**A short summary of some of the truths confessed by**

**Crown of Life Lutheran Church:**

1. We believe that there is only one God, who’s revealed Himself as the triune (three-in-one) God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Luke 3:21-22; Matthew 28:19)
2. We believe that all humans have sinned and fallen short of God’s standard of perfection, and therefore deserve to be sent to hell eternally. That’s true for each person, right from the moment of conception. (Psalm 51:5; Romans 8:7; Genesis 6:5)
3. We believe that Jesus – who is both truly God and truly human – paid the full price for all sins of all time by His perfect death on the cross. (John 1:1,14; Romans 9:5; Mark 9:1-9; Hebrews 1:1-8; Philippians 2:5-11; Romans 5:18; John 3:16; 1John 2:1-2)
4. We believe that Jesus’ resurrection is the ultimate proof of Jesus’ divinity, and is THE proof of the fact that God has declared all mankind to be innocent. (Romans 4:25; Romans 1:4)
5. We believe that all mankind will be raised from the dead at the end of the world. Body and soul will be reunited, those who were believers in Jesus will enjoy eternal life with God, those who were unbelievers will be condemned to an eternity of suffering in hell. (Matthew 24-25)
6. We believe that Jesus will return only once, at which time this world will be destroyed by fire. Until that time the world will become progressively worse, not better. Only God knows when that return will take place, so it’s foolish for humans to try to predict it. (Matthew 24:4-14; Revelation 1:7; Hebrews 9:27-28; 1Thessalonians 4:13 – 5:11)
7. We believe that God created the earth in six normal days. Man and woman – created in a unique manner – were the crown of creation, being created in the image of God, that is, perfect and holy. (Genesis 1-2; Exodus 20:11)
8. We believe that faith is a gift which God the Holy Spirit works in our hearts. Man does not have the capacity to become a believer on his own. The tool which God uses to create faith and to strengthen faith is the means of grace – the gospel, either in the word itself or in the sacraments. We believe that faith can be lost. (Ephesians 2:1-10; Romans 8:7; Romans 1:16; Romans 10:17; 1Corinthians 10:12; 1Timothy 1:19-20)
9. We believe that baptism is a powerful tool by which God creates – or seals – faith in the heart of the individual, no matter how old or how young that person may be. (1Peter 3:21; Titus 3:5-6; Romans 6:3-5; Acts 2:38-39; Matthew 28:19).
10. We believe that in the Lord’s Supper we receive Jesus’ true body and blood together with the bread and wine, for Jesus says, “This IS my body, this IS my blood.” We reject the notion that the bread and wine change substance into Jesus’ body and blood, and we reject the notion that the bread and wine merely represent Jesus’ body and blood. (Matthew 26:26-28; 1Corinthians 10:16)
11. We believe that in addition to being a wonderful gift from God to us, that the Lord’s Supper is also a powerful confession of a commonly held faith. For that reason, and because the Lord’s Supper can be taken to a person’s harm, we practice “close” or “membership” communion, believing that a person ought first to be instructed in the truths of the Word before attending the Lord’s Supper. (1Corinthians 10:17; 11:23-29)
12. We believe that through His Word and Sacraments God works faith in the hearts of individuals, and in so doing He builds His Church, that is, the group of all believers. That Church – the “Holy Christian Church” – is also called “the invisible church,” for only God can read hearts, so only God knows who belongs to that “church.” The Holy Christian Church cannot be attached to any one denomination, but will be found wherever the Word of God is proclaimed. (1Peter 1:22-2:12; Isaiah 55:10-11)
13. We believe that, since we cannot read hearts and are indeed forbidden to read hearts, that we are to determine which churches/groups we join or practice fellowship with on the basis of their official confession of faith. Where error is found, we would lovingly but firmly refuse to practice fellowship, lest we give the impression that their error is okay, or that God’s Word isn’t clear. (Romans 16:17; John 8:31-32; Matthew 7:15)
14. We believe that the Bible is God’s Word, given to us by God word-for-word, through human writers. The Bible’s main purpose is to work faith in Jesus in our hearts. Its secondary purpose is to teach us how to live lives which give glory to God, lives which say “thank you” to God for what He’s done for us. (2Peter 1:21; John 17:17; John 20:31; 2Timothy 3:16-17)
15. We believe that two messages flow throughout the Bible. a) the law, which leads us to see our sinfulness and our need for a Savior and b) the Gospel, which tells us that God has sent the Savior to this world, and that by His life, death, and resurrection, we have been saved. (Romans 3:9-24; Luke 2:8-14; Matthew 1:21)
16. We believe that prayer is a wonderful privilege given by God to His believers, by which God allows His believers to speak directly to Him. We believe that God always answers the prayer of the believer, and that God will always answer in the way that’s best, even if that means saying “No”. (James 5:16; Psalm 50:15; Matthew 7:7-11; Romans 8:26; Isaiah 59:1-2; Romans 5:1-2)
17. We believe that the believer, motivated by God’s love for him, will want to say “thank you” to God. God guides that life of faith through His Word, particularly through the 10 Commandments. Love – for God and for our neighbor – is the fulfillment of God’s law. We believe that our life of faith earns us nothing at all; rather, it’s our way to say “thank you” to God for all He’s done for us. (Psalm 119:105; Romans 12:1; Matthew 22:36-38; Exodus 20; Luke 17:10; Isaiah 64:6)
18. We believe that God desires His people to gather regularly for worship and study. (Hebrews 10:25; 1Peter 3:17-18)
19. We believe that God wants His people to grow in their knowledge of the Word, and to spread the good news message of salvation to the ends of the earth. (Matthew 28:19-20)
20. We believe that marriage is a life-long union of one man and one woman. (Genesis 2:18-24; Matthew 19:2-9; Malachi 2:16)
21. We believe that each believer has at least one spiritual gift by which he both gives service to God and to his fellow men. (Rom 12:3-8; 1Cor 12)
22. We believe that every life is precious, from conception to grave, because life has been given by God, and because Jesus paid for each life when He died on the cross.
23. We believe that both the church and the state are instruments which God created, but that each have their own sphere of responsibility. The state has been given the “sword,” the right to punish, in order to keep order in society. The church has been given the Gospel – the good news that Jesus is the Savior – in order to make disciples for all eternity. Each Christian is a citizen both of the church and of the state, and has a role and/or responsibilities in each sphere. Care should be taken that the church doesn’t become a political organization, and care should be taken that the state not meddle in the affairs which correctly belong to the church. (Romans 13:1-7; Matthew 22:21).