

## Exhibit A-2

Pr. J. David Bryant  
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Statement of Faith

Everything, absolutely everything, begins and comes to its fullness in the Triune God. All are connected and related to the Triune One. Life is a gift from that One, and death is a path that carries us to that One. This reality is visible in our God's love for the cosmos revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are brought to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ by the activity of the Holy Spirit. Grace is the Triune God's means to claim, sanctify, and preserve us unto life-everlasting. Grace is the means by which we belong to God. And grace is a gift given, not a reward earned.

For so great a gift, the measureless, boundless, matchless grace given to us by the Triune One's activity in our Lord Jesus Christ, we worship, love, serve, adore, and honor the Triune One and no other. This God, revealed to us in our Lord Jesus Christ, who is 100% human and 100% God, is Ancient Israel's God---walking, talking love: up-close-and personal. Jesus announced and inaugurated the in-breaking of the kingdom of God. Jesus revealed God's activity in the unremarkably common. Jesus meets people where they were (and are) in everyday life, in their own everyday circumstances — beggars, politicians, prostitutes, net-menders, business owners, tax agents, and the bereaved. Jesus is deeply involved with ordinary people of his day and our day as well. Jesus personifies relevance by preaching good news to the poor and marginalized, release to the captives, by healing the sick, by fulfilling the Triune God's promises to Ancient Israel, perhaps most clearly by taking on human flesh and suffering a criminal's death on a cross.

Jesus proclaimed the forgiveness of sin, and by his resurrection shattered the power of death and made evil's claim on God's cosmos null and void, thus liberating the cosmos and bringing the cosmos from death to life, even eternal life. The goodness of God revealed in Jesus assures us that God is good, God has created us good, and that we are a good facsimile of the Triune God, made to be one member of the good family of God, meant for good things, and purposed to reveal the love of God in thought, word, and deed.

When we fail in thought, word, and deed to live into the divine intent of God, we mar the image of God revealed through ourselves, and we create disharmony and damage in God's cosmos. Yet, in and of God's goodness, love, and grace, God does not condemn us on account of our failure, rather, God remains faithful to love, forgive, restore, renew, and sanctify.

Perennially, God's Holy Spirit moves among the cosmos, renewing, overturning, restoring, and continuing the ministry of Jesus through the Church. It is this Holy Spirit who creates faith, gives life, renews life, and justifies us by grace. It is this Holy Spirit who sets us free to love self, love God, and love others. It is this Holy Spirit who join us to all those in God's good family. It is this Holy Spirit who convicts us of sin

and righteousness. And it is this Holy Spirit who gathers, connects, maintains, sanctifies, and keeps God's Church on task.

God's Church is the fruit of the Holy Spirit's activity. That activity began before time, took shape when "the Spirit moved over the face of the deep," was heard through Ancient Israel's prophets, overshadowed the virgin Mary that Christ might enter human reality, rested upon Christ Jesus at the inauguration of Jesus' public ministry at the Baptism of our Lord, gave birth to God's Church that followers of Jesus might be empowered to continue and extend the work of Jesus after Jesus' Ascension.

Empowered by that same Holy Spirit, God's Church imbued with God's grace through the Sacraments, Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper, perseveres and persists with the saints in all times and in all places, until the Last Day when the inaugurated reign of God is brought to its fullness. And as we persevere, we look to see Jesus throughout the cosmos, for as John Calvin tells us, "The whole world is a theatre for the display of the divine goodness, wisdom, justice, and power."<sup>1</sup> And until everything, absolutely everything, that begins in the Triune God comes to its fullness in the Triune God, we look to Jesus, having the humility to bear in mind, as Martin Luther tells us, "We are beggars. This is true."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John Calvin, Commentary on Psalms, Volume 5.

<sup>2</sup> Martin Luther, Final Words, Luther's Works.