

## **Thomas Winstead** **Personal Statement of Faith**

My personal belief is based on three essential parts of my journey thus far. First and foremost is the eternal wisdom found in the Holy Scripture, secondly is my own experiences of circumstance and Christian community, and thirdly is the ever present God who is always near, always guiding, and always forgiving, ushering me through a life devoted to God's purpose. Through these elements I have come to believe that there is but one Triune God who is revealed to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God uses the scripture, which is the Word of God; to reveal to us the person of Jesus Christ who is the Word made flesh. This Word is recorded in the Bible, which is the written witness to us of God's activity throughout the history of humanity. The Old Testament offers us a history of a living faith and our ancestors' walk with the one true God, as well as the foundational promises of God that would be fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ, the Messiah. The Father sent the Son who came and dwelt among us, being both fully human and fully divine. Through suffering the afflictions of this world Christ took upon His back the yoke of humankind and, through the sacrifice of His own body and blood freed all those who would accept Him. It was the resurrection of Jesus Christ after the third day that proclaimed God's victory over death. Through this one man's act of righteousness there is justification and life for all. It is because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the grace of God the Father, not because of any action or decision of our own that our robes are washed clean and all those who come unto Christ shall live eternally in the presence and communion of God. It is through this belief that I accept the gift of Jesus Christ and proclaim Him Lord and Savior, not only of my life, but also of all creation.

I believe that God works actively in our world today guiding us with the grace of God, forgiving us with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and enabling us through the Holy Spirit. It is through this activity that God is able to use our sinful, inadequate lives for God's purposes. Christ's sacrifice, made while knowing our sinfulness completely, proclaims God's grace and love all the more. Knowing the extent of that love and being freed by that sacrifice we are called into lives that recognize God and seek to live as Christ has commanded us, loving and serving the Lord and loving our neighbor. We are therefore called to, desire to and, because of our need to be consistently fed on the word, *need* to take part in the community of believers, the Body of Christ the Church. To take part in the Body is to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to the entire world, to aid those who are in need, and to move ever closer in communion with God through study, prayer, and fellowship in a community of faith.