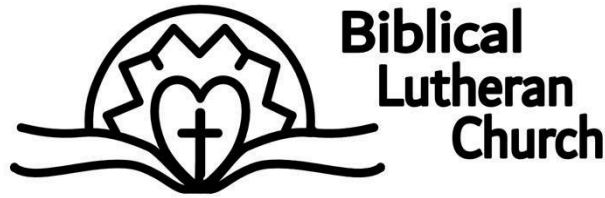


The



of the UK

The Seat, Summary, Statement and Source of Our Confession

November 2024

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1 Preface

a. Who are we?

We are the Biblical Lutheran Church of the UK.

BiblicalLutheranChurch.co.uk

We are **Biblical** because by faith we accept God's Word, the Bible, as the very words of God by which we have eternal life (1 Thess 2:13).

We are **Lutheran** because we believe, teach and confess the Book of Concord as a faithful explanation of the Bible (2 Thess 2:15), a compilation of confessions that includes Luther's Small Catechism, Luther's Large Catechism, the Augsburg Confession, Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Formula of Concord, and the treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope.

We are **Church** because through God's Word, God's Spirit gives us new life to receive this Word by faith, and gathers together those who confess this faith as God's people (John 10:27-28).

b. Why this Confession?

As a Biblical church, the Bible is our only source of doctrine. As a Lutheran Church, we believe, teach and confess the Book of Concord as an exposition of this doctrine. This Confession of the Biblical Lutheran Church of the UK summarises what we believe in an accessible way:

1. This Confession summarises the Book of Concord.
2. This Confession shows how the Book of Concord should be rightly understood.
3. This Confession states what the Bible says on points of doctrinal confusion that have arisen since the Book of Concord was written.

a. What is this Confession?

This Confession presents our doctrine at three levels of depth:

The Seat is the four big ideas that are foundational to everything the Bible says.

The Summary is twenty one sentences that summarise the Bible's message.

The Statement is a list of short sentences stating in detail what the Bible says.

The Source is an explanation of how every statement of our Confession is revealed in the Bible using as much as possible words from other Lutherans to demonstrate our consistency with the Lutheran tradition.

2 Abbreviations

a. Creeds

Ath Athanasian Creed

b. The Lutheran Confessions of the Book of Concord

AC The Augsburg Confession
Ap Apology of the Augsburg Confession
BC Book of Concord
Ep Epitome of the Formula of Concord
FC The Formula of Concord
LC Luther's Large Catechism
SA The Smalcald Articles
SC Luther's Small Catechism
SD Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord
Tr The Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope

c. Luther's Works

BW The Bondage of the Will
CN To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation
L.1522.Borna Luther's Sermon, Sunday after Easter 1522 at Borna
L.1523.Haus Luther's 1523 letter to Nicholas Hausmann
LCom Luther's Commentary
LW Luther's Works

a. Melancthon's Works

LociCom Loci Communes

b. Chemnitz' Works

ECT Examination of the Council of Trent
LociTheo Loci Theologici

c. Other Lutheran Statements

Sax The Saxon Visitation Articles
TWB Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) This We Believe
WCM.M C.F.W. Walther, Church and Ministry: Theses on the Ministry
WDS WELS Doctrinal Statements
WWB WELS What We Believe

The Seat of Our Confession

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| A. God's Word is truth and Christians receive it by faith (John 10:22-30) | 13 |
| B. God's Law reveals our sin, which is an inward tendency to evil (Matt 5:43-48) | 21 |
| C. God's Gospel is the free undeserved grace of Father, Son and Spirit (Rom 3:21-25) | 33 |
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2. God fully reveals Himself only by his Word (2 Tim 3:15)	13
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4. Scripture is purely God's Word (Psa 19:8)	13
5. Scripture is truth (John 17:17)	13
6. Scripture cannot contradict itself (John 10:35)	14
7. Scripture has God's authority (Luke 4:32)	14
8. Scripture is relevant, being actively spoken today (Heb 4:12)	14
9. Scripture is useful (2 Tim 3:16)	14
10. Scripture is effective (Isa 55:11)	14
11. Scripture is perfectly sufficient (2 Pet 1:3-4)	14
12. Scripture is spoken through men (1 Cor 2:12-13)	15
13. Scripture is our only source of doctrine (Rev 22:18-19)	15
14. Scripture has authority over the Church (2 Pet 1:16-21)	15
15. Scripture is prophesied to abide (1 Pet 1:23-25)	15
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21. Scripture must be interpreted rightly (2 Tim 2:15)	16
22. Scripture can be interpreted by any Christian (1 Cor 2:15)	17
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36.	The Old Covenant defined a nation through which Christ came (Gen 12:1-3)	20
37.	The Old Covenant was given to teach and lead us to Christ (John 5:46)	20
38.	The Old Covenant is obsolete (Heb 8:13)	20
39.	The Old Covenant had three aspects: moral, civil, ceremonial (Exod 24-40)	20
40.	The Moral Law is God's Law bound to the nation of Israel (Exod 20; Deut 5)	20
41.	The Moral Law reveals God's Law that continues to bind everyone (Rom 13:9)	20
42.	The Ceremonial Law was a shadow of Christ's sacrifice (Col 2:16-17)	21
43.	The Ceremonial Law is not binding in the latter days (Col 2:16-17)	21
44.	The Civil Law was a shadow of Christ's spiritual kingdom (Gal 6:16)	21
45.	The Civil Law is not binding in the latter days (Luke 12:13-14)	21
46.	The New Covenant has two aspects: repentance and the Gospel (Mark 16:15)	21

B. God's Law reveals our sin, which is an inward tendency to evil (Matt 5:43-48) 21

IV. The Law commands us to love the one God who is three persons (Deut 6:4-5; Matt 28:19) 21

47.	1—The Law commands us to love God above all things (Deut 6:5)	21
48.	1—The Law commands us to trust God above all things (Heb 11:6)	21
49.	1—God has revealed Himself progressively (Rom 16:25-26)	22
50.	1—God is one (Deut 6:4)	22
51.	1—God is three eternal persons (Matt 28:19)	22
52.	1—The Father is truly God, unbegotten (John 5:26)	22
53.	1—The Son is truly God, begotten from the Father (John 3:16)	22
54.	1—The Spirit is truly God, proceeding from the Father and Son (John 15:26)	22
55.	1—The three persons are equal in authority (Matt 28:18-19)	22
56.	1—The three persons always act as one God (Mark 1:10-11)	23
57.	1—The one God always acts as three persons (Eph 1:3-14)	23
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59.	2—God's name should not be abused for falsehood (Lev 19:11-12)	23
60.	2—God's name should not be shamed by false teaching (Rev 2:13)	23
61.	2—God's name should not be lowered through occult practices (Lev 20:3)	24
62.	2—God's name should be used for truth (Deut 6:13)	24
63.	2—God's name should be honoured by biblical teaching (Jam 5:10)	24
64.	2—God's name should be lifted through prayer (Psa 50:15)	24
65.	3—The Sabbath means people should have rest and holidays (Exod 20:8-11)	24
66.	3—The Sabbath day itself has been abolished (Col 2:16-17)	24
67.	3—The Sabbath is not fulfilled by the Lord's Day (Heb 4:9-11)	24
68.	3—Sunday is not special (Rom 14:5-6)	24
69.	3—Only God's Word makes things holy for us (1 Tim 4:5)	25
70.	3—God's Word must be used to make every day holy (Psa 119:11-13)	25

V. The Law commands us to love our neighbour (Lev 19:18) 25

71.	4—The Law commands us to love our neighbour (Lev 19:18)	25
72.	4—We must honour our parents (Exod 20:12)	25
73.	4—We must be grateful for our birth gender (Psa 139:13-14)	25
74.	4—We must obey government and all human institutions (1 Pet 2:13-17)	25
75.	5—We must not cause or wish harm by thought, word or deed (Matt 5:21-26)	25

76.	5—We must not fail to prevent harm when we are able (Jam 2:15-16)	26
77.	5—We must treat all people as spiritually equal (Gen 1:27; Rom 3:23)	26
78.	5—Human life on earth is a unique opportunity to repent (Heb 9:27)	26
79.	5—Human life as an opportunity to repent begins at conception (Psa 139:13)	26
80.	5—Human life may only be ended by God and those he authorises (Psa 90:3)	26
81.	5—Human life may be ended by government to establish justice (Rom 13:1-7)	26
82.	6—Marriage is a state of life instituted by God (Gen 1:27-28)	26
83.	6—Marriage is between one man and one woman (Gen 2:23)	27
84.	6—Marriage is leaving and cleaving (Gen 2:24)	27
85.	6—Marriage is a one flesh union, i.e. sexually consummated (Gen 2:24)	27
86.	6—Marriage is the only appropriate place for sexual desire (Exod 20:14)	27
87.	7—We must not cause harm to our neighbour's property (Exod 20:15)	27
88.	7—We must respect and obey copyright laws (Exod 20:15)	27
89.	8—We must not lie about people, but speak well of them (Exod 20:16)	27
90.	9—We must not craftily try to get our neighbour's possessions (Exod 20:17)	27
91.	10—We must not craftily try to get our neighbour's relationships (Deut 5:21)	27
VI. The Law reveals we need God's righteousness (Rom 7:10-13)		28
92.	The Law offers life for obedience and death for disobedience (Exod 20:5-6)	28
93.	The Law is used to curb excessive sin (1 Tim 1:9)	28
94.	The Law is used as a mirror for sin, leading us to seek Christ (Rom 3:21-26)	28
95.	The Law is used as a guide for Christians to live out their faith (Psa 119:1)	28
96.	The Law is veiled when read without Christ (2 Cor 3:12-16)	28
97.	The Law is veiled when we seek our own righteousness (Rom 10:2-4)	28
98.	The Law is unveiled when read with Christ (2 Cor 3:12-16)	29
VII. The Law reveals our sin as a constant inclination to evil (Gen 6:5)		29
99.	Original sin is the root: a corrupt nature that inclines to evil (Gen 6:5)	29
100.	Actual sin is the fruit: the works resulting from this corruption (Matt 7:16-20)	29
101.	Sin means we are dead and salvation is impossible (Eph 2:1)	29
102.	Sin means we are slaves and do not want to be saved (Rom 6:16)	29
103.	Sin means we are under wrath, given over to sin (Rom 1:18-32)	29
104.	Sin means we are wrathful against God (Rom 8:7)	29
105.	Sin means we are callously unfeeling towards God (Eph 4:17-19)	30
106.	Venial ("forgiven") sin is sin remaining in the regenerate (Rom 7:25)	30
107.	Mortal ("deadly") sin is the sin that killed faith in fallen Christians (Rom 8:13)	30
108.	Scripture warns that once saved we are not always saved (Rom 11:17-24)	30
109.	Scripture warns that restoration from falling away is impossible (Heb 6:4-8)	30
110.	Scripture warns us with examples of apostates (Luke 22:3)	30
111.	Scripture prophesies that some Christians will fall away (1 Tim 4:1)	31
112.	Satan and sinners, not God's will, are the origin of sin (Rev 12:9)	31
113.	Satan and his angels fight to prevent redemption from sin (Rev 12:7)	31
114.	Satan is the father, ruler and spirit working in those dead in sin (Eph 2:2)	31
115.	Satan is a liar (Rev 12:9)	31
116.	Satan deceives through antichrists that look like Christ (Matt 24:22-25)	31
117.	Satan deceives through "the" antichrist, which is the Papacy (2 Thess 2:1-12)	31
118.	Satan is a murderer (John 8:44)	32

119. Sin will result in eternal death and damnation, which is Hell (Matt 13:40-42) 32
 120. Hell is a real place of eternal punishment prepared for Satan (Rev 20:14-15) 32

C. God's Gospel is the free undeserved grace of Father, Son and Spirit (Rom 3:21-25)

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- VIII. God the Father created and sustains all things (Neh 9:6) 33
121. The Father Almighty predestined the elect for eternal life (Eph 1:4-5) 33
 122. The Father does not predestine anyone to condemnation (1 Tim 2:4) 33
 123. The Father's foreknows all things perfectly (Psa 139:16) 33
 124. The Father's foreknowledge restrains evil (Gen 50:20) 33
 125. The Father works all things for the good of the elect (Rom 8:28) 33
 126. The Father Almighty created all things in six days (Gen 1:1-2:3) 33
 127. The Father sustains all things (Matt 6:25-34) 34
- IX. God the Son became incarnate to redeem the world (John 1:14, 29) 34
128. The Son has always existed with a fully divine nature (John 1:1-3) 34
 129. The Son took to Himself a fully human nature (John 1:14) 34
 130. The Son was born of the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:35) 34
 131. The Son is one person who now has two natures, divine and human (Rom 9:5) 34
 132. The Son's two natures are unmixed (Phil 2:6-8) 34
 133. The Son's two natures are united in a real personal communion (Mark 9:2-3) 34
 134. This union does not add to or subtract from His divine nature (Jam 1:17) 35
 135. This union gives His human nature non-essential divine properties (Dan 7:14) 35
 136. The Son is present everywhere, not only as God, but also as man (Eph 1:23) 35
 137. The Son has power over all, not only as God, but also as man (Matt 28:18) 35
 138. The Son gives life, not only as God, but also as man (John 5:21) 35
 139. The Son can be worshipped, not only as God, but also as man (Matt 28:17) 35
- X. God the Son was humiliated to pay for our sin (Phil 2:7-8) 36
140. The Son was humiliated and laid aside his divine Majesty (Phil 2:7-8) 36
 141. The Son fulfilled the Law (Matt 5:17) 36
 142. The Son suffered and bodily died (Acts 3:15) 36
 143. The Son's death was a legal substitution for all (Gal 3:13) 36
 144. The Son's death was a priestly sacrifice for all (Heb 10:12) 36
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 146. The Son's atonement is objective and unlimited (John 1:29) 36
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148. The Son was exalted and laid aside his human servitude (Phil 2:9-11) 37
 149. The Son descended to Hell to declare his victory over Satan (1 Pet 3:18-19) 37
 150. The Son bodily rose from the dead in victory (Rom 4:25) 37
 151. The Son ascended to the Father's right hand side (Acts 1:9-11) 37
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159. The Means of Grace are Gospel and Sacrament (Eph 1:13)	39
160. The Means of Grace do not include the Law (Gal 3:23-24)	39
161. The Means of Grace always achieve God's intended purposes (Isa 55:10-11)	39
162. The Means of Grace are not made ineffective by evil ministers (Matt 23:2-3)	39
163. The Means of Grace must be received by faith (Gal 5:4)	39
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167. Baptism, being God's Word, is necessary for salvation (Mark 16:16)	40
168. Baptism should not be repeated (Eph 4:5)	40
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173. The Supper also remains true bread and wine (1 Cor 10:16)	41
174. The Supper is not an atoning sacrifice (Heb 10:12)	41
175. The Supper is, with the whole Christian life, a sacrifice of praise (Rom 12:1)	41
176. The Supper is received by unbelievers to their judgement (1 Cor 11:29-30)	42
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185. The Spirit does not tell us to expect this foundation to continue (Eph 2:20)	43
186. The Spirit will not add another word to Scripture (Rev 22:18)	43
187. The Spirit always accompanies faith, not spiritual gifts and feats (Matt 7:23)	43
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189. The Spirit does not remain with apostates (Luke 8:13)	44

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195. Prayer speaks words God has given us back to Him (Psa 51:15)	45
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198. 2—Prayer asks for God's Word to spread and the Spirit to work faith (Matt 13)	45
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201. 4—Prayer asks for all things needed for a blessed life (Psa 104:28)	45
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208. The Church is real (Eph 1:20-23)	46
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227. The Call must only be given to qualified individuals (1 Tim 3)	50
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230. Corporate worship is devoted to apostolic teaching (Acts 2:42)	50
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249. A child's vocation is to obey their parents (Eph 6:1-3)	53
250. An employer's vocation is fairness to their employees (Eph 6:9)	53
251. An employee's vocation is to work for their employer (Eph 6:5-8)	53
252. A government's vocation is to establish civil order (Rom 13:3-4)	53
253. A citizen's vocation is to obey their government (Rom 13:5-7)	53

The Source of Our Confession

A. God's Word is truth and Christians receive it by faith (John 10:22-30)

2I. God's Word is our only perfect, infallible, authority (2 Pet 1:16-21)

1. God partly reveals Himself by His works so we are culpable (Rom 1:20)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God made all things by his Word (Gen 1; John 1:1) and so "even the pagans, to a certain extent, had a knowledge of God from the natural law. But they neither knew Him nor glorified Him correctly" (FC V.22) because they suppress this knowledge (Romans 1:19–32). So, while God is partially revealed in creation (Psa 19:1) this revelation does not make God known to us because of our sin, but only makes us accountable to God (Rom 1:20; 2:15).

2. God fully reveals Himself only by his Word (2 Tim 3:15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that eternal life is "to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (John 17:3). God therefore reveals himself in a way "which is saving, through which we gain eternal life, namely... through the Word, in which God reveals both Himself and His will and confirms this revelation by notable events which are clearly miraculous." (LT I.1.7) This Word is his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 11:25–27; John 1:18), attested and presented to us through Scripture (2 Tim 3:15) and the preached Word (1 Cor 1:21) in whom the fulness of God dwells (Col 1:19-20).

3. Scripture is God's Word (2 Tim 3:16)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God breathed "the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the pure, clear fountain of Israel" (2 Pet 1:21; 1 Cor 2:13; 2 Tim 3:16; FC SD Rule and Norm 3): Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1-2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1-2 Thessalonians, 1-2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1-2 Peter, 1-3 John, Jude, and Revelation.

4. Scripture is purely God's Word (Psa 19:8)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that Scripture is pure so "clean and without any pharisaical leaven or addition" (LCom.Psa 19:8): not mixed with something that is not God's Word, nor merely containing God's Word, nor only partly composed of God's Word, but is purely God's Word (Psa 12:6; 19:8; FC Preface 16).

5. Scripture is truth (John 17:17)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God's Word is "infallible truth" (John 17:17; BC Preface 20), and therefore Scripture is faithful so can be trusted (Psa 19:7); upright so a true source of joy (Psa 19:8); true (Psa 19:9; John 17:17) so that "every word is true" (2 Sam 22:31; Psa 18:30; Prov 30:5; Rev 21:5; 22:6); inerrant, infallible and authoritative in all matters with which it deals, and so historical and factual in all it presents as history (Luke 16:29-31; Deut 4:2; 13:1-5).

6. Scripture cannot contradict itself (John 10:35)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that we can boast of the Scriptures because "the Holy Spirit cannot contradict himself, for he is not a God of discord, but a God of peace and harmony" (2 Cor 13:11; LW 36). Jesus states "Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35), meaning it cannot contradict itself, because God who has perfect knowledge (Job 37:16) does not lie or change his mind (Num 23:19; Rom 3:4; 2 Tim 2:13; Tit 1:2; Heb 6:18).

7. Scripture has God's authority (Luke 4:32)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that Christ's Word possesses Christ's authority (Matt 7:29; Mark 1:27; Luke 4:32, 36; 5:24; Heb 1:3), we must tremble at God's Word as we tremble before his throne (Isa 66:1-2) and Paul commends the Thessalonians for receiving God's Word in recognition of God's authority (1 Thess 2:13). So all other writings "are subject to the Scriptures" (1 Cor 14:32; FC Ep Rule and Norm 2) and "all our life and work must be guided by God's Word" (LC I.92).

8. Scripture is relevant, being actively spoken today (Heb 4:12)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that even though Scripture was written down thousands of years ago "these words are not lazy or dead, but are creative, living words" because it is the living, abiding and active Word of God (1 Pet 1:23; Hebrews 4:12; LC I.3.101). The Holy Spirit is speaking Scripture today: the writer to the Hebrews does not quote Psalm 95 by saying "the Holy Spirit said," but rather "the Holy Spirit says" (Heb 3:7).

9. Scripture is useful (2 Tim 3:16)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that all Scripture is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Tim 3:16). However, as is explained more thoroughly elsewhere, this does not mean every part of Scripture is useful in the same way: some is Law, some is Gospel. Paul can apply civil laws to the administration of the Church (1 Cor 9:9-10; 1 Tim 5:18), and ceremonial laws to work of Christ and his Sacraments (Col 2:11-12).

10. Scripture is effective (Isa 55:11)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the Word is so effective that whenever it is seriously contemplated, heard, and used, it is bound never to be without fruit (Isa 55:11; Mark 4:20). It always awakens new understanding, pleasure, and devoutness and produces a pure heart and pure thoughts (Phil 4:8)" (LC I.3.101). As we come to Scripture "the devil is put to flight and driven away" (Jam 4:7) and we can be confident that "this exercise in the Word is more pleasing to God than any work of hypocrisy, however brilliant" (LC I.3.102).

11. Scripture is perfectly sufficient (2 Pet 1:3-4)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that Scripture is perfect (Psa 19:7) so sufficient for salvation, life and godliness (John 20:30-31; 2 Tim 3:15-17; 2 Pet 1:3-4). The twisting of Scripture in the early centuries of the church by heretics led to the church holding councils to respond to these groups, and so as a result the saying falsely arose "that the Scriptures were not sufficient, that we also needed the laws and the interpretations of the councils and the fathers" (LW 37). But, Scripture prophesies that false

teachers will twist the Scriptures in this way, and so is sufficient even to explain its own history of misinterpretation (2 Tim 4:3-4; 2 Pet 3:16).

12. Scripture is spoken through men (1 Cor 2:12-13)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that inspiration means "God had men express His Word in their own language (Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek), and in their own style (personal, historical, poetic, oratorical). (Cf. the superscription on the cross, Matt 27:37; Mark 15:26; Luke 23:38; John 19:19-20.) Thus the holy writers felt personally responsible for every word they wrote (cf. 2 Cor 7:8), while they at the same time knew that their words were given by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:12-13)." (WWB Scripture)

13. Scripture is our only source of doctrine (Rev 22:18-19)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "God's Word shall establish articles of faith, and no one else, not even an angel can do so" (SA II.2) and so the Scriptures "are the only true standard or norm by which all teachers and doctrines are to be judged" (Gal 1:8; FC SD Rule and Norm 3). God has given us our reason, experience and tradition as aids in listening to what Scripture says (Ezr 7:10; 2 Tim 2:7), but the church does not add these as other sources of doctrine to Scripture (Deut 4:2; 12:32; Prov 30:5-6; 1 Cor 4:6; Rev 22:18). They are wrongly used when they lead to doctrinal claims that contradict Scripture (Tit 1:9), are not expressly stated by Scripture (Rev 22:18), or subtract from Scripture (Rev 22:19).

14. Scripture has authority over the Church (2 Pet 1:16-21)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God's Word creates God's people (Exod 19:3-6), God's people do not create God's Word. The church recognises the Word of Christ (John 10:27), it does not regulate the Word of Christ. As people hear, believe and confess scripture (Rom 10:9-10) the Holy Spirit gives the church authority to teach Scripture (Matt 28:18-20; 1 Pet 2:9), the church does not give authority to Scripture. The Apostle Peter even considered Scripture more confirmed than his own eyewitness experience of Jesus' transfiguration (2 Pet 1:16-21). Scripture does not submit to the church, the church submits to Scripture: the passage "obey your leaders (Heb 13:17)... requires obedience to the Gospel. It does not establish a dominion for [church leaders] apart from the Gospel. Neither should [church leaders] enact traditions contrary to the Gospel or interpret their traditions contrary to the Gospel" (Ap XXVIII.20).

15. Scripture is prophesied to abide (1 Pet 1:23-25)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God's Word is imperishable, living and abiding (1 Pet 1:23), "the word of the Lord endures forever" and will not pass away (Isa 40:8; Matt 5:18; 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33; 1 Pet 1:24-25). This prophecy was seen in David's life, when despite his experience of suffering the "words of the promise had to abide and come true, since God cannot lie or deceive" (Tit 1:2; LC I.46). We can also see that this prophecy has so far been fulfilled in history for the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts, which have been preserved for us through oral tradition, hand written manuscripts, printed texts and more recently digital copies.

16. Scripture is summarised in confessions to correct error (Tit 1:9)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the church must speak the doctrine of Scripture clearly (Col 4:4) and is commanded "to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it" (Tit 1:9). For this reason, "in

ancient times the true Christian doctrine, in a pure, sound sense, was collected from God's Word into brief articles or chapters against the corruption of heretics" (FC SD Rule and Norm 3) and at the Reformation the doctrines of the Word of God were gathered into the Lutheran Confessions "against the corruptions of the papacy and other sects" (FC SD Rule and Norm 5). Creeds and confessions are therefore summaries of God's Word in response to those matters that are most under attack from false doctrine at a particular time. They are not a control for the interpretation of Scripture (2 Pet 1:20).

17. We confess only confessions that summarise Scripture (Matt 5:37)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that Scripture commands us to speak plainly and honestly (Exod 20:16; Matt 5:37), therefore the creeds and confessions we confess should not be re-interpreted in light of Scripture, but understood in their own historical contexts, and accepted or rejected on the basis of whether they are found to be true confessions of the doctrine of Scripture. "We confess [the creeds] because [they have] been taken from God's Word and [are] well founded firmly in the Word of God" (FC SD Rule and Norm 5).

18. We confess the three Creeds, Book of Concord, and this (2 Thess 2:15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that if creeds and confessions do summarise Scripture, then "we are bound to them in our faith and life" (2 Thess 2:15; TWB I.13), not because of their nature of being Creeds and Confessions, but because they affirm what Scripture says. Therefore, we confess and are bound to the three ecumenical creeds (Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian), the Book of Concord, and this confession of the Biblical Lutheran Church of the UK.

2II. God's Word is about justification by faith (Rom 3:21-22)

19. Scripture's essence is its meaning (John 17:17)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God's Word is truth (John 17:17), and so while the Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic words of scripture are the very words of God, the essence of God's Word is the meaning of these words. Therefore, translations of Scripture that faithfully convey its doctrinal meaning (Heb 2:3; 1 Pet 1:25; Mark 13:31; John 17:20; Matt 28:19-20; TWB I.11), the doctrine itself (1 Thess 2:13), and preaching and speaking this doctrine (Luke 10:16; Heb 13:7) are also called the Word of God.

20. Scripture is clear (Luke 24:45)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "all the things... contained in the Scriptures; are made manifest... [and] set in the clearest light" (BW Preface 3). "The most abstruse mysteries, are no longer in the dark corner, but... manifested openly. For Christ has opened our understanding to understand the Scriptures, (Luke 24:45). And the Gospel is preached to every creature. (Mark 16:15; Col 1:23) 'Their sound is gone out into all the earth.' (Psalm 19:4) And 'All things that are written, are written for our instruction.' (Rom 15:4) And again, 'All Scripture is inspired from above, and is profitable for instruction.' (2 Tim 3:16)" (BW Preface 4).

21. Scripture must be interpreted rightly (2 Tim 2:15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that Satan "can twist and pervert the Word of God and the Scriptures" (Matt 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-12; FD SD VII.31), so

Scripture must be interpreted rightly (2 Tim 2:15), and therefore that Bible teachers have a responsibility to rebuke false teachers (Tit 1:9).

22. Scripture can be interpreted by any Christian (1 Cor 2:15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that because all Christians are priests they "also have the power to test and judge what is correct or incorrect in matters of faith" (1 Cor 2:15; 2 Cor 4:13; CN I). "Therefore it behooves every Christian to espouse the cause of the faith, to understand and defend it, and to rebuke all errors." (CN I)

23. Scripture must be interpreted with God's help (John 14:26)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "if God does not open and explain Holy Writ, no one can understand it; it will remain a closed book, enveloped in darkness." (John 10:3; LCom Psa 68:14). Christians can be confident of Christ's promise that the Spirit will bring to our remembrance Christ's Words and teach them to us (John 14:26).

24. Scripture must be interpreted in its plain literary sense (2 Cor 4:2)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that we read all Scripture as the Lutheran Confessors read Christ's words of institution" "With simple faith and due obedience we receive the words as they read, in their proper and plain sense (2 Cor 4:2; FC SD VI.45)."

25. Scripture must be used to interpret Scripture (2 Pet 3:15-18)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that Scripture alone must be used to interpret Scripture, so that seemingly obscure or difficult passages are interpreted "according to certain and clear Scripture passages," difficult passages should not be given an interpretation "contrary to the Scriptures (Heb 5:11-14; 1 Pet 2:2; 2 Pet 3:15-18; Ap XXVII.60)."

26. All Scripture is about justification by Faith (Luke 24:27)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the first and chief article" of our religion (1 Cor 15:3-5) is that "Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, died for our sins and was raised again for our justification (John 5:39, 46; Rom 4:24-25). He alone is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29), and God has laid upon Him the iniquities of us all (Isaiah 53:6). All have sinned and are justified freely, without their own works or merits, by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, in His blood (Rom 3:23-25)" (SA II.2), and we obtain this forgiveness of sins by faith alone (Acts 10:43). All scripture reveals Jesus Christ (Luke 24:27), and the fact that we obtain justification only by faith in him "alone opens the door to the entire Bible" (Ap IV.2).

2III. God's Word contains Law and Gospel (2 Tim 2:15)

27. Scripture must be rightly divided between Law and Gospel (2 Tim 2:15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that reading Scripture in light of justification by faith means distinguishing Law from Gospel, as this distinction "serves the purpose of rightly dividing God's Word and properly explaining and understanding the Scriptures of the holy prophets and apostles" (2 Tim 2:15; FC SD V.1).

28. "Law" in its proper sense means God's righteous commands (Rom 3:21-26)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the "Law is properly a divine doctrine. It teaches what is right and pleasing to God, and it rebukes everything that is sin and contrary to God's will" (Rom 7:12-13; FC Ep V.3). Scripture uses the word "Law" in this way to mean "everything that reproves sin... Its peculiar office is to rebuke sin and to lead to the knowledge of sins" (Rom 3:20; 7:7; FC SD V.14). It is read correctly when its rigidity is in no way relaxed (Rom 10:5). Scripture also uses "Law" in other senses:

1. all of God's Word as written Scripture (Psa 19:7)
2. even the Gospel (Isa 2:3)
3. the Pentateuch (Acts 28:23).
4. the Old Covenant (Heb 9:19-20).

29. The Law has been written in people's hearts from creation (Rom 2:15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Law is "written in all people's hearts" from the beginning of creation (Rom 2:15; LC II.67).

30. The Law was promulgated in the Old Covenant (John 1:17)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Law was publicly manifested and preached by Moses (John 1:17). "In a certain sense when the nation of Israel was established, the law of God was promulgated," which means the Law was set forth "by a public and manifest testimony" (Rom 5:13-14; LociCom VIII).

31. "Gospel" in its proper sense means God's free promise of grace (Mark 1:15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "in its proper sense, Gospel does not mean the preaching of repentance, but only the preaching of God's grace. This follows directly after the preaching of repentance, as Christ says, 'Repent and believe in the gospel'" (Mark 1:15). Scripture uses the word "Gospel" in this way to denote the free gift of grace in distinction from repentance (Mark 1:15). In the Gospel "God is superabundantly generous in His grace" (SA 3.IV), presenting to us the promises and love of the triune God (John 3:16; 1 John 4:10). "Everything that comforts, that offers God's favor and grace to transgressors of the Law, is, and is properly called, the Gospel. It is a good and joyful message that God will not punish sins, but will forgive them for Christ's sake" (Rom 1:16; FC SD V.21). It is read correctly when its unconditional grace is in no way compromised (2 Cor 4:3-4; 2 Tim 3:16-17; Gal 2:5; 5:3,6). Scripture also uses "Gospel" in other senses:

1. the written accounts of Jesus' life and death, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John (Mark 1:1).
2. the entire doctrine of the New Covenant, which is "a preaching of repentance and the forgiveness of sins" (Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-47; Acts 20:21; FC SD V.5).

32. The Gospel has been promised from Adam (Gen 3:15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the promise of grace bestowed in Christ... is constantly repeated in the whole of Scripture, first having been delivered to Adam... in Gen 3:15" (Ap XIIa.53).

33. The Gospel was promulgated and effected in the New Covenant (Luke 22:20)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Gospel was promulgated in the new covenant, as explicitly claimed by Christ at the institution of the

Supper (Matt 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Cor 11:23–26; FC SD VII.52). It is the grace and truth that came through Jesus Christ (John 1:17).

34. The Old and New Covenants are not the same covenant (Jer 31:31-34)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the two covenants are not outward administrations of the same covenant, but are actually two different contracts and "the differences between these two covenants are clearly treated in Scripture" (Jer 31:31-34; Matt 9:16; Mark 2:21; Luke 5:36; LociTheo 16). Scripture clearly shows these are different covenants for the following reasons:

1. **The Old was mediated by Moses, the New by Christ (Heb 8:6):** "the mediator of the Old Covenant was Moses (Deut 5:26-27)... but the mediator of the New Covenant is Christ (Heb 8:6)" (LociTheo 16).
2. **The Old was ratified by animal blood, the New by Christ's (Heb 9:13-14):** The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the "Old Covenant was ratified by the blood of animals (Exod 24:5), but the New by the blood of the Son of God (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25; Heb 9:12)" (LociTheo 16).
3. **The Old established an earthly kingdom, the New a spiritual (John 18:33-36):** The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Old Covenant is "the pact by which the people of Israel were bound to the Law and to this form of civil life" so that the Messiah might be born amongst this people (LociCom xv). It guaranteed the preservation of Israel as a temporal political entity until the Messiah came (Deut 18:15-19), but the New Covenant has no temporal political entity (John 18:33-36).
4. **The Old was promulgated in the former days, the New in the latter (Jer 31:33):** The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Old Covenant was promulgated in ancient Egypt (Jer 31:33), whereas the New "is predicated for the future, in the last days, that is, in the days of Christ," (Isa 2:2; Mic 4:1; LociTheo 16), which is why the Apostles call the period of the Church the "last days" and that "the end of the ages has come" (1 Cor 10:11; 1 John 2:18).
5. **The Old was promulgated on Sinai, the New from Zion (Gal 4:24-25):** The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the Old Covenant was promulgated on Mt. Sinai" (Exod 19:18; Gal 4:24-25; Heb 12:18; LociTheo 16), "but the new covenant came from Mt. Zion and Jerusalem" (Isa 2:3; Mic 4:2; Gal 4:26-27; Heb 12:22; LociTheo 16).
6. **The Old was written on stone, the New on Christians' hearts (2 Cor 3:3):** The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the old law was written on tablets of stone (Exod 31:18; 34:1; Deut 9:10), but the new covenant is inscribed through the Spirit of God in the hearts of believers (Jer 31:33; 2 Cor 3:3)" (LociTheo 16).
7. **The Old offered eternal blessings by works, the New by faith (Gal 3:10-12):** The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Old Covenant did not only offer temporal blessings, rather "it is evident that spiritual promises of eternal life had been given under the old covenant (Lev 18:5)," but these were offered "on the foundation of the observance of the Law which was called weak and useless (Heb 7:18; 8:7)" because of sin (LociTheo 16). The New Covenant promises spiritual blessings on the basis of Christ alone (Rom 8:2-4; Gal 2:19-21; 3:10-12).

8. **The Old kills, the New gives life (2 Cor 3:6-9):** The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the old covenant is the letter which kills... but the new covenant is the life-giving Spirit" (2 Cor. 3:6–9; Gal 4:24-26; LociTheo 16).
9. **The Old was abrogated, the New is eternal (Heb 8:13):** The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the Old Covenant has been abrogated. The New remains forever" (Heb 7:20; 8:13; LociTheo 16).

35. The Old Covenant preserved God's Word until Christ came (Mal 2:7)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the civil arrangement of the Old Covenant was made so that "the promise of the coming Messiah might be preserved and propagated" until the coming of Christ (Mal 2:7; LociCom 16).

36. The Old Covenant defined a nation through which Christ came (Gen 12:1-3)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the ceremonial laws of Moses and the civil laws are not commanded to the other nations, nor are they binding upon us." These laws defined the nation of Israel and "were given to the people of Israel for that time in order that the political structure might continue for a definite period of time, so that there might be a specific place in which the Christ should be born and reveal Himself, be proclaimed, and become the sacrifice and openly complete the work of our eternal life" (Gen 12:1-3; LociCom VIII.A).

37. The Old Covenant was given to teach and lead us to Christ (John 5:46)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Old Covenant was given to teach us about Christ and to lead us to Christ because Moses wrote about Christ (John 5:46), all Moses and the Prophets are about Christ (Luke 24:27) and the prophets wrote things not for their own sake but for ours in the last days (1 Pet 1:10-12).

38. The Old Covenant is obsolete (Heb 8:13)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the New Covenant makes the Old Covenant obsolete (Heb 8:13), it is thus not binding on Christians. In Acts 15:10-11 "Peter forbids burdening consciences with many rites, either from Moses or others" (AC XXVI.27).

39. The Old Covenant had three aspects: moral, civil, ceremonial (Exod 24-40)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "there are certain moral laws, and certain which are ceremonial, and certain which are civil" (LociTheo VIII.1.IV). Scripture uses different words to denote the law (e.g. Deut 6:1, 17), and in Exodus God gives Moses first the moral law (Exod 20), then the civil laws (Exod 21-23), then following this the ceremonial laws (Exod 24-40). The moral law was to be taught by everyone (Deut 6), the civil law by judges (Deut 17), the ceremonial law by priests (Mal 2:7).

40. The Moral Law is God's Law bound to the nation of Israel (Exod 20; Deut 5)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God bound the people of Israel to His law by the covenant made with them at Sinai. This covenant is described in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5, and so apart from those aspects of the Ten Commandments that are specific to the Israelite nation, these very commandments are an expression of God's Moral Law.

41. The Moral Law reveals God's Law that continues to bind everyone (Rom 13:9)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that while Christians are free from the Mosaic Law as a covenant (Rom 7:2-3) they are not free from the Law as a revelation of God's perfect will, thus "Paul, when encouraging the regenerate to do good works, clearly presents to them the Ten Commandments" (Rom 13:9; FC SD VI.21).

42. The Ceremonial Law was a shadow of Christ's sacrifice (Col 2:16-17)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "since the Gospel has been revealed, all the ceremonies of Moses can be omitted" (AC XXVIII.59) because these "are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ" (Col 2:16-17).

43. The Ceremonial Law is not binding in the latter days (Col 2:16-17)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "Scripture itself has abolished the Sabbath Day. It teaches that since the Gospel has been revealed, all the ceremonies of Moses can be omitted" (Col 2:16-17; AC XXVIII.59).

44. The Civil Law was a shadow of Christ's spiritual kingdom (Gal 6:16)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that this early kingdom established by the Old Covenant was a type of the spiritual kingdom established by the New Covenant (Gal 6:16; Heb 8:8; 1 Pet 2:9).

45. The Civil Law is not binding in the latter days (Luke 12:13-14)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Gospel does not "offer new laws about the public state, but commands that we obey present laws, whether they have been framed by heathens or by others. It commands that in this obedience we should exercise love. Carlstadt was crazy to impose on us Moses' judicial laws" (Ap XVI.55). When prompted, Christ refused to exercise the office of a civil judge (Luke 12:13-14).

46. The New Covenant has two aspects: repentance and the Gospel (Mark 16:15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the doctrine of the New Covenant, is "a preaching of repentance and the forgiveness of sins" (Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-47; Acts 20:21; FC SD V.5). Repentance is not properly a part of the Gospel, which is exclusively the preaching of God's monergistic gracious work that provides justification and the forgiveness of sins. But, "if the term Gospel is understood to mean Christ's entire teaching that He proposed in His ministry, as His apostles did also (this is how it is used in Mark 1:15; Acts 20:21), then it is correctly said and written that the Gospel is a preaching of repentance and of the forgiveness of sins" (FC SD V.6). The ministry and preaching of Christ is the ministry and preaching of the New Covenant (2 Cor 3:6-8).

B. God's Law reveals our sin, which is an inward tendency to evil (Matt 5:43-48)

- 2l. The Law commands us to love the one God who is three persons (Deut 6:4-5; Matt 28:19)

47. 1—The Law commands us to love God above all things (Deut 6:5)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Law commands us to love God (Deut 6:5; Matt 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27). This command

includes within it the command to have faith (Exod 20:3-4), the command to pray (Exod 20:7), and the command to sanctify our time by hearing God's Word, which is "the treasure that sanctifies everything" (Exod 20:8-11; 1 Tim 4:5; LC I.91).

48. 1—The Law commands us to trust God above all things (Heb 11:6)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "to have a God is nothing other than trusting and believing Him with the heart" and "the confidence and faith of the heart alone make both God and an idol" (Matt 6:24; LC I.2). It is therefore impossible to love God without faith (Heb 11:6), and so the essence of the first commandment (Exod 20:3; Deut 5:7) is therefore that we have faith (Deut 10:16).

49. 1—God has revealed Himself progressively (Rom 16:25-26)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that there are mysteries revealed only in these last days (Rom 16:25) but which were always attested in the Old Testament writings (Rom 16:26). One such mystery is that the one, unchanging, God (Mal 3:6) has eternally existed as three persons: "The three divine persons in the Godhead... were thus at once shadowed forth at the very beginning of the world (Gen 1:1-3, 26-27), and were afterwards clearly understood by the prophets (Psa 110:1; Isa 63:10-14), and at length fully revealed in the Gospel" (John 5; LCom.Gen 3:22). Only with the coming of Christ was God's self-revelation complete, because in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell (Col 1:19).

50. 1—God is one (Deut 6:4)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that there is only one true God, a single being, "one divine, undivided essence" (Ap I) "and nature" (SA I), composed of nothing (Deut 6:4; Isa 44:6). God's oneness is a real, essential, ontological oneness of being, not a mere quality of the relationship between persons (Deut 6:4). He has one will (Job 23:13). He needs nothing (Acts 17:24-25) "is eternal (Psa 90:2), without a body (John 4:24), of infinite power (2 Chron 20:6), wisdom (Psa 104:24; 1 John 1:5), and goodness (1 John 4:8)" (AC I).

51. 1—God is three eternal persons (Matt 28:19)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the one God is "three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19; 1 Cor 8:6). These three persons are of the same essence and power. Our churches use the term person as the Fathers have used it. We use it to signify, not a part or quality in another, but that which subsists of itself" (AC I.3-4). The persons are only eternally distinguished by the relations of their personal subsistence.

52. 1—The Father is truly God, unbegotten (John 5:26)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God the Father is truly God, "begotten of no one," nor proceeding (John 5:26; SA 1).

53. 1—The Son is truly God, begotten from the Father (John 3:16)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God the Son is truly God, from all eternity "begotten of the Father" (John 1:14; 3:16; 5:26; Heb 1:5; SA I).

54. 1—The Spirit is truly God, proceeding from the Father and Son (John 15:26)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God the Spirit is truly God, from all eternity "proceeding from the Father and the Son" (John 15:26; SA 1).

55. 1—The three persons are equal in authority (Matt 28:18-19)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, the Holy Spirit almighty" (Ath), so the three persons are equal in authority (Matt 28:18-19). Therefore, the Son is not eternally subordinate to the Father, functionally or otherwise, but is the Word of God (John 1:1-2), through whom the Father does all things (John 5:19).

56. 1—The three persons always act as one God (Mark 1:10-11)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that persons therefore never act independently, but always as one (e.g. Mark 1:10-11): the Son cannot act independently of the Father, nor the Father of the Son (John 5:19). Likewise, the Spirit is not independent of the Son (2 Cor 3:16-18); he is sent by the Father through the Son (John 14:26) and by the Son from the Father (John 15:26).

57. 1—The one God always acts as three persons (Eph 1:3-14)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that each person of God acts together with the others in a way appropriate to their person (LC 2.6-7). The Father created the world through the Son by the Spirit (Gen 1:1-2; John 1:1-3). The Son, in the power of the Spirit, was sent by the Father and became incarnate to redeem mankind (Mark 1:9-11). The Spirit, through the Word of Christ, sanctifies those chosen by the Father in Christ (Eph 1:4, 13-14).

58. 1—God's chosen pronouns are male (John 5)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God does not have physical attributes such as gender (John 4:24) and created both man and woman in his image (Gen 1:27). He is therefore the only being in existence who can choose His own pronouns. He has done so, and has chosen to reveal Himself to us exclusively using the male gender as Father and Son (John 5). The Son became incarnate as a man, and his male gender is not incidental to the incarnation, but part of his self-revelation (Eph 5:23). Just as the Apostle Paul can use female imagery to describe himself (1 Thess 2:7) without implying gender fluidity, God occasionally describes Himself using female (Isa 66:13) and neuter (Deut 32:15) imagery, without implying gender fluidity. When referring to Himself personally as the one God, or any of the three persons, Father, Son, or Spirit, God always uses male pronouns. The grammatical genders of Hebrew and Greek nouns for the Spirit are linguistic features of Hebrew and Greek and do not imply a non-male gendered identity to the Spirit. When Jesus uses personal pronouns to speak of the person of the Spirit He exclusively uses male pronouns (John 16:13). Both the one God, and any person of God referred to individually, must therefore exclusively be referred to with the male pronouns He/Him and we therefore "reject the use of feminine names and pronouns for God" (TWB I.14).

59. 2—God's name should not be abused for falsehood (Lev 19:11-12)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "God's name must not be appealed to falsely, or taken upon the lips, while the heart knows well enough—or should know—that the truth of the matter is different. This is what happens with people who

take oaths in court, where one side lies against the other. For God's name cannot be misused worse than for the support of falsehood and deceit" (Lev 19:11-12; LC I.51-52).

60.2—God's name should not be shamed by false teaching (Rev 2:13)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the greatest abuse" of God's name "occurs in spiritual matters. These have to do with the conscience, when false preachers rise up and offer their lying vanities as God's Word" (Rev 2:13; LC I.54).

61.2—God's name should not be lowered through occult practices (Lev 20:3)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that to "curse, swear, use witchcraft" is to lower God's name and so these things should not be done (Lev 20:3; SC I.2). Pagan liturgy must therefore not be used in church worship.

62.2—God's name should be used for truth (Deut 6:13)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God's "name has been revealed and given to us so that it may be of constant use and profit. So it is natural to conclude that since this commandment forbids using the holy name for falsehood or wickedness, we are, on the other hand, commanded to use His name for truth and for all good, like when someone takes an oath truthfully when it is needed and it is demanded" (Num 30:2; Deut 6:13; LC I.63-64).

63.2—God's name should be honoured by biblical teaching (Jam 5:10)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that lifting God's name rightly "also applies to right teaching" (Jam 5:10; LC I.64).

64.2—God's name should be lifted through prayer (Psa 50:15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that lifting God's name rightly also applies "to calling on His name in trouble or praising and thanking Him in prosperity" (Psa 50:15; LC I.64).

65.3—The Sabbath means people should have rest and holidays (Exod 20:8-11)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the simple meaning of the [Sabbath] commandment [is] People must have holidays" (LC I.86), and workers, especially manual laborers, must be able to "withdraw in order to rest for a day and be refreshed" (Exod 20:8-11; LC I.83).

66.3—The Sabbath day itself has been abolished (Col 2:16-17)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "Scripture itself has abolished the Sabbath Day" (Col 2:16-17; AC XXVIII.59).

67.3—The Sabbath is not fulfilled by the Lord's Day (Heb 4:9-11)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "it is a great error for anyone to think that it is by the authority of the Church that we observe the Lord's Day as something necessary, instead of the Sabbath Day" (AC XXVIII.58). The Sabbath is fulfilled in God's rest in the New Creation (Heb 4:9-11). The purpose for the Lord's Day is that "since the masses of people cannot attend [church] every day, there must be at least one day in the week set apart. From ancient times Sunday has been appointed for this purpose. So we also should continue to do the same, in order that everything may be done in an

orderly way and no one may create disorder by starting unnecessary practices" (1 Cor 14:40; LC I.85). Sunday is traditionally called the Lord's Day because it is the day Christ rose from the dead, not because it is a fulfillment of the Sabbath.

68.3—Sunday is not special (Rom 14:5-6)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that Christian worship "does not have to be just on this or that day. For in itself no one day is better than another (Rom 14:5–6; LC I.85).

69.3—Only God's Word makes things holy for us (1 Tim 4:5)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "whenever God's Word is taught, preached, heard, read, or meditated upon, then the person, day, and work are sanctified. This is not because of the outward work, but because of the Word, which makes saints of us all" (LC I.92) because "God's Word is the treasure that sanctifies everything" (1 Tim 4:5; LC I.91).

70.3—God's Word must be used to make every day holy (Psa 119:11-13)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "we should daily be engaged with God's Word and carry it in our hearts and upon our lips" (Psa 119:11–13; LC I.89).

2II. The Law commands us to love our neighbour (Lev 19:18)

71.4—The Law commands us to love our neighbour (Lev 19:18)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Law commands us to love our neighbour (Lev 19:18; Matt 19:19; 22:39; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27) and in response to those who would seek to justify themselves by restricting the definition of "neighbour," Jesus told a parable clearly teaching that our neighbour is anyone—no matter their ethnic, religious or other identity—who we would accept help from if we were lying in the road nearly dead (Luke 10:29-37).

72.4—We must honour our parents (Exod 20:12)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "parents [must] be addressed kindly and with reverence" (Prov 15:1) and that "both in the heart and with the body, we demonstrate that we value them very highly, and that, next to God, we regard them as the very highest" (Exod 20:12; LC I.107).

73.4—We must be grateful for our birth gender (Psa 139:13-14)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God made each one of us (Psa 139:13-14) and so each of us should say: "I am God's creature... He has given and constantly preserves for me my body, soul, and life, my members great and small, all my senses, reason, and understanding, and so on" (LC II.13). This careful and deliberate creation of our body includes our gender, and nobody has "been given the power to make a woman out of a man or a man out of a woman, or to nullify either sex" (SA III.11). We should not be ungrateful for this gift, but instead "it is clearly suggested and concluded that it is our duty to love, praise, and thank Him for these things without ceasing" (1 Thess 5:17–18; LC II.13).

74.4—We must obey government and all human institutions (1 Pet 2:13-17)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that “civil government” and other human institutions of civil authority are “all included in the place of fatherhood and extends farthest of all relations. Here “father” is not one person from a single family, but it means the many people the father has as tenants, citizens, or subjects” (1 Pet 2:13-17; LC I.150).

75.5—We must not cause or wish harm by thought, word or deed (Matt 5:21-26)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that “we must harm no one, either with our hand or by deed. We must not use our tongue to instigate or counsel harm. We must neither use nor agree to use any means or methods by which another person may be injured” (Exod 20:13) and “the heart must not be ill disposed toward anyone or wish another person ill in anger and hatred” (Matt 5:21-26; LC I.188).

76.5—We must not fail to prevent harm when we are able (Jam 2:15-16)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that anyone sins “who can do his neighbor good, prevent or resist evil, defend, and save his neighbor so that no bodily harm or hurt happen to him—yet does not do this” (Jam 2:15–16; LC I.189).

77.5—We must treat all people as spiritually equal (Gen 1:27; Rom 3:23)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that every individual human being, of whatever racial or ethnic heritage, is made equally in the image of God (Gen 1:27). This image has been equally marred in all people because “all have sinned and fall short of the image of God” (Rom 3:23), so there is no spiritual or ethical distinction between different ethnic groups (Rom 3:22).

78.5—Human life on earth is a unique opportunity to repent (Heb 9:27)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that human life on earth is a unique opportunity to repent, after which comes judgement (Heb 9:27). The ministry of forgiving sins, “the Keys” do indeed “have the power of binding and loosing” but “only upon earth” (Matt 16:19; Ap XIIb.79). Those who have not availed themselves of this opportunity will bitterly regret it (Luke 16:24-26).

79.5—Human life as an opportunity to repent begins at conception (Psa 139:13)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God knits together children in the womb (Psa 139:13-14) and that even from conception the unborn are guilty of sin (Psa 51:5). Jesus (Psa 22:10) and John the Baptist (Luke 1:44) had faith in the womb, and demonstrate that the Spirit desires is able to work in any child in the womb to bring faith in response to God's Word. Therefore, the lives of unborn children at any age must be recognised as having full human worth and dignity.

80.5—Human life may only be ended by God and those he authorises (Psa 90:3)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that only God has the authority to end human life (Deut 32:39; Psa 31:15; 90:3), which he has granted to civil authorities for the specific purpose of maintaining justice and peace (Rom 13:4).

81.5—Human life may be ended by government to establish justice (Rom 13:1-7)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the government may “restrain people with the sword and physical punishment in order to preserve civil

justice and peace” (Rom 13:1–7; AC XXVIII.11). This purpose is the only justification given in scripture for civil government to sanction ending human life, either domestically or in foreign war.

82.6—Marriage is a state of life instituted by God (Gen 1:27-28)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that “marriage was not first instituted in the New Testament, but in the beginning, immediately after the creation of the human race” (Gen 2:24; Ap XIII.14). It is therefore not a sacrament of the New Testament, but a “state of life” (AC XXVI.11) that is a part of God’s purposes for all mankind (Gen 1:27-28) and so should not be considered a lesser state of life than any other. “A doctrine of demons forbids marriage” (1 Tim 4:1–3; AC XXIII.22).

83.6—Marriage is between one man and one woman (Gen 2:23)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that no living creature was fit to be Adam’s helper until God fashioned woman from his rib explicitly for this purpose (Gen 2:23). Therefore, homosexual unions are by definition not marriage.

84.6—Marriage is leaving and cleaving (Gen 2:24)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that for a marriage to be formed a man and woman must separate from others and be united together in a manner recognised socially before other people (Gen 2:24).

85.6—Marriage is a one flesh union, i.e. sexually consummated (Gen 2:24)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that for a marriage to be formed a man and woman must become one flesh, which means to sexually consummate their union (Gen 2:24).

86.6—Marriage is the only appropriate place for sexual desire (Exod 20:14)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that sexual desire, tenderness or activity is exclusively for between spouses within the context of marriage (Exod 20:14).

87.7—We must not cause harm to our neighbour’s property (Exod 20:15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that “God also wants property protected. He has commanded that no one shall take away from, or diminish, his neighbor’s possessions. For to steal is nothing else than to get possession of another’s property wrongfully. Briefly, this includes all kinds of advantage in all sorts of trade to the disadvantage of our neighbor” (Exod 20:15; LC I.223-224).

88.7—We must respect and obey copyright laws (Exod 20:15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that to steal “also means grasping property in the market, in all stores, booths, wine and beer cellars, workshops, and, in short, wherever there is trading or taking and giving of money for merchandise or labour” (Exod 20:15; LC I.224). Digital content is as much the product of labour as physical goods or service, and therefore must be fairly remunerated.

89.8—We must not lie about people, but speak well of them (Exod 20:16)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that “God does not want the reputation, good name, and upright character of our neighbor to be taken away or

diminished, just as with his money and possessions. He wants everyone to stand in his integrity before wife, children, servants, and neighbours" (Exod 20:16; LC I.256).

90.9—We must not craftily try to get our neighbour's possessions (Exod 20:17)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "God has added these two commandments in order that it be considered sinful and forbidden to desire or in any way to aim at getting our neighbor's wife or possessions" (Exod 20:16; LC I.293).

91.10—We must not craftily try to get our neighbour's relationships (Deut 5:21)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "God has added these two commandments in order that it be considered sinful and forbidden to desire or in any way to aim at getting our neighbor's wife or possessions" (Exod 20:16; LC I.293), which includes any relationship of our neighbour's.

2III. The Law reveals we need God's righteousness (Rom 7:10-13)

92. The Law offers life for obedience and death for disobedience (Exod 20:5-6)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God "promises grace and every blessing to all who keep [the] commandments" (Exod 20:5-6; SC I.11).

93. The Law is used to curb excessive sin (1 Tim 1:9)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Law was given "to restrain sin by threats and the dread of punishment and by the promise and offer of grace and benefit" (1 Tim 1:9; SA 3.II).

94. The Law is used as a mirror for sin, leading us to seek Christ (Rom 3:21-26)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the chief office or force of the Law is to reveal original sin with all its fruit" (Rom 7:12-13; SA 3.II), so that we realise we cannot in any way be righteous by trying to obey the Law ourselves and instead "seek all our righteousness in Christ" (Rom 3:21-26; Gal 3:19-22).

95. The Law is used as a guide for Christians to live out their faith (Psa 119:1)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "when people have been born anew by God's Spirit, converted to the Lord, and Moses' veil has been lifted from them (2 Cor 3:13-16), they live and walk in the Law (Psa 119:1)" (FC SD VI.1). "Therefore, as often as believers stumble, they are rebuked by the Holy Spirit from the Law (2 Tim 3:16). By the same Spirit they are raised up and comforted again with the preaching of the Holy Gospel" (FC SD VI.14). "Nevertheless, they are not under (Rom 6:14), but in the Law" (FC SD VI.18). Christ did not abolish the Law (Matt 5:17-18), which describes what God's will for our lives is (Deut 12:8, 28, 32). Therefore, "what God commands must be much better and far nobler than everything that we may come up with ourselves. Since there is no higher or better teacher to be found than God, there can certainly be no better teaching than what He provides. Now, He teaches fully what we should do if we wish to perform truly good works. By commanding such works, He shows that they please Him. If, then, it is God who commands this and does not know how to appoint anything better, I will never improve upon it" (LC I.113). For this reason, "Paul, when encouraging the regenerate to do good works, clearly presents to them the Ten Commandments" (Rom 13:9; FC SD VI.21).

96. The Law is veiled when read without Christ (2 Cor 3:12-16)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "concerning the revelation of sin, Moses' veil hangs (2 Cor 3:12–16) before the eyes of all people as long as they hear the bare preaching of the Law, and nothing about Christ" (FC Ep V.8).

97. The Law is veiled when we seek our own righteousness (Rom 10:2-4)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that those who read the Law with the veil "do not learn from the Law to see their sins correctly" and seek to use it to establish their own righteousness (Rom 10:2-4), therefore "they either become bold hypocrites who swell with the opinion of their own righteousness like the Pharisees (Matt 23), or they despair like Judas (Matt 27:3–5)" (FC Ep V.8).

98. The Law is unveiled when read with Christ (2 Cor 3:12-16)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Law is spiritual (Rom 7:14), but we only perceive the significance of what the Law is saying with Christ's help (Matt 5:21–48). "In this way God's wrath is revealed from heaven against all sinners (Rom 1:18), so that they see how great it is. In this way they are directed back to the Law, and then they first learn from it to know their sins correctly... Then they understand correctly for the first time what great things God requires of us in His Law, none of which we can keep" (2 Cor 3:12-16; FC Ep V.8-9).

2IV. The Law reveals our sin as a constant inclination to evil (Gen 6:5)

99. Original sin is the root: a corrupt nature that inclines to evil (Gen 6:5)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "since the fall of Adam (Rom 5:12), all who are naturally born are born with sin (Psa 51:5), that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with the inclination to sin, called concupiscence (Gen 6:5; 8:21). Concupiscence is a disease and original vice that is truly sin. It damns and brings eternal death on those who are not born anew through Baptism and the Holy Spirit (John 3:5)" (AC II.1-2).

100. Actual sin is the fruit: the works resulting from this corruption (Matt 7:16-20)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the fruit of [original] sin are the evil deeds that are forbidden in the Ten Commandments" (Matt 7:16-20; Gal 5:19–21; SA 3.I).

101. Sin means we are dead and salvation is impossible (Eph 2:1)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "when we had been created by God the Father and had received from Him all kinds of good, the devil came and led us into disobedience, sin, death, and all evil" (Gen 3; Eph 2:1; LC II:28). It is therefore impossible to be saved from sin (Matt 9:23-26; Mark 10:24-27; Luke 18:24-27).

102. Sin means we are slaves and do not want to be saved (Rom 6:16)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that sin enslaves us (Rom 6:16) because the nature of sin is that "from their mother's womb they are all filled with evil desire and the inclination toward evil. By nature, they have no true fear of God and no true faith in God," nobody even seeks God (Rom 3:9-18; Ap II.2).

103. Sin means we are under wrath, given over to sin (Rom 1:18-32)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that after the first sin "we fell under God's wrath and displeasure and were doomed to eternal damnation, just as we had merited and deserved" (Rom 1:18-23; LC II:28), and God expresses his wrath by giving us up to our evil desires, which therefore express themselves in increasingly more heinous ways (Rom 1:24-32).

104. Sin means we are wrathful against God (Rom 8:7)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot (Rom 8:7).

105. Sin means we are callously unfeeling towards God (Eph 4:17-19)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that those who live without faith walk in the futility of their minds, are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart and have become callous having given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity" (Eph 4:17-19).

106. Venial ("forgiven") sin is sin remaining in the regenerate (Rom 7:25)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "original sin remains after Baptism" (Rom 7:25; 1 John 1:8), so while 'Baptism removes the guilt of original sin... the material, as they call it, of the sin (concupiscence) remains'" (Ap II.35). "Therefore there is sin dwelling in us which tries to keep us in captivity, and those who hold hands with it and are overcome by it are led to damnation. But if they fight against it and are in Christ Jesus, even though sin is still in their members, yet for them there is no condemnation. This is venial sin" (Rom 7:23; 8:1; LociTheo 17.1).

107. Mortal ("deadly") sin is the sin that killed faith in fallen Christians (Rom 8:13)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that, as Paul says, "If we live according to the flesh we shall die" (Rom 8:13.) "It is obvious that he is speaking here of the regenerate. For of the unregenerate he says in Eph 2:1 and Col 2:13, 'You were dead in your trespasses and sins.' But after they through faith had been converted to Christ and born again, they were at the same time also brought back to life, so that they might be reconciled and live. But those people will again die if they continue to live according to the flesh, that is, when they lose their life, they rush headlong into eternal damnation" (LociTheo 17.1). Paul warns that the immoral, idolaters, adulterers will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor 6:9-10; Gal 5:21; cf. Eph 5:5). This is to abandon faith and live in sin (Rom 6:2; 8:1-8). So when the regenerate "fall into manifest sins (as David did into adultery, murder, and blasphemy), then faith and the Holy Spirit have left them. The Holy Spirit does not permit sin to have dominion, to gain the upper hand so it can be carried out, but represses and restrains it from doing what it wants (Psa 51:11; Rom 6:14). If sin does what it wants, the Holy Spirit and faith are not present" (1 John 3:9; SA III.3).

108. Scripture warns that once saved we are not always saved (Rom 11:17-24)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that once saved we are not always saved, but only as long as we continue to cling onto Christ by faith (Rom 8:17; 11:17-24). This faith is spiritual life, and is the only means by which we receive justification.

For this reason we must reject those "who deny that those who have once been justified can lose the Holy Spirit" (AC XII.7).

109. Scripture warns that restoration from falling away is impossible (Heb 6:4-8)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that it is impossible to restore to faith one who has fallen away (Heb 6:4-8), just as it is impossible to give faith to one who has never been spiritually alive (Mark 10:27; Eph 2:1-3).

110. Scripture warns us with examples of apostates (Luke 22:3)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that Scripture gives grave examples of apostates in the Old Testament, such as Saul (1 Sam 13:8-14) and David (2 Sam 11) and in the New Testament, such as Judas (Luke 22:3, 47-48), Hymenaeus and Alexander, (1 Tim 1:19-20) and Peter (Mark 14:26-31, 66-72). Saul, David, Judas and Peter all later showed contrition, but "the contrition of Judas or Saul (Matt 27:3-5; 1 Sam 31:4-6) is useless because faith is not added. Faith grasps the forgiveness of sins, given as a gift for Christ's sake. So, the contrition of David or Peter (2 Sam 12:13; Matt 26:75) helps because faith, which takes hold of the forgiveness of sins granted for Christ's sake, is added to it" (Ap XIIa.36).

111. Scripture prophesies that some Christians will fall away (1 Tim 4:1)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that Paul expressly prophesies in the Spirit that in the period of the church some will fall away (1 Tim 4:1).

112. Satan and sinners, not God's will, are the origin of sin (Rev 12:9)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the beginning and cause of evil is not God's foreknowledge. (For God does not create and do evil, neither does He help or promote it.) The cause of this evil is the wicked, perverse will of the devil and of people," (Ps 5:4; Hos 13:9; FC SD XI.7). Sin entered the world through Adam (Rom 5:12) when Satan tempted Eve (1 Tim 2:14), making Satan the deceiver of the whole world (Rev 12:9), therefore "the cause of sin is located in the will of the wicked, that is, the devil and ungodly people" (AC XIX).

113. Satan and his angels fight to prevent redemption from sin (Rev 12:7)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "devils and the ungodly are not able to believe this article: the forgiveness of sins. Hence, they hate God as an enemy (Rom 8:7) and do not call Him (Rom 3:11-12) and expect no good from Him" (AC XX.25). Therefore "if we would be Christians, therefore, we must surely expect and count on having the devil with all his angels and the world as our enemies. They will bring every possible misfortune and grief upon us" (Matt 25:41; Rev 12:7; LC III.65).

114. Satan is the father, ruler and spirit working in those dead in sin (Eph 2:2)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the wicked are in the devil's power and members of his kingdom" (Eph 2:2; Ap VII.16), the devil is their father (John 8:44) because they are "ruled by the devil and are captives of the devil. They are not ruled by the Spirit of Christ" (John 12:31; Ap VII.16), but are blinded by Satan from seeing the light of the gospel (2 Cor 4:4).

115. Satan is a liar (Rev 12:9)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the devil is the father of lies (John 8:44), the first liar (Gen 3:13), and the deceiver of the whole world (Rev 12:9).

116. Satan deceives through antichrists that look like Christ (Matt 24:22-25)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "many forces and powers which are actively hostile to Christ and His Church" are prophesied to come, and scripture "uses the term 'antichrist' with reference to some of them.... These antichristian forces will appear in various recurrent forms until the end of time" (Dan 11:36-38; Matt 24:22-25; 1 Tim 4:1-3; 2 Tim 3:1-9; 1 John 2:18-22; 4:1-6; 2 John 7; 2 Thess 2:1-12; WDS The Antichrist).

117. Satan deceives through "the" antichrist, which is the Papacy (2 Thess 2:1-12)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that there will arise "a particular personal embodiment of the antichristian power in which the iniquity of false teaching finds its climax" (2 Thess 2:1-12; WDS The Antichrist). This prophecy has been and is being fulfilled in the institution of the papacy, as can be seen by comparing the Papacy to the prophesied marks of the man of lawlessness in 2 Thess 2:1-12. At the time of the Reformation, many of these marks were clearly evident and noted in the Book of Concord (Ap XV.18-19; XXIV.97-98; SA II.2; II.4; FC SD X.20; PPP 39-41, 57). Since that time, the Pope has furthermore claimed the right to make infallible doctrinal proclamations, even more clearly demonstrating that the papacy fulfills this prophecy:

1. **He is male (vv. 4-12):** the Pope is exclusively male.
2. **He "opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship" (v. 4):** the Pope claims to be head of the exclusively true world religion.
3. **He "takes his seat in the temple of God" (v. 4):** the Pope claims to be the vicar of Christ.
4. **He "proclaims himself to be God" (v. 4):** the Pope claims to be able to make infallible doctrinal proclamations in the name of God.
5. **He was restrained in the time of the Apostles and "revealed in his time" (v. 6):** the Roman Bishop only began asserting authority over the global church from the late 4th century.
6. **He will come "with all wicked deception" (v. 10):** the rise of the Roman Bishop as the head of the global church coincided with the introduction of many superstitions into the catholic church.
7. **He will remain in power until the Lord Jesus returns (v. 8):** the Roman Catholic church is permanently established as a global religious and civil power.
8. **His coming is "by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception... [and] a strong delusion" (vv. 9-11):** many miracles have purportedly been performed in and through the Catholic church and her pantheon of supposed saints.

118. Satan is a murderer (John 8:44)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "since the devil is not only a liar, but also a murderer (John 8:44), he constantly seeks our life. He wreaks his vengeance whenever he can afflict our bodies with misfortune and harm. Therefore, it

happens that he often breaks men's necks or drives them to insanity, drowns some, and moves many to commit suicide and to many other terrible disasters" (Mark 9:17–22; LC III.115)

119. Sin will result in eternal death and damnation, which is Hell (Matt 13:40-42)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23), our bodies are dying daily (2 Cor 4:16) and all of us will eventually physically die (Rom 5:12), and unless the Spirit gives us new life, we are already spiritually dead (Eph 2:1), and will face the second death (Rev 2:11; 20:6, 14), which is Hell (Rev 21:8).

120. Hell is a real place of eternal punishment prepared for Satan (Rev 20:14-15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "at the end of the world Christ will appear for judgment and will raise all the dead (1 Thess 4:13–5:2). He will give the godly and elect eternal life and everlasting joys, but He will condemn ungodly people and the devils to be tormented without end (Matt 25:31–46)" (AC XVII). While this place of eternal torment will be the ultimate, and unending, place of the ungodly, it was not prepared for them, but for the devil and his angels (Matt 25:41).

C. God's Gospel is the free undeserved grace of Father, Son and Spirit (Rom 3:21-25)

21. God the Father created and sustains all things (Neh 9:6)

121. The Father Almighty predestined the elect for eternal life (Eph 1:4-5)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that before the creation of the world God the Father chose individuals in Christ for salvation, not for any reason in them, but by his grace alone (Rom 8:30; 11:5-6; Eph 2:10; 1 Cor 2:7). "God's eternal election, or predestination, means God's preordaining to salvation. It does not include both the godly and the wicked, but only God's children, who were elected and ordained to eternal life before the world's foundation was laid (Eph 1:4-5; FC SD XI.5).

122. The Father does not predestine anyone to condemnation (1 Tim 2:4)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "God created no one for condemnation, but wants all people to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9; Sax IV.2), so God's election "does not include both the godly and the wicked, but only God's children" (FC SD XI.5), that is, it is only an election to life (Eph 1:4-5). We are explicitly told that God's secret counsel is a mystery (Rom 11:25), which is something not revealed to us and therefore which we should not attempt to generate a systematic explanation from our own thoughts (Deut 29:29).

123. The Father's foreknows all things perfectly (Psa 139:16)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "God sees and knows everything before it happens. This is called God's foreknowledge, which extends over all creatures, good and bad. In other words, He foresees and foreknows everything that is or will be, that is happening or will happen, whether it is good or bad. For all things, whether they are past or future, future, are clear and present before God" (Psa 139:16; Dan 2:28; Isa 37:28; Matt 10:29; FC SD XI.4).

124. The Father's foreknowledge restrains evil (Gen 50:20)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "God's foreknowledge foresees and foreknows what is evil, yet not in the sense that it is God's gracious will that evil should happen.... His foreknowledge preserves order also in wicked acts or works, since a limit and measure is fixed by God for the evil that God does not will. He limits how far it should go, how long it should last, and when and how He will hinder and punish it." (Gen 50:20; Psa 103:19; 115:3; Isa 14:24; FC SD XI.6).

125. The Father works all things for the good of the elect (Rom 8:28)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Father works all things for the good of the elect (Rom 8:28; Eph 1:11), and so "election is a cause that gains, works, helps, and promotes our salvation and what belongs to it. Our salvation is so founded on it that 'the gates of hell shall not prevail against it' (Matt 16:18), as is written in John 10:28, 'no one will snatch [My sheep] out of My hand.' And again, 'and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed' (Acts 13:48)" (FC SD XI.8).

126. The Father Almighty created all things in six days (Gen 1:1-2:3)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that in time God the Father created all things through His Word, by His Spirit, in six ordinary days (Gen 1:1-2:3; Exod 20:11; Heb 11:3), and so is the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible (Neh 9:6) caring for all things, especially his children (Matt 6:25-34).

127. The Father sustains all things (Matt 6:25-34)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God the Father sustains all things (Psa 36:6; Matt 6:25-34) and "has not only given us all that we have and see before our eyes, but He daily preserves and defends us against all evil and misfortune (Psa 5:11). He directs all sorts of danger and disaster away from us. We confess that He does all this out of pure love and goodness, without our merit, as a kind Father" (LC II.17).

2II. God the Son became incarnate to redeem the world (John 1:14, 29)

128. The Son has always existed with a fully divine nature (John 1:1-3)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "God's Son from eternity has been a particular, distinct, entire, divine person. Yet He is true, essential, perfect God with the Father and the Holy Spirit" (John 1:1-3; FC SD VIII.6).

129. The Son took to Himself a fully human nature (John 1:14)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "in the fullness of time [the Son] received also the human nature into the unity of His person" (John 1:14; Gal 4:4; FC SD VIII.6).

130. The Son was born of the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:35)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Son was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Matt 1:20) and born of the virgin Mary (Luke 1:35).

131. The Son is one person who now has two natures, divine and human (Rom 9:5)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "Christ Jesus is now in one person at the same time true, eternal God, born of the Father from eternity, and a true man, born of the most blessed Virgin Mary" (Rom 9:5; FC SD VIII.6).

132. The Son's two natures are unmixed (Phil 2:6-8)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "these two natures in the person of Christ are never either separated from or mingled with each other. Nor are they changed into each other. Each one abides in its nature and essence in the person of Christ to all eternity" (Phil 2:6-8; Col 2:9; FC SD VIII.7).

133. The Son's two natures are united in a real personal communion (Mark 9:2-3)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the divine and the human nature in the person of Christ are so united that they have a true communion with each other" (FC SD VIII.17). As a result of this personal union, therefore, attributes of the divine nature are communicated to the human nature as the heat and light of fire are communicated to iron (an illustration used in the ancient church, FC SD VIII.18-19)—not essentially so as to change the essential nature of the iron—but due to the unity of the iron with the fire. This illustration is a description of the reality seen in the transfiguration, where Christ's human nature remains fully and essentially human, but shines with attributes of his divine nature communicated to his human nature (Matt 17:2; Mark 9:2-3).

134. This union does not add to or subtract from His divine nature (Jam 1:17)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Son's "divine nature, in its essence and properties, suffered no subtraction or addition by the incarnation. It was not, in or by itself, either diminished or increased by it" because it is not subject to change (Jam 1:17; FC SD VIII.49).

135. This union gives His human nature non-essential divine properties (Dan 7:14)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "to make alive, to have all judgment and all power in heaven and on earth, to have all things in His hands, to have all things subject beneath His feet, to cleanse from sin, and so on, are not created gifts. These are divine, infinite properties. Yet, according to the declaration of Scripture, these have been given and communicated to the man Christ" (Dan 7:14; Matt 11:27; 28:18; John 1:3; 3:35; 5:27; 6:39; 13:3; 1 Cor 15:27; Eph 1:22; Heb 2:8; FC SD VIII.55). These properties have not been given to the human nature so as to change its substance, but have been given "apart from, and over and above its natural, essential, permanent properties," just as fire gives light and heat to an iron only because and while they are united (FC SD VIII.51).

136. The Son is present everywhere, not only as God, but also as man (Eph 1:23)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that because of the personal union of Christ's divine and human natures, "He also truly fills all things, being present everywhere, not only as God, but also as man. He rules from sea to sea and to the ends of the earth, as the prophets predict (Psa 8:1, 6; 93:1-4; Zech 9:10) and the apostles testify (Mark 16:20)" (FC SD VIII.27).

137. The Son has power over all, not only as God, but also as man (Matt 28:18)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that all authority was given to Christ according to his human nature (Matt 28:18). This power is unique to Christ "No man is installed in such divine almighty majesty and power through and in the personal union of the two natures in Christ" (FC SD VIII.29).

138. The Son gives life, not only as God, but also as man (John 5:21)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the power to give life and to execute judgment has been given to Christ because He is the Son of Man and since He has flesh and blood" (John 5:21, 27; 6:39–40; FC SD VIII.58). Christ's body and blood give life (John 6:53-54) and his blood purifies consciences (Heb 9:14). The flesh and blood of a perfect human being could not provide these amazing benefits.

139. The Son can be worshipped, not only as God, but also as man (Matt 28:17)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Son must be worshipped, and this worship is of his whole person (Matt 28:17), as the incarnation has made visible the glory of the Son (John 1:14). This does not justify venerating the elements of the Sacrament, which our Lord never commands us to do. As demonstration that this position is consistent with that of the early church, the words of Athanasius were often appended to early copies of the Book of Concord: "The holy catholic Church condemns anyone who says that the human flesh of our Lord is not to be worshiped and adored as the flesh of the Lord and God."

2III. God the Son was humiliated to pay for our sin (Phil 2:7-8)

140. The Son was humiliated and laid aside his divine Majesty (Phil 2:7-8)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Son kept his divine nature "concealed in the state of His humiliation and did not always use it, but only when He wanted to use it" (FC SD VIII.26): Taking the form of a servant, he humbled himself by laying aside the continuous and full display and use of his divine characteristics (Phil 2:7-8).

141. The Son fulfilled the Law (Matt 5:17)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that Jesus came to fulfil the Law (Matt 5:17; Rom 10:4).

142. The Son suffered and bodily died (Acts 3:15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the person (pointing to Christ) suffers, and dies. But this person is truly God, and therefore it is correct to say: the Son of God suffers. Although, so to speak, the one part (namely, the divinity) does not suffer, nevertheless the person, who is God, suffers in the other part (namely, in the humanity)" (Acts 3:15; FC SD VIII.41-42).

143. The Son's death was a legal substitution for all (Gal 3:13)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Son died "to reconcile the Father to us and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of mankind" (John 1:29; AC III) therefore "by His death, Christ made satisfaction for our sins" (Isa 53:5-6; AC IV). He was crucified according to Roman Law under Pontius Pilate (Matt 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; John 18-19), bearing the curse of the Mosaic Law as a

legal substitute for all sinful men (Matt 27:15-23; Gal 3:13), taking the penalty they deserve, justifying all sinners (Rom 3:21-26; 5:18; Gal 3:8; 1 John 2:2).

144. The Son's death was a priestly sacrifice for all (Heb 10:12)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that Christ is our only "Mediator, Atoning Sacrifice, High Priest, and Intercessor" (1 Tim 2:5-6; AC XXI.2). As High Priest of all he sacrificed himself for all people on the altar of the cross, ransoming all from sin (Matt 20:28; Heb 10:12). His righteousness is accepted by the Father as our righteousness, his death for sin as our death for sin (2 Cor 5:21).

145. The Son's death propitiated God's wrath for all (1 John 2:2)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that all are "under sin, subject to eternal wrath and death. Because of this, we cannot be freed by the Law from sin and be justified. But the promise of forgiveness of sins and of justification has been given us for Christ's sake, who was given for us in order that He might make satisfaction for the sins of the world. He has been appointed as the Mediator and Atoning Sacrifice" (Rom 5:9; 1 John 2:2; Ap IV.40).

146. The Son's atonement is objective and unlimited (John 1:29)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "Christ took away the sin of the whole world" (John 1:29; Ap IV.103), taking the iniquities of all (Isa 53:6), leading to justification and life for all (Rom 5:18), so that he is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2) and the one who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). This atonement is not only of unlimited value for all sins, but God's intention and will was unlimited: God sent his Son to save the world (John 3:17), was pleased to reconcile all things on earth or in heaven to himself, making peace by the blood of Christ's cross (Col 1:19-20), and desires all men to be saved (1 Tim 2:4). The Son longed to gather rebellious Jerusalem (Matt 23:37; Luke 13:34) and prayed for the salvation of the very people who crucified him (Luke 23:24). "Atonement" is an Old Testament term pointing forward to Christ's work of making "justification", a term that is used in the New Testament to describe everything he achieved both by his death (Rom 5:16-18) and resurrection (Rom 4:25).

147. The Son's one sacrifice is complete and unrepeatable (Heb 10:12)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "there has been only one atoning sacrifice in the world, namely, Christ's death" (Ap XXIV.22), where he offered on the cross a single sacrifice for sins (Heb 1:12; 9:26; 10:12) and so "redemption, too, is finished" (LC II.61).

2IV. God the Son was exalted for our justification (Phil 2:9-11)

148. The Son was exalted and laid aside his human servitude (Phil 2:9-11)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "after the form of a servant and humiliation had been laid aside, the human nature did receive—apart from, and over and above its natural, essential, permanent properties— special, high, great, supernatural, mysterious, indescribable, heavenly privileges and excellences in majesty, glory, power, and might above everything that can be named (Phil 2:9-11; FC SD VIII.51).

149. The Son descended to Hell to declare his victory over Satan (1 Pet 3:18-19)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the entire person (God and man) descended into hell after the burial, conquered the devil, destroyed hell's power, and took from the devil all his might. We should not, however, trouble ourselves with high and difficult thoughts about how this happened" (FC SD IX.2-3), because Christ's descent is presented in scripture as the beginning of his victory (Acts 2:31; Eph 4:8-20; 1 Pet 3:18-19).

150. The Son bodily rose from the dead in victory (Rom 4:25)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that Jesus Christ died and "was raised again for our justification" (Rom 4:24–25; SA 2.1). This resurrection was a genuine physical, bodily resurrection (John 20:20, 27).

151. The Son ascended to the Father's right hand side (Acts 1:9-11)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that Christ "descended into hell, and truly rose again on the third day. Afterward, He ascended into heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father. There He forever reigns and has dominion over all creatures" (Acts 1:9-11; Eph 1:20-23; Phil 2:9-11; AC III.4).

152. The Father's right hand side is God's omnipresent power (Acts 1:9-11)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "'God's right hand' is no set place in heaven, as the Sacramentarians assert without any ground in the Holy Scriptures. It is nothing other than God's almighty power, which fills heaven and earth" (Isa 48:13; FC SD VIII.28). This place is described in Ephesians 1: The Son was raised (Eph 1:20), placed above all things at God's right hand side (Eph 1:21-22), and fills all things (Eph 1:23).

153. The Son now reigns in the last days (1 Cor 10:11)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that we live in the last days (Acts 2:17; 1 Cor 10:11; 2 Tim 3:1; Heb 1:2; 9:26; 2 Pet 3:3), where the New Creation has already begun in the hearts of those united to Christ by faith (1 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15) and Satan is bound, a period symbolically represented in Revelation 20 as a "thousand years." This is not a literal thousand year reign of Christ on earth in a physical, earthly kingdom. We therefore reject "Jewish opinions, that before the resurrection of the dead the godly shall take possession of the kingdom of the world, the ungodly being everywhere suppressed" (AC XVII.5) because Christians should not set their hopes upon an earthly kingdom of Christ (John 18:36). "Any claim that Christians will be physically removed, or "raptured," from the earth prior to judgment day... [or] any claim that all the Jews will be converted in the final days" are unscriptural (TWB IX.5).

154. The Son will return any moment (Matt 24:36)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that Jesus Christ "will return visibly, in the same way as his disciples saw him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11; TWB IX.1). "No one can know the exact time of Jesus' return. This knowledge is hidden even from the angels in heaven (Matt 24:36). Nevertheless, our Lord has given signs to his believers to keep them in constant expectation of his return (Matthew 24:4-14). He has told them to be alert and to watch so that day will not come upon them unexpectedly (Luke 21:34)" (TWB XI.2).

155. The Son will judge the world (Rev 20:11-15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "at Jesus' return this present world will come to an end" (2 Pet 3:13; TWB IX.3), his voice will be "heard throughout the earth, all the dead will rise, that is, their souls will be reunited with their bodies (John 5:28-29). Together with those still living, the resurrected will appear before his throne of judgment (Rev 20:11-15). The unbelievers will be condemned to an eternity in hell. Those who by faith have been cleansed in the blood of Christ will be glorified and will live with Jesus forever in the blessed presence of God in heaven (Phil 3:21)" (TWB IX.4).

2V. God the Holy Spirit sanctifies by giving us faith through God's Word (Eph 1:13)

156. The Son's justification must be subjectively received by faith (Rom 3:28)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "'To be justified' means that just people are made out of unjust people, or born again. It also means that they are pronounced, or counted, as just. For Scripture speaks in both ways... Faith alone makes a just person out of an unjust person; in other words, that person receives forgiveness of sins" (Rom 3:28; Ap IV.71).

157. The Spirit sanctifies us by giving us faith (1 Cor 12:3)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that faith "liberates from death and produces a new life in hearts. This is the work of the Holy Spirit" (Ap IV.64). Only with the Spirit's work are we able to say from our hearts that "Jesus is Lord" (1 Cor 12:3), the confession that is required to receive all the benefits of justification that Christ has won for all people (Rom 10:9). This faith is the life and regeneration that the Spirit gives us (Rom 8:10).

158. The Spirit gives faith only through the Means of Grace (Rom 10:17)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Spirit gives faith and sustains people in faith by special means established by God. "Through the Word the Spirit reveals and preaches, He illumines and enkindles hearts, so that they understand, accept, cling to, and persevere in the Word" (1 Cor 2:12; LC 2.42). "God grants His Spirit or grace to no one except through or with the preceding outward Word (Rom 10:17; Eph 1:13; Gal 3:2, 5; SA 3.VIII).

159. The Means of Grace are Gospel and Sacrament (Eph 1:13)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Spirit is given (John 20:22). He works faith, when and where it pleases God (John 3:8), in those who hear the good news that God justifies those who believe" (AC IV.2). That the Spirit is expressly said in one place in Scripture to work exclusively through the Word (Rom 10:17) and in another through Baptism (Acts 2:38) is not a contradiction, as the Sacraments are the Word of Christ united to physical elements.

160. The Means of Grace do not include the Law (Gal 3:23-24)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the law is not a means of grace, but the Spirit uses the law to prepare us for the means of grace by convicting us of sin and making us hungry for the gospel of Christ (Gal 3:23-24).

161. The Means of Grace always achieve God's intended purposes (Isa 55:10-11)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "both the Sacraments and Word are effective because of Christ's institution and command, even if they are administered by evil men" (AC VIII.1-2) since "the promise of the Lord stands that His word will not return to Him void, without accomplishing that which He pleases" (Isa 55:10-11; Matt 28:18-20; 2 Cor 2:14-16; WDS Church and Ministry I.D.2).

162. The Means of Grace are not made ineffective by evil ministers (Matt 23:2-3)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Word and Sacraments remain effective "even if they are administered by evil men" because the scribes and Pharisees' sit on Moses' seat (Matt 23:2-3; AC VIII.1-2).

163. The Means of Grace must be received by faith (Gal 5:4)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Means of Grace do "not justify us by the outward act (*ex opere operato*) without faith" (Ap V.155). Not all who hear the Gospel believe (Matt 23:37; Acts 7:51; Heb 4:2), but without faith we are severed from Christ (Gal 5:4).

164. The Sacraments are God's Word united to an element (1 Cor 11:26; Eph 5:26)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God has united his Word to physical elements for the sake of our edification (1 Cor 11:26; Eph 5:26), and the Church has labelled these phenomena "Sacraments"; that is "when the Word is joined to the element or natural substance, it becomes a Sacrament" (SA 3.V).

2VI. God the Holy Spirit regenerates us through God's Word in Baptism (Eph 5:26)

165. Baptism is God's Word united to water (Eph 5:26)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "Baptism is nothing other than God's Word in the water, commanded by His institution. As Paul says, it is a 'washing . . . with the word'. As Augustine says, 'When the Word is joined to the element or natural substance, it becomes a Sacrament'" (Eph 5:26; SA III.5). The Word connect to the water in Baptism is: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt 28:19; SC IV.1).

166. Baptism is the Baptism of the Spirit (Tit 3:5-8)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that when the Word of God is united to water "it is a Baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Spirit" (Tit 3:5-8; SC IV.3). This Baptism is the Baptism of the Spirit offered by Peter in Acts 2:38, there is no subsequent Spirit Baptism separate to the Baptism of water with the Word (Rom 6:3-4; Eph 5:26).

167. Baptism, being God's Word, is necessary for salvation (Mark 16:16)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "Baptism is necessary for salvation (Mark 16:16; 1 Pet 3:21) and that God's grace is offered through Baptism (Tit 3:4-7);" by it we are forgiven and receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; AC IX).

168. Baptism should not be repeated (Eph 4:5)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that there is one Baptism (Eph 4:5), which is washing with water united to the Word (Matt 28:19), and so when this is performed correctly, then even if neither the minister nor baptizee have faith, true Baptism has still been administered and so should not be repeated.

169. Baptism can be performed in various ways (Ezek 36:25)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that any mode of washing with water united to the Word is a valid baptism because Christ did not command how the washing is to be performed (Matt 28:19). Because Baptism is the means by which the Spirit brings new life (Rom 6:3-4), some claim that full immersion is the most appropriate mode of Baptism, but there are no explicit examples of full immersion described in Scripture. No description is given of the mode of Jesus' baptism, only that Jesus was in the water when he was baptised (which could have been performed by sprinkling, pouring or immersion), He left the water after his Baptism and then the Holy Spirit fell upon Him (Matt 3:16; Mark 1:10). This falling was not simultaneous with Jesus' baptism (Luke 3:21). Similarly, Philip and the eunuch are described as going down into the water, and then the baptism was performed (Acts 8:38)—the going down into the water is not a description of the act of baptism itself. Washings and baptisms are explicitly described as sprinkling, and this picture is associated with rising to new life in Ezek 36:25. Other modes described in Scripture are pouring (associated with Pentecost, Acts 2:2-3), and partial immersion (Exod 30:17-21). Some today appeal to evidence outside of Scripture to argue not only that full immersion is the most appropriate mode of Baptism, but even that it is the only appropriate mode of Baptism, and that the Sacrament has not been administered unless this mode is used. Such appeals are a denial of the sufficiency of Scripture, which we assert contains everything needed to understand how the Gospel and its Sacraments are to be effectively administered.

170. Baptism should be given to infants (Acts 2:39)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the blessing of Baptism is meant for all people" (Matthew 28:19; TWI VI.3) and so "children should be baptised, for they belong to the promised redemption made through Christ. Therefore, the Church should administer Baptism to them." (Acts 2:39; SA III.5). "Infants are born sinful (John 3:6) and therefore need to be born again, that is, to be brought to faith, through Baptism (John 3:5)" (TWB VI.3). Scripture nowhere says infants are incapable of faith, instead we see examples of David (Psa 22:9-10), John the Baptist (Luke 1:44) and the infants brought to Christ responding in faith (Luke 18:15-17).

2VII. God the Holy Spirit forgives us through God's Word in the Supper (1 Cor 11:26)

171. The Supper is God's Word united to bread and wine (1 Cor 11:26)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Lord's Supper "is bread and wine included in, and connected with, God's Word." (1 Cor 11:26; LC V.5). The Word connected to the bread and wine is given in Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20; and 1 Corinthians 11:23-26: "this is my body, which is given for you" (Luke 22:19) and "this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." (Matt 26:28).

172. The Supper is the true body and blood of Christ (1 Cor 10:6)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the bread and wine in the Supper are Christ's true body and blood" (1 Cor 10:6; SA III.6).

173. The Supper also remains true bread and wine (1 Cor 10:16)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "it is in perfect agreement with Holy Scriptures that there is, and remains, bread, as Paul himself calls it, 'The bread that we break' (1 Cor 10:16) and 'Let a person so eat of the bread' (1 Cor 11:28)" (SA III.6) and also that there is and remains, wine (1 Cor 10:16; 11:28).

174. The Supper is not an atoning sacrifice (Heb 10:12)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the sacrifice of Christ dying on the cross has been enough for the sins of the whole world" (Ap XIII.8) because "when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God" (Heb 10:12). Therefore, "no sacrifice is left to be applied for the sins of others, except the one sacrifice of Christ upon the cross" (Ap XXIV.56), "the Mass does not justify by the outward act (*ex opere operato*)... when applied to others, it does not merit forgiveness" (Ap XXIV.60), nor does "the Mass by the outward act [give] grace to the one using it" (Ap XXIV.63). Therefore, "Thomas's error is to be rejected. He wrote: That the body of the Lord, once offered on the cross for original debt, is continually offered for daily offenses on the altar" (Ap XXIV.62).

175. The Supper is, with the whole Christian life, a sacrifice of praise (Rom 12:1)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that there are sacrifices different to atoning sacrifices. These are "eucharistic sacrifices, which are called sacrifices of praise (Lev 3; 7:11–18; Psa 56:12). These are the preaching of the Gospel, faith, prayer, thanksgiving, confession, the troubles of saints, yes, all good works of saints. These sacrifices are not satisfactions for those making them, nor can they be applied to others to merit the forgiveness of sins or reconciliation by the outward act (*ex opere operato*). They are made by those who have been reconciled. These are the sacrifices of the New Testament, as Peter teaches, "a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices" (1 Pet 2:5).... Paul teaches the same thing, "Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship" (Rom 12:1)" (Ap XIV.25-26). This is the "sacrifice of praise to God" that the writer to the Hebrews exhorts his readers to "continually offer up," a sacrifice he defines as "the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name" (Heb 13:15).

176. The Supper is received by unbelievers to their judgement (1 Cor 11:29-30)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the body and blood of Christ "are given and received not only by the godly but also by wicked Christians" (1 Cor 11:29–30; SA III.6).

177. The Supper must be celebrated with common confession (1 Cor 1:10)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that by eating and drinking the Supper we are proclaiming Christ's death (1 Cor 11:26), and thus have an explicit responsibility to be entirely united in our doctrine as we do so (1 Cor 1:10).

178. The Supper must be performed as Christ commanded (1 Cor 11:24)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that part of the Word of Christ attached to the Sacrament is his instruction on how to perform it where He says "Do

this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor 11:24). "If it is unlawful to set aside a man's testament, it is more unlawful to set aside Christ's testament" (Ap XXII.2), therefore the Supper must be performed as Christ commanded.

179. The Supper should not be given to infants (1 Cor 11:28-29)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "no one [should be] admitted to the Sacrament without first being examined" (AC XIV) and we therefore do "not approve of the Bohemians who commune little children." (L.1523.Haus). "It is clear that one cannot deal with infants through the bare preaching of repentance and remission of sins, for that requires hearing (Rom 10:17), deliberation and meditation (Psa 119), understanding (Matt 13:51), which are not found in infants. With regard to the Lord's Supper Paul says: 'Let a man examine himself' (1 Cor 11:28). Likewise: 'Let him discern the Lord's body' (1 Cor 11:29), a thing which cannot be ascribed to infants. Moreover, Christ instituted His Supper for such as had already become His disciples. In the Old Testament infants were circumcised on the eighth day, but they were admitted to the eating of the Passover lamb when they were able to ask: 'What do you mean by this service?' (Exod 12:26). There remains therefore for infants of the means of grace in the New Testament only the sacrament of Baptism." (ECT II.2.X.3)

2VIII. God the Holy Spirit brings good works as the fruits of faith (Gal 5:22-23)

180. The Spirit brings forth good works as fruits of faith (Gal 5:22-23)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "faith is bound to bring forth good fruit (Gal 5:22-23). It is necessary to do good works commanded by God (Eph 2:10), because of God's will" (AC VI.1). The Spirit brings forth good works as the fruit of faith that are pleasing to God (John 15:5; Gal 5:22-25; Jam 2:17) and fulfil the Law (Rom 13:10).

181. Good works are different to civil righteousness (Gal 3:24)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "a person's will has some freedom to choose civil righteousness and to do things subject to reason" (AC VIII.1-2). This is sometimes also called *civic righteousness*, or the *righteousness of reason*: "We think about the righteousness of reason like this: God requires it. Because of God's commandment, the honorable works commanded by the Ten Commandments must be done, (Gal 3:24; 1 Tim 1:9)... For God wants wild sinners to be restrained by civil discipline. To maintain discipline, He has given laws, letters, doctrine, rulers, and penalties. To a certain extent reason can, by its own strength, perform this civil righteousness" (Ap IV.22-23). But, without faith these works are not good in God's sight, they are not good works, which only flow from faith (Heb 11:6).

182. Good works are not a Means of Grace (Luke 17:10)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "it is only by faith, and nothing else, that forgiveness of sins is apprehended. The Holy Spirit is received through faith, hearts are renewed and given new affections, and then they are able to bring forth good works" (AC XX.28-29). Good works merit nothing (Luke 17:10), nor faith does not come or increase by good works, but only by hearing the Word of Christ (Rom 10:17).

183. The Spirit equips the church with all the gifts it needs (1 Cor 12:4-11)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the Holy Spirit also equips the church with all the spiritual gifts it needs for its well-being" (1 Cor 12:4-11; TWB V.9).

184. The Spirit gave special charismatic gifts to found the church (2 Cor 12:12)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "during the beginning of the New Testament era, special charismatic gifts were given to the church, such as signs, miracles, and speaking in tongues. These gifts were connected with the ministry of the apostles" (2 Cor 12:12; TWB V.9).

185. The Spirit does not tell us to expect this foundation to continue (Eph 2:20)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "there is no evidence in Scripture that we today should expect the continuation of such charismatic gifts" (TWB V.9), instead Scripture tells us that the role of the Apostles and Prophets was foundational (Eph 2:20).

186. The Spirit will not add another word to Scripture (Rev 22:18)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "God no longer gives new revelation outside of Scripture" (Rev 22:18; TWB V.9).

187. The Spirit always accompanies faith, not spiritual gifts and feats (Matt 7:23)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the Holy Spirit certainly wants to be present with the Word preached, heard, and considered, and He wants to be effective and work through it" (FC SD XI.39). Through this Word he gives faith: this faith is His work (Eph 1:13), it is the "sound" He makes (John 3:6), faith only comes with the Spirit (1 Cor 12:3). In contrast, impressive spiritual gifts and feats do not necessarily accompany the Spirit. They are not a reliable indicator of the presence or work of the Spirit. Some will perform them without faith, and will be told on the last day "depart from me, I never knew you." (Matt 7:23), others may perform impressive feats with faith, but whether the Spirit works faith in others through their ministry has nothing to do with the presence or absence of spiritual gifts and feats, but rather on the content of their preaching, and whether this preaching accords with Scripture (1 Cor 3:10-15).

188. The Spirit's Grace is resistible (Acts 7:51)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "God does not force a person to become godly. (Those who always resist the Holy Spirit and persistently oppose the known truth are not converted, as Stephen says about the hardened Jewish people.)" (Acts 7:51; FC SD II.60).

189. The Spirit does not remain with apostates (Luke 8:13)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "any 'hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away' (Luke 8:13). The reason is not that God was unwilling to grant grace for perseverance to those in whom He 'began a good work,' for that is contrary to St. Paul (Phil 1:6). The reason is that they willfully turn away again from the holy commandment, grieve and embitter the Holy Spirit, involve themselves again in the world's filth, and redecorate their hearts as homes for the devil. For them their last situation is worse than the first" (Luke 11:24-26; 1 Cor 10:12; Eph 4:30; Heb 10:26; 2 Pet 2:10-20; FC SD XI.42).

190. The Spirit preserves the elect through faith (1 Cor 1:8-9)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that we must remain in faith until the end in order to experience final salvation (Matt 24:13; Col 1:22–23; Heb 3:14; 1 Pet 1:9). We can take great comfort from his kindness toward us if we continue in belief (Rom 11:22), knowing that God will preserve his elect (Matt 24:22–24; Rom 8:28–39; 1 Cor 1:8–9; 10:13). Therefore, we must confirm our election by doing good works (2 Pet 1:10), not relying on such works as though they sustain us, because to rely on anything other than faith is itself apostasy (Gal 3:3), but rather if faith does not bear fruit as good works, then we forget Christ's grace and stop clinging to him by faith (2 Pet 1:9).

2IX. God the Holy Spirit brings prayer as a fruit of faith (Jam 1:5-8)

191. True prayer is only given by God's children from faith (Jam 1:5-8)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "a prayer without faith is not prayer" (Jam 1:5-8; Ap XXI.13).

192. Prayer is a good work, it is not faith itself (Exod 20:7)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "praying, as the Second Commandment teaches, is to call upon God in every need. He requires this of us and has not left it to our choice. But it is our duty and obligation to pray, if we would be Christians, just as it is our duty and obligation to obey our parents and the government. For by calling upon God's name and praying, His name is honored and used well" (Exod 20:7; LC 3.8). Prayer is therefore a work commanded in the Law, in the second commandment, and produced in the life of believers as a fruit of faith (Gal 4:6; SC I.2).

193. Prayer, being a good work, is not a Means of Grace (Rom 10:17)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that prayer is not a means of grace. "Although God certainly gives good gifts to believers in answer to their prayers, he conveys his forgiving grace and strengthens faith only through the Word and sacraments" (TWB V.14). For example, Cornelius had faith and so "his prayers and alms were acceptable to God (since Luke calls him devout and God-fearing, Acts 10:1-2). Without the Word coming first and without hearing it, he could not have believed or been righteous" (Rom 10:17; SA 3.VIII.8).

194. God promises to answer prayer as a Father gives to his children (Matt 7:7-8)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "we should be more encouraged and moved to pray because God has also added a promise and declared that it shall surely be done for us as we pray" (Psa 50:15; Matt 7:7-8; LC 3.19) because he is our Father (Matt 6:9).

195. Prayer speaks words God has given us back to Him (Psa 51:15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God's will is revealed in his Word and so God "Himself arranges the words and form of prayer for us. He places them on our lips for how and what we should pray, so that we may see how heartily He pities us in our distress, and we may never doubt that such prayer is pleasing to Him and shall certainly be answered" (Psa 4:1; 51:15; LC 3.22)

196. Christians pray the Lord's Prayer every day (Matt 6:11)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "there is no nobler prayer to be found upon earth than the Lord's Prayer. We pray it daily, because it has this excellent testimony, that God loves to hear it" (LC 3.22). Christ clearly expects Christians to pray the Lord's Prayer every day by the words of the fourth petition "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matt 6:11).

197. 1—Prayer asks for our doctrine and life to be godly (Matt 6:9)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God's name is hallowed "when both our doctrine and life are godly and Christian" (Matt 6:9; LC 3.39).

198. 2—Prayer asks for God's Word to spread and the Spirit to work faith (Matt 13)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, into the world to redeem and deliver us from the devil's power (1 John 3:8). He sent Him to bring us to Himself and to govern us as a King of righteousness, life, and salvation against sin, death, and an evil conscience. For this reason He has also given His Holy Spirit, who is to bring these things home to us by His holy Word and to illumine and strengthen us in the faith by His power" (Matt 13; LC 3.39).

199. 2—Prayer asks for Christ to return (Rev 22:20)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God's kingdom also comes "in eternity forever through revelation", i.e. with the second coming of Christ (Luke 19:11; 1 Pet 1:4–5; LC 3.53).

200. 3—Prayer asks for God's people to persevere through suffering (1 John 2:17)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "we must firmly keep God's honor and our salvation, and not allow ourselves to be torn from them" (1 John 2:17; LC 3.60) and this is the meaning of the third petition of the Lord's Prayer.

201. 4—Prayer asks for all things needed for a blessed life (Psa 104:28)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "when you mention and pray for daily bread, you pray for everything that is necessary in order to have and enjoy daily bread. On the other hand, you also pray against everything that interferes with it" (Psa 104:28; LC 3.72).

202. 5—Prayer increasingly recognises our sins are forgiven (Psa 32:1-2)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that we pray for forgiveness of sins so that "we may recognize and receive such forgiveness" (Psa 32:1-2; LC 3.88).

203. 6—Prayer asks not to fall into temptation and lose faith (Luke 22:46)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "our life is of such a nature that we stand today, and tomorrow we fall (Isa 40:6–8). Therefore, even though we are godly now and stand before God with a good conscience, we must pray again that He would not allow us to fall again and yield to trials and temptations" (Luke 22:46; LC 3.100).

204. 7—Prayer is a directed attack against the devil (Luke 22:31-32)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that “we are far too weak to deal with the devil and all his power and followers who set themselves against us. They might easily crush us under their feet. Therefore, we must consider and take up those weapons with which Christians must be armed in order to stand against the devil” (2 Cor 10:4; Eph 6:11; LC 3.30).

D. God's People have been saved to live lives of good works (John 15:1-11)

2I. The Church is the communion of saints (John 20:21-23)

205. The Church is the communion of saints (Psa 149:1)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the church is those sanctified in Christ Jesus (1 Cor 1:2) called by God to be a "congregation of pure saints, under one heaven, even Christ" (Eph 1:22; LC 2.51), the communion of saints (Ps 149:1), "the holy believers and lambs who hear the voice of their Shepherd" (John 10:11-16; SA III.13). These are the “sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:26), the temple of God (1 Cor 3:16), the body (Eph 1:23; 4:12), bride (Rev 19:7), and kingdom (Col 1:13) of Christ in whom there is forgiveness of sins (Col 1:14); one blessed fellowship (1 John 1:3).

206. The Church is invisible (1 Sam 16:7)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Church, "is not only the fellowship of outward objects and rites, as other governments, but at its core, it is a fellowship of faith and of the Holy Spirit in hearts" that can only be apprehended by faith (Rom 10:10; Ap VII.5). God alone can discern those who are really his (1 Sam 16:7; 2 Tim 2:19).

207. The Church we see is mixed (Matt 13:24-30)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that outward profession of faith in word and deed may be false and hypocritical: "Those in whom Christ does not act are not the members of Christ.... The wicked are “dead” members of the Church." The Lord will separate them on the last day (Matt 13:24-30; Ap VII.6). The church cannot therefore be equated with any individual church organization, or the sum total of all such outward churches.

208. The Church is real (Eph 1:20-23)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Church is not "a Platonic state... [but] exists: [as] truly believing and righteous people scattered throughout the whole world." It is the object of God’s gracious thoughts from all eternity (John 17:2, 6, 9, 11-12; 13:18; Eph 1:4; Ap VII.20). Everything that happens and that will happen is bound up with the gathering and completion of the Church (Eph 1:20-23). It is a reality that is to be of great comfort and concern for us (Eph 2:18-22; 4:1-16; 1 Cor 12).

209. The Church is founded on her confession (Matt 16:16-18)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the authority of the church "has been built upon the ministry of the confession Peter made, in which he proclaims that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (Matt 16:16-18; Tr 25). This confession is the foundation of the church (Matt 16:16-18; Eph 2:19-22; John 10:16; 1 Cor 1:2; 2 Cor 1:1; 1 Thess 1:1; Acts 2:47). All people who confess with their mouth that Jesus is Lord and

believe in their heart that God raised him from the dead will be saved and are equally members of the holy Christian church, regardless of the nation, race, or church body to which they belong (Rom 10:9).

210. The Church has visible marks because of this confession (Matt 18:20)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the presence of the invisible Church can be recognised wherever people are gathered around this confession that Jesus is Christ (Matt 18:20). So, Christ and his Church are present where "the Gospel is purely taught and the Sacraments are correctly administered" because these are the means of grace, and are therefore visible marks of the invisible Church (Matt 28:19-20; 1 Cor 10:16; AC VII).

211. The Church is visibly united by these marks (John 6:68)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that despite the invisible unity of the Church, man can only look on the outside (1 Sam 16:7) and so a visible Church body can only be united on the basis of outward confession expressed by the Church's outward marks. This outward confession is a profession of the entire Word of God that does not deny any part of it (John 8:31; Matt 5:19; 1 Pet 4:11; Jer 23:28, 31; Deut 4:2; Rev 22:18-19), because every detail of Scripture bears witness that Jesus Christ is Lord (Luke 24:27; John 5:39; Rom 1:1-3; 2 Cor 1:20) and Christ commissioned the Church to teach the nations to observe everything he commanded (Matt 28:19-20). We must therefore visibly unite with all who confess the whole of Scripture (Matt 28; John 6:68; 8:31-32; 17:21; 1 Thess 5:21-22).

212. The Church must not unite by compromising these marks (2 John 9-11)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "as long as it depends on our ministry, we will not overlook error or be silent" (2 John 9-11 FC SD XII.6) and Paul appeals to the Church in Corinth that they all agree "and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment" (1 Cor 1:10), so must visibly withdraw from those who persistently spread error (Rom 16:17-18; 2 Tim 2:17-19; Gal 1:8-9). Yet, we rejoice that God preserves believers even in the midst of erring church bodies (1 Kgs 19:18).

213. The Church must not unite by other marks (Rom 14:17)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "it is not necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies instituted by men, should be the same everywhere," as the New Testament gives no commands about these (Rom 14:17; AC VII). It is "false ecumenicity to seek visible unity of the church in some form of external or organisational union," which is a divisive act that undermines confession of faith in Christ as the one true principle of visible unity (Col 2:16-19; TWB VII.12).

214. The Church is flexible (Matt 18:20)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the specific forms in which believers group themselves together for the fellowship and work of the Church, in which they arrange for the use of the means of grace in public worship, or in which they establish the public ministry, have not been prescribed by the Lord to His New Testament Church" (Matt 18:20; WDS Church and Ministry I.D.4).

215. The Church is imperfect (Phil 3:12)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the faith of Christians and its manifestations are marked by many imperfections, either in the grasp and understanding of scriptural truths, or in the matter of turning these truths to full account in their lives. We are all weak in one way or another" (Phil 3:12; Eph 3:16-18; 4:14; 1 Thess 5:14; Heb 5:12; 1 Pet 2:2; WDS Church Fellowship B.3). "Weakness of faith is in itself not a reason for terminating church fellowship, but rather an inducement for practicing it vigorously to help one another in overcoming our individual weaknesses" (Acts 1:6; 15:5-6, 22, 25; Gal; Col Eph 4:1-16; Matt 6:25-34; 18:15-17; Rom 14; 1 Cor 6:12; 8; 9; 10:23-24; 15; 1 Thess 4:10-12, 14; 2 Thess 3:6, 14-15; WDS Church Fellowship B.4).

2II. The Ministry is every Christian's role to preach forgiveness (1 Pet 2:9)

216. The Church's mission is her ministry (Matt 28:18-20)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the church's mission is to serve people with the Word and sacraments" by making disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that Jesus has commanded (Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; TWB VII.9).

217. The Ministry is declaring the forgiveness of sins (Matt 16:19)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "Christ instituted one office in His Church, the ministry of the Gospel. It is the task of proclaiming the Gospel in Word and Sacrament (Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; John 20:21-23; Acts 1:8; 1 Pet 2:9; Luke 22:19-20). This office or service, the ministry of the keys, has been given to those who confess Jesus as the Christ (Matt 16), who have the Holy Spirit (John 20), and who worship Christ to whom all authority has been given (Matt 28), i.e. it has been given to the Church—to all believers individually and collectively" (Matt 16:19; 10:32; 18:18; 1 Pet 2:9; WDS Church and Ministry II.A).

218. The Ministry belongs to every individual Christian (John 20:22-23)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that in John 20:22-23 "This power is here given to all Christians, although some have appropriated it to themselves alone, like the pope, bishops, priests and monks have done: they declare publicly and arrogantly that this power was given to them alone and not to the laity. But Christ here speaks neither of priests nor of monks, but says: 'Receive ye the Holy Spirit,' Whoever has the Holy Spirit, power is given to him, that is, to every one that is a Christian. But who is a Christian? He that believes. Whoever believes has the Holy Spirit. Therefore every Christian has the power, which the pope, bishops, priests and monks have in this case, to forgive sins or to retain them" (L.1522.Borna 31). Every Christian is a priest before God (1 Pet 2:9). All believers have direct and equal access to the throne of grace through Christ, the mediator (Eph 2:17-18). God has given the means of grace to all believers. All Christians are to declare the praises of him who called them out of darkness into his wonderful light (1 Pet 2:9). In this sense all Christians are ministers, or servants, of the gospel. God wants all Christians to share the message of salvation with other people (Matt 10:32; 28:19-20).

219. The Ministry is from the laity mediated to those publicly called (1 Pet 2:9)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the ministry is not given only to those who have been called to exercise it publicly. Instead, Peter writes "...you are... a royal priesthood... that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you..." (1 Pet 2:9) and so "...the Keys belong immediately to the entire Church..." (Tr 24). "The holy ministry is the power, conferred by God through the congregation as the possessor of the priesthood and all church power, to exercise the rights of the spiritual priesthood in public office in the name of the congregation" (WCM.M VII).

220. The Ministry is not from Papal Authority (Luke 22:25-26)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the ministry has not been given only to the Pope because "in 1 Corinthians 3, Paul makes ministers equal" (Tr 11). And Christ instructed the apostles saying: "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you." (Luke 22:25-26).

221. The Ministry is not from Apostolic Succession (Mark 9:38-39)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the ministry has not been given only to those who have had hands laid on them in Apostolic Succession from the time of Jesus, because when the apostles tried to stop a man casting out demons in Jesus' name "because he was not following us" (Mark 9:38) Jesus told them not to stop him (Mark 9:39). Therefore, "...we ourselves should ordain suitable persons to this office" (SA III.X.3).

2III. The Call to public ministry is given to qualified men (1 Tim 2:12-3:13)

222. The Ministry must be publicly performed in good order (1 Cor 14:40)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that even though the ministry belongs to all believers, not all Christians "can institute confession, baptize, preach and administer the Lord's supper... St. Paul says in 1 Cor 14:40: 'Let all things be done decently and in order.' If everybody wished to hear confession, baptize and administer the Lord's supper, what order would there be? Likewise, if everybody wished to preach, who would hear? If we all preached at the same time, what a confused babble it would be, like the noise of frogs!" (L.1522.Borna 32).

223. The Call is necessary for public ministry (Rom 10:15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that for the purposes of this good order "the congregation shall elect one, who is qualified, and he shall administer the Lord's supper, preach, hear confession and baptize. True we all have this power; but no one shall presume to exercise it publicly, except the one who has been elected by the congregation to do so" (L.1522.Borna 32). For this reason "no one should publicly teach in the Church, or administer the Sacraments, without a rightly ordered call" (Acts 13:1-3; 6:1-6; 20:28; Rom 10:15; 1 Tim 3:1-10; 1 Cor 9:14; Eph 4:11; AC XIV).

224. The Call must be made by the Church (Tit 1:5)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that a rightly ordered call must be made by the church (Tit 1:5) because all Christians in the congregation have equal authority together and so no one person may take to themselves this authority above others (1 Pet 2:9).

225. The Call can take many forms (Acts 6:1-6)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that there is "no direct word of institution for any particular form of the public ministry. The one public ministry of the Gospel may assume various forms, as circumstances demand" (Acts 6:1-6; WDS II.D.6).

226. The Call must only be given to godly individuals (Tit 1)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that anyone we call must be godly. Paul describes their character with words like: "above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable,..." (1 Tim 3:2; 1 Tim 3; Tit 1).

227. The Call must only be given to qualified individuals (1 Tim 3)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that anyone we call must be skilled and trained to perform the task they're commissioned to do. Paul uses two terms to describe categories of people who may receive a call in 1 Tim 3: "Bishop" is a catch all term for anyone who has a role involving public teaching and authority. So, Paul says a Bishop must: [be] "able to teach" (3:2) be able to "manage his own household well" as a demonstration that he will be able to exercise public authority in the church (3:4-5). "Deacon" is a catch all term for anyone who has a role of administration. So, Paul says a Deacon must: "not [be] greedy for dishonest gain", "prove themselves blameless", and "faithful in all things" (1 Tim 3:8, 9, 10).

228. The Call must not place women in authority over men (1 Tim 2:11-12)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "women are encouraged to participate in offices and activities of the public ministry except where that work involves authority over men" (1 Corinthians 11:3; 14:33-35; 1 Tim 2:11-12; WDS Man and Woman 19).

229. Those called should be financially supported by the Church (1 Tim 5:18)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel (1 Cor 9:3-14; 1 Tim 5:17-18).

2IV. Corporate worship is communal gathering to receive grace by God's Word (Acts 2:42-47)

230. Corporate worship is devoted to apostolic teaching (Acts 2:42)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the authority of the keys "is exercised only by teaching or preaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments, either to many or to individuals, according to their calling. In this way are given not only bodily, but also eternal things: eternal righteousness, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life" (Acts 2:42; AC XXVIII.8).

231. We proclaim God's Word (1 Tim 4:13)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "the Church has the authority to grant eternal things and exercises this authority only by the ministry of the Word" (1 Tim 4:13; AC XXVIII.10).

232. We distinguish Law and Gospel (2 Tim 2:15)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that “the distinction between the Law and the Gospel is to be kept in the Church with great diligence as a particularly brilliant light” (2 Tim 2:15; FC Ep V.2).

233. We emphasise the Gospel in content and tone (1 Cor 2:2)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that the Gospel of justification by faith is “the first and chief article” of the Church (1 Cor 15:3; SA II.1.1) and so should predominate in the content and tone of corporate worship (1 Cor 2:2).

234. Corporate worship is devoted to fellowship (Acts 2:42)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that we experience God’s grace “through the mutual conversation and consolation of brethren” as we speak the Gospel to one another (Matt 18:20; Rom 1:12; Acts 2:42; SA 3.IV).

235. We meet in an orderly way, led by those rightly called (1 Cor 14:37-40)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that because “no one should publicly teach in the Church, or administer the Sacraments, without a rightly ordered call” (1 Cor 14:37-40; AC XIV) we should always meet publicly in an orderly way.

236. We share and give to help the Word and other believers (Acts 2:44)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that we should do good to all especially to those of the household of faith (Gal 6:10), and this mutual love should be reflected in our corporate life of worship together (Acts 2:44).

237. Corporate worship is devoted to the Sacraments (Acts 2:42)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that because “the Church is the congregation of saints in which the Gospel is purely taught and the Sacraments are correctly administered” (Acts 2:42; AC VII.1), our corporate worship should be devoted to the Sacraments.

238. We make disciples (Matt 28:19)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that devotion to Baptism involves devotion to making disciples in obedience to Christ’s command (Matt 28:19).

239. We baptize and profess the baptismal formula (Matt 28:19)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that devotion to Baptism involves baptising new Christians and professing together the baptismal formula given to us by Christ (Matt 28:19).

240. We publicly confess and are absolved of sins (Matt 16:16-19)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that “the Keys are an office and power given by Christ to the Church” and the church should thus use them (Matt 16:16-19).

241. We proclaim the Supper by receiving Christ’s body and blood (1 Cor 11:26)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that “the Lord’s Supper was instituted in the Church. So by remembering Christ’s promises (about which we are

taught in this Sacrament), faith would be strengthened in us, and we would publicly confess our faith and proclaim Christ's benefits," (1 Cor 11:26; Ap V.89).

242. Corporate worship is devoted to prayer (Acts 2:42)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that "God has promised that He will hear our prayer (John 14:13). This is the worship that He approves above all other worship, that He be called upon in all afflictions" (Acts 2:42; AC XXI.3).

2V. Christians are created in Christ to live out their vocations (Eph 2:10)

243. God gave man vocations (Gen 1:28)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that God gave all men and women the command to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it (Gen 1:28) and placed Adam in the Garden of Eden to care for it (Gen 2:15). The fourth commandment to honour our parents provides a model for serving our heavenly Father, and thus for living out this creation mandate. "What God commands must be much better and far nobler than everything that we may come up with ourselves and he teaches fully what we should do if we wish to perform truly good works. By commanding such works, He shows that they please Him" (Exod 20:12; LC I.113). Therefore, every person, no matter how low or humble, has the highest heavenly vocation: "If this truth, then, could be impressed upon the poor people, a servant girl would leap and praise and thank God. With her tidy work, for which she receives support and wages, she would gain such a treasure of good works. It would be unlike all those gained by people regarded by saints. Is it not an excellent boast to know and say that if you perform your daily domestic task, this is better than all the sanctity and ascetic life of monks?" (LC I.113).

244. Men and women have different vocations (1 Cor 11:3-16)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that man and woman were created spiritually equal before God (Gen 1:26-27), equally redeemed by Christ (Col 3:10; Gal 3:28), and equally Sons of God by the indwelling Spirit through Baptism (Gal 3:25-27; 4:6-7). God gave them distinct roles (Gen 2:7, 18, 22; 1 Cor 11:3, 8-9; 1 Tim 2:12-13), so that man is head of the woman (Eph 5:21-6:9; Col 3:18-4:1; 1 Pet 3:5-7). Men model Christ's self-sacrificial servant-leadership authority for the church and women model the incarnate Christ's loving submission to the Father (1 Cor 11:3, 10; Col 1:18; 2:10; Eph 1:22; 1 Tim 2:11-12), but sin has perverted and undermined these good roles (Gen 2:16-17; 3:12,16). These roles are worked out in marriage (Eph 5:22-33; 1 Pet 3:1-7) and the church (1 Cor 11:3-10; 14:33-35; 1 Tim 2:11-12). Our physical birth gender is a gift from God for our good, we should not attempt to change it, or take on the appearance or role of the opposite gender (Deut 22:5; 1 Cor 11:4-12).

245. The marriage vocation models Christ and the Church (Eph 5:22-33)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that marriage is a state of life given at creation (Gen 2:18-25) where one man and one woman are united in sexual tenderness and life-long monogamous commitment (Exod 20:14; Rom 1:26-27; 1 Cor 6:9; 1 Tim 1:10), as a model of Christ and the church (Eph 5:22-33), and for the raising of children (Gen 1:28).

246. A husband's vocation is to sacrificially love his wife (Eph 5:25-33)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that a husband must sacrificially love his wife, as Christ loved the Church by dying for her (Eph 5:25-33).

247. A wife's vocation is to submit to her husband (Eph 5:22-24)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that a wife must submit to her husband as the Church submits to Christ (Eph 5:22-24).

248. A parent's vocation is to raise their children as Christians (Eph 6:4)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that fathers must not provoke their children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Eph 6:4).

249. A child's vocation is to obey their parents (Eph 6:1-3)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that children should obey their parents in the Lord, which is the first command with a promise (Eph 6:1–3). This inequality and ordered difference models our submission to God (Matt 5:48), so not only within the family, but in the world, those who are younger should be subject to elders and humble (1 Peter 5:5–6; LC I.108).

250. An employer's vocation is fairness to their employees (Eph 6:9)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that employers, should do good to their employees, not threatening them, knowing that he who is master of both employee and employer is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him (Eph 6:9; cf. Col 4:1).

251. An employee's vocation is to work for their employer (Eph 6:5-8)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that all should aspire to live quietly, mind their own affairs, and work (1 Thess 4:11). Employees should obey their earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as they would Christ, not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free (Eph 6:5–8; cf. Col 3:22).

252. A government's vocation is to establish civil order (Rom 13:3-4)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that all governmental authority has been instituted by God (Dan 2:37; Rom 13:1). The power of the state is to punish wrong and arrange all civil matters by the light of reason, to establish good order (Rom 13:3-4), so that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness (1 Tim 2:2); it has no power over the Word, the Sacraments, or to appoint or depose church leaders. The Church has the role of proclaiming the Gospel through Word and Sacrament; it has no power over civil matters or punishments.

253. A citizen's vocation is to obey their government (Rom 13:5-7)

The Bible says and so the Lutheran Church believes and confesses that Christians are both citizens of the state and God's kingdom and serve God by faithfully fulfilling their duties in both realms (Rom 13:6-7), so must obey the government that rules over them (Rom 13:5) unless that government commands them to disobey God (Acts 5:29).

