

## YOUTH NEWS

Sharing the statements of faith made by our newest confirmands.

### **Kylee Fears**

I believe that in your life you go through different phases of your faith journey. For me my faith was not always as strong. Asking questions such as why I should believe in God? What proof is there? Sure others shared their experiences but not until I experienced it myself did I go into a new phase of really 100% trusting and believing. Now i have no doubts in my faith. I then phased into loving God and loving church, loving seeing signs of God in everyday life. Another phase in my faith journey is learning about God. Learning the ways about the bible, church and what I believe in. I believe that God loves me. I also believe that God watches over me. I believe that God sent Jesus to save us and to help us all be kind to one another. While there are still many questions to ask and answer about my faith, I trust that God will always be there to help guide and answer these questions. My hopes for my faith are to continue to learn and grow. I hope to be presented with many different opportunities to grow with my faith. I also hope to seek out God to learn more about my faith. I'm excited to continue on my faith journey.

### **Isabel Lykins**

My faith journey has changed my life for the better. Although I still have questions for God, I still believe in his power and love. My first memory of God and the church was when I was younger at my Grandparents church. It was the part in the Christmas Eve service where we all lit candles and sang Silent Night. I remember feeling so happy and at peace in those moments. That was when I knew I believed in God. Throughout my life I have had many more faith moments. These moments have strengthened my relationship with God and taught me more about God. I do have many questions with my faith but that does not stop me from believing. Thanks to God I have many blessings in my life that make me, me. Such as artistic talents, writing, and patience. Patience is the most important thing to me because sometimes God will not answer. My faith has confused me but in the end I am devoted to God. Questions I have are why do people who worship God suffer? This is a question I have thought about and have yet to find an answer to. Another question is why is there so much hate in the world? Although these questions confuse me I intend to keep growing in my faith and stopping hate that is in God's earth.

### **Jens Bartel**

Hello, my name is Jens Bartel and I am in 10th grade student at

Talawanda High school. For as long as I can remember, I've been surrounded by those both at home and at church who have built and layered my faith into what it is today. A foundation of my faith that has been present since I was young is God's eternal, unwavering love for us and His forgiveness of mistakes that we may make. Growing up in a state park surrounded by the beauty of nature helped me gradually expand on this foundation and realize that God's love for us can be seen all around if we just look closely enough. The tiny minute details, the confounding fact that life is so unique to Earth, and the abundance that is present in our lives all shows this profound love of God. Looking closely helped me to realize that God created the Earth in His image, and endowed on us the responsibility to protect it. God calls us, as a church and individually, to be stewards of the Earth through our own means, for me this has been picking up litter, writing letters to elected officials and riding a bike around town. Through my experiences growing up with people of all abilities, I added another layer to my faith by learning to accept people for who they are and what they can do. These experiences led me to see how God's teachings through Jesus compel what they do. These experiences led me to see how God's teachings through Jesus compel us to see all His children as equal and perfect, and to accept and celebrate each other for our differences. Through these experiences and this new layer I learned how to notice and cherish small success as miracles in their own way that God has performed in our very lives. By attending church regularly, I began to see how God is always trying to bring us closer to Him, and how Jesus being sent down to us to assume the burden of our sins was a manifestation of this. Throughout my faith journey, I have noticed and embraced a recurring theme of God's love and goodness towards us. This has led me to believe that God is good, and His goodness is our task as a church to emulate and radiate.

### **Grady Holmes**

We are forgiven by our belief in Jesus and staying close to God fulfills our belief and secures the grace that God bestows upon us. We all fall short of the glory of God through sin. But because of what Jesus did on the cross, we can rejoice in the gladness for the grace which we are saved by. Because we are known to be saved, we can now run to our peers to spread the good news of the grace of God. This is not only directly but also indirectly by sharing the love of God with others that we may not have shared with before. To love one another as a brother or sister, and pick them up and when they fall in knowing they will be there for you if you fall yourself. For we are all in this together to spread the love and glory of God. So as we learn the grace we are given, we go to serve God in all ways. Whether in the church as the Liturgist spread the word of God, or in the

community sharing our work to help those in time of need, and at home at the dinner table sharing what you love with the family you love. For God gave us his word to share the glory of his love.

**Ezekiel Groom**

Hello, My name is Ezekiel Groom and I am a 15 year old Freshman at Talawanda High School. I have been attending Oxford Presbyterian Church since I was about three years old. In the time I have spent here at this church, I have learned that God's messages can be used and interpreted in multiple ways by different people. I have learned to accept and embrace God in my life. I enjoy the reassurance and structure it adds to my life. I still have many questions and uncertainties about God and my belief in the Christian teachings. For instance, I have a hard time comprehending the omniscience of God. How can he be so incorruptible, always forgiving, and all powerful? Perhaps I find this hard to believe completely because I have yet to have a profound encounter like Moses and the burning bush. I'm still working out some of the theological questions. I'm still learning and open to development of my faith and relationship with our Lord. I believe in the end, it will come. Thank you.