

Rev. Kyle Delhagen
Statement of faith

Christian life and faith begins, for me, at the table. When we gather for communion, we meet God in the body and blood of Christ, made visible in the bread and the cup. At the same time, it is a community gathering that affirms the Spirit's presence among us. Communion, the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist, is not something we can *take*, but something we must be given. When we are invited to partake of the body and blood of Christ, we are taking part in something that is both known *and* mystery; present with us *and* beyond our understanding.

Christian life and faith finds its fullness in our baptism. When we are baptized, we marked with the sign and seal of God's love and mercy. While baptism is appropriate for anyone of any age, I love infant baptism precisely because it demonstrates that baptism is not something we do or ask for ourselves, but something that is done to and for us. It is God's action of claiming us as His own, as well as the community's commitment to raise and grow the child in the faith.

Finally, Christian life and faith is expressed in community worship and service. Deuteronomy 11:18-19 says, "You shall put these words in your heart and soul... Teach them to your children, talking about them when you are home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise." We are called to live with the Word of God on our lips, but also in our every action. We are called to walk hand in hand with our brothers and sisters, serving those in need: the widow, the orphan, the immigrant, and so on. When we put our faith into action, coupled with worship and study of God's word, we find the fullness of our life together.

I believe that God loved humanity so fully and so deeply, that He sent Jesus Christ to us, to walk with us, to struggle with us, to love us so passionately, that he was willing to die a very human death, that we might be forgiven. I believe that Jesus Christ was resurrected that we might rise with him into new life. I believe that the Spirit of God continues to bind us together with our brothers and sisters around the world, working in and through us to actively bring God's kingdom to earth. I believe that the Church is a vehicle of hope, bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to all who need it most, inspiring us to greater faithfulness and hope in God.

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Biography

I grew up the son of a minister, so we moved around a few times. However, I consider Pultneyville, New York to be home. It was in Pultneyville that my family found a community that we would come to know as family. Pultneyville is a tiny hamlet of the town of Williamson, and most residents are related to someone else by blood or by marriage. Still, it was not long before I felt that I was a member of the family.

As a young person, I found my spiritual life being influenced by the church family and friends I was always around. My church youth group provided many opportunities to study God's Word, talk about what it means to be a Christian, and also to put our faith into action. Some of the most formational moments in my spiritual development were on service trips during school breaks to Staten Island to work with the homeless, hungry, and those suffering from HIV/AIDS. All of this set me on a very early path to ministry.

Throughout college, I struggled with my call to be a pastor. Having grown up as a pastor's kid, I tried to avoid where I sensed God was pulling me, but when God has a desire for your life, it is hard to ignore! I spent six summers during and after college working at a Camp Fowler in the Adirondacks, and then two years working in youth ministry before going to seminary at New Brunswick Theological Seminary in New Jersey. Following graduation from Seminary, I spent a year working as a Resident Chaplain at a Philadelphia Hospital, which taught me a lot about being a pastoral presence in times of grief and trauma.

In the few years following, I turned to teaching at a private Christian school in center city Philadelphia, where I taught tenth and twelfth grade English. During that time I was a part-time

pastor of a small Reformed Church outside of Philadelphia. In that experience, I found myself drawn more and more to full time parish ministry. Since October of 2016, I have served as Pastor of Western Presbyterian Church in Palmyra, where I continue to be challenged and stretched, finding fullness in this particular part of God's family.

My wife, Elena, and I live in Palmyra with our two children, Jumah (14) and Atticus (4). They keep me grounded, give me joy unimaginable, and remind me of God's love and grace every single day.