

A RECONCILING CREED

BASED ON THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Pastor Dan Hooper ✝ January 30, 2011

The following statement about Christian faith and life was written for use on Reconciling in Sunday 2011 (January 30), when Hollywood Lutheran Church celebrates and publicizes its unconditional welcome to all people, including sexual minorities. This was written as an attempt to re-think an essential summary for our own times of what it means to be a Christian: to confess our faith in Christ and to intentionally follow where he leads.

The “Creed” is divided into four sections, not three, although the first three are trinitarian. Many details about Christ’s incarnation are omitted, not because they are unimportant or unbelievable in our time, but because what is truly relevant for our lives of faith is often overlooked in the ancient and many contemporary creeds.

The language intentionally switched back and forth from “I believe” to “I know” —reminding us of the certainty of our faith. It also uses “I” and “we” in different places to remind us of our individual faith commitment and our corporate mission.

I believe that God created all that exists,	Genesis 1:1
and that humanity was created in God’s image,	Genesis 1:26
with a special mission to be stewards of this good creation,	Genesis 1:28-31
and to care for one another.	Luke 10:25–37; Philippians 2:1–4
In God’s sight, I know that I am blessed—	Deuteronomy 2:7; 2 Samuel 7:28–29 ; Matthew 5: 1–12; Ephesians 1:3
a unique and precious individual—	1 Samuel 26:24; Psalm 72:12–14; ; Isaiah 43:1–4; 1 John 3:1–2
and that my life has dignity and purpose.	1 Timothy 2:1–4
For God so loved the world that Jesus Christ was sent to save the world, not to condemn it.	John 3:16-17; Acts 10:34–35
I believe that he humbled himself, even to death upon the Cross.	Philippians 2:5–8; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 9:12
He lay down his life so that I might be redeemed and my sins forgiven.	John 15:13; Ephesians 5:1; Colossians 1:13–14 Luke 6:37; Romans 3:21–26; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 4:32; 1 John 2:12
All this comes from God’s goodness and grace alone— not by my efforts.	Ephesians 2:5
I know that through the waters of Baptism	Mark 16:16; Acts 2:37–42, 8:38
I have been made a member of Christ’s body, and marked forever by the sign (✠) of the cross.	Romans 7:4, 12:4–5; 1 Corinthians 12:12–27; Galatians 1:2; Ephesians 3:6. 5:30; Galatians 3:27-28 Ephesians 4:30

And for our sake, the Holy Spirit has come to us as advocate, guide, and counselor.	John 14:26; Acts 2:38; Ephesians 1:11–14, 4:25
With the guidance of the Spirit—as the Scriptures show— God has called us to lives of faith, not to earn God’s favor but in response to our redemption.	Romans 1:1–6; 2 Timothy 3:16 Psalm 116:16 Leviticus 26:44–45; Psalm 84:11; Isaiah 61:1–2; Luke 1:46–49; John 1:16; Ephesians 1:3–14 Psalm 111:9; Luke 2:38, 21:28; Romans 8:22–24
Christ has entrusted to us this community, his Church on earth, in which we live by one new commandment: that we love one another as he loves us.	Ephesians 6:23–24 Matthew 18:18–20; John 15:12
And we are called to carry his message to everyone who will receive it: God has reconciled all people for the sake of Christ, giving us peace, ending all hostility, and creating one new humanity.	Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 1:26–29 John 1:12–13 Ephesians 2:14–18
I believe my life and my place in God’s household are gifts of grace, which we all receive through faith alone.	Ephesians 2:19–20 Luke 7:50
I believe the kingdom of Christ, which is coming, will have no end.	John 18:36
I know that, in this new heaven and new earth Christ is preparing room for me.	Revelation 21:1 John 14:2–3; 1 Corinthians 2:9
There will be—for me and all who love him— a place at the table forever, where rejoicing will have no end. Amen.	Matthew 5:12, 22:9; Luke 6:23, 10:20, 15:6–7; 1 Peter 1:4–9 Jude 24; 1 John 1:1–4; Revelation 21:22–27