

This we believe: A statement of faith

At Seattle Pacific University, we seek to ground everything we do on the transforming gospel of Jesus Christ. Such a claim is both personal, a commitment by each member of our community, and institutional, a corporate aspiration that has guided this institution from its founding. Even while we celebrate the rich diversity of the Church throughout the world, we anchor our faith on the person of Jesus Christ, the authority of Holy Scripture, and the tradition of the Christian Church throughout history.

1. We are historically orthodox

We affirm the historic Christian faith, as attested in the divinely inspired and authoritative Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and as summarized, for example, in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. We affirm that God is triune, and that the three divine Persons — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit — are coequal, coessential, and coeternal.

We affirm that by the grace and power of God the universe was brought into being, is continually sustained and governed, and will ultimately be brought to its promised consummation. We affirm, further, that we human beings are created by God in God's own image to be stewards of creation, and that we are called to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and to love others as ourselves.

In these divinely appointed tasks we have failed, so that we are now subject to judgment and death. Yet we rejoice that God's grace is available to us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and that through faith in Christ we are delivered from sin and death and empowered by the Holy Spirit for lives of joyful obedience to the Father. Finally, we respond to the Spirit's call to participate in Christ's body, the church; to embrace Christ's mission to the world; and to live in the hope and assurance that Christ's return will bring to completion God's saving work.

2. We are clearly evangelical

We stand within the broad evangelical tradition of Christianity and, as such, we joyfully accept the task of proclaiming the evangel — God's good news — to the world. We understand this to mean that Jesus Christ is the Lord and Savior of the world and that he alone can liberate broken and fallen human beings from sin and death.

We lift high the authority of holy scripture as divinely inspired, embraced by the church as central to our understanding and witness. We affirm that the Holy Spirit works in human hearts to kindle faith in Jesus Christ, to restore people to a right relationship with God and each other, and to begin transforming people into the likeness of Christ.

And we believe the gospel promise that light, health, wholeness, and peace are abundantly available to everyone who asks. Yet we also believe that we are called to practice what we

preach: first, by cultivating vital Christian piety; and second, by engaging the surrounding culture through public testimony and loving service.

3. We are distinctively Wesleyan

Standing within the Wesleyan holiness branch of historic and evangelical Christianity, and recognizing the Free Methodist Church as our founding denomination, Seattle Pacific University is informed by the theological legacy of John and Charles Wesley.

We share their conviction that God's saving purpose is the renewal of human hearts and lives in true holiness through the transforming work of the Holy Spirit. We are shaped by their emphasis on the importance of the human response to the Spirit's renewing work, including the vital role of the spiritual disciplines and practices — such as prayer, meditation, worship, Scripture study, charitable giving, public witness to Christ's saving love, and service to those in need — all of which serve as means of God's grace.

Above all, we embrace the Wesleys' hope that God's transforming love is offered to all persons, addresses all areas of life, and will not rest content until it has redeemed the whole creation.

4. We are genuinely ecumenical

As heirs of John Wesley's catholic-spirited Christianity, we seek to gather persons from many theological and ecclesial traditions who have experienced the transforming power of Jesus Christ. We believe that theological diversity, when grounded in historic orthodoxy and a common and vital faith in Christ, enriches learning and bears witness to our Lord's call for unity within the church.

We are also well aware of other dividing walls that separate people from one another, walls that Christ desires to break down — walls of gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, language, and class. We believe that Christ calls us to value diversity and to seek ways for all persons in our university community to grow in their individual giftedness and to contribute in meaningful ways to our common life and work. Thus, in all of our diversity, we are centered in Christ, and called by him to shape, model, and participate together in grace-filled community.

Therefore, we commit ourselves to this faith, and to these shaping influences that define our community of faith, and we pledge ourselves, with humility and conviction, to live as best we know how in loving relationship with Jesus Christ and in faithful service to others. This we believe to be the defining center of our lives and the guiding aspiration of our life in community at Seattle Pacific University.

— SPU's Faith Statement was ratified by the Board of Trustees on May 21, 2004.

<https://spu.edu/about-spu/statement-of-faith>

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