Article 1: God

Hear, O people: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! Almighty in power, perfect in wisdom, righteous in judgment, overflowing in steadfast love.

The LORD is our Sovereign. You reign over all things visible and invisible. The LORD is our Shepherd. You rescue the lost and the helpless. The LORD is a consuming fire. You are perfect in holiness. The LORD is slow to anger. You abound in tender mercy.

Holy and pure is the Father in all His ways! Creator of heaven and earth, in whom we live and move and have our being. You hear us when we pray. Open to us the way of salvation, and unite us in the one family of faith.

Holy and true is the Son in all His ways! Image of the invisible God, eternal Word who was made flesh, conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary to be Servant of all and Lord of all, made like us in every way, yet without sin. You suffered, were crucified and buried, and were raised to new life on the third day. Saviour of the world,

ARTICLE 1 | RESPONSIVE WORSHIP READING

you love us with an everlasting love. You reveal the fullness of the Father. You intercede for us your followers. You call us to be your witnesses until you return in glory.

Holy and wise is the Spirit in all His ways! Power, presence, and wisdom of God, divine Gift to all God's people. You convict us of sin. You give us the new birth. You guide us into all truth. You enrich us with gifts for service, and cultivate the fruit of maturity. Divine Comforter and Counsellor, you pray for us when we do not know how, baptize us into the one body, and give us a foretaste of the glory to come.

Blessed be the name of the LORD! Blessed be the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever! Amen.

Article 2: Revelation of God

The glory of God is written boldly in the skies, and carved deeply into the landscape of this earth. Lord, since creation, you have shown all people that you exist and have all power. Merciful God, open our eyes to see the heights and depth and breadth of your glory and steadfast love, which fill the world.

In the fullness of time, God revealed himself by the Son, Jesus Christ, who is the brightness of God's glory, the true likeness of God's essence. **The law and the prophets looked forward to you, Jesus, hoping for the day of your arrival. The New Testament calls us to follow you and abide in you.**

We believe that all Scripture is inspired by God. It is profitable for teaching, for pointing out error and setting us straight, and for training in right living, so that everyone who belongs to God may be well-equipped for every good work. Almighty God, your Spirit moved among the ancient prophets and writers, reminding them of the truth, and shaping the eternal message of salvation. Move among us now, and speak to us, so that we may hear your Word with understanding, and respond with obedient hearts.

Article 3: Creation and Humanity

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Beauty erupted out of darkness, order sparkled where chaos once reigned a universe clean and pure.

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it; the world, and all that fills it. O Lord, you delight in your creation, and all creation delights in your care and sustaining presence.

But who are we, that you should take notice of us, we poor mortals, that you even look at us? O God, you were not content with beauty alone. You desired love, and created us in your image to love you and live with you. You made us, male and female, in your image. You gave us the world to name it and care for it, to enjoy it and offer it back to you in ministries of exploration and stewardship.

Holy God, we failed you at the beginning. We have sinned ever since. As sin entered the world through one human, and death through sin, so life and salvation have entered through Jesus Christ. **God's light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot put it out.** We live with the pain of Eden's curse; we live with the promise of Eden regained.

ARTICLE 3 | RESPONSIVE WORSHIP READING

All creation waits with bated breath, for the glorious return of Christ, who makes all things new; and God will be all in all. Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad, let the sea roar, let the fields celebrate! Then the trees of the forest will rejoice before the Lord, for He comes; He comes bringing justice to all the earth.

Article 4: Sin and Evil

Out of the depths we cry to You, O Lord; in your mercy, hear our prayers. We confess that we were dead in sin, cut off from you, cut off from each other rebels wandering in a wilderness of our own making. We long to put off the sin that so easily entangles; but in our own strength, Lord, we cannot.

Father in heaven, do not lead us into temptation! The human heart is deceitful above all things; how dare we trust in ourselves? Pride and greed make their home within, and we quickly turn to worship anything but you.

Father in heaven, rescue us from the evil one! The devil prowls around, like a lion seeking someone to devour. Powers and principalities rage against us, seeking to deceive and enslave. Yet greater is the One who is in us than the one who is in the world.

Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

Article 5: Salvation

We believe that there is no name under heaven that can save us, except the name of Jesus. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

Since that sad day when sin entered the world, indeed, before the foundation of the world, our God has been a saving God: covering our shame, covering our sin, covenanting in faithfulness to receive all who call upon the name of the Lord. We were too weak and blind to help ourselves; but while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

O blessed cross, our tree of life, on which was shed the precious blood of Jesus, in which we find the healing of the nations. In Christ we are the new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! Together with all creation, we eagerly await the day when the heavens and earth will be renewed, and we will gather in joyous worship around the throne of God, singing songs of thanks to the Christ who was slain, and now lives. We confess that all must receive salvation as a gracious gift of God. For it is by grace that we are saved, through faith, and not by works, so that no one can boast.

We confess that all whom God adopts are brought together as sisters and brothers, one new people of God. When we are together with all the saints, we grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.

We confess that all who receive the love of God respond with lives of service and beauty. For we are God's works of art, created in Christ Jesus to do good works.

Give thanks to the Lord! God's steadfast love endures forever!

Article 6: Nature of the Church

No one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. He has called us out of darkness into His glorious light. He builds us into a holy temple, a house of prayer for all the nations, and the gates of Hades will never overpower it.

You are the body of Christ and individually members of it. **God's Spirit makes us one, breathing unity into diversity, breaking down the walls that divide.**

The dividing lines of male and female, of nation, race, and class, have been broken. The body of Christ is but one body with one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God. **We commit ourselves** to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, as we live out our mission to be Christ's hands and feet, ears and mouth, mind and heart— His body for a broken world.

You are a holy people, a royal priesthood, God's special property, created to do His will. We gather to build up the body of believers and to make God's praise glorious! We celebrate God's faithfulness and grace. We hear the word of the Lord, bread for our soul. We offer prayers as incense to the Lord. We prod each other on to love and good works. We seek God's will for our life and mission. We baptize, eat, and drink as Christ commanded, awaiting with joy the Great Banquet to come. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. And when we fail, merciful God, bring us lovingly back to Your truth, so that we may learn again how to bring each other back from sin and error. We commit ourselves to the common good of your people, humbly submitting to one another, according to our Lord's example and Spirit.

When Christ was enthroned at the right hand of God, he poured out his Holy Spirit upon his followers, men and women, young and old, according to the promise of the Father. We receive God's Spirit as the gift and promise of eternal life. We yield ourselves to the Spirit, that God may work through us in our ministry to the body

and our mission to the world.

God gives the church spiritual gifts to equip the whole body for ministry. Those with gifts of leadership have a high calling, as models of Christ-like living and as servants entrusted with the care and equipping of God's people. We receive those whom God has given to us, and commit ourselves to pray for them, support them, and correct them in a spirit of love.

Bless them, O God. Bless us through them, that your people may be built up and your good news announced to all the world.

Article 7: Mission of the Church

You are the light of the world! Let your light shine, so that all people may see it and praise your Father in heaven. **God, we love you and live for you. Help us to love our neighbours as ourselves, sharing the good news with boldness, and showing the good news with deeds of limitless love.** We are not ashamed of this good news; it is your power for salvation to everyone who believes.

All authority in heaven and on earth is given to our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, go and summon all nations to follow him, baptizing them and teaching them to observe all that he commanded. Let the nations praise you, O God, let all the nations praise you!

Spirit of God, fill us with power to be your witnesses. We offer ourselves to the Lord of the Harvest as ambassadors for Christ. Purify us and use us to proclaim your salvation. We commit ourselves to spread the good news of peace with God to those who are near and to those far away. Strengthen us to work with joy as we look forward to the Day when the redeemed will gather in your presence to celebrate forever the boundless riches of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Article 8: Christian Baptism

Jesus our Lord was baptized to fulfill all righteousness. All who turn to Jesus are also called to pass through the waters and embark on a life of obedience and abundant joy. **Blessed is the one** who hears the call of Jesus and follows. **Blessed is the one** cleansed by Jesus' forgiving love, washed and made new by the Holy Spirit, welcomed into the Father's family.

Baptism is a public testimony of repentance and the forgiveness of sins. Baptism testifies that we have died with Christ, that we will also be raised to newness of life in Him. Baptism is a pledge to serve Christ according to the gifts God has given. Baptism announces that we belong to God: we take God's name upon ourselves, and God's people become our people. So submit yourselves to God, and commit yourselves to the church family that God has entrusted with your care.

(Optional blessing for baptismal candidates) May the Spirit descend like a dove, and the blessing of God rest upon you: "Well done, my dear child; with you I am well pleased!"

Article 9: The Lord's Supper

Taste and see that the Lord is good! Jesus says, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." Listen! The Lord who fed the thousands on the hillside, who fed the twelve in the upper room listen, he stands at the door and knocks. If we hear his voice and open the door, he will come in and eat with us.

Jesus invites all his disciples to feast at this table. All who are members of God's covenant family, living in obedience to God, with integrity towards their spiritual brothers and sisters, gather to celebrate their communion with Christ and each other.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us! Forgive our sins: our pride and self-sufficiency, our bitterness and division. Help us to examine ourselves, and give us the grace to repent. We will leave the gifts of our worship at the altar until we have made right that which needs mending with you and with others. And then, O Lord, Your kindness and forgiveness will feed our very souls. On the night he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." **Father, we bless you for the bread, for this sign of Jesus' body, for his life of compassion and his example of humble service. This loaf unites us in the one body, and strengthens us for ministry. Lord, remember your body, and deliver us from evil.**

In the same way, Jesus took the cup and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Father, we bless you for the cup, for this sign of Jesus' shed blood, for his death on the cross and his sacrifice for sin. This cup welcomes us into a covenant of forgiveness, and promises us the riches of eternal life, for Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed, and we have been brought over from death into life.

As often as you do this, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!

Article 10: Discipleship

Jesus calls us to walk with Him, to follow Him, and to imitate Him. **Through the power of your Spirit,** we will take up our cross. We will live ready to suffer, to surrender our rights, even to die, for the cause of Christ our King.

Jesus calls us to walk with each other. Do not neglect to meet together, but encourage each other to love and good works. God, you have given us to each other, that together we may discover your holy and perfect will. We ask for wisdom in times of uncertainty, for courage in times of difficulty, for humility in times of defeat. We commit ourselves to a life of faithfulness to you, ready to receive correction and offer encouragement as the Lord directs, so that we may be built up into a holy and beautiful temple, pleasing to God in every way.

As followers of Christ, we are friends of God, and enemies of the darkness that rules this present age. **Rescue us from its seductive power. Empower us to live boldly as citizens of the Age to Come.** We reject the world's use of power to oppress and impress. **Fill us with your love and humility; make us peacemakers, as those who know the power of sacrifice.** We reject the world's desire to hoard and squander wealth. Fill us with your generosity; make us poor in spirit, as those who know the wealth of simplicity.

We reject the world's lust for pleasure and lack of self-control. Fill us with your purity; make us to hunger and thirst after righteousness, as those who know the pleasure of feasting on God's will.

May we grow to be like Christ, thinking his thoughts, speaking his words, embodying his passion to serve and to save the lost. As Christ called us, we joyfully call others to walk with us, and together follow Christ in this new life.

Article 11: Marriage, Singleness, and Family

We believe that God designed human life to begin in a family, and be blessed by the family. **Even more, God desires all people to become part of the family of faith.**

In the beginning, God established marriage as the union of one man and one woman for life-long companionship, intimacy, and the nurture of children. The blessing of God is on those who receive God's gift of marriage. We commit ourselves to honour the sanctity of this gift of marriage. We bless all the married people in our church family and ask that you would empower them to live faithfully and intentionally in their calling according to the pattern of Christ. May each of them experience rich community here as members and ministers in the family of faith. O Lord, fill each of them with your unfailing love. Keep them from temptation. Strengthen them to flee from all that would violate and harm the covenant of marriage. Fill us with compassion and wisdom to bring healing and restoration to the faltering and the fallen.

The Apostle Paul wished that all disciples of Jesus could live unmarried as he was. The blessing of God is on those who receive God's gift of singleness. We bless all the single people in our church family and ask that you would empower them to live faithfully and intentionally in their calling according to the pattern of Christ. May each of them experience rich community here as members and ministers in the family of faith. Strengthen them to flee from all that would violate and harm their discipleship journey with you. Fill us with compassion and wisdom to bring healing and restoration to the faltering and the fallen.

The blessing of God is on those who receive God's gift of children. We bless all the parents and children in our church family and ask that you would empower them to live faithfully and intentionally in their calling according to the pattern of Christ. May each of them experience rich community here within the family of faith. Strengthen parents for the many challenges of parenting. May they bring up their children to love and serve God by instructing their children in the faith, disciplining them with gentleness, blessing them with favour, and not provoking them to anger.

Strengthen children to live in love, respect, and obedience toward their parents. May we as a church family also love and nurture these children so that they will respond to your invitation to salvation and discipleship taking their own place within our family of faith.

Article 12: Society and State

God in His mercy established government to promote the well-being of all people. Lord, we pray for all our governmental leaders. Empower us to live out your justice, truth, and righteousness in our homes, in our communities, and in all the nations of the world. Make us keenly aware, by your Spirit, of those who suffer discrimination and injustice so we can love our neighbours as ourselves. In serving them, we are serving you.

God requires governments to uphold and bless what is good, and to restrain and punish what is evil. Empower us to obey all laws that do not conflict with the Word of God. Give us your compassion so we grieve for and stand with all the victims of violence and evil. Help us be peacemakers who live in the way of Jesus by seeking reconciliation, justice, forgiveness, and the love of enemies.

Help us be truthful and gracious in all we say, never needing to swear oaths to prove our truthfulness, but letting our "Yes" be "Yes" and our "No" be "No."

Article 13: Love and Nonresistance

Greater love has no one than this: to lay down your life for your neighbour. Jesus has left us his example, that we should follow in his steps. **Christ Jesus, you are our peace. You demolished all divisions and made us one new family, united by your one Spirit in the bond of peace.** We proclaim that we want our allegiance to you and your name to be higher and stronger than any other loyalty.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. Christ, let your word of Christ dwell in us richly, that we may teach and admonish one another with all wisdom. Grant us courage to resolve conflicts peacefully among ourselves, remembering that you ask us to leave even our acts of worship so that we may be reconciled to each other.

Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the children of God. Lord God, fill us with the love that flows from your heart, that we may be agents of reconciliation in a broken world, ambassadors of the Prince of Peace in all our ways. Give us the patience to wait on your justice, rather than seeking vengeance ourselves. Give us the strength to bless and not curse, to return evil with good, and to trust in the power of your love, rather than a love of power. Jesus warned that in the last days

there would be wars and rumours of wars.

Lord, strengthen your children to be a sign to the world that one day you will bring an end to all violence and war.

Nations will beat their swords into plowshares,

and weapons of war will become tools for peace.

The Tree of Life will be given for the healing of the nations. But while we wait for that Day,

free our hearts—and our mouths—

to bless and pray for those who pursue violence against us and others.

May we work against the causes of violence and war in our world,

so the world will want to live in the richness of God's peace. Help us to live as people of peace,

and enable us be faithful in the time of testing.

Article 14: The Sanctity of Human Life

All human life belongs to God. You have created all human beings in your image, and crowned them with dignity and honour.

God opposes every action and attitude that devalues human life. Since the beginning of time, you have shown yourself as a shield for the defenseless: caring for the poor and needy, providing for the widow and orphan, comforting the sick and lonely. Spirit of God, use us as your instruments for justice, peace, and blessing.

O God, you are Lord over life and death. When you open your hand to us, we are filled with abundance; when you take away our breath, we die and return to dust. Lord, you were present at the moment of our creation, for you lovingly shaped us in our mother's womb. We praise you, for we are wonderfully made! Your care over our mortal body is unending from the beginning of life to our final breath.

Article 15: Stewardship

In the beginning, God placed man and woman in the garden to tend it and guard it. Today, God still entrusts us with the care and responsible use of our world and its resources. Help us, Lord, receive this task as a sacred trust, and manage our lives in ways that honour you. As good stewards of your gifts, we commit ourselves to using the earth's abundance to meet human need. O Lord, save us from self-destruction fueled by greed, protect us from unjust exploitation of the land, keep us from destroying the beauty of your good creation.

All that we have is God's time, talents, and possessions and without God we are nothing. We worship and follow the One who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we may become rich in him. **Our lasting treasure is in You, O Lord. Teach us to live lightly with all that you have given.**

Article 16: Work, Rest, and the Lord's Day

The Lord God made the heavens and the earth, and everything in them.

O Lord, you are the carpenter of creation, the weaver of worlds.

You have called us, your image bearers, to live lives of both work and rest.

Give us work that blesses you and the world,

and participates in your Kingdom work.

Empower us with the skills, health, honesty, and integrity to do this work well—so the world will know we are serving you. We thank you for meaningful work

and we pray for those who are without work or unable to work. May you answer their prayers.

On the seventh day, God finished from all the work of his hands, and rested from his labours.

O Lord, you thought it a good thing to pause, reflect, and enjoy what you had done.

Help us to do the same. Help us to rest, thankful for our daily bread. Help us to rest, enjoying a sweet foretaste of eternal peace. Help us to rest, relying on your goodness, and not on our own activity. Help us to worship you, the giver of every perfect gift, and slow us down so that we can be still and know that you are God.

ARTICLE 16 | RESPONSIVE WORSHIP READING

On the first day of creation, God said "Let there be light!" Today, God says, "Let the light of Christ shine out of darkness, the glory of God in the face of Jesus!"

We celebrate Jesus' triumph over the grave, by gathering with others on the first day of the week, for praise and prayer.

We celebrate the promised gift from the Father the Holy Spirit poured out on God's people by gathering on the first day of the week for teaching and sharing.

This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Article 17: Christianity and Other Faiths

Jesus said, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. O Lord, fill us with your love and wisdom to proclaim your name to the ends of the earth.

O Lord, ever since you made this world, your handiwork shouts out your glory; your signature has never been erased. Your presence and power are evident to all who have eyes to see. We confess that Christ is the fullness of Truth, while also confessing that echoes of God's truth can be found in all places and times. Open our ears to hear echoes of God's truth wherever they can be found, while always fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfector of our faith. Open our mouths, that we may share with both humility and confidence what we have heard and seen and touched concerning the Word of Life. We pray that all people would respond to your great invitation and move from darkness to light, from bondage to freedom, from unknown gods to the love of Jesus. We pray for those without Christ,

that they would turn away from the path that leads to death and experience your great salvation. We trust you, Lord, as the righteous Judge of all the earth. You will do what is right for those who are without Christ.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Article 18: Christ's Final Triumph

The words of him who is faithful and true: "Surely, I am coming soon!" As the end of this age is drawing near, help us, Lord, to live as a people of hope. We await your final return, Christ our King, because you will make right all that is wrong. You will restore peace to the earth.

All around we see the work of the Enemy: war and destruction, famine and death, increasing more and more as the Day approaches. We rejoice in the Lord because the Enemy has been conquered, and our Saviour Jesus Christ will reign forever and ever.

The last enemy to be destroyed is death. Christ has broken the power of death, and therefore we will not fear. O Lord, we pray that we would not fear death but rather long for the Day when you will take off our mortal rags, and clothe our resurrection bodies with glorious robes of immortality, to be with you forever in the new creation.

When Christ returns, the dead will be raised, and the living will be transformed. On the day of Resurrection, we will all stand before the judgment throne of God. We praise you Lord for the great promise that when you return, your righteous ones who have died will be resurrected with new bodies to live eternally on the new earth. We praise you also for the great promise that those in Christ alive at your final coming will be given transformed bodies to join the resurrected on the new earth. We pray for mercy for all the unrighteous facing death and separation from you. May they seek your face while there is still time. May you empower us to live in such a way that on that Day we hear from you the great words of welcome: "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into your Master's delight!" But yet, Lord, over the many centuries, your children have waited and watched, prayed and hoped. In our spirits we ask, "How long, O Lord? When will be the day of your appearing?" It is not for us to know the times or seasons. The form of this world is already fading away, and the Lord is not slow about his promise. God is patient, not wanting any to perish, but wanting all to receive eternal life. Therefore we will watch and pray according to your promise, waiting for the new heaven and the new earth, where righteousness is at home. We will gather in worship around your throne, and praise and adore you, the God of our salvation, forever and ever. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! Maranatha!