

Confession of Faith
James R. Hutchison, M.Div., Th.M., Ed.D.
13 December 2009

I am ordained into Holy Orders as a priest in the Anglican Church of North America (Missionary Diocese of All Saints) and am the vicar for St. Barnabas Anglican Church in Lynchburg. In humble obedience to the Apostolic Tradition of Faith, Order, and Morals as understood and proclaimed in the Anglican tradition and formularies, I affirm and confess the historic faith and practice of the Christian Church as it is set forth in Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments along with the Apocrypha, as summarized in the historic creeds—Apostles' Nicene, and Athanasian, as proclaimed by the first seven ecumenical councils, and as stated in the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) including the Articles of Religion and other documents included in the “Historical Documents” section of the BCP (1979, p. 876). I further embrace the principles set forth by the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1886, which affirmed the authority of Holy Scripture, Holy Baptism and Holy Eucharist as the two principle sacraments of the Church, the legitimacy of apostolic succession and the historic episcopacy, and the centrality of the historic creeds in our understanding of the Christian faith. I believe that there are seven sacraments that have been received. These consist of Baptism, Holy Eucharist, Confirmation, Confession and Reconciliation, Holy Orders, Unction, and Marriage. I believe that in Christ we are one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church.

In my confession of faith I believe in the mystery of the Triune God who exists eternally as God the Father; Jesus Christ, his only Begotten Son, and the Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

I believe in God the Father, maker of heaven and earth who in his love for his creation takes the initiative to seek out humanity in order to have a relationship with us, and then invites us to dinner. He seeks to be in covenantal relationship with us and to heal the brokenness that was a consequence of our disobedience and rebellious nature. He is the ground of our being and the creator of all life and all that is good and blessed in heaven and on earth.

I believe in the Incarnation of God in the person of Jesus Christ, the ever living and subsistent Word of God who was present with God from the beginning, begotten and not made, of one being with the Father. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and was born of the Virgin Mary. Jesus is the Christ, fully God and fully man. He lived a life that was in full and perfect obedience to God the Father. He was crucified for our transgressions in order to atone for the sins of the world. He was raised bodily from the dead by God the Father in accordance with the tenets of Holy Scripture. In that process God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself. Although other world religions may contain elements of truth, Jesus Christ alone is the full revelation of God. No one comes to the Father except through Jesus Christ. In the Gospel Jesus judges and corrects all perspectives about God and about anthropology. He also corrects all doctrines in the creation

of the New Covenant. All persons throughout the world need to learn of Him, come to know and believe in Him, and receive forgiveness of sin and new life in Him. There is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved (Acts 4¹²).

I believe in the Holy Spirit who draws us to one faith in Jesus Christ, through whom alone we are justified and made acceptable by God the Father. The Holy Spirit is the Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth who proceeds from the Father and moves the world toward salvation in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit fills the Church, guides Christians in our daily walk of faith, and fills the Church with the love of Christ. He sanctifies Christians and helps us to praise, glorify, and serve the Father through Jesus Christ our Lord and Redeemer.

I further believe in Holy Scripture as the revelation of God. Holy Scripture is “God’s Word” provided in writing and is for us the infallible rule for Christian faith and practice.

I believe that the Christian Church is the bride of Christ. I believe that Jesus Christ founded the Church to give meaningful worship to God, which is our good and faithful service; to sanctify and make saints of its members, and to convert the world to faith in Christ. Consequently, I am committed to a catholic and evangelical worship that is centered in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist and is set within the framework of daily worship following the form of the Daily Offices or the Liturgy of the Hours. I maintain the liturgical and devotional practices of the Catholic Revival (the Oxford Movement) within Anglicanism as well as contemporary expressions of evangelical and informal worship (e.g. through the use of praise music). I do believe that any and all innovations to worship and liturgy should conform to and remain faithful to the triune nature of God and the Person and work of Christ as revealed in Scripture and upheld by our catholic tradition.

I also believe in the responsibility of each Christian to live a life that is regulated by spiritual disciplines of the Church that includes daily worship, participation in the Eucharist whenever possible, the praying of the Divine Offices with set times for scriptural study, reflection and contemplation, personal prayer, and meditation.

Furthermore, I am committed to a morality, which opposes all forms of prejudice in self and others. I decry any false notions about inclusivity or unity that denies or minimizes the importance of natural differences, including gender differences that have been prescribed within the created order. I maintain that sexual relations should occur exclusively within a covenantal relationship that is bound together through the sacrament of Holy Matrimony joining a man and a woman who through the mystery of the sacrament become one flesh. All Christians are called to a life of chastity. Married persons are committed to exclusive sexual fidelity, while single persons are expected to abide by a life of sexual abstinence. The Church should support the sanctity of family life.

I believe that all human life is a sacred gift from God and is to be protected and defended from conception to natural death. As Christians we are called to bring the grace and compassion of Christ to any who are confronted with ethical decisions regarding abortion, reproductive issues, or terminal illnesses.

In Matthew 28 Jesus proclaimed the “Great Commission.” As God’s anointed ones we are instructed to proclaim the Good News of the Gospel and make disciples of all peoples. The mission of the Church included both evangelistic proclamation and ministries of love and service to others.

I affirm my particular responsibility to know, love, and serve the Lord in whatever local context I am called to serve. I shall strive to be well informed about our secular society and to seek ways to bring the Christian message of salvation and healing and Christian social and psychological teachings and ethical principles to bear upon all spheres of our common life together, including a witness to secular political and social structures. I seek to stand with others who can collaborate with me in mutual enlightenment, encouragement, mission, and ministry, as I seek to be faithful to the vows I have taken in pursuit of Holy Orders. I affirm my intention of obedience to the episcopate authority of my Bishop Ordinary, Suffragan Bishop, or their successors.