

WRITING YOUR STATEMENT OF FAITH

FIRST DRAFT DUE MARCH 8

What should it look like? That is up to you. The larger church has written several – each a reflection of its relationship and understanding of God expressed at a moment in time, knowing that the life of faith is always a work in progress.

Part 1

- As you begin, see if you can articulate your basic philosophy of life at this point in time.
- What do you believe about how the world really works?
- What do you believe about why you are here?
- What core values motivate you to do the things you do?
- Many of you will say that “being happy” or “being a good person” is important. What do these things mean to you? What are the things that make for a “good” and “happy” life?
- In what way is God and your faith in God a part of your view of yourself and your world at this point?

Part 2

This is your chance to reflect on your relationship with God, how that has evolved for you, and how you aim to live that out at this point in your life. For many of you, your December papers are very good beginnings on this. Here are some sample directions you then might explore:

- Tell a bit about the story of your faith/your relationship with God.
- What was your early understanding of who God is?
- How has that changed over time?
- What words would you use to describe who you understand God to be?
- In what ways have you experienced God’s presence in your life?
- What has changed for you through the year of confirmation?
- What is your sense of your relationship with God now?
- What IS faith to you?
- How does your relationship with God inform how you understand your world, yourself, and how you live your life?
- Who do you understand Jesus to be?
- What does standing up in front of the church and declaring that he is YOUR Lord and Savior mean to you?
- What will it mean for you to seek to “follow and be a disciple of Jesus Christ?”
- What is the Holy Spirit and how do you see it active in your life?
- Why (or why not) “confirm your faith” in May? What is your understanding of the commitment you are being asked to consider making?
- Why join a church or come to church – what is important about church to you? What is important about RPC to you (especially it being Presbyterian)?
- What do you see as your responsibility in being a church member?
- Why pray? How does that look for you?
- Why read the bible?
- How does your faith affect the way you view who you are and why you are here on this planet? What is your sense of God’s purpose for you and your life?

- Of all that we have talked about this year, what do you find most important to you?
- How do you envision your relationship with God growing and changing in the years ahead? What is your part in making that happen?
- What questions do you have about your faith?

Part 3

Finally, on the Confirmation page of the church website (www.ryepc.com) I've posted a list of bible verses. Please take a look through them, and choose one that speaks to you about the nature of God and your relationship with God. This should be incorporated into your paper.

For your information, here are the questions you will be asked at Confirmation in May should you choose to confirm your faith:

*Who is your Lord and Savior? **Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.***

*Will you be a faithful member of this congregation, and will you seek the people of God in a congregation wherever you might be? **I will.***

*Will you share in its worship and ministry, and through your prayers and gifts, your study and service fulfill your calling as a disciple of Jesus Christ? **I will.***

Make this statement yours. I know what I believe, and I don't want to hear my words. Speak from your heart. Feel free to include art, music lyrics, poetry, etc. As I have tried to stress, this is not an end, but the continuation of a relationship with God. We will all continue to grow in our understanding of all these questions. So don't stress out too much about getting "right answers" - to me it is more important that the church elders that you will meet with know that you have been thinking about it and wrestling with it and not just doing it to get it done.

If you have questions about this, please feel free to contact me. As well, I will read over your first drafts after March 8 and give you some feedback for your final.