, and what we should do in response. Each passage of Scripture is best interpreted prayerfully, in community, with careful attention given to its original language and context, and with the witness of the whole Bible, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

I believe the Church is God's mission to the world. God's mission embodied in Jesus Christ gives shape and substance to the life and work of the Church. In Christ, head of the church, the Church participates in God's mission for the transformation of creation and humanity, by proclaiming the Good News of God's love, offering to all people, the grace of God and calling all people to discipleship in Christ (Matthew 28:19).

As Christians, we recognize Christ's mission through worship and service to others. We honor this relationship when we partake of the gifts of the sacraments, Baptism and The Lord's Supper, two sacraments we share with our Savior Jesus Christ. Baptism seals what the Word proclaims: God's redeeming grace offered to all people. Through Baptism, Jesus Christ calls us to repentance and faithfulness. Baptism marks in each of us the beginning of new life in Christ (BOC, W-3.0402). I believe that Baptism seals our identity with Christ, either our own as adults, or through that of our parents and guardians, who choose to baptize us as infants and children, and promise to raise us in the church, so that we can develop our own faith. In the Lord's Supper, we encounter and experience Christ in the Sacrament, as we share His Body and Blood. The Lord's Supper tells the story of Jesus, how He gave Himself completely to give us a better life, a fresh start and a new relationship with God. Through the Lord's Supper, we remember His life, death and resurrection, we anticipate the heavenly banquet to come, and we are to do all Christ has called us to do and be, in remembrance of Him – His hands, feet, ears, eyes, mind and heart, and in service to others, so that we may work on behalf of God's Kingdom.