

Deacon Andrew's Bible Study Toolbox

“How Lutherans Interpret the Bible”

Our ELCA Constitution and The Bible

The ELCA Constitution has two foundational statements regarding the Bible.

First, there is a general statement (2.01) about the **Word of God**, which is understood in a threefold sense:

- Jesus Christ** (the incarnate Word)
- The message of law and gospel** (the proclaimed Word)
- The Bible** (the written word)

Second, there are specific statements in our ELCA constitution (2.02 and 2.03) about the Bible as being authoritative for the church's proclamation, faith, and life:

“This church confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.

Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.

The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed,

beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.

This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.”

The Bible is the Word of God

When we say that the Bible is the Word of God, we are also saying that it:

- **Creates** a world in which the church lives
- **Nourishes** us like food and drink
- Gives us an **identity** as God's people
- Gives us **language** – fluency in that language allows us to hear God more clearly and speak God's Word more effectively
- **Shapes** our lives individually and together as the church of Christ.