

AMERICAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH (AELC) CONFESSION OF FAITH

1. WE CONFESS THE HISTORICAL CHRISTIAN CREEDS AND THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS. This congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene and Athanasian Creeds as a true declaration of faith and the Lutheran Confessions as a true witness to the Word of God, normative for our teaching and practice.

2. WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS LORD AND KING. John 14:6; Colossians 1:15-18; Philippians 2:9-11; John 18:36; Luke 17:20-21. Jesus is the head of the Church. Unity among the various expressions of the Body of Christ is achieved through focusing on Jesus, who alone is able to draw all people to Himself. Jesus is the King of the Kingdom of God and is establishing His Kingdom on earth by His effective will through His supreme power and authority. Jesus is the complete and ultimate expression of the living God and is a person of the divine Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

3. WE STAND UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE WORD OF GOD. John 1:1, 1:14; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Romans 15:4; Psalm 1. The Bible is our authority and sole guide for life and faith. We accept that all of the Scripture is inspired by God and is without error; however not all interpretation is without error. Therefore we support and encourage the study of the original manuscripts, recognizing the original audiences and purposes of a text, and allowing the Bible to interpret itself. For the Scriptures are a living Word that are always relevant and revealing God's purpose for all of creation.

4. WE DESIRE GENUINE WORSHIP. John 4:23-24; Romans 12:1-2; Psalm 105:1-4. Worship establishes and encourages a right relationship between God and His people; God is the audience. Worship is essential for the believer and central to the life of the Church. In worship we cast our eyes to the cross, come under the instruction of God's Word, receive the gift of Baptism, are strengthened with the Lord's Supper, and grow together as Christ's body. Worship involves the whole person – body, mind, heart and soul.

5. WE ARE CALLED BY GOD. John 15:16; 1 Peter 2:9; Ephesians 1:3-6 & 4:11-16. We believe in "the priesthood of all believers." All of God's people are called to ministry and each member of the Body of Christ must recognize and affirm that call. Jesus has given each believer the greatest "once-in-a-lifetime" opportunity to be His apprentice and, with His help, discover our spiritual gifts in order to learn how to effectively use them to build up the Body of Christ and grow His Kingdom.

6. WE ARE FREE IN CHRIST. John 8:31-36; Romans 8:1-2; Galatians 5:1; Ephesians 2:13-22. Because of what Jesus has accomplished for us through the cross we are free from the bondage of sin and enjoy peace with God. We are free to serve God as the Lord leads us and not out of guilt, obligation or duty. We serve God joyfully in response to all that the Lord has done for us: past, present and future.

**AMERICAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH (AELC)
CONFESSION OF FAITH**

7. WE WILL “GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES.” Matthew 28:18-20; Matthew 4:18-20; Luke 19:10; 2 Corinthians 2:14. Jesus gave his disciples this command: “Go and make disciples of all nations.” Disciples of Jesus make disciples of Jesus. A disciple of Jesus is one who believes in Him as Savior *and* Lord. Disciples of Jesus intentionally apprentice themselves to Him as the one Master of their life. They, in turn, act as the hands and feet of Jesus in order to spread His saving knowledge and grow His Kingdom—inviting every person to consider a personal, active and everlasting relationship with Him. We are called not only to spread His knowledge and way of life, but also to help cultivate this in all those who have come to believe.

8. WE CELEBRATE THAT GOD IS CHANGING LIVES. John 8:1-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:15; Romans 8:29-30; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23. It is God alone who spiritually regenerates and transforms people who can freely love and serve Him. It is God’s will for every believer to be conformed to the image of His beloved Son. We accept that there is nothing in this world that ever stays the same except the solid rock of Christ. We trust that God will give us all that we could ever need to adapt to our changing surroundings and become “all things to all people” without compromising our obedience to Him. We worship Jesus, not our tradition, not our history and not ourselves.

9. WE BELIEVE THAT IN BAPTISM THE LORD CLEANSSES US FROM OUR SIN AND GIVES US THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. Mark 1:4-5; Acts 2:37-41; Galatians 3:27; Romans 6:3-4. God has commanded those who seek eternal life to be baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Baptism is an outward sign of the inner rebirth of the believer. Baptism has not been given to us to act as a proclamation of our faith. Baptism is not our work; it is God’s work of grace. In baptism we are buried with Christ in His death and raised to new life in His resurrection. Without repentance and belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of our lives, Baptism alone has no promise of salvation.

10. WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS PRESENT IN THE LORD’S SUPPER. 1 Corinthians 11:23-29; John 6:32-58. When we receive the Lord’s Supper (Communion) with a repentant heart we are assured that our sins are forgiven and are spiritually nourished and renewed with Christ’s life-giving body and blood. It is at the Lord’s Table that we together proclaim Christ’s death on the cross for the sins of the world.

11. WE AFFIRM THAT GOD ESTABLISHED THE SACRED COVENANT OF MARRIAGE. Genesis 2:24-25; Matthew 19:4-6. God created us male and female, and it is His will and intention that all human sexual expression and fulfillment take place only within the boundaries of marriage between one man and one woman. Marriage is God’s one-flesh complementary union and covenant that He established from the beginning to beautifully bind together husband and wife. All weddings performed in the facilities of American Evangelical Lutheran Church, or by any of its Pastors in any venue, are Christian worship services.

AMERICAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH (AELC)
CONFESSION OF FAITH

12. WE MAKE IT OUR AIM TO LOVE AS SCRIPTURE TEACHES US TO LOVE. Matthew 22:37-40; John 14:15; John 17:26; 1 Corinthians 13; 1 John 4:7-21. Love of God and our neighbor is to be the sole focus of our lives. Without the love of God actively working in our lives, guiding, inspiring and directing our daily decisions, our actions come to nothing worthy of God's name. God is love and expects His followers to be controlled by His love. Love in us produces works of love toward others and empowers us to love all people regardless of their actions and beliefs.

13. WE HOLD THAT ALL HUMAN LIFE IS UNIQUELY SACRED. Genesis 1:25-28; Psalm 139:13-16; John 1:12-13. In the beginning, God uniquely created humankind in His perfect image and likeness. Every person was first conceived in the mind of God, comes into being at physical conception and remains sacred in the eyes of God throughout their life. Because God alone is the giver and sustainer of life, all human acts with the intention to harm or destroy human life without just cause, are an affront to the Creator "who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4).