

Confirmation Statements of Faith 2023

Piper Rosenthal

A lot of people have asked me... “**Who** is God?” But the question I wish they would ask is “**What** is God?”. Because in my life, God can be anything. God can be a feeling, an object, or a person. But the whole point is that God is powerful. Throughout my life, many different feelings have come over me. Sadness, anger, overwhelmed, joy, and I think that those feelings are God. God believes that to grow stronger, to be happier, and to become powerful one needs to overcome bumps and hills. There are many important people in my life like my mom Sara, my dad Michael, and my friends. These people make me feel so so happy and so loved that when I see them, I see God. God can be someone who makes me happy, someone who makes me laugh, someone who makes me feel loved. Being part of the church makes me feel more connected to God. To my family. To myself. And being able to know so much and learn so much about something so powerful like God makes it one of the most incredible experiences of them all.

Kate Lindstrom

I’ve been coming to First Congo since I was 2. My family had just moved to Palo Alto and we were invited to join our friends for a Back to School service. We didn’t attend church on a regular basis, we mostly went to the Farmer’s Market on Sunday mornings. My first memories of First Congo have to do with the Cherub Choir and Inga. As time passed, my family attended Church more often and became more involved. There were Christmas pageants, Christmas Eve services, Easter egg hunts and the bouncy house, caroling on Christmas Tree Lane, and watching my sisters go through Confirmation and attend youth group. My family started going to church regularly and going to the Farmer’s Market after services, it was nice to do both. Slowly, we met more people that became our friends, we said hello to people we knew and became part of the First Congregational community. It felt nice. I’ve loved being in the church musical, youth choir, youth group and hearing Clarence talk about “churchy” topics in a funny/real way, making everyone laugh.

I’m the youngest of three girls in my family and the third to go through confirmation at First Congo. I asked my sisters about their own faith and experience at First Congo to help me figure out where faith fit into my life. Faith for each of us is personal and very different. I feel the safety of the community around me here at church, I know there are so many people watching out and making sure that I’m okay. I love that adults come up to me and say hello, they know who I am and are truly interested in how I’m doing. It’s hard to know where my faith will take me because I’m only 13

years old. However, I am grateful for the foundation of faith that First Congo, Dave, Eileen, Todd, Andrea, Joe and Inga, and so many others have given me. As I continue through high school and college, I hope to be involved here in the community at First Congo and to see how my faith evolves in a personal way.

Audrey Erickson:

I believe in God as a spirit that's with us, lifting us up like a breath of wind. God makes me feel happy and caring, as he guides me through life and my faith journey. I used to think God was an old man that sat up in the clouds, but I realize now that God is not defined to a gender, or rather a person or place. God is almost like a feeling, or a presence like backyard Sunday school or the church plays.

Jesus is the son of God because he is the holy one, meant to spread God's messages everywhere. Jesus loved everyone and always gave people a second chance, just as we do today at church. He is a teacher of faith, meant to guide people towards the right path.

To me, the Bible is a guide for faith. I think the Bible holds a lot of the things Jesus did because he taught faith, and all of God's lessons. I do not believe everything in it is necessarily true, but it resembles a deeper message we can take from it. I think the Bible exists because Jesus isn't here to tell us about faith today, so it was compiled into a book to help us understand Jesus's thoughts, like an autobiography.

Praying helps me connect with God and make difficult decisions. Praying can also make me feel happier and grateful about everything in my life. I think you should pray when you want to, it doesn't have to be every hour or daily but when you feel you need to pray you should.

Being a part of this church is more than gathering every Sunday to worship. It has a sense of community and togetherness, and everyone supports each other which makes FCCPA so special. And it's not only in worship. In the backyard, at choir, and through many fun church events, I continue to see how loving and accepting our church environment is.

Being a good person doesn't depend on whether you go to church or not, church is just another place to go to feel connected to God. People who aren't religious come to our Church because it is fun and inviting. Church has grown into another part of my life throughout the years and I am glad to have completed this confirmation journey as I connect with and learn more about my faith.