

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Teaching Statement

- **The Bible.** We teach that the Holy Bible is God's written and inspired Word, and our final authority in matters of faith and life (2 Timothy 3:16, Psalm 119:105).
- **God.** We believe in the triune God. This means God, one, true, and holy, exists in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4). God is three yet one, one yet three (Matthew 3:16-17, 28:19, 2 Corinthians 13:13). We believe that God created and creates all that exists and continues to sustain and preserve his creation out of Fatherly and divine goodness and mercy. (Psalm 8; 1st Article, Luther's Small Catechism)
- **Jesus Christ.** We teach that Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully human, who by his death on the cross has redeemed us (1 Timothy 3:16, Isaiah 9:6, Colossians 1:15-20). We believe that Jesus has brought us back from sin, death, and the power of evil through His own innocent suffering and death on the cross, freely given for our sake (Romans 3:21-26; Second Article, Luther's Small Catechism). We believe that Jesus was raised from the dead by the power of God, and it is His death and resurrection that guarantees the eternal life for all who believe.
- **The Holy Spirit.** We believe that the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, is at work in the world today, calling people to faith, gathering people into Christ's body, the church, making it possible for people to believe, and transforming the lives of God's people to more and more resemble that of Jesus. (John 14:16-17; Ephesians 1:13-14; John 16:13-15; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13). The Holy Spirit's gifts are available and operative today for all Christians, edifying and empowering them to do God's Work in the world (Acts 2, 1 Corinthians 12:1-31, 14:1-25, Romans 12).
- **Human nature.** We teach that Christian life should be one of daily repentance because all humans from birth are sinful by nature. (Romans 3:23).
- **Salvation.** We teach that Christ alone (Acts 4:12, John 14:6) provides salvation. This salvation is a free gift ("grace"- Ephesians 2:8-9). We teach that one can be certain of eternal life ("assurance"- John 5:24). We teach that we partake of this free gift of grace by faith alone (Romans 3:28, John 3:16), and thereby enter a lifelong process of change and growth (Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 2:20).
- **The Church.** We teach that we are a part of one true Church (Ephesians 4:4-6, Romans 12:5) made up of all who believe in Christ as Lord. We extend the hand of fellowship to all members of this universal Christian Church (Romans 15:7).
- **Prayer.** We teach that God answers prayer and we encourage everyone to grow in prayer. (James 5:16, Matthew 18:18-20)

- **Baptism and the Lord's Supper.** We teach that Jesus instituted Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We teach that God truly acts in these sacraments, and that they are effective through faith. (Mark 16:16, 1 Corinthians 11:29, John 3:16).
- **Changed Life** We believe that becoming a Christian leads to a changed life. (2 Corinthians 5:17) We call this change 'sanctification,' which is a lifelong process of growth in selfless love, humility, service, stewardship, and holiness under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Change and growth are not optional for those saved by grace. (James 2:17, Romans 12:2) Because a good tree bears good fruit (Matthew 7:17-18), people justified by grace through faith act on that faith and grow in Christ. (2 Peter 3:18, James 1:22, 2 Corinthians 3:18, 5:17, Ephesians 4:22-24)
- **The Last Things.** We teach that Christ will return in power to judge the living and the dead (Matthew 25:31ff). We believe that no one knows when Jesus will come back or the exact nature of His Return. (Matthew 24:36)
- **Marriage** We teach that a full sexual relationship belongs within the boundaries of marriage and that God's mandate for marriage is one man and one woman to be united in one flesh. (Genesis 2, Matthew 19, Romans 1, Ephesians 5:31)
- **Lutheran Heritage** We identify with the renewal movement begun in the Lutheran Reformation. We teach the Lutheran themes of grace through faith alone, scripture alone, and Christ alone. We accept the historic ecumenical creeds as true statements of biblical faith, as well as the Lutheran Confessions as found in the Book of Concord because they are drawn from and are true summaries and explanations of the Word of God.