



SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY
MADRID

THEO-2430-M01
✕ JESUS AND SALVATION ✕

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”
(Luke 4:18-19)

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.
(Colossians 1:19-20)

As mere theory and empty rhetoric come under fire because of their impotence in the face of the urgent crises of our time (...) theology must understand itself not as abstract speculation but as concrete reflection that arises out of and is directed to the praxis of Christian faith, hope and love.
(Daniel L. Migliore, Faith Seeking Understanding, xiii)

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Office Hours: TTh 12:30-1:30 and by appointment

Class: TTh 9:30-10:45

Room: SIH A

Semester: Fall 2017

Core requirement: 3 Credits

Course description:

Who is Jesus and how does he help us? Is Jesus primarily a moral example, a teacher, a prophet who denounces injustice, and/or a divine savior? Is his main message eternal salvation or worldly liberation? Does he call people primarily to faith or to action? What does it mean to pray “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done?” These are questions for theologians and for laypeople drawn to his figure and to the salvation promised in his name.

Who was Jesus and what did he do and teach? These are questions for theologians, historians, believers, and seekers. How do theology and history speak to each other? Does one modify the other? Jesus was born into a particular cultural, social, political and religious context, far removed from our own. How can studies of that ancient context shed light on Jesus’ identity, words and actions? How have changing power relationships over the centuries between Christians and the larger society affected witness to Jesus and his message?

Jesus incarnated God’s Word 2,000 years ago, and yet he has been incarnated anew in each time and place, leading to a diversity of Christologies and Soteriologies around the world. What is it about Jesus’ message that makes it seem both universal and particular? Who has the authority to speak about Jesus? How open is he to interpretation? If he is the living Image of God, how can we be sure that interpretations of his message are faithful to his true essence and to the diversity of humanity, also created in God’s image?

In this course, we will seek to bring classical Christian beliefs about the person and work of Jesus Christ, as expressed in the Scriptures and the Creeds, into conversation with the fruits of historical Jesus research and contemporary global interpretations of Jesus, salvation and the Christian life. Appropriate to a multi-cultural, religiously diverse campus like SLU Madrid, our study will be ecumenical and will include both Western perspectives and emerging global theologies, as well as Christian and non-Christian voices.

My objectives for this course:

Required readings:

Main Textbook: Borg, Marcus J. and Wright, N.T., *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, (New York: HarperOne, 2007). (Bookstore)

Assigned chapters from:

The Holy Bible (NRSV print edition available in the bookstore; Bibles also available in the library)

In English: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/books-of-the-bible/> (NASV with commentary)

<http://www.devotions.net/bible/00bible.htm> (NRSV)

In Spanish: <http://www.buscad.com/biblias/reina-valera-1995.html> (RV 1995)

In Arabic: <http://www.copticchurch.net/cgi-bin/bible/> (SDV)

Migliore, Daniel L., *Faith Seeking Understanding: An introduction to Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004). (See also his Glossary of Theological Terms) (Reserve)

Pagels, Elaine, *The Gnostic Gospels* (Blackboard)

Placher, William, *Narratives of a Vulnerable God: Christ, Theology and Scripture* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994). (Reserve and Bookstore)

Levison, John R. and Pope-Levison, Patricia, *Jesus in Global Contexts* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994). (Reserve and Bookstore)

Vermes, Geza, *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Reading of the Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981). (Blackboard)

Film: *From Jesus to Christ: The First Christians*, PBS Frontline, 1998.

Helpful texts in the library for reading and research:

The Anchor Bible Dictionary, Vol.s 1-6

Armstrong, Karen, *A History of God* (Christianity within developing monotheistic traditions)

Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, USCCB, *The Bible, the Jews and the Death of Jesus: A Collection of Catholic Documents*

Borg, Marcus, *Jesús y Buda: Palabras paralelas*

Ehrman, Bart, *Introduction to the New Testament*

Griffiths, Paul J., *Christianity through Non-Christian Eyes*

Jenkins, Philip, *The Next Christendom* (The Global Shift of Christianity)

Jesus and His World: An Archaeological and Cultural Dictionary, John J. Rousseau and Rami Arav, ed.s

Jesus and the Cross: Reflections of Christians from Islamic Contexts. David Emmanuel Singh, ed.

Kavanaugh, John F., *Following Christ in a Consumer Society* (Jesus challenges western culture)

Moltmann, Jürgen, *Jesus Christ for Today's World*

Pagola, José Antonio, *Jesús: Aproximación histórica*

Ratzinger, Joseph (Benedict XVI), *Jesus of Nazareth* (Papal historical and theological reflections)

Routledge Reader in Christian-Muslim Relations, Mona Siddiqui, ed.
 Theissen, Gerd and Merz, Annette, *The Historical Jesus* (Comprehensive guide)
 Theissen, *The Shadow of the Galilean* (Novel based on historical Jesus research)
 Thurston, Bonnie, *Women in the New Testament*
 Wink, Walter, *The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millenium* (influential author on the spiritual and demonic dimensions of the social and political systems of today)

E-mail and Blackboard:

PowerPoint Presentations will be posted on Blackboard, and campus and course announcements will often be handled by e-mail. Students should check their “@slu.edu” e-mail regularly.

Grading policy:

The final grade will be determined in accordance with the following Learning Goals established by the SLU Theology Department for 200 level courses:

Thinking theologically: Students will demonstrate critical thinking by analyzing the themes, concepts and presuppositions of Christology and Soteriology.
Reading theologically: Students will analyze and critique the coherence and argumentation of course contents within their historical and/or contemporary contexts.
Researching theologically: Students will be able to find, cite and use appropriate essays and articles, including print journals, essays in books, online journals, etc.
Speaking theologically: Students will analyze theological topics and the relationship between them.
Writing theologically: Students will formulate a thesis and develop a written argument on a discipline-specific topic in relationship to the course content.

The final grade will be calculated in the following manner:

10%: Attendance and Participation	20%: Global Christology Presentation
20%: Jesus in the Gospels Essay	25%: Final Examination
25%: Borg and Wright Reading Guides	

Grade scale:

A	94-100	B+	87-89	B-	80-82	C	73-76	D	60-69
A-	90-93	B	83-86	C+	77-79	C-	70-72	F	0-59

Criteria for grading:

A range = *Superior, exceptional, outstanding*. The assignment demonstrates critical, informed, and creative theological inquiry that reflects superior understanding of essential theological/historical concepts. This means the student demonstrates depth of insight beyond what is normally expected. Carefully nuanced reasoning and writing, free from material, structural and grammatical error are presupposed in this grade.

B range = *Good*. The assignment demonstrates ready command of full range of concepts and shows some critical, informed, and creative inquiry that reflects above average understanding of essential theological/historical concepts. This means the student has produced an assignment that is free from material, structural and grammatical errors.

C range = *Acceptable*. The assignment demonstrates satisfactory ability to describe overall picture and essential concepts. This means the student has completed the assignment in a manner involving no significant errors. Material may not be free from structural and grammatical errors. Nuanced reasoning is not demonstrated.

D range = *Below average*. The assignment demonstrates reasoning that is neither carefully nuanced nor coherently presented; writing is insufficient in depth of insight and/or use of texts; presentation is not free from material error in structure, spelling and grammar. This means that the student failed to respond adequately to the assignment and its intentions.

F = *Unsatisfactory*. In one or more of the following ways the student: 1) failed to turn in the assignment; 2) did not respond to the assignment as given; 3) submitted work so thoroughly flawed as to indicate that the student did not make a serious effort, 4) was involved in plagiarism or cheating.

Assignment Descriptions:

- 1. Borg and Wright Reading Guides:** For each of the first seven sections of the book, I will distribute and post a sheet of questions. You are to answer the questions by hand, use your answers for our class discussion, and then turn in the sheet to me at the end of class. If you are to be absent, scan and send by the end of class and then turn the sheet in to me at the next class session.
- 2. Jesus and the Gospels Essay:**
 - a. Read the Gospel of Matthew or the Gospel of Luke in the *Holy Bible*.
 - b. Take notes on what you learn from the Gospel itself about Jesus' life, teachings, ministry, death and resurrection. Questions to ask: How does the author present Jesus? How does Jesus present himself? Who are his friends and adversaries? How does the story begin and end? In what ways is Jesus depicted as human? In what ways does he appear divine? What titles are applied to him? What titles does he use for himself? What is said and what meanings are applied to his death and resurrection? What is meant by the "kingdom of God" or the "kingdom of heaven?"
 - c. Critically engage Borg and Wright on these questions, based on your own reading and analysis of the Gospel. (Optional: You may also choose to discuss how your readings interact with your own beliefs about/in Jesus.)
 - d. Write an 8-10 page essay, double-spaced and properly referenced.
 - e. All quotations and paraphrased ideas should be cited, and quotations of three lines or more should be single-spaced and indented.
 - f. Citations from the Scriptures will follow this format: (Mt. 22:37, NRSV). "NRSV" stands for the translation of the Bible being used, if you use various translations. If you use just one (or mostly just one), include a footnote at the site of the first quotation saying the equivalent of: "All biblical citations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version (unless otherwise noted)." From then on, all you have to do is cite book, chapter and verse.
 - g. Please make use of the Writing Center on campus if you need any assistance—especially if you are a non-native English speaker.
 - h. Turn in your paper electronically by midnight on October 5.
- 3. Global Christology Presentation:**
 - a. Each student will do research, individually or in small groups, on a particular global Christology (Latin American, Asian, Black, Feminist...).
 - b. At least five sources will be used and listed in a bibliography at the end.

- c. Levison and Levison's *Jesus in Global Contexts* and "Confessing Jesus Christ in Context" in Migliore's *Faith Seeking Understanding* will serve as general references, as well as library books, articles from the databases, and other research from scholarly sources.
- d. Each student will explain and critically engage his or her particular Christology and its relationship to classical Christology and Soteriology and to historical Jesus investigations.
- e. Presentations shall be educational, creative and engaging and include slides, a print-out of which is to be sent to the professor at least one day in advance.
- f. The presentations shall be limited to the allotted time frame—to be determined—and will include questions to generate class discussion.
- g. If you need to reschedule your presentation, you must do so as soon as possible, as the entire class will be affected by any schedule changes.

Attendance Policy:

It will be impossible to adequately master the material presented in this course without studying and without regular attendance and participation. Illness, personal and family emergencies constitute excused absences. It is your responsibility to inform me of any absence in a timely fashion and it will be crucial to recover any material missed.

Each unexcused absence lowers your participation grade by two points, three late arrivals or early departures will constitute an absence, and unnecessary disruptions in the middle of class will also be noted. More than eight unexcused absences will lead to a participation grade of 0.

Excessive talking and/or disengaging from class through the use of personal technology for matters unrelated to our class discussions will reduce your learning and be detrimental to the classroom environment as a whole, as they will be seen as signs of disrespect towards your classmates and professor. Let's value each other's voices and experiences and seek to learn as much as possible from one another this term. Towards this end, cell phones are to be turned off and put away during class. Emergencies and exceptions must be discussed in advance. If you are unable to resist temptation, your phone will sit on my desk until the end of class.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors. The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity." Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care and community service via which SLU embodies its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern.

The governing University-level Academic Integrity Policy can be accessed on the Provost's Office website at <https://www.slu.edu/the-office-of-the-provost/academic-affairs-policies>. Additionally, SLU-Madrid has posted its academic integrity policy online: <https://www.slu.edu/madrid/academics/student-resources/academic-advising/policies-and-procedures#43>. As a member of the University community, you are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions and appeals.

Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to your faculty, the chair of the department of your academic program or the Academic Dean of the Madrid Campus. If a case of academic dishonesty is detected in this course (e.g., cheating, plagiarism...), you will receive an F for the assignment and be reported to the Chair of Humanities. He will write a report to be sent to the Madrid Campus Committee on Academic Honesty. Repeated violations will lead to failure of the course and can lead to suspension from the university.

Students with Special Needs:

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- *Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.*
- *University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Academic Dean's Office (San Ignacio Hall) or by going to <https://www.slu.edu/madrid/campus-life/student-services/disability-services>.*

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Once successfully registered, the student also must notify the course instructor that they wish to access accommodations in the course. Please contact Disability Services at disabilityservices-madrid@slu.edu or +915 54 58 58, ext. 230 for an appointment. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about the student's eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors via email from Disability Services. For more information about academic accommodations, see "Student Resources" on the SLU-Madrid webpage.

Note: Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one are encouraged to contact Disability Services.

Assessment:

Saint Louis University - Madrid Campus is committed to excellent and innovative educational practices. In order to maintain quality academic offerings and to conform to relevant accreditation requirements, the Campus regularly assesses its teaching, services, and programs for evidence of student learning outcomes achievement. For this purpose, anonymized representative examples of student work from all courses and programs is kept on file. Thus, copies of student work for this course, including written assignments, in-class exercises, and exams may be kept on file for institutional research, assessment and accreditation purposes. If students prefer that Saint Louis University - Madrid Campus does not keep their work on file, they need to communicate their decision in writing to the professor.

Title IX Sexual Misconduct Policy:

Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX deputy coordinator, Marta Maruri, whose office is located on the ground floor of Padre Rubio Hall, Avenida del Valle, 28 (mmaruri@slu.edu; 915-

54-5858, ext. 213) and share the basic fact of your experience with her. The Title IX deputy coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the SLU-Madrid's Counseling Services on the third floor of San Ignacio Hall (counselingcenter-madrid@slu.edu; 915-54-5858, ext. 230) or Sinews Multipletherapy Institute, the off-campus provider of counseling services for SLU-Madrid (www.sinews.es; 917-00-1979). To view SLU-Madrid's sexual misconduct policy and for resources, please visit the following web address: <http://www.slu.edu/Documents/Madrid/campus-life/SLUMadridSexualMisconductPolicy.pdf>.

Campus Ministry, Volunteer Opportunities, and Course-related Travel:

For organized opportunities to integrate faith, worship, service, and/or travel with your learning, check out the Student Life webpages and notices posted around campus.

- Sample trips which might enhance your theological studies include: The Monasterio de Piedra (Sept. 9), Toledo (Sept. 10), the Loyola Retreat (Sept. 29-Oct. 1), and the Morocco exchange (Nov. 8-12). See: <https://www.slu.edu/madrid/campus-life/activities-and-events/traveling-with-slu-madrid/fall-2017> for more information about these and other options.
- Volunteer opportunities include student-led Boca Talk, which gives out sandwiches to the homeless and engages them in conversation, and *Acción Social Protestante*, which needs volunteers to give out clothes and food on Thursday mornings and to take care of the children of immigrants on Thursday evenings. See: www.accionsocialprotestante.org.
- Also, there is a weekly Mass held on campus in the PRH chapel and an interfaith prayer room in SIH which can be used for prayer and meditation.

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SYLLABUS

Tuesday, September 5: Introduction to course, instructor and participants. Introduction to Christology and Soteriology. Introductory Survey.

Read: Borg and Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, Part I: "How Do We Know About Jesus?" On Blackboard: Sabar. Ariel, "Unearthing the World of Jesus," *Smithsonian*, January-February 2016, pp42-55; Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, pp163-169;

Assignment: Borg and Wright Reading Guide, Part I.

Thursday, September 7: How Do We Know About Jesus? Introduction to the Quest for "The Historical Jesus."

Due: B&W Reading Guide, Part I.

Read: Borg and Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, Part II: "What Did Jesus Do and Teach?" and Vermes, Geza, *Jesus the Jew*, Introduction and Postscript

Assignment: Borg and Wright Reading Guide, Part II.

Tuesday, September 12: What Did Jesus Do and Teach? Discussion. Film: *From Jesus to Christ*, Part I: Jesus of Nazareth: The Life and Passion.

Due: B&W Reading Guide, Part II.

Read: Borg and Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, Part III: "The Death of Jesus."

Assignment: Borg and Wright Reading Guide, Part III

Thursday, September 14: Discussion, cont'd... The Passion of Jesus

Due: B&W Reading Guide, Part III

Begin reading and taking notes on: The Gospel of Matthew or the Gospel of Luke in *The Holy Bible* in preparation for the essay due on Oct. 5 (See instructions above).

**Sunday, September 17: Last day to drop a class without a grade W and/or add a class
Last day to choose Audit (AU) or Pass/No Pass (P/NP) options**

Tuesday, September 19: *From Jesus to Christ*, Part II: The Jesus Movement. Discussion.

Read: Borg and Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, Part IV: "God Raised Jesus from the Dead"

Assignment: Borg and Wright Reading Guide, Part IV.

Thursday, September 21: The Resurrection

Due: B&W Reading Guide, Part IV.

Tuesday, September 26: *From Jesus to Christ*, Part III: The Gospels. Discussion.

Read: Placher, *Narratives of a Vulnerable God*, pp87-108.

Thursday, September 28: The Gospels

Read: Borg and Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, Part VI: "Born of a Virgin?"

Assignment: Borg and Wright Reading Guide, Part VI.

Tuesday, October 3: The Virgin Birth

Due: B&W Reading Guide, Part VI.

Read: Migliore, pp169-173; 212-216.

Reminder: Your Jesus and the Gospels Essay is due on Oct. 5.

Thursday, October 5: Christological Controversies and Formulations.

Due: Jesus and the Gospels Essay

Read: Migliore, pp174-182; Placher, *Narratives of a Vulnerable God*, xiii-26; The Gospel of Mark in the *Holy Bible*.

Tuesday, October 10: Rethinking Classical Affirmations of the Person of Christ: Fully Human

Read: The Gospel of John in the *Holy Bible*; Borg and Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, Part V: "Was Jesus God?"

Assignment: Borg and Wright Reading Guide, Part V.

Thursday, October 12: *Fiesta Nacional de España* - Holiday (University closed)

Friday, October 13: University closed

Monday, October 16: Last day to submit Transfer Application for spring semester

Tuesday, October 17: Rethinking Classical Affirmations of the Person of Christ: Fully Divine

Read: Migliore, pp 182-222

Due: B&W Reading Guide, Part V.

Thursday, October 19: Rethinking the Classical Interpretations of the Work of Christ

Read: Pagels, Elaine, "The Passion of Christ and the Persecution of Christians" (Blackboard).

Tuesday, October 24: *From Jesus to Christ*, Part IV: Persecution and the Rise of the Church. Discussion of Film and Pagels.

Read: Levison and Levison, pp11-25 (plus Table of Contents).

Thursday, October 26: Introduction to Contemporary Contextual Christologies and Soteriologies

Read: Placher, *Narratives of a Vulnerable God*, pp109-133.

Monday, October 30: Last day to drop a class and receive a grade of W

Tuesday, October 31: Introduction to Contemporary Contextual Christologies and Soteriologies

Assignment: Sign up and prepare to discuss presentation topics with professor (Nov. 6&7).

Wednesday, November 1: Día de Todos los Santos Holiday - (University closed)

Thursday, November 2: Jesus Christ in Western Art: Changing Depictions for Changing Times

Registration for Spring 2018 semester begins.

Monday, November 6: Individual interviews about presentation topics.

Tuesday, November 7: NO CLASS. Individual interviews about presentation topics.

Read: Borg and Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, Part VII: "He Will Come Again" and Migliore, pp330-353.

Assignment: Borg and Wright Reading Guide, Part VII.

Thursday, November 9: *La Almudena* Holiday - (University closed)

Tuesday, November 14: The Future of Jesus and Christian Hope. Assignment of presentation dates.

Due: B&W Reading Guide, Part VII

Read: Migliore, pp301-329; Placher, *Narratives of a Vulnerable God*, pp53-83.

Thursday, November 16: The Finality of Jesus Christ and Religious Pluralism

Assignment: Remember to send in a copy of your presentation the day before you present.

Tuesday, November 21: Contemporary Contextual Christology Presentations

Thursday, November 23: Contemporary Contextual Christology Presentations

Tuesday, November 28: Contemporary Contextual Christology Presentations

Thursday, November 30: Contemporary Contextual Christology Presentations

Tuesday, December 5: Contemporary Contextual Christology Presentations

Read: Levison and Levison, pp165-197; Migliore, pp139-162

Wednesday, December 6: *Día de la Constitución* Holiday - (University closed)

Thursday, December 7: Bringing the Christologies and Soteriologies into Conversation

Read: Borg and Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*, Part VIII: "Jesus and the Christian Life."

Assignment: Borg and Wright Reading Guide, Part VIII

Friday, December 8: *Inmaculada Concepción* Holiday - (University closed)

Tuesday, December 12: Who Was Jesus? Who Is Jesus? Why Does It Matter?

Final review to be distributed.

Due: B&W Reading Guide, Part VIII

Tuesday, December 19: 9:00-11:30: FINAL EXAMINATION

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The Apostles Creed (1st-2nd century CE)

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord: Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He arose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

The Nicene Creed (325; expanded at Constantinople in 381 CE)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Chalcedonian Creed (451 CE)

We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable [rational] soul and body; consubstantial [co-essential] with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; as the prophets from the beginning [have declared] concerning Him, and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.

A Brief Statement of Faith (Presbyterian Church USA, 1991)

In life and death we belong to God.

Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve.

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the broken-hearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.

Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.

We trust in God, whom Jesus called Abba, Father.

In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God's image male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community.

But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator. Ignoring God's commandments, we violate the image of God in others and ourselves, accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and nature, and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care. We deserve God's condemnation.

Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation.

In everlasting love, the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people to bless all families of the earth. Hearing their cry, God delivered the children of Israel from the house of bondage.

Loving us still, God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant.

Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child,
like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home, God is faithful still.

We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life.

The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the church.

The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the waters of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and calls women and men to all ministries of the church. In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.

In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, Come, Lord Jesus! With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.