

John Calvin Presbytery  
May 16th, 2024

Two Hundred and Fourteenth Stated Meeting  
Ozark Prairie Presbyterian Church  
Mount Vernon, Missouri

## **JOHN CALVIN PRESBYTERY**

### STATEMENT OF FAITH - Alison Bucklin

The transforming power of God who created all things from nothing is a love which brings life out of death, light out of darkness, hope from despair, and beauty, wholeness and purpose out of pain and confusion. This God, whom my mind acknowledges as Creator, Sustainer and Provider, my heart knows as the Father who loves me, who healed the deep wounds in my soul whose existence I could not even bear to acknowledge until I was safe in his care. Jesus Christ, my beloved Savior and Lord, is the one who reached out to me over the gulf of ignorance and fear which kept me from recognizing or trusting the beauty and goodness of God, and brought me back to the center of life to begin again. Gifts of common grace, from the beauty, complexity and reliability of the created order to the human experience of such gifts as creativity, courage and kindness, are present in abundance in this world because of the goodness of our God; nevertheless, most human beings experience the world as filled with confusion, disappointment, and pain. This is because of the condition of alienation from God called sin, which causes first the blindness that keeps us from seeing or surrendering to God, but also the cruelty which human beings routinely, almost casually, inflict upon one another. It is impossible for us either to diagnose or to cure this condition under our own power.

The only way back into the intimate relationship with the Creator for which we were originally intended is through Jesus Christ, in whom God became incarnate in first century Palestine, died at the hands of people like us, and rose again from the dead. How exactly the death and resurrection of Christ makes reconciliation with God possible is one of the central mysteries of the Christian faith, and can be more readily experienced than explained, although many have tried. The gift of salvation is received by acknowledging need for and dependence on the person and work of Jesus Christ. Both the ability to see and the ability to receive are gifts from God; therefore boasting is excluded, and gratitude and humility are called for. The reunion with God, called new or eternal life, is experienced partially in the present, and guaranteed to be completed or fulfilled in the future. Salvation converts physical death into a gateway to an eternity of loving and enjoying the unmediated presence of God.

I believe that the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, indwells believers, creating in each of us the promised new life, illuminating to us God's revelation to humanity in Scripture, conforming us to the image of Jesus Christ, and by bestowing peace, joy, kindness and love transforms our relationships and empowers us to live lives increasingly pleasing to God. The Holy Spirit also oversees and empowers the Church of Jesus Christ, distributing gifts as needed, creating unity out of diversity, and guiding the community into the purposes of God. The Church universal, in all of its cantankerous human individuality, is God's instrument for continuing the work of Jesus Christ, witnessing and serving in all dimensions of human need. I believe that, just as God calls and empowers individuals differently, so are congregations and denominations called and empowered differently. Love for and obedience to God, as revealed by the written and the incarnate Word, are what unites us, in spite of the incomplete human understanding which leads to differences. I believe that the Scriptures are the wholly inspired and authoritative self-revelation of God, and it is our responsibility to use

this incomparable gift with honesty, humility and trust in order to free and to serve, never to condemn or coerce.

The sacraments are gifts from God, visible signs of an invisible reality. They are the events which make real to us the re-connection between God and humanity which, offered by Jesus Christ and received by faith, overcomes the separation from God called sin. We offer ourselves and our children to God in faith through the waters of baptism, claiming the promised forgiveness and receiving from God new life and the present reality of membership in the covenant community. At the Lord's Table we reaffirm our need for spiritual sustenance, and receive it; we celebrate, re-experience and reinforce our union both with Christ and with his church, and receive power from the Holy Spirit to live out our commitment.

Our Presbyterian form of government acknowledges human frailty, our mutual dependence and our need for community, and the equal calling of both laity and clergy for discerning and carrying out the mission of the church. The structure provides the order and accountability within which we may, as a body of diverse believers, live and work out our differences under a common allegiance to one faith, one baptism, and one Lord.

#### Biography - Alison Bucklin

- 1947 Born in Seattle WA
- 1947-1960 Baltimore, MD; Endicott, NY; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Rosario, Argentina  
Raised Unitarian
- 1960-1964 Vashon Island, WA - High School
- 1964-1966 Washington, DC - George Washington U., International Relations
- 1966-1967 Seattle, WA - U. of Washington, Fine Arts
- 1967-1971 Portland, OR - Portland State U, Education/History
- 2071-2075 Los Angeles, CA, Tucson, AZ- mis-spent youth
- 1975-1990 Minneapolis, MN - The Pillsbury Co.
  - accounting clerk
  - several promotions
  - Finance and Accounting Manager (Risk Management)
- 1984 Became a Christian
- 1984-1991 Evangelical Free Church (doesn't ordain women)
- 1985-1986 Dreamed a call to ministry, worked through Biblical material
- 1988-1990 Bethel Theological Seminary, evenings
- 1990 Pillsbury sold to Grand Metropolitan LLC
- 1990-1993 Bethel Theological Seminary, full time
- 1991 Joined PCUSA (after exploring multiple denominations)
- 1993 MDiv (Summa cum Laude)
- 1994 Per CPM redid field work, did 1 year CPE
- 1995-1996 Federal Reserve Bank, budget analyst
- 1996 CPM approved circulation of PIF
- 1997 Ordained, Installed, First Pres of Clayton, NJ
- 1997-2005 Served on Church and Society Committee  
Delegate to GA  
Served on Admin Commission  
Began D.Min program, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

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2005        Left FPC, Installed First Pres Leadville CO  
              Served on COM

2007        Received D.Min (final project spiritual formation)  
              Left FPCL 12/07

2008-2013   Parish Associate, Vashon Presbyterian Church, Vashon Island, WA

2013-2019   Peace Presbyterian Church, St Louis Park, MN

2016-2019   Parish Associate PPC