

## **Statement of Faith**

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### **The Lord**

I believe God is infinite love, and mercy itself (TCR 651). Therefore, God is life itself (DLW 4). That infinite love takes its perfect form in divine wisdom as a soul is with a divinely human body - the Lord God Jesus Christ, the Divine Human; Who as to His soul is love and as to His body is wisdom, and His spirit is His impact He has on all creation.

The Lord's infinite divine purpose for existence is to create others outside of Himself who are human who reflect His image and likeness, and who, in freedom can respond to His will, so that He can bless them and give them peace (DP 27). And so, the nature of His love is creative and positive, and there is nothing in it that is hurtful, angry, vengeful or contains the least shred of negativity (AC 10431). The Lord's goal therefore is to regenerate, redeem, heal, and help us grow to eternity in a joyful partnership with Him. In order to do this, He invites us to follow Him.

### **The Word**

I believe that the Lord gave the Word as the principal means through which humans discover and receive His divine guidance to a good life. The Old and New Testaments reveal all the genuine truths necessary for the life that leads to heaven. But in many of these stories the essential divine life is hidden beneath the surface like great treasure buried in a field. The Old and New Testaments were written in this way so that the stories could reach people and motivate people to respond to God's invitation in any state of mind, no matter how distant they might be from Him.

At the dawn of the New Church, I believe that the Lord brought forth a New Revelation, the Heavenly Doctrine that is rational and offers clear explanation to those stories showing the immutable truths that before the Second Coming were hidden to humankind. I believe that these Heavenly Doctrines are the Word and constitute 'the Lord's coming in the clouds with great glory' as described in Matthew 24.

I understand this new revelation clarifies the Lord's loving nature, how He reaches us, blesses us and how we respond to His call. In its pages, we see the spiritual world, the nature of heaven and hell, and how human life continues, largely uninterrupted after the death of the body. Here, the Lord teaches about the equal, yet complimentary nature of male and female, and how God creates marriage as a special partnership between the two that is the source of inmost joy – a partnership which can continue after a couple passes from one world into the next.

### **The Life of Charity**

I believe that religion is of no value unless grounded in the life of charity (LJP 270). We are taught that the first step in that life is to examine one's own behaviors in the light of teachings such as the ten commandments, with the prayerful question of what needs to change. I believe that the Lord with His love and power over hell, offers us His strength to shun the evil destructive forces of lust and negativity, to forgive us and set us on a path toward heaven. I want to say something about this power. I believe it is His power that creates new life and what helps us grow. It is the power that allows us to see when we otherwise would be blind. It is the power that holds back the forces of hell in the darkness of night when, nothing else could rescue us.

### **The Church**

I believe that the Lord is now establishing His New Church on earth to be a community where people look to the Lord's Word for wisdom on how to worship, grow, live, cooperate and serve together in partnership with heaven.

The church is not a closed organization, it is a vibrant, living, growing movement that constantly seeks to share the wisdom the Lord gives us with others for the purpose of salvation. Our church is a church where 'we freely give for freely we have received' (Matt. 10:8)

While I do not believe that it is required to be a member of this church in order to find happiness or live the life of heaven, I am convinced that the purpose and mission of the New Church are critical for the spiritual health of humanity and for the relationship it offers with the Lord and His heavens. The existence of an established New Church organization on earth, therefore, is critical for the health and survival of humankind. I believe the Lord calls people to participate in His church as He did with His disciples saying: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age" (Matthew 28).

### **My Purpose**

I have been deeply blessed by my years of service as a priest in the New Church. My call to serve as a bishop focuses my uses more on helping lead and facilitate a healthy growing General Church organization. It is my goal to help cultivate our ability to present the Lord in daily life through the use of timeless, yet practical truths that connect with heavenly life. To that end, I will turn to the Lord in His Word first for guidance. I will also rely on the council and the rich variety of dialogue offered by both clergy and the many participants of this church. I will use that guidance to cooperate with both priests and lay people as we work together to build a strengthened presence of the Lord's kingdom on earth. And so, to that end, I recognize that I need your help and your

wisdom as a friend and participant in this church. I thank my wife for her willingness to walk this new journey with me, and my children and my family for their support that has helped me in so many ways.