

Statements of Faith by the BUMC Confirmation Class of 2022

Liam Boverhuis

I believe in God the Creator who is all powerful. As it reads in Genesis 1, verse 1: *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.* God created our World. God is kind, helpful and He will listen when I pray to Him.

I believe Jesus is our redeemer as He died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead on Easter morning. John 3:16 is meaningful to me as it reads: *For God so loved the world he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God and is filled with all good feelings such as peace, goodness and self-control. I believe the Holy Spirit works through others, and also helps us directly when we really need it. Where there is good, the Holy Spirit is present and will always be with us.

God's Word is represented in the Bible and for me, it is like a guide. The Bible is something you can learn from and use to teach others about God. As it reads in 1 Timothy 4:13: *Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.*

I believe the Church is like a school to teach about God. The Church helps us understand what God wants us to know through the Bible about what is right and what is wrong. The Church also supports all of us during hard times by being like a family.

Parker Carlson

God as Creator means to me that God created the Heavens and the Earth, and we should be eternally grateful for this. I chose to represent my faith with this cross. It was made to commemorate my mom who passed away almost two years ago. Each one of these stones was placed by a child of God. I like to think of each little stone as a perfect creation from God. Each person is carefully crafted by God and God loves all of His followers and protects and leads them on their journey to Heaven. The verse I chose to represent this was Genesis 17:7. It reads: *I will confirm my covenant with you and your descendants after you, from generation to generation. This is the everlasting covenant: I will always be your God and the God of your descendants after you.* To me, this says that God will love every one of us for all of eternity and will be with us forever.

God as Redeemer to me means that God sent His son from Heaven to save us all from our sins. If you follow Him, He will lead you to Heaven and will guide you in your faith. Whenever you think about Jesus the Redeemer, you always think about the cross. It's a key piece in defining faith in Jesus. He loved us so much that He gave his life to save us from our sins. Jesus is there to guide you and lead you to the promised land. The cross represents Jesus dying on the cross to save us from sins. He cared for us so much that He was willing to give his own life for the forgiveness of our sins. The verse I chose to represent this is John 11:35, which reads: *Then Jesus wept.* Although it's the shortest verse in the Bible it shows that Jesus was human and that He cared about us and wanted to save us so that we could live with Him for the rest of eternity.

God as Sustainer means to me that the Holy Spirit is always there, just like an angel on your shoulder. The Spirit acts as your conscience and helps you make decisions. To me, the cross also represents the Holy Spirit because the Spirit is always there for you, there to help you when you need it. God won't ever give up on you. The verse I chose to represent this was Matthew 3:16-17. It reads: *After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy.'* This verse is important to me because it shows that the Holy Spirit came down from Heaven and blessed Jesus as He got baptized.

God's Word to me is a source for answers and guidance. When you are lost, you can read the Bible and it will lead you. The Bible will guide you through dark times. It can be interpreted in many different ways, but to me it represents the desire to learn more about God and God's Word. When you are going through a difficult time, you can read the Bible and it can lead you through your problems. The verse I chose to represent this was 2 Peter 1:20-21. It reads: *Above all, you must realize that no prophecy in Scripture ever came from the prophet's own understanding, or from human initiative. No, those prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit and they spoke from God.* I chose this verse because it shows that the prophets weren't just writing what they wanted to write, but that they were moved by the Holy Spirit and wrote what God wanted.

The Church to me is a group of people who follow God and have the same beliefs as you. They are there when you need them and are always there to support you. The people of the Church are very compassionate. As a part of the Church, you are accepted and loved. The Church to me is like a second family or home that I can go to when I'm feeling down or need help. Each one of the stones in the cross I made was placed by a follower of God. To me, this represents unity in our love for Jesus and our path to Heaven. The cross can be interpreted in many different ways but the one that stands out most to me is that every stone represents a follower and lover of God. The verse I chose to illustrate this is Matthew 28:19-20. It reads: *Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.* I like this verse because it shows how God's People were commanded to spread His Word and that they will spread His Word forever.

Max Carter

God to me is the creator of all life. God forgives us for what we do, and God guides us through hard times when we need it. Genesis chapter 1:1-3 is an example of this, reading: *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light.*

Jesus to me is the Son of God and the person that forgave our sins. He was the person that said that He would rise from the grave for us, He would tell us to spread his Word, and He would later go to heaven to sit at the right hand of God. Matthew 26:64 points to this, reading: *And in the future you will see the Son of Man seated in the place of power at God's right hand and coming on the clouds of heaven.*

The Holy Spirit to me is a messenger of God who spreads His Word and tells people what God has done for you and what God wants for you. The Holy Spirit does alot of things. The Spirit tells you the Word of

God and can influence you to become one of God's people. John 14:26 describes this, reading: *But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you.*

God's Word to me is a promise that cannot be broken. The purpose of the Bible to me is to guide people in the right track to make sure that they don't get into trouble. And it helps people believe in God more. 1Timothy 1:8-9 illustrates this: *We know that the law is good when used correctly. For the law was not intended for people who do what is right. It is for people who are lawless and rebellious.*

The Church to me is a place to worship God. And it is a place of kindness and giving. God's people to me are his followers and they listen to God's Word every day because it guides them in the right direction. 1Peter 2:5 describes the Church in this way: *And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are his holy priests. Through the mediation of Jesus Christ, you offer spiritual sacrifices that please God.*

Elsa Emmons

God as our creator is a potter who shapes us, our personalities, and our life. In Psalms 104:24 it reads: *O Lord, what a variety of things you have made! In wisdom, you have made them all. The Earth is full of your creatures.* This verse perfectly states that God is our creator.

Jesus to me is my example, teacher, and leader. A verse that represents this for me is John 14:6, where Jesus says, *'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.'*

I think of the Holy Spirit as someone who is sent to you when you're down and in need of help because you've fallen. John 14:26 reads: *But when the Father sends down the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and remind you of everything I have told you.*

My guide in life that leads me down the right path is the Bible. In Proverbs 4:13, it reads: *Take hold of my instructions; don't let them go. Guard them, for they are the key to life.*

The Church to me is the people who are here to help me grow in faith and are like a family because we can depend on each other when we are down. In Hebrews 10:24-25, it reads: *We should think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.*

Dalinda Gravley

God is our creator. God created me, God created you, God created us. God used His hands and delicately put us together in His image with His love, and His image is perfect. Psalm 139:13-14 tells us, *For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.* In my heart, I truly believe we were part of God's plan long before birth or merely being a thought in my parent's mind. Revelation 4:11 gives me guidance as to why I, along with you, am here. It reads: *You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.* I see that as God being the one to give us life because without God we would not exist. God put us all here for a reason and a purpose, and I praise Him for that.

Jesus has redeemed us. He died a horrible death so that we may live on to be forgiven for the horrible things we do. He made the ultimate sacrifice for us all. That is why I look to 1 John 2:1-2, where it reads: *My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.* Jesus died to forgive not only Christians or “good” people, but everyone. No matter how large our sin, we can be forgiven because of him. Psalm 78:35 reads: *They remembered that God was their Rock, that God Most High was their Redeemer.* To me that means that as a rock will stay in place, so will Jesus.

The Holy Spirit to me is omnipresent, there for guidance and prayer and sometimes to listen. Whether we know it or not, the Holy Spirit is always there. In class, we learned to not follow idols and to only follow God. To me, that means that while others come and go, the Holy Spirit stays. The Holy Spirit is dependable. Psalm 51:12 reads: *Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.* And that is exactly what happens. The Holy Spirit keeps staying with us and sustaining us wherever we go, whether we stray away from God or grow closer. Through my path of confirming my Faith, I follow the Holy Spirit. John 8:12 promises that *Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.* Whenever I look to the Holy Spirit, this verse reminds me where I am going, and because of the Holy Spirit sustaining me through my journey, I will be there in the end.

God's Word is something I live by. We all interpret the Bible differently, but in the end, it's still God's Word. No matter where we are and what time it is we can look to the Gospel for guidance. 1 Timothy 4:13 reads: *Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.* I think of my Faith Partner, Sheryl, and how much she has helped me in the teachings of God and growing closer to Him. In so many ways has she found a way to share the Gospel. Someday, I hope to do the same thing, in the loving way she does. That verse is also just a reminder of how good God's Word is, and that everyone deserves to hear it. It doesn't matter where you come from, or what things you've done in your life. You still are worthy of God's love and God's Word. John 8:31-32 reads: *To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, 'If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'* Although I am not a Jew, I am a believer in Jesus and His Word. Confirmation has taught me much about the Bible, and I hope that I will be able to teach others so they, too, may know how great God's gospel is.

This Church would not be a Church without you because you and I are the Church itself. You all mean so much to me and so much to God, and although I may not know you very well, I know we are all connected through the one and only Jesus Christ. Matthew 18:20 reads: *For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.* That really connects to me because although we are a small congregation of believers, we all worship the same God and we do it all together. Just as my faith partner and confirmation teachers and Pastor Bill, along with all of you, have been there with me on my journey, so has Jesus. I also share with you 1 Corinthians 12:25-26, which reads: *...so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.* The way I look at that is that we are all here to support each other through every Faith Stepping Stone and through our journey of life with God. That to me is what makes us the Church, and I am so blessed for it.

AJ Hanson

God is my leader, if I believe in Him He will guide me through my entire life. One verse that helps me understand God as my creator is John 3:16, which reads: *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.* If I believe in God, He will guide me and give me eternal life to not perish. Another verse that helps me is Proverbs 3:5-6: *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.* When I believe in God, He will set my paths straight to lead me through life.

Jesus is a guide to life or a leader and He fills me with the Holy Spirit with a good conscience to guide me through life. One verse that helps me understand Jesus as my redeemer is Matthew 3:11-12, which reads: *I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.* This verse helps me by telling me when I was baptized, I was filled with the Holy Spirit and my sins will burn.

The Holy Spirit gives me the feelings of faith and goodness. The Holy Spirit helps me through life with my conscience and making the right choices. One verse that helps me understand the Holy Spirit is Acts 2:38, which reads: *Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.* I have to turn to God to receive the Holy Spirit and to wash away my sins.

The Bible is the book of life that shows me who I must follow to go to heaven. One verse that helps me understand the Bible as God's Word is 1st Timothy 4:13, which reads: *Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.* This verse helps me by showing me that I have to read the Bible until God comes to me. Another verse that helps me is James 2:8 which reads: *If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, 'Love your neighbor as yourself,' you are doing right.* This verse helps me by telling me that life come with rules but if I follow God's rules, I am doing the right thing.

God's people are a part of the Body to help complete the whole Body of Christ and they support each one another in everything they do. One verse that helps me understand the Church is Acts 2:41-42, which reads: *Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.* I take this to means that the Church not only teaches but we worship together with those who believe in him. Another verse that helps me is 1 Corinthians 12:25-26, which reads: *...so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.* This means that the Church is one whole body and everybody is a part of it. If one person is down, everybody is down. If one person is up, everybody is up. We all support each other.

Skylar Heyerdahl

God is my Savior, my Father in Heaven. As it says in Isaiah 40:28: *Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow weary, and His understanding no one can fathom.* I believe God is my strength, that He is with me all the time, I never have to worry or be afraid. God is forgiving. He loves me unconditionally. He sent his one and only son Jesus to die on the cross for my sins. I believe in God; therefore, I will have eternal life in Heaven. (John 3:16)

Jesus is a risk taker. Mark 10:27 reads: *With man this is impossible, but not with God, all things are possible with God.* I believe Jesus is so powerful to us, and no one can ever do as good as Him. Jesus said in John 14:6: *I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through me.* Jesus makes me feel so safe, and loved, and He makes me feel like no matter what, He will always forgive me.

The Holy Spirit is my sustainer and is there to guide me to Jesus. We read in Romans 8:26: *In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.* Another verse I find helpful is 2 Corinthians 3:17, which reads: *Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.* This helps me that believe wherever the Holy Spirit is you are free and living.

When I read God's Word in the Bible, it is a light guiding me, which also will help me guide others to God. God's words are like a guidebook of life. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 reads: *All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.* This verse helps me because it says God's Word is like a guide for right and wrong, and that is what I believe about God's Word. Another helpful verse is John 1:1, which reads: *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.* This verse helps me because it is saying everything that is in the Bible is directly from God, and it tells us everything that Jesus went through just for us.

Hebrews 10:24 reads: *And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.* I love the people at our church, so this verse just helps me with realizing that we have such good people at our church. They are there for the same thing that we are there for, and we need to respect them the way Jesus would want us to respect them. We don't want them to turn away from Jesus because of how we, the people of the church, treat them. A related verse is 1 Corinthians 12:27, which reads: *Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.* This is a very powerful verse, because when you decide to go to church and trust in God and believe God is going to do something good, it is a very big step. Especially with my faith, when I first got asked, I was not so sure of doing this. I was nervous. It turned out to be a huge part of my life, and I love the relationships I have built with many people over the years.

Wyatt Larson

God to me is the creator of all living things. God will forgive us for our sins. He is always there when you need Him. A verse from the Bible that helps me understand God as creator is, Genesis 1:1-3: *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light' and there was light.* God is the creator of heaven and earth. Another verse is John 1:1-5: *In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.* God is the light and created the light to follow.

Jesus is the messenger. He teaches you. A verse from the Bible that helps me understand Jesus is Matthew 1:23: *Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means 'God is with us.'* Another verse that helps me is Matthew 11:29-30: *Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.*

The Holy Spirit teaches us to love, be kind, be faithful and to show self-control. To me, the Holy Spirit is my conscience. A verse from the Bible that helps me understand the Holy Spirit is Luke 3:21-22: *One day when the crowds were being baptized, Jesus himself was baptized. As he was praying, the heavens opened, and the Holy Spirit, in bodily form, descended on him like a dove. And a voice from heaven said, 'You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy.'* Another verse is Mark 13:11: *But when you are arrested and stand trial, don't worry in advance about what to say. Just say what God tells you at that time, for it is not you who will be speaking, but the Holy Spirit.* To me that means we should trust the Holy Spirit is guiding us.

The Bible teaches me and guides me. It gives me a road map for my spiritual life. A verse that helps me understand the Bible is 1 Timothy 4:13: *Focus on reading the Scriptures to the Church, encouraging the believers, and teaching them.* Teaching the Bible spreads God's Word. Another verse is 2 Peter 1:20-21: *Above all, you must realize that no prophecy in Scripture ever came from the prophet's own understanding, or from human initiative. No, those prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit, and they spoke from God.* To me that means that the Bible was written by people, but the words are God's.

The Church isn't just a building, it's my faith family. A verse from the Bible that helps me understand the Church is Acts 2:41-42: *Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all. All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.* As the Church, we devote ourselves to teaching and fellowship. Another verse is 1 Peter 2:5: *And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are his holy priests. Through the mediation of Jesus Christ, you offer spiritual sacrifices that please God.* As the Church, we are being built up as a spiritual house of God.

Logan Warner

God created me. God made all that I am, all that I was, and all that I will be. God is the Father of everything. Every person, every object, every event in my life is all due to Him. God makes sure that everything I do, every mistake, success, and lesson, leads me closer to Him. God is my guide, my teacher. God creates lessons for his people when we stray, and rewards those that stick to His path. Colossians 3: 9-10 really connected to me: *Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds. Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him.* Instead of being reborn, I see it as shedding away our sinful selves through mistakes and learning. God created us with the capacity to do just that. God gave us the ability to learn and to change. God made us able to improve and become more like him.

Jesus, God's son, sacrificed His life to rescue me from sin. He allowed himself to be crucified so that I would be cleansed of my wrongdoings and go on to live eternally in his kingdom. Without Jesus, I would surely never be saved, never have the chance to live forever with Him. Jesus pulled my unborn soul from sin and told me I would live beautifully. Titus 2: 13-14 remind me of how I see Jesus: *We look forward with hope to that wonderful day when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed. He gave his life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us his very own people, totally committed to doing good deeds.* I see Jesus as my purifier, my great savior. He sacrificed his life for all people, even though He loved living. He saved me, and I will be eternally grateful for it.

The Holy Spirit ensures that I stick to the path God laid down for me. If I stray, the Spirit does not punish me, but gives me a lesson on how to improve, on how to find the path again. To me, the Holy Spirit created failure as a lesson. Our ability to fail is not a bad thing, it is the beauty of making us better. Failure means we are not bound to our mistakes, as it gives us a chance to succeed, to be better. The Holy Spirit makes us see how we can be better people, better followers of God. Acts 2: 17-18 shows me how the Holy Spirit works: *'In the last days,' God says, 'I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams. In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on my servants—men and women alike—and they will prophesy.'* To me, the Holy Spirit is a pathway into God's love and understanding, and that pathway guides us to being better.

To me, the Bible is not a set of rules, it is a collection of stories built to remind you of what you are praying for. It tells you stories of those who hit rock bottom, and how God built them back up. David came from nothing and became everything. He failed many times, and lifted himself out of the pit of losing, and improved himself through God. The Bible has so many examples of people improving themselves, and that is why I think it is one of the most useful tools for Christians. 2 Timothy 3: 15-17 reminds me of how I see the Bible: *You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.* God gifted us with the Bible so we could use it as a guide to salvation and purity.

The Church is our support on our way through improvement and life. God's people show us the path God laid down for us. They are with us every step of the way and will never leave you alone in the dark. They see our mistakes, and pull us out of their grip, as the Church has experienced all of it. We are never alone when we are with God's people, and they will always find us when we cannot find ourselves. The

Church will never be a stranger to us, they will be the foundations that hold us strong. This is how I understand Ephesians 2: 19-22, which reads: *You are members of God's family. Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.*