

Statement of Faith – The Rev. Melinda VanderSys

*“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.”*  
*Ephesians 2:8-9 NRSV*

As a child, I was taught that Jesus was my personal Lord and Savior, and my friend. Though God was "something" to be feared, I was taught to believe He was more like a father to me. I could trust Him, knowing that He would take care of me and guide me through my life.

As I matured, I thought the path that God had presented to me often changed. At some point, I realized that the path didn't change, my faith journey changed. And, as my faith journey changed, my involvement in the life of the church changed.

During my journey to ordination, I realized my faith in God increased and was strengthened. I felt a deepening sense of commitment to serve Jesus Christ and His church.

I believe God has called me to proclaim Christ's redeeming and sustaining love to all the world. The Holy Spirit continues to equip me with the knowledge necessary to carry out God's will.

Recognizing that Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, I believe it is my duty and privilege, as a pastor, to share the birth, life, death and resurrection of Christ to the world. It is my humble honor to preside over the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. It is a joy to share the Word of God to others. As I seek justice for those who are discriminated against, I feel called to encourage others to reach out to those less fortunate; the poor, the widow, the orphan, persons who are discriminated against because of race, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or physically- and mentally-challenged.

Ephesians 2:8-9 is a constant reminder that the gift of God's grace is for all. I have been saved through faith. I did not do anything for this. These words are forever engrained in my faith journey, my ministry and my life.