



Our Confession of Faith

*Our community is a member of the Mennonite Church U.S.A. and affirms **A Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective** (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: herald, 1996). The confession was adopted at the delegate sessions of the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church meeting at Wichita, Kansas, July 25-30, 1995, and is now the official confession of faith of the Mennonite Church U.S.A. Here is an official summary of that confession from pages 93-98.*

Article 1: God. We believe that God exists and is pleased with all who draw near by faith. We worship the one holy and loving God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit eternally. God has created all things visible and invisible, has brought salvation and new life to humanity through Jesus Christ, and continues to sustain the church and all things until the end of the age.

Article 2: Jesus Christ. We believe in Jesus Christ, the Word of God become flesh. He is the Savior of the world, who has delivered us from the dominion of sin and reconciled us to God by his death on a cross. He was declared to be Son of God by his resurrection from the dead. He is the head of the church, the exalted Lord, the Lamb who was slain, coming again to reign with God in glory.

Article 3: Holy Spirit. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the eternal Spirit of God, who dwelled in Jesus Christ, who empowers the church, who is the source of our life in Christ, and who is poured out on those who believe as the guarantee of redemption.

Article 4: Scripture. We believe that all Scripture is inspired by God through the Holy Spirit for instruction in salvation and training in righteousness. We accept the Scriptures as the Word of God and as the fully reliable and trustworthy standard for Christian faith and life. Led by the Holy Spirit in the church, we interpret Scripture in harmony with Jesus Christ.

Article 5: Creation and Divine Providence. We believe that God has created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, and that God preserves and renews what has been

made. All creation has its source outside itself and belongs to the Creator. The world has been created good because God is good and provides all that is needed for life.

Article 6: The Creation and Calling of Human Beings. We believe that God has created human beings in the divine image. God formed them from the dust of the earth and gave them a special dignity among all the works of creation. Human beings have been made for relationship with God, to live in peace with each other, and to take care of the rest of creation.

Article 7: Sin. We confess that, beginning with Adam and Eve, humanity has disobeyed God, given way to the tempter, and chosen to sin. All have fallen short of the Creator's intent, marred the image of God in which they were created, disrupted order in the world, and limited their love for others. Because of sin, humanity has been given over to the enslaving powers of evil and death.

Article 8: Salvation. We believe that, through Jesus Christ, God offers salvation from sin and a new way of life. We receive God's salvation when we repent and accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. In Christ, we are reconciled with God and brought into the reconciling community. We place our faith in God that, by the same power that raised Christ from the dead, we may be saved from sin to follow Christ and to know the fullness of salvation.

Article 9: The Church of Jesus Christ. We believe that the church is the assembly of those who have accepted God's offer of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. It is the new community of disciples sent into the world to proclaim the reign of God and provide a foretaste of the church's glorious hope. It is the new society established and sustained by the Holy Spirit

Article 10: The Church in Mission. We believe that the mission of the church is to proclaim and to be a sign of the kingdom of God. Christ has commissioned the church to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them, and teaching them to observe all things he has commanded.

Article 11: Baptism. We believe that the baptism of believers with water is a sign of their cleansing from sin. Baptism is also a pledge before the church of their covenant with God to walk in the way of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Believers are baptized into Christ and his body by the Spirit, water, and blood.

Article 12: The Lord's Supper. We believe that the Lord's Supper is a sign by which the church thankfully remembers the new covenant, which Jesus established by his death. In this communion meal, the church renews its covenant with God and with each other and participates in the life and death of Jesus Christ, until he comes.

Article 13: Foot Washing. We believe that in washing the feet of his disciples, Jesus calls us to serve one another in love as he did. Thus we acknowledge our frequent need of cleansing, renew our willingness to let go of our pride and worldly power, and offer our lives in humble service and sacrificial love.

Article 14: Discipline in the Church. We practice discipline in the church as a sign of God's offer of transforming grace. Discipline is intended to liberate erring brothers and sisters from sin, and to restore them to a right relationship with God and to fellowship in the church. The practice of discipline gives integrity to the church's witness in the world.

Article 15: Ministry and Leadership. We believe that ministry is a continuation of the Work of Christ, who gives gifts from the Holy Spirit to all believers and empowers them for service in the church and in the world. We also believe that God calls particular persons in the church to specific leadership ministries and offices. All who minister are accountable to God and to the community of faith.

Article 16: Church Order and Unity. We believe that the church of Jesus Christ is one body with many members, ordered in such a way that, through the one Spirit, believers may be built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

Article 17: Discipleship and the Christian Life. We believe that Jesus Christ calls us to discipleship, to take up our cross and follow him. Through the gift of God's saving grace, we are empowered to be disciples of Jesus, filled with his Spirit, following his teachings and his path through suffering to new life. As we are faithful to his way, we become conformed to Christ and separated from the evil in the world.

Article 18: Christian Spirituality. We believe that to be a disciple of Jesus is to know life in the Spirit. As the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ takes shape in us, we grow in the image of Christ and in our relationship with God. The Holy Spirit is active in individual and in communal worship, leading us deeper into the experience of God.

Article 19: Family, Singleness, and Marriage. We believe that God intends human life to begin in families and to be blessed through families. Even more, God desires all people to become part of the church, God's family. As single and married members of the church family give and receive nurture and healing, families can grow toward the wholeness that God intends. We are called to chastity and to loving faithfulness in marriage.

Article 20: Truth and the Avoidance of Oaths. We commit ourselves to tell the truth, to give a simple yes or no, and to avoid the swearing of oaths.

Article 21: Christian Stewardship. We believe that everything belongs to God, who calls the church to live in faithful stewardship of all that God has entrusted to us, and to participate now in the rest and justice, which God has promised.

Article 22: Peace, Justice, and Nonresistance. We believe that peace is the will of God. God created the world in peace, and God's peace is most fully revealed in Jesus Christ, who is our peace and the peace of the whole world. Led by the Holy Spirit, we follow Christ, in the way of peace, doing justice, bringing reconciliation, and practicing nonresistance, even in the face of violence and warfare.

Article 23: The Church's Relation to Government and Society. We believe that the church is God's "holy nation," called to give full allegiance to Christ its head and to witness to every nation, government, and society about God's saving love.

Article 24: The Reign of God. We place our hope in the reign of God and its fulfillment in the day when Christ will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead. He will gather his church, which is already living under the reign of God. We await God's final victory, the end of this present age of struggle, the resurrection of the dead, and a new heaven and a new earth. There the people of God will reign with Christ in justice, righteousness, and peace forever and ever.