

The background of the slide is a photograph of the Seattle Pacific University archway. The arch is made of dark metal with the words "SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY" in white, serif, all-caps letters. It is supported by two brick pillars with white horizontal stripes. In the background, there are trees with yellow and orange autumn leaves. Two people are visible in the foreground, their backs to the camera, looking towards the arch. One person is wearing a white beanie and a green jacket, and the other is wearing a dark jacket.

SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY

WRITING FAITH DEVELOPMENT NARRATIVES FOR PRE-TENURE, PROMOTION & TENURE REVIEW FILES

Monday, September 17, 2018, 10:00am-1:00pm, Cremona 101

Facilitator: Dr. David Nienhuis

Opening – 2 Peter 1:3-11

His divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness, through the **knowledge** of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Thus he has given us, through these things, his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of lust, and may become participants of the divine nature. For this very reason, you must make every effort to support your faith with goodness, and goodness with **knowledge**, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with endurance, and endurance with godliness, and godliness with mutual affection, and mutual affection with love. For if these things are yours and are increasing among you, they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the **knowledge** of our Lord Jesus Christ. For anyone who lacks these things is nearsighted and blind, and is forgetful of the cleansing of past sins. Therefore, brothers and sisters, be all the more eager to confirm your call and election, for if you do this, you will never stumble. For in this way, entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly provided for you.

Opening

- Unison Prayer: “Give us, O Lord, steadfast hearts that no unworthy thought can drag downward; unconquered hearts that no tribulation can wear out; upright hearts that no unworthy purpose may tempt aside. Bestow upon us also, O Lord our God, understanding to know you, diligence in seeking you, wisdom to find you, and a faithfulness that may finally embrace you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”
(*St. Thomas Aquinas, 1225-74*)

Overview

- I. Goals and Introductions
- II. Basic Elements
 - Take a break*—
- III. A Close Look at the Faith Statement
- IV. Lunch and sharing

Goals of Today's Workshop

Immediate goal: to assist faculty in drafting the narrative of their faith journey and statement of their Christian convictions and practices, a document required in pre-tenure review and tenure application files.

Goals of Today's Workshop

Note: The goal is *not* to dictate what SPU faculty are “supposed” to believe...or say they believe...in order to receive tenure.

Rather, the goal is to help SPU faculty reflect critically on the extent to which, and the ways in which, their personal faith is congruent with the University's official Statement of Faith.

Goals of Today's Workshop

Larger goal: to encourage faculty to reflect on their personal faith insofar as it shapes and informs...

1. their own teaching and research,
2. their membership in the SPU community, and
3. their contributions to Christian higher education.

Note: This larger goal entails more than the production of a document. It is part of the formation of a Christian vocation.

Self-Introductions

1. Name and Department
2. Years of service at SPU
3. What are you preparing for? Tenure? Promotion? Pre-Tenure Review?
4. Your Church Identity

The background of the slide is a photograph of the Seattle Pacific University archway. The archway is a dark, curved structure with the words "SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY" inscribed on it in a light color. The archway is set against a backdrop of trees with vibrant autumn foliage in shades of yellow, orange, and red. The scene is captured from a low angle, looking up at the archway.

II. Basic Elements

1. What the *Handbook* requires
2. What the Faculty Status Committee hopes to see
3. Compositional Strategies

Note: We'll take a coffee break when the time seems right

1. What the *Faculty Handbook* requires

The description of the essay is identical for all three FSC performance reviews:

- Content of all review files – *FH* 10.2
- Pre-Tenure Review described – *FH* 10.3
- Tenure Review described – *FH* 10.5
- Promotion Application described – *FH* 10.8

1. What the *Faculty Handbook* requires

Part I of your file: “Primary documents”

- A. Curriculum Vitae [5 pages]
- B. Faith Statement [4 pages]**
- C. Vocation Statement [4 pages]
- D. Teaching Assessment [4 pages]
- E. Scholarly Trajectory [2 pages]
- F. Service Activities [2 pages]
- G. Advising Assessment [2 pages]

Three Quick Keys to Success:

- Stay within page limits!
- Make use of multiple proofreaders!
- Strive to create an *overall portrait of coherence*

1. What the *Faculty Handbook* requires

The exact wording of the Faculty Handbook:

“A narrative that describes the development of the candidate’s faith over the years, reflects the candidate’s affirmation of the central claims of historic Christian teaching, interacts with the SPU Statement of Faith, and provides some indication of the current practices that form and sustain the candidate’s faith and life—including participation in a local church.”

2. What the Faculty Status Committee hopes to see



Preferred format for the Faith Development Essay

A 4-pg document with 3 *distinct yet intentionally interrelated* types of content:

- (1) A narrative of your faith journey;
- (2) A statement of your core Christian beliefs, giving explicit attention to the way in which the candidate understands and is, in good conscience, able to embrace the official SPU Faith Statement
- (3) An account of the current spiritual disciplines and faith practices that form and sustain the candidate's faith and life, including participation in a local church.

Key Distinction: *“Mission fit” and “Professional Performance”*

1. The primary (though not exclusive) focus of pre-tenure review and tenure application is a candidate’s “Christian mission fit” (the Faith and Vocation essays are important!)
2. The primary focus of promotion application is “professional performance” (teaching, advising, scholarship, and service to University, church, and community).

NOTE: “Mission fit” is measured explicitly in reference to the SPU Faith Statement!

3. Compositional Strategies



Three main objectives:

Your faith statement must include the following:

1. A narrative of how you came to faith
2. A statement of your core Christian beliefs in relation to the SPU Faith Statement
3. A description of your current spiritual disciplines and faith practices.

Note: you'll want to write single-spaced...

Three main objectives:

1. A narrative of *how you came to faith*.

- Tell the story of what has most influenced your spiritual growth
 - What *people* have shaped your faith? Parents, pastors, friends...
 - What *institutions* have shaped your faith? Congregations, schools...
 - What *experiences* have shaped your faith? Life-changing experiences, events, conversations...
- *This part should not absorb more than two of your four pages*

Three main objectives:

2. A statement of your *core Christian beliefs* in relation to the SPU Faith Statement

- Again, the goal is to reflect *critically* and *honestly* on the extent to which, and the ways in which, your personal faith is in harmony with the University Statement of Faith.
- In one way or another, you must engage *explicitly* with the four “marks” of the SPU Faith Statement.
- This will typically absorb at least a single page.

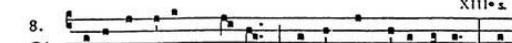
Three main objectives:

3. A description of your *current spiritual disciplines and faith practices*

- What habits and practices form and sustain your faith life?
- Provide clear indication of your participation in a local church
- Use this as a place to “tie everything up” – i.e. explain how your *story* and your *beliefs* are given expression in these *practices*.
- Often the shortest section (less than one page) but *do not scrimp here!*

III. Exploring the SPU Statement of Faith

CREDO VII. XIII. 5

8.  **C** Rédo in únum Dé-um, Pátre omnipoténtem, factó-rem caéli et térrae, vi-si-bí-li-um ómni-um et invi-si-bí-li-um. Et in únum Dóminum Jé-sum Chrí-stum, Fí-li-um Dé-i unigéni-tum. Et ex Pátre ná-tum ante ómni-a saécu-la. Dé-um de Dé-o, lúmen de lúmi-ne, Dé-um vé-rum de Dé-o vé-ro. Gé-ni-tum, non fáctum, con-substanti-á-lem Pá-tri : per quem ómni-a fácta sunt.

Qui propter nos hómines et propter nóstram sa-lú-tem descéndit de caé-lis. Et incarná-tus est de Spí-ri-tu Sán-cto ex Ma-rí-a Vír-gi-ne : et hómo fáctus est. Cru-ci-fíxus é-ti-am pro nóbis : sub Pónti-o Pi-lá-to pássus, et sepúltus est. Et resurréxit térti-a dí-e secúndum Scri-ptú-ras. Et ascéndit in caé-lum : sédet ad dexte-ram Pá-tris. Et í-te-rum ventúrus est cum gló-ri-a, iudi-cá-re vi-vos et mórtu-os : cú-jus régni non é-rit fi-nis. Et in Spí-ri-tum Sánctum, Dóminum et vi-vi-ficántem : qui ex Pá-tre Fí-li-óque procé-dit. Qui cum Pátre et Fí-li-o simul adorá-tur et conglo-ri-fi-cá-tur : qui locú-tus est per Pro-phé-tas. Et únam, sánc-tam, cathó-li-cam et apostó-licam Ecclé-si-am. Confíte-or únum baptísma in remissi-ó-nem peccató-rum. Et exspécto resurrecti-ónem mortu-ó-rum. Et ví-tam ven-tú-ri saécu-li. A-men.

The SPU Statement of Faith

Five Main Parts (see handout)

1. Preamble: Faith and Mission
2. We are *Historically Orthodox*
3. We are *Clearly Evangelical*
4. We are *Distinctively Wesleyan*
5. We are *Genuinely Ecumenical*

Take a few moments to read the document over. What strikes you as significant? Confusing? Is anything missing? Over- or understated?

Preamble: Faith and Mission

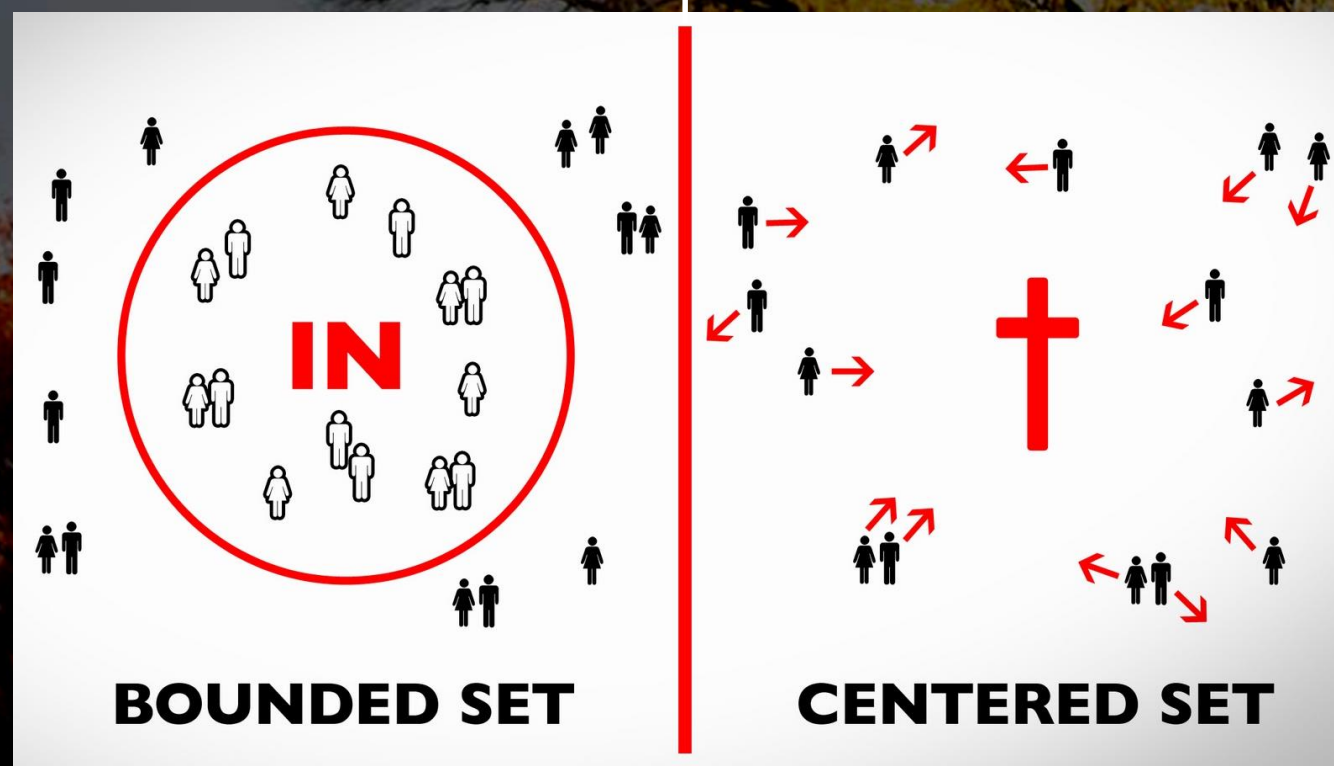
- What do you take to be the key words in this section?
- What do these words suggest about how SPU's Statement of Faith seeks to regulate our common life?
 - *Transforming gospel*
 - *Personal commitment / corporate aspiration*
 - *Diversity / anchor*



Two Ways of Defining Institutional Identity

By defending the boundaries

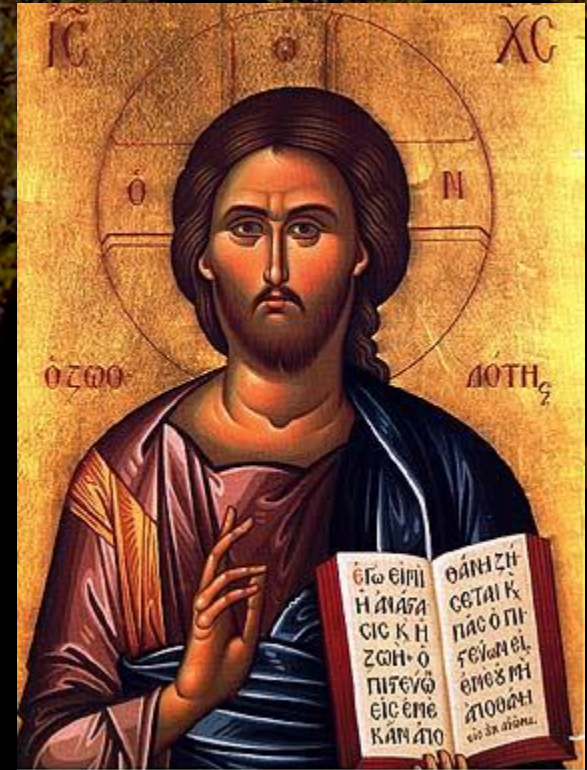
By living from a common center



Which, in your experience, is the SPU way?

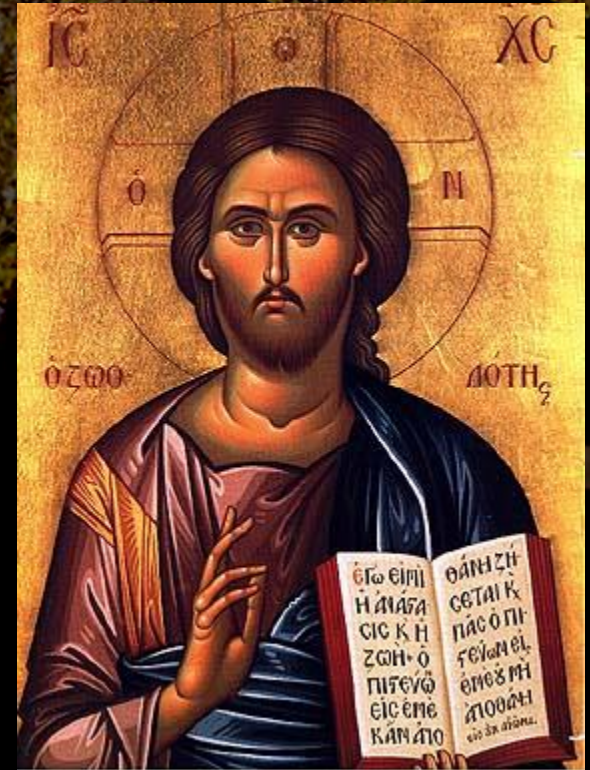
1. Historically Orthodox

- What does the Statement affirm about...
 - The sources of our knowledge of God?
 - The nature of God?
 - The purposes of God?
 - Human nature, human need?
 - The mission of the church?



1. Historically Orthodox

- Things you might consider when writing your essay...
 - How “fluent” do you feel when it comes to articulating basic Christian belief?
 - How does your part of the SPU curriculum reflect, or engage with, these core Christian affirmations?
 - In your experience, to what extent does campus life at SPU reflect these affirmations?



2. Clearly Evangelical

- How does the Statement understand the term “evangelical”?
 - *Evangelicalism is a broad tradition*
 - *Jesus as Savior*
 - *Scripture is primary authority*
 - *Holy Spirit transforms our lives*
 - *Practice what we preach: piety, testimony, service*
- What other common understandings of that term are implicitly rejected?



2. Clearly Evangelical

- Things you might consider when writing your essay...
 - If you identify as “Evangelical,” how does SPU’s definition sit with you?
 - If you aren’t from a conventionally “Evangelical” tradition, to what extent are you able champion SPU’s description of the term?
 - How does our identity as an “evangelical” institution shape the way you teach your subject? How do you handle apparent “conflicts” between scripture and the findings of your discipline?
 - How does our “evangelical” identity shape the way you interact with “non-Christian” students?



3. Distinctively Wesleyan

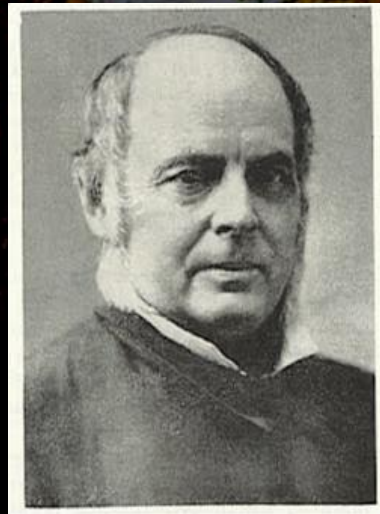
- What does the Statement emphasize about the “theological legacy” of John and Charles Wesley?
- How does “the Wesleyan holiness branch of historic and evangelical Christianity” differ from other branches of the faith?



John Wesley (1703-91),
Founder of Methodism



Phoebe Palmer
(1807-1874),
Methodist
evangelist and
“Mother
of the Wesleyan
Holiness
Movement”



Benjamin Titus
Roberts (1823-
93), Founder of
Free Methodism



Alexander and
Adelaide Beers,
Founders of
Seattle Seminary
(1891)

3. Distinctively Wesleyan

- Things you might consider when writing your essay...
 - How does the ethos of a “Wesleyan holiness” university differ from that of other Christian universities? Is that difference apparent here at SPU?
 - What difference does it make for you that you teach at a “distinctively Wesleyan” university?
 - In your judgment, what role should representatives of the denomination that founded SPU, the FMC, play in setting curricular goals and campus life policies?

4. Genuinely Ecumenical

- The Statement claims that “theological diversity, when grounded in historic orthodox and a common and vital faith in Christ, enriches learning....”
- Note the qualifiers... for “diversity” to be meaningful, a center is required.

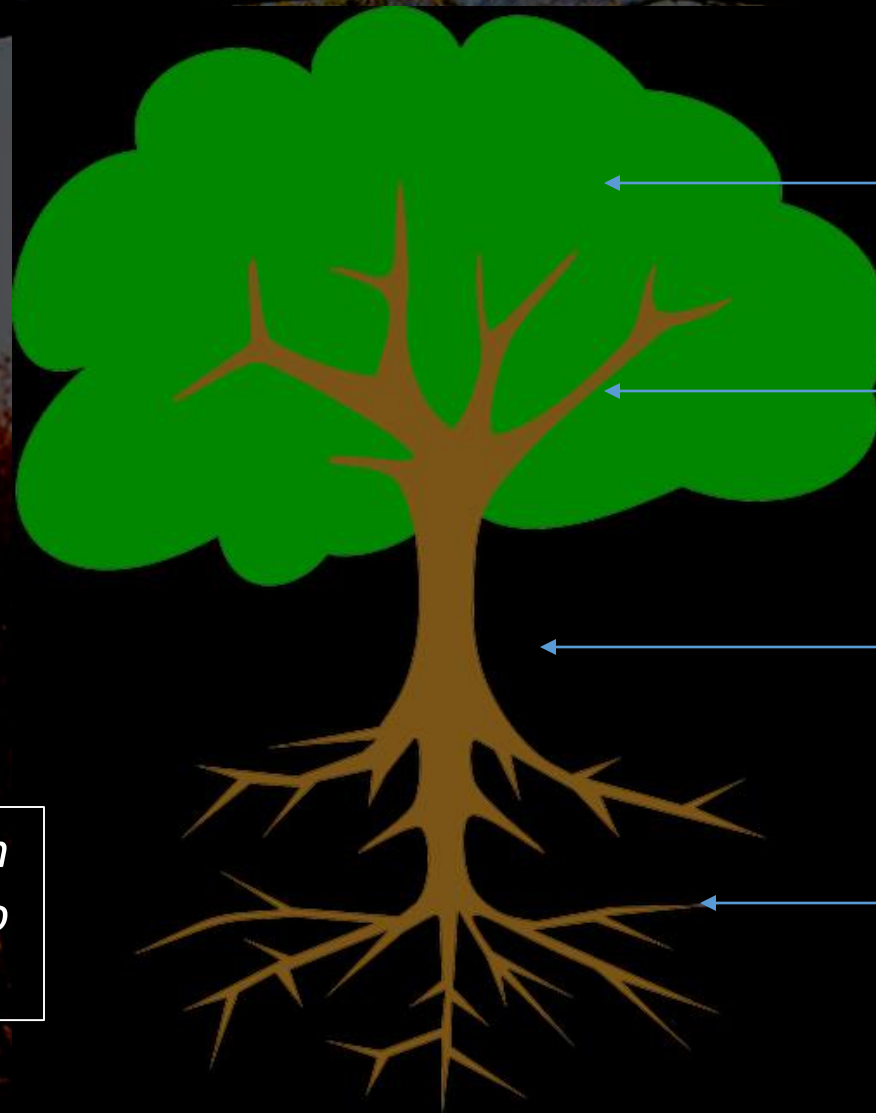


Did you know? SPU, Malone U. and Messiah College are the only members of the Christian College Consortium (13) and the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities (110) that tenure RC and EO Christians.

4. Genuinely Ecumenical

Reflects a more comprehensive, historical, less partisan understanding of “the Church”

This view is deeply rooted in Wesley’s call for believers to maintain a “catholic spirit”



← The foliage and fruit are the local churches

← The branches are the major historic sub-traditions (i.e. Lutheran, Roman Catholics, Reformed, Wesleyan...)

← The trunk that supports us all is the God who is known by the central authorities of our common faith (Scripture, Creeds, Practices)

← Roots are in Judaism

4. Genuinely Ecumenical

- What “ecumenical” does *not* mean for SPU:
 - Does not mean “interfaith” or “interreligious”
 - Does not mean promoting diversity for diversity’s sake
 - Does not mean indifference to doctrines, modes of worship, or moral perspectives
 - Does not mean that SPU is “non-denominational”. Not all traditions of Christianity are ecumenical!



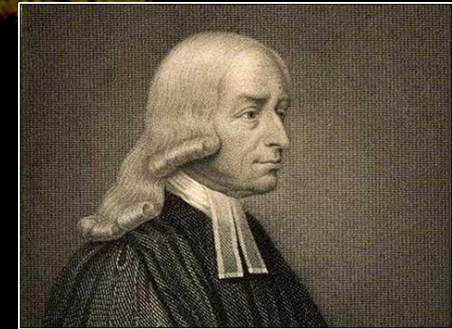
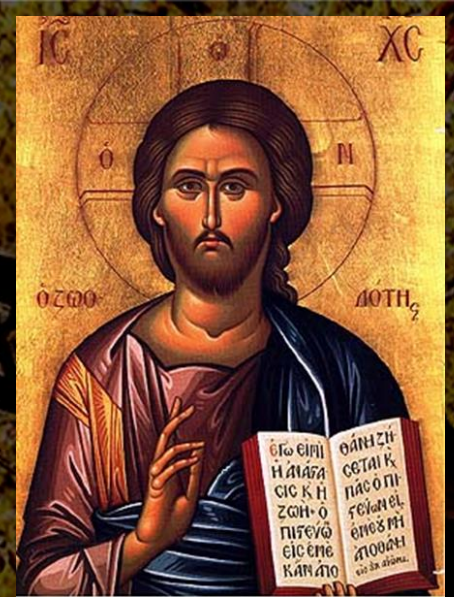
4. Genuinely Ecumenical

- Things you might consider when writing your essay...
 - What are the benefits and costs of this ecumenical stance to the spiritual and academic life of the University?
 - What are the benefits and costs to your own spiritual development and professional work here?



“Therefore...

...we commit ourselves to this faith, and to these shaping influences that define our community of faith, and we pledge ourselves, with humility and conviction, to live as best we know how in loving relationship with Jesus Christ and in faithful service to others. This we believe to be the defining center of our lives and the guiding aspiration of our life in community at Seattle Pacific University.”



Pair and share!

- *Orthodox, Evangelical, Wesleyan, Ecumenical.*
 - Which of these four terms is *most central* to the way you understand yourself as a Christian and as a Christian teaching scholar? Why?
 - Which of these four terms is *least central* to the way you understand yourself as a Christian and as a Christian teaching scholar? Why?
- Feedback to large group...

IV. Lunch!

NOTE: Participation in this workshop entitles you to a one-hour consultation from the facilitator on a draft of your faith statement!

Please submit it to me at least two weeks before your tenure, promotion or third-year review file is due to your dean.