

## What the AELC Stands for.

Our *Statement of Faith* is available in our congregations. Simply ask your pastor for a copy. It is also available as a download at [www.aelc.org.au](http://www.aelc.org.au). Anyone who wants to examine in detail what the AELC stands for can do so. A good study is to check the hundreds of Scripture references as well.

However, sometimes people want a series of concise statements. To people who want something far more succinct, a summary like following may be helpful:

- 1 The Gospel about the free and full forgiveness of sin that Jesus Christ has obtained; the Scriptural of justification through faith alone; and a clear distinction between sin and grace, Law and Gospel.
- 2 The truth and purity of God's Word, with a clear rejection of the heresy that there are errors in the Scriptures.
- 3 A solid emphasis the Gospel, and the visible forms of the Gospel, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- 4 An uncompromising confession of the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper.
- 5 A careful proclamation of the two natures in Jesus Christ, divine and human, in His one person, with proper emphasis on the majesty of His human nature, together with a clear proclamation of what He has done to win our salvation.
- 6 Theology that is based directly on clear passages of Holy Scripture alone, apart from any preconceived philosophical notions or any rationalistic system.
- 7 The truth about the creation of the world by God from nothing in six days of ordinary duration, and the rejection of evolutionary theories about origins, together with genuine trust in what the Bible reports about a world-wide flood at the time of Noah.
- 8 Special attention to the clear teaching about the one holy Church, and the relationship of the outward marks of the church to it, together with proper teaching about the unity of the church and the fellowship of all believers; and at the same time, insistence on proper church fellowship on the basis of the pure teaching of the Gospel and the right use of the sacraments, and the rejection of the errors of the modern ecumenical movement\_ which compromises truth in the interests of false outward unity.
- 9 The truth about the last times, and the rejection of millennialistic dreams about a time of peace before Jesus' return.
- 10 The truth about the unscriptural claims by Pentecostals and Charismatics for miraculous healings, speaking in tongues, and holy laughter.
- 11 Sound worship practices and liturgy; hymns with edifying Scriptural content; and emphasis on the importance of private and family devotions.
- 12 A genuine desire to spread the Gospel in our community, and a clear conviction that bridges for witness to Christ's death and resurrection are made as members spend time and effort to help the needy, lonely, and afflicted in our communities.
- 13 A congregational manner of managing church affairs, which listens to the opinions of all its members, and resists all attempts to place decision-making in the hands of a few. Resistance to any attempts by a synodical body to dictate to the congregations.
- 14 A strong desire to prepare an able and dedicated group of pastors to serve congregations in future years.
- 15 High valuation of the Lutheran church's rich musical heritage.
- 16 The principle that Lutheran pastors should be genuine carers of souls, not trying to act as chief executive officers of a business.
- 17 Pastors and lay people who are familiar with some of the outstanding literary heritage of the Lutheran Church.
- 18 A refusal to mix the separate functions of church and state; resistance to governmental control of the church, and a studied rejection of attempts by churches to advocate political measures;
- 19 yet a willingness to speak prophetically as the church to government when it flouts or ignores God's commandments, in issues such as abortion and euthanasia.
- 20 The upholding of the biblical principle that the state may practise capital punishment for certain crimes, such as wilful murder.
- 21 Condemnation of homosexuality.
- 22 A clear warning against adultery and sexual immorality.
- 23 Acceptance of what the Scriptures teach about women not having authority over men, together with a high regard for the special services of women.
- 24 A scriptural stand in opposition to Freemasonry and cults.

- 25 Proper responsibility in matters of health and a sober use of what God has placed in this created world, neither abusing God's good gifts, nor placing ecological concerns above eschatological concerns, because the form of this present world will pass away, and be replaced by a new heaven and new earth.
- 26 Proper respect for true scientific research and archaeological work, with the conviction that God's revelation of Himself in nature is not contradicted by His revelation of Himself in His Word, and the conviction that archaeological finds in biblical lands will not contradict the record of God's Word in Scripture.
- 27 Promotion of a proper Christian attitude toward work, even within modern labour unions and the modern industrial order.
- 28 A genuine desire to meet the challenges of assisting the spread of the Gospel in other countries as the opportunities arise.
- 29 An even-handed attitude to the problem of racism, with the conviction that where faith in Christ is held, black and white, red and yellow are all one in Him.
- 30 A strong confidence in the power or efficacy of the Word of God to convert the hearts of people, and a rejection of attempts to supplement or replace the Word of God by gimmicks and the techniques that use Reformed principles and devalue the Sacraments, as in the method currently known as "Church Growth."
- 31 A conviction that the movement known as Pietism has had, and still has, harmful effects in its legalism, indifference to doctrine, and confusing a change in life-style with genuine faith.
- 32 A clear conviction that the faith that we hold is one with the universal and Christian church of the past, and on the other side the retention of all the articles of Christian doctrine, together with a rejection of the Fundamental approach to Scripture, which loses sight of the difference between Old Testament and New, and Law and Gospel, and the doctrine of justification through faith.
- 33 A rejection of theological liberalism and historical criticism, together with the conviction that the prophecies of the Bible were genuine prophecies, that the miracles reported in the Scriptures really did happen, and that the claims of the authors of the Bible and of Jesus Christ about books such as Jonah, Daniel, Moses, and Isaiah must be taken at face-value.
- 34 The strong commitment by its pastors to giving solid and scriptural comfort in the hour of death and at funerals, together with a refusal to give an impression at funerals that people's works or "good lives" have in any way contributed towards their salvation.
- 35 A willingness to give an account of our faith and hope to all who ask us about them.