



Confession of Belhar

1. **We believe** in the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who gathers, protects and cares for the church through Word and Spirit. This, God has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end.

2. **We believe** in one holy, universal Christian church, the communion of saints called from the entire human family.

We believe

- that Christ's work of reconciliation is made manifest in the church as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another;
- that unity is, therefore, both a gift and an obligation for the church of Jesus Christ; that through the working of God's Spirit it is a binding force, yet simultaneously a reality which must be earnestly pursued and sought: one which the people of God must continually be built up to attain;
- that this unity must become visible so that the world may believe that separation, enmity and hatred between people and groups is sin which Christ has already conquered, and accordingly that anything which threatens this unity may have no place in the church and must be resisted;
- that this unity of the people of God must be manifested and be active in a variety of ways: in that we love one another; that we experience, practice and pursue community with one another; that we are obligated to give ourselves willingly and joyfully to be of benefit and blessing to one another; that we share one faith, have one calling, are of one soul and one mind; have one God and Father, are filled with one Spirit, are baptized with one baptism, eat of one bread and drink of one cup, confess one name, are obedient to one Lord, work for one cause, and share one hope; together come to know the height and the breadth and the depth of the love of Christ; together are built up to the stature of Christ, to the new humanity; together know and bear one another's burdens, thereby fulfilling the law of Christ that we need one another and buildup one another, admonishing and comforting one another; that we suffer with one another for the sake of righteousness; pray together; together serve God in this world; and together fight against all which may threaten or hinder this unity;
- that this unity can be established only in freedom and not under constraint; that the variety of spiritual gifts, opportunities, backgrounds, convictions, as well as the various languages and cultures, are by virtue of the reconciliation in Christ, opportunities for mutual service and enrichment within the one visible people of God;
- that true faith in Jesus Christ is the only condition for membership of this church.

Therefore, we reject any doctrine

- which absolutizes either natural diversity or the sinful separation of people in such a way that this absolutization hinders or breaks the visible and active unity of the church, or even leads to the establishment of a separate church formation;
- which professes that this spiritual unity is truly being maintained in the bond of peace while believers of the same confession are in effect alienated from one another for the sake of diversity and in despair of reconciliation;
- which denies that a refusal earnestly to pursue this visible unity as a priceless gift is sin;
- which explicitly or implicitly maintains that descent or any other human or social factor should be a consideration in determining membership of the church.

3. **We believe**

- that God has entrusted the church with the message of reconciliation in and through Jesus Christ, that the church is called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, that the church is called blessed because it is a peacemaker, that the church is witness both by word and by deed to the new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness dwells;
- that God's lifegiving Word and Spirit has conquered the powers of sin and death, and therefore also of irreconciliation and hatred, bitterness and enmity, that God's lifegiving Word and Spirit will enable the church to live in a new obedience which can open new possibilities of life for society and the world;
- that the credibility of this message is seriously affected and its beneficial work obstructed when it is proclaimed in a land which professes to be Christian, but in which the enforced separation of people on a racial basis promotes and perpetuates alienation, hatred and enmity;
- that any teaching which attempts to legitimate such forced separation by appeal to the gospel, and is not prepared to venture on the road of obedience and reconciliation, but rather, out of prejudice, fear, selfishness and unbelief, denies in advance the reconciling power of the gospel, must be considered ideology and false doctrine.

Therefore, we reject any doctrine

which, in such a situation, sanctions in the name of the gospel or of the will of God the forced separation of people on the grounds of race and color and thereby in advance obstructs and weakens the ministry and experience of reconciliation in Christ.

4. **We believe**

- that God has revealed himself as the one who wishes to bring about justice and true peace among people;
- that God, in a world full of injustice and enmity, is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged;
- that God calls the church to follow him in this, for God brings justice to the oppressed and gives bread to the hungry;
- that God frees the prisoner and restores sight to the blind;
- that God supports the downtrodden, protects the stranger, helps orphans and widows and blocks the path of the ungodly;
- that for God pure and undefiled religion is to visit the orphans and the widows in their suffering;
- that God wishes to teach the church to do what is good and to seek the right;
- that the church must therefore stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies, among other things, that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream;
- that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged; that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others.

Therefore, we reject any ideology

which would legitimate forms of injustice and any doctrine which is unwilling to resist such an ideology in the name of the gospel.

5. **We believe** that, in obedience to Jesus Christ, its only head, the church is called to confess and to do all these things, even though the authorities and human laws might forbid them and punishment and suffering be the consequence.

Jesus is Lord.

To the one and only God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be the honor and the glory for ever and ever.



Isivumo saseBelhar

1. **Siyakholwa** kuThixo oziqo zithathu emnye, uYise noNyana noMoya oyiNgcwele, othi ngeLizwi lakhe nangoMoya wakhe aziqokelelele iCawe eyeyakhe, aze ayikhusele aylondoloze ukususela ekuqalekeni kwehlabathi kuse esiphelweni.

2. **Siyakholwa** kwicawe engcwele enye eyeyeziukulwana ngezizukulwana, ibubudlelane babangcwele ababiziwego bevela kuluntu xa lalonke.

Ke ngoko siyayikhaba

- umsebenzi kaKrestu wokuxolelanisa uyabonakala kule cawe ububudlelane bokholo bâbo bathe baxolelanisa noThixo nabathe baxolelanisa omnye nomnye.
- Ngenxa yoko siyakholwa ukuba ubunye became kaYesu Krestu busisiphiko, bukwangumyalelo; bungamandla abandakanyayo ngomsebenzi kaMoya oyiNgcwele, kodwa kananjalo buyinto ekufuneka iphuthunywe ifunwe, into ekufanele ukuba abantu bakaThixo bahlale behuthazwa ukuyakha.
- Siyakholwa ukuba obu banye kufuneka bubonakale ukuze ihlabathi liqonde; kwaye siyakholwa ukuba ucalu-calulo nobutshaba nentiyo phakathi kwabantu bebobwa okanye bengamaqela sisono esesoyisa nguKrestu. Ke ngoko yonke into echitha ubunye kufuneka ichaswe, kuba ayinandawo ecaweni kaKrestu.
- Siyakholwa ukuba obu banye babantu bakaThixo bufanele ukuba bubonakale busebenza ekuhleni iindlela ngeendlela, ngokuthi sithandane, sibe nobudlelane omnye nomnye ngenxa yobunye esibuphuthumayo nesibuphumelelisayo, ekubeni siziva sinemfanelo yokuzinikezelu ngokupheleleyo nangovuyo omnye komnye ukuze sakheke sibe noyolo, nasekubeni sidlelana ngokholo olunye, sinalubizo lunye, simxhelo mnye, sibanye ngezimvo, sinoThixo omnye onguBawo wethu sonke, siphefumlelwu nguMoya omnye, sisabelana ngasonka sinye nandebe-nye, sibhaptizwe ngalubhaptizo lunye, sivuma Gama linye, sithobele Nkosi inye, sizimisele ngomcimbi omnye, lilinye nethembwa esabelana ngalo, kukunye ukukuqonda kwethu ukuphakama nobubanzi nobunzulu bothando uKrestu asithande ngalo, sisakheka kanye ukuze sifuze uKrestu sibe luluntu olutsha, sithwalisane ubunzima, size ngokwenjenjalo siwufeze umyalelo kaKrestu, sixhomekekane sakhanne, siyalane sithuthuzelane, sidlelana ngokuthwala ubunzima ngenxa yobulungisa, sithandaze ngamxhelo mnye, sibambisane ekumsebenzeleni uThixo kweli hlabathi, sikuchase kanye konke okunokuthintela nokuchitha obu banye.
- Siyakholwa ukuba obu banye bunokuphunyelelisa kuhela kukuqhutywa yintliziyu kungekuko ngokunyazelwa; kwaye sikhola ukuba, ngenxa yoxolelaniso olodalwe nguKrestu, iindidi ngeendidi zeziphiwo zoMoya namathuba neemvelaphi neembono, kwakunye neentetho ezahlukeneyo neenkubo-ntlalo ezingafaniyo, zisivulela ithuba lokuba sikhonzane sakhanne siluhlanga olunye olubonakalayo lukaThixo.
- Siyakholwa ukuba ukholo lwenene lokukholwa kuYesu Krestu lulo kuhela oluyimfuneko ukuze umntu abe nokuba lilungu lwale cawe.

Ke ngoko siyayikhaba

- nayiphi na imfundiso ethi indawo ephambili kukungafani kwabantu ngokwendalo, okanye kukwahlulahlulwa kwabo ngenxa yesono, ze ke le imfundiso ithintele okanye ichithe ubunye obubonakalayo nobusebenzayo became, ide ibange ukusekwa kweecawe ezahlukeneyo.
- Kananjalo sikhala nayiphi na imfundiso ehanahanisayo ngokuthi obu banye bomoya bugcinwa ngenene ngentambo yoxolo xa amakholwa anesivumo esinye athe ahlukaniswa ngenxa yokungafani nangenxa yokungaxolelaniseki.
- Sikwakhala nayiphi na imfundiso ekhanyelayo ukuba kusisono ukukulandula ukubuphuthuma obu banye obubonakalayo obusisiphiko esinqabileyo.
- Kanjaqo sikhala nayiphi na imfundiso ethi ngokuvakalayo okanye ithe cwaka ihanahanise ngokuthi ubulungu became bukwaxhomekeke kumlibo wokuzalwa okanye nakuyiphi na enye indawo enxulumene nemeko yomntu nenkubo-ntlalo.

3. Siyakholwa

- ukuba uThixo icawe yakhe uyiphathise udaba loxolelaniso olukho kuye nangaye uYesu Krestu; cawe leyo ibiziwego ukuba ibe yityiwa yehlabathi kwanokhanyiso lwalu; icawe ekuthiwa inoyolo kuba iyimbumba yabaxolisi; icawe elingqina ngamazwi nangezenzo, ingqinela izulu elitsha nehlabathi elitsha elimiwa ngobulungisa.
- Siyakholwa ukuba uThixo uthe ngeLizwi lakhe elidala ubomi nangoMoya wakhe umniki-bomi waloyisa igunya lesono nokufa, wathi ngokwenjenjalo wakoyisa nokungaxolelaniseki nentiyo, ubukrakra bentliziyu nobutshaba; kananjalo ngeLizwi lakhe elidala ubomi nangoMoya wakhe umniki-bomi uThixo abantu bakhe ubanike igunya lokumthobela ngendlela entsha enokuthi nakumzi jikelele nakwihlabathi izekelise ngeendlela ezintsha zenqubo-ntlalo.
- Siyakholwa ukuba olu daba lwenziwa lungabi nakukholwa, ze ke nempembelelo yalo encedayo ithintelwe, ukuba luvakaliswa kwilizwe elibanga ukuba lilelobuKrestu kanti kulo kuyayazelwa ukwahlulwa kwabantu ngokobuzwe, ze ke bangathembani koko bathiyane babe nobutshaba.
- Siyakholwa ukuba iyalahlekisa yaye iyimfundiso ezimisele ukulawula iinqondo zabantu nayiphi na imfundiso ethi ukwahlulwa kwabantu ngonyanzelo ngolu hlobo yinto esiyifundiswa ziNdaba eziMnandi zikaThixo, ibe ikutyeshela ukuthobela umyalelo kaThixo iyihambe indlela yoxolelaniso, ize ithi ngenxa yokwenza ingaqalanga yaqonda nangenxa yokoyika nokungabkhathaleli abanye nakukuswela ukholo isuke iwakhanye amandla eeNdaba eziMnandi okuxolelanisa.

Ke ngoko siyayikhaba

nayiphi na imfundiso ethi iiNdaba eziMnandi zikaThixo okanye intando kaThixo ziyakuvuma ukuba abantu mabahlulwe ngonyanzelo ngokobuzwe nangebalwa kwimeko elolu hlobo, ze ke ngokwenjenjalo ithintele iphuthise ukuvakalisa nokuxhanyulwa koxolelaniso olukho kuKrestu.

4. Siyakholwa

- ukuba uThixo wazithila engulowo uthanda ukudala ubulungisa noxolo lwenene phakathi kwabantu;
- othi ngendlela eyodwa ehlabathini elizele zizenzo zentswela-bulungisa nobutshaba abe nguThixo wabahlelelekileyo nabangamahlwempu nabaphethwe ngendlela engafanelekanga,
- yaye necawe yakhe uyibiza ukuba imlandele kule nto; kananjalo abacinezelweyo ubenzela ubulungisa, abalambileyo abanike isonka;
- amabanjwa uyawakhulula, iimfama azenze zibe nako ukubona;
- abantliziyu zidakumbileyo uyabazimasa, abangeneleli abakhusele, iinkedama nabahlolokazi abancede, xenikweni axabay endleleni yabangendawo;
- yaye kuye ukukhonza uThixo ngendlela ecocekileyo nengenachaphaza kukubonelela iinkedama nabahlolokazi emngciphekweni wabo;
- ewe, abantu bakhe ufuna ukubafundisa ukwenza okulungileyo baphuthume ubulungisa.
- Ke ngoko siyakholwa ukuba icawe imelwe kukubanceda abantu nakuluphi na uhlobo lwentlwupheko abanokuba kulo, nto leyo ekwathetha ukuthi icawe iya kungqina iphikisane nalo naluphi na udidi lwentlwela-bulungisa, khon' ukuze ukugweba ngokwemfanelo kugaleleke okwamaza nobulungisa njengomfula ongatshiyo.
- Siyakholwa ukuba icawe, emnikazi wayo inguThixo nje, imelwe kukuma nkqi, ichase intswela-bulungisa, ibaxhase abo bangaphathwanga ngobulungisa; yaye icawe, ilandela uKrestu nje, imelwe kukungqina ichasane nazo zonke iziphathamandla noosomalungelo abalungiselela iziqu zabo kuhela kangangokuba basebenzise abanye bebasindanisa.

Ke ngoko siyayikhaba

nayiphi na imfundiso ezimisele ukulawula iinqondo zabantu ethi iindidi ezithile zokuphathwa kwabantu ngeendlela ezingezizo ezobulungisa zivumelekile, yaye sikhala nayiphi na imfundiso engavumiyo ukuthi ngenxa yeeNdaba eziMnandi zikaThixo iyichase inkqubo enjalo.

5. **Siyakholwa** ukuba icawe iyabizwa ukukuvuma nokukwenza konke oku, imthobela uYesu Krestu oyeyona Ntloko yayo, nokuba kuyachaswa ngabasemagunyeni nayimimiselo yabantu, kananjalo nokuba okuvumayo nokwenza oku ezibizela isohlwayo nembandezelo.

NguYesu oyiNkosi.

KuThixo emnye, uyise noNyana noMoya oyiNgcwele, makube ludumo nobungangamsha ngonaphakade kanaphakade.



Belydenis van Belhar

1. **Ons glo** in die drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees, wat deur sy Woord en Gees sy Kerk versamel, beskerm en versorg van die begin van die wêreld af tot die einde toe.

2. **Ons glo** aan een heilige algemene christelike kerk, die gemeenskap van die heiliges, geroepe uit die ganse menslike geslag.

Ons glo

- dat die versoeningswerk van Christus sigbaar word in dié kerk as geloofsgemeenskap van diegene wat met God en onderling met mekaar versoen is;
- dat die eenheid van die kerk van Jesus Christus daarom gawe én opdrag is; dat dit 'n samebindende krag is deur die werking van Gods Gees maar terselfdertyd 'n werklikheid is wat nagejaag en gesoek moet word en waartoe die volk van God voortdurend opgebou moet word;
- dat hierdie eenheid sigbaar moet word sodat die wêreld kan glo; dat geskeidenheid, vyandskap en haat tussen mense en mensegroepes sonde is wat reeds deur Christus oorwin is en dat alles wat die eenheid mag bedreig, gevvolglik geen plek in die kerk van Christus mag hê nie, maar bestry moet word;
- dat hierdie eenheid van die volk van God op 'n verskeidenheid van maniere sigbare gestalte moet kry en werksaam moet wees, daarin dat ons mekaar liefhet, gemeenskap met mekaar beleef, najaag en beoefen; daarin dat ons skuldig is om onsself tot nut en saligheid van mekaar gewillig en met vreugde te gee; daarin dat ons een geloof deel, een roeping het, een van siel en een van sin is, een God en Vader het, van een Gees deur drenk is, van een brood eet en uit een beker drink, met een doop gedoop is, een Naam bely, aan een Heer gehoorsaam is, vir vir een saak ywer, een hoop met mekaar deel, saam die hoogte en breedte en diepte van die liefde van Christus leer ken; saam opgebou word tot die gestalte van Christus, tot die nuwe mensheid; saam mekaar se laste ken en dra en so die wet van Christus vervul, mekaar nodig het en mekaar opbou, mekaar vermaan en mekaar vertroos, saam met mekaar ly vir die geregtigheid, saam bid, saam diensbaar is aan God in hierdie wêreld, saamstry teen alles wat hierdie eenheid mag belemmer of bedreig;
- dat hierdie eenheid slegs in vryheid gestalte kan vind en nie onder dwang nie; dat die verskeidenheid van geestelike gawes, geleenthede, agtergronde, oortuigings, soos ook die verskeidenheid van taal en kultuur, vanweë die versoening in Christus geleenthede is tot wedersydse diens en verryking binne die een sigbare volk van God;
- dat die ware geloof In Jesus Christus die enigste voorwaarde is vir lidmaatskap van hierdie kerk.

Daarom verwerp ons

- enige leer wat óf die natuurlike verskeidenheid óf die sondige geskeidenheid so verabsouteer dat hierdie verabsolutering die sigbare en werksame eenheid van die kerk be-lemmer of verbreek of selfs lei tot 'n aparte kerkformasie,
- wat voorgee dat hierdie geestelike eenheid werklik bewaar word deur die band van die vrede wanneer gelowiges met dieselfde belydenis van mekaar vervreem word ter wille van die verskeidenheid en vanweë die onversoendheid;
- wat ontken dat 'n wiering om hierdie sigbare eenheid as 'n kosbare gawe na te jaag sonde is,
- wat uitgesproke of onuitgesproke voorgee dat afkoms of enige ander menslike of sosiale faktore medebepalend is vir lidmaatskap van die kerk.

3. **Ons glo**

- dat God aan sy kerk die boodskap van versoening in en deur Jesus Christus toevertrou het; dat die kerk geroep is om die sout van die aarde en die lig van die wêreld te wees; dat die kerk salig genoem word omdat hulle vredemakers is; dat die kerk deur woord en daad getuies is van die nuwe hemel en die nuwe aarde waarop geregtigheid woon;
- dat God deur sy leweskeppende Woord en Gees die magte van sonde en dood, en daarom ook van onversoendheid en haat, bitterheid en vyandskap, oorwin het; dat God deur sy leweskeppende Woord en Gees sy volk in staat stel om te leef in 'n nuwe gehoorsaamheid wat ook in die samelewing en wêreld nuwe lewensmoontlikhede kan bring;
- dat hierdie boodskap ongeloofwaardig gemaak word en dat die heilsame uitwerking daarvan in die weg gestaan word indien dit verkondig word in 'n land wat op Christelikheid aanspraak maak, maar waarin die gedwonge skeiding van mense op rassegondslag onderlinge vervreemding, haat en vyandskap bevorder en bestendig;
- dat enige leer wat sodanige gedwonge skeiding vanuit die evangelie wil legitimeer en dit nie wil waag op die pad van gehoorsaamheid en versoening nie, maar uit vooroordeel, vrees, selfsug en ongeloof die versoenende krag van die evangelie by voorbaat verloën, ideologie en dwaalleer is.

Daarom verwerp ons

enige leer wat in die naam van die evangelie of die wil van God die gedwonge skeiding van mense op grond van ras en kleur in so'n situasie sanksioneer en daardeur die bediening en belewing van die versoening in Christus by voorbaat belemmer en van krag beroof.

4. **Ons glo**

- dat God Homself geopenbaar het as die Een wat geregtigheid en ware vrede onder mense wil bring;
- dat Hy in 'n wêreld vol onreg en vyandskap op 'n besondere wyse die God van die noodlydende, die arme en die veronregte is en
- dat Hy sy kerk roep om Hom hierin na te volg; dat Hy aan verdruktes reg laat geskied en brood aan die hongeriges gee;
- dat Hy die gevangenes bevry en blindes laat sien;
- dat Hy die wat bedruk is ondersteun, die vreemdelinge beskerm en weeskinders en weduwees help en die pad vir die goddelose versper;
- dat vir Hom reine en onbesmette godsdiens is om die wese en die weduwees in hulle verdrukking te besoek;
- dat Hy sy volk wil leer om goed te doen en die reg te soek;
- dat die kerk daarom mense in enige vorm van lyding en nood moet bystaan, wat onder andere ook inhoud dat die kerk sal getuig en salstry teen enige vorm van ongeregtigheid sodat die reg aanrol soos watergolwe, en geregtigheid soos 'n standhoudende stroom;
- dat die kerk as eiendom van God moet staan waar Hy staan, naamlik teen die ongeregtigheid en by die veronregtes; dat die kerk as volgeling van Christus moet getuig teenoor alle magtiges en bevoordele wat uit selfsug hulle eie belang soek en oor andere beskik en hulle benadeel.

Daarom verwerp ons

enige ideologie wat vorme van veronregting legitimeer en enige leer wat nie bereid is om vanuit die evangelie so'n ideologie te weerstaan nie.

5. **Ons glo** dat die kerk geroep word om dit alles te bely en te doen, in gehoorsaamheid aan Jesus Christus, sy enigste Hoof, al sou ook die owerhede en verordeninge van mense daarteen wees en al sou straf en lyding daarvan verbonde wees.

Jesus is die Heer.

Aan dié enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees, kom toe eer en heerlikheid in ewigheid.