

## Statement of Faith of James Hodsden

- I. All praise and thanksgiving belong to God, the Holy One of Israel  
The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob  
All praise and thanksgiving belong to Jesus Christ, our only Lord and Savior  
The self-same God sent to dwell among us  
All praise and thanksgiving belong to the Holy Spirit, the giver of life  
The sent Comforter who is God
  
- II. Humanity is mired in its preference for sin. Unbound, we would choose to threaten the very throne of God. We deserve judgment and condemnation, yet God's love abounds, into this sinful world, Jesus Christ is the fullest revelation of God. He alone reconciles us with God. Only through Jesus Christ can we encounter God personally and really. Only through the true Son of God, can we call God, Father. We are united in Christ in his life, death, resurrection, ascension, intercession, and return. Nonetheless, being reconciled to God does not mean that we may abound in sin. We are a new creation in Christ. The old life is gone; a new life has begun. Gratitude to our Lord compels us to act in obedience. In Christ, we are to love God with our whole heart, mind, and soul. In Christ, we are to love our neighbor as ourselves.
  
- III. Our knowledge of God-Father, Son and Holy Spirit-is found in the authoritative witness of the Old and New Testaments. This witness is inspired by God and has no parallel. Our knowledge of God is confused and clouded by sin. Scripture provides clarity and correction. Indeed, there can be no knowledge of God contrary to the full testimony of Scripture. Nonetheless, our understanding of Scripture is dependent upon the work of the Holy Spirit in the community of faith throughout history. All Scripture is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.
  
- IV. Our union in Christ binds us with believers in every time and place. Our Lord desires us to be his body in the world, the holy catholic and apostolic Church. All are laity under the perpetual priesthood of Christ. Together we worship God offering our praise and thanksgiving. Together we participate in Christ's mission to the world. We are called to make disciples of all nations, to wash each other's feet, to feed on him until he comes again. We are a people in covenant with God. We are required to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our Lord.
  
- V. One response of faith is prayer, which is a gift of the Holy Spirit. With the confidence of children, we beseech the Father. That confidence, however, comes not from our merit. We can pray without fear only because our advocate, the Son of God, prays for us. In our joy and even in sorrow, we can cling to Jesus Christ. He cleanses our prayers, making them fit for the Lord. In prayer, we express our adoration, our confession, our thanksgiving, and our supplication to God through Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. God hears our prayers because of God's incredible love. Although God's response to our prayers may be difficult to understand, God's love never fails.

- VI. The Holy Spirit communicates the grace of God in Jesus Christ ordinarily through the Scriptures, prayer and the Sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist. As Jesus Christ is truly the Word of God, the Scriptures are the written word of God, and the Sacraments are the enacted word of God. Combined with the promises of Scripture, the Sacraments confirm our communion with Jesus Christ and our communion with each other.

In Baptism, God offers us a new beginning like the world cleansed after the waters of the flood. Like circumcision for the children of Abraham, baptism is a sign of God's covenant with us. We cross the Jordan to the Promised Land. We die with Christ, and with him, we are resurrected. We are washed in the blood of the Lamb. We are set free from the bondage of sin and death. We are ordained into the ministry of the Church. We receive adoption in Christ. We heard the words of God, "These are my beloved children, in whom I am well-pleased."

In the Eucharist, the Church gathers to break bread and drink wine--welcomed at table by our Lord, Jesus Christ. We give thanks, and we remember. We remember the Passover meal and God's covenant with Israel. We remember how Jesus ate with his disciples, how he fed the thousands, how he died on a cross for our sake. As we are fed by the body and blood of our Savior, we are called to share with the hungry. We anticipate the coming triumph of God and the marriage supper of the Lamb. We, the prodigal daughters and sons, will celebrate with God, our Father. And God will proclaim, "These children of mine were dead and have again come to life. They were lost, and have been found."

- VII. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all."

Amen

(2 Cor 13:14)