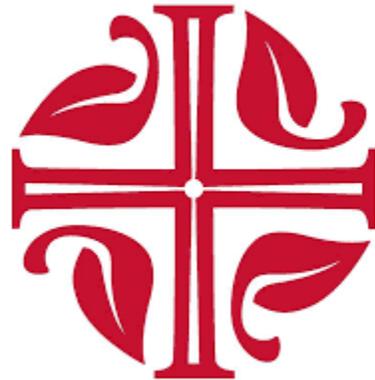


## What We Believe

- We believe in the Triune God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit- (i.e. the Trinity) - who created all things.
- We believe that God is most clearly revealed in the life death, and resurrection of God's Son, Jesus Christ.
- We believe that we are saved by the grace of God alone -- not by anything we do.
- We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, which guides the Church and all Christians in matters of faith and life.
- We believe that our salvation in Christ calls us to faith- which means entrusting our whole lives to Jesus and looking to him for forgiveness, life, and salvation.
- We believe that Jesus calls people of faith to participate in the body of Christ, which is the Church and that we are called to welcome all people into this community.
- We believe that the Church is called to follow the example of Christ by serving our neighbor (especially those most vulnerable) and proclaiming God's unconditional love for all people.



## Core Values of the ELCA and COJ

- **How We Read the Bible:** We love the Bible and understand it as God's word- but we are neither literalists nor fundamentalists. This means that we believe that the Bible speaks truth in many different ways, sometimes literally, sometimes figuratively. Therefore, we embrace the idea that Scripture is best understood when we engage questions eagerly and listen to different perspectives openly.
- **Welcome & Inclusivity:** A common theme of Jesus' life is that he constantly embraced outcasts and sinners. Though many have experienced the Church as a place of judgment, we strive to truly welcome all people into God's family and embrace them for who they are- without judgment or accusation.
- **A Priesthood of All Saints & Sinners:** One of Luther's great ideas was that all of us are a mixture of good and bad and that we do not need to be perfect to be loved by God or useful to God's work. Therefore, we believe that everyone has gifts to share in God's work and that ministry is the job of every Christian.
- **Service & Justice:** Jesus had a special place in his heart for people who were oppressed, suffering, and vulnerable. Therefore we believe that real faith calls us to love and serve our neighbors in need and to advocate for a more fair and just world.

*For additional information about our beliefs and teachings, please visit: [elca.org/Faith](http://elca.org/Faith)*