

Heather Russell von Marko, Statement of Faith

Matthew 28:19

I believe in the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Daniel 4:3

I believe that God is sovereign.

I Timothy 3:16

I believe that this divine source of love is what created and sustains the universe. I believe that the mystery and majesty of this source is so far beyond our understanding that our words will always fall short in attempting to describe it.

Philippians 4:7

I Corinthians 12:18

I believe that we honor this creative force when we present our most authentic, inward known self to the world. Our authentic expression of exactly whom God created us to be glorifies God and makes manifest the awesome diversity of God's creation.

John 3:16

Exodus 22:22

I believe that Jesus Christ, who is fully human and fully God, is the Son of God and came to erase our sins by his life, death on the cross, and subsequent resurrection. I believe that anyone who follows Christ has an obligation to live as he lived, with radical love for **all people**, especially the marginalized and forgotten ones¹. We share the true message of God when we craft our lives to be reflections of that kind of love.²

Matthew 22:37-39

Mark 13:11

I believe that the Holy Spirit is at work in the world to breathe God's grace and love into our actions, and part of our duty is to make room for that expression to be proclaimed.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

I John 3:23

I believe that the Bible is inspired by God and is to be interpreted in community using our God-given intellect and discernment and used as a guide for our lives, and as a way to locate ourselves in the grand narrative.

Mark 10:39

I believe that the Church is the body of Christ, and as such has a holy commitment to be with the poor, the passed-over, the neglected, not only sharing resources and time, but by shining the light of Christ into the lives of those we serve, that they might know we are Christians by our love.³

The sacraments, baptism and communion, have been given to us in order to be vehicles of God's grace- touchstones for the love and promises of God made physical for us.⁴

In baptism, we claim God's covenant of forgiveness for the baptized one, affirm that covenant by remembering our own baptism, and formally welcome them into our church community.⁵

I Corinthians 15:22

At the communion table, we are invited by the triune God, to experience the sureness of our salvation through Christ's sacrifice. We experience with our physical senses the promise of eternal life.⁶

I believe that God has elected the entire world, every human of God's own creation, for salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. We are justified and sanctified by this act of love, through the grace and mercy of God.

Revelation 1:8

Revelation 7:15-17

I believe that at the end of days, God will bring all things into the brilliant light of Love, as only God can, to meet God's purposes. I believe that God's children will be reunited with God, in a non-physical way that we cannot hope to fully understand in our limited scope here on earth. We can point ourselves in the right direction, but I imagine that our words fall well short of the overwhelming wholeness we will experience in that reunion.

I believe that, as a Confessing Church, we retain the solemn responsibility to continually revisit and remain in conversation with the past, while we boldly confront the situations before us in the present. I believe it is vital to continue to hold accountable those in power who make decisions for the voiceless and poor. We must name injustice when we see it, confess our part in it with haste, and work for reconciliation with diligence. In so doing, we glorify God.⁷

Footnotes: ¹See the Confession of Belhar, 10.7

²See the Brief Statement of Faith, 11.2

³See The Confession of 1967, 9.43-9.46

⁴See the Heidelberg Catechism, section 4.066

⁵See the Heidelberg Catechism, sections 4.069-4.074

⁶See the Heidelberg Catechism, sections 4.075-4.077

⁷See the Confession of Belhar, 10.7-10.8