
The Spiritual Practice of Remembering that Christians Across the World and Across the Ages Confess that We Believe in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church

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In tribute to Professor Emerita Norma Cook Everist, PhD, friend, and long-term colleague, let me say at the outset: this essay has benefited greatly from my reflection on her vocation as a teacher of the church, which she exercised in many diverse contexts within the U.S.A. and several countries of the world.¹

Thus, as I begin this essay, it is fitting to give a brief explanation of the title, “The Spiritual Practice of Remembering that Christians Across the World and Across the Ages Confess, ‘We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.’”² Growing up in the colony of British Guiana, which became the independent nation of Guyana on 26 May 1966, I was shaped by intra-Christian and inter-religious influences. In that multi-ethnic, multi-cultural religious milieu, amid the reality of the explicit and implicit discernment of which church or religion (or none at all) was to be preferred, there was the persistent question to Christians about the unity they have on account of belonging to one Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ. As in other parts of the world, Christians in mainline churches in the Guyanese context formally used the Creeds—Apostles’ and Nicene—in their confession of the Christian faith, and the Christians in the churches that would fall under the umbrella of the contemporary use of “evangelical” made confession of their faith in Jesus Christ in the character of “personal decision” and testimony. Notwithstanding these differences in styles of corporate worship and personal piety, occasions of celebration, like Christmas and Easter, and of sickness, loss, and grief on account of death, often evoked concrete expressions of Christian unity. Such unity was part and parcel of communal belonging: of

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church, family, village, inter-faith identities, and inter-racial and inter-ethnic solidarity.

My formation as a Christian was primarily in a Lutheran congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Guyana. Like most every other Lutheran congregation, Redeemer Lutheran Church was liturgically “middle of the road.” It was not a common practice for the pastor or lay person leading worship to chant the liturgy, even though the congregation chanted the responses.³ During my years as a student in high school and then as a teacher, I was involved in an “ecumenical” Christian group—commonly called “Bible Club”—which was sponsored by the Inter-School Christian Fellowship (ISCF). Those who attended meetings of the Bible Club, which met weekly, were from different churches, most of them non-liturgical, “evangelical” churches.⁴ Attendees

1. A version of this essay was originally given as a plenary presentation in the Spiritual Practices class for the whole of the community of Wartburg Theological Seminary, 9 December 2020. I am grateful to my Student Assistant, Wesley Isberner (2020-21), for the working transcript of the presentation (29 May 2021).

2. Notwithstanding the use of capital letters in the actual title of this essay, here and throughout the essay, I quoted “one holy catholic and apostolic church,” as it is common in English translations of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed of 325 C.E.

3. This liturgical practice reflected both the primary influence of missionary pastors from the predecessor churches of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the influence of Guyanese pastors trained in seminaries in the U.S.A. and Canada.

4. Among the attendees and members of the Bible Clubs were members of Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Moravian, Lutheran,

also included students who were not affiliated with any church; some were Hindu or Muslim. It is interesting to note, as I reflect on my involvement with Inter-School Christian Fellowship, that I was ethnically and racially a minority. Notwithstanding that reality and in the face of the endemic racial tension in the country, I experienced a genuine welcome in the Name of Jesus. I had a sense of belonging in that fellowship centered in the common faith in and commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ. Further, there was an awareness that within the fellowship across the denominational spectrum, there were differences in understanding and practice of the Christian faith. Yes, there was the fundamental emphasis on faith in Jesus Christ. As I look back, there was a real tension between trusting in Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit—that the experience of justification as a sinner standing before God is wholly by God’s grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone—and an unmistakable emphasis on personal decision for Christ: “You must say, ‘yes’, to Jesus, as the Spirit is leading you to do.” Not surprisingly, as the history of the “one holy catholic and apostolic church” shows, that tension, which continues to persist, means that the question of genuine Christian identity inevitably and necessarily arises.⁵

How might we respond to the question of the spiritual practice of attending to those who believe differently about the Christian faith? How might we relate to that difference when we consider that many people who hold positions different from our own—in terms of the understanding of the Christian faith—are also ethnically and racially different from us? Thus, there is the unavoidable need to deal with the question of differences in understanding the faith and of belonging to the “one holy catholic and apostolic church.” Further, it is necessary that it is recognized that how we respond to that question was and is connected to differences of race and ethnicity, color of one’s skin, gender, class, and one’s religious background.⁶

Over the years, as I have reflected on who comprised the leadership in ISCF, I keep being reminded that it was essentially lay leadership with a large number of females. Not surprisingly, many gave their testimony of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and of giving witness to him.⁷ Consequently, it is hard to avoid acknowledging the differences among those who, for example, as Christians, emphasize “making a decision for Christ.” This means that we need to give appropriate, positive attention

Roman Catholic, and Seventh-day Adventist churches. It was evident that members of Baptist, Brethren, Assemblies of God, Wesleyan Holiness, and Nazarene churches were in the majority.

5. See *We Believe in the Holy Spirit: Global Perspectives on Lutheran Identities*, eds. Chad M. Rimmer and Cheryl M. Peterson (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt; Geneva: Lutheran World Federation, 2021).

6. In addition to the rich diversity of Christian denominations in the Guyanese context whose total membership account for approximately 58% of the population, there is also the presence of Hindus (about 30 % of the population) and Muslims (about 8% of the population).

7. It needs to be pointed out that male dominance was very much a feature of life in church, society, and family.

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to gender differences and racial-ethnic differences (among others) which are present among those who confess faith in Jesus Christ. Indeed, we have to face the unavoidable question: Are we are giving due attention to what it means as a spiritual practice to live with integrity the confession, “We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church”? It should be noted that the “appropriate attention,” for which I am calling, is not intrinsically opposed to St. Paul’s evangelical declaration, “There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28).

With this summary of the underlying formative, dynamic hermeneutics in understanding the Christian faith in mind, I turn now to some of the primary insights I gained during the first half of my sabbatical, July-December 2018.⁸ In my proposal to the faculty, which went on to the Board of Directors and was accepted, I stated, “What will be new in this phase of my ongoing work is the focus on how to teach the essentials of the Christian faith summarized in the Creeds—particularly the Nicene-Constantinopolitan and the Apostles’ Creeds, and Luther’s Small and Large Catechisms and the Augsburg Confession....” Further, I noted the changed and changing realities in the contemporary world. In summary, we are “in an age of the Internet and in the context of congregations comprised of communities where basics of the biblical witness and, in particular, the Christian story have been heard where people live in a world that they regard as extreme, existentially post-Christian, and in new communities, in the U.S.A. and globally, which are comprised of immigrants and refugees.” The church needs to recognize that “[t]he challenge of learning English as a second language and hearing the Christian story in one’s native language, and/or English as a second language,

8. The second half of the sabbatical was scheduled for June–December 2019. In consultation with President Louise N. Johnson, DD, and Academic Dean Craig L. Nesson, ThD, I chose to put that off and return to teaching full-time.

calls for primary sustained attention with evangelical integrity, creativity, and persistence for the long haul.”

In my initial commentary to the foregoing statement of my sabbatical proposal, I offered the following:

Through the confluence of teaching and preaching in a variety of settings—seminary, synodical, congregational—in the U.S.A. and Guyana, I have become increasingly aware that it cannot be assumed that there is in-depth and widespread knowledge and understanding of the biblical theological essentials of the Christian faith among students and participants. The thesis, “The biography of the interpreter plays a critical role, sometimes *a*, or *the*, decisive role, in the interpretation of the text” (see *Lutheran Study Bible*, 1547, for a version of this thesis), is pervasive, definitive and normative; and it is uncritically embraced. This phenomenon is unwittingly enhanced by a culture of many ‘truths’ *vis-à-vis* any ultimate truth. The welcome egalitarian, democratizing power of the Internet is not dialectically balanced by the vital, much-needed critical attention to the question of truth. For the Christian believer, as with other religious and secular believers, the question of truth—indeed, of *the* truth—is unavoidable. How do we speak about God? For the Christian believer, the question of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and faithful witness to the Gospel points to the question of identity. As a teacher of the church, I feel impelled to consider the interrelated questions of the Gospel and identity in the contemporary world—geographical and virtual—of immigrants and refugees to whom witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the church’s non-negotiable vocation, which includes teaching the faith, inviting people into faith in Jesus through the Spirit, and calling and forming leaders for this vocation.

In my reading and research during my sabbatical, primary attention was given to texts on the Creeds, Confessions, and Statements of Faith that are reflective of the diversity within the “one holy catholic and apostolic church.” In reading introductions to and actual Confessions and Statements of Faith of Christian communities over the centuries, while I noted “confessional” differences, I viewed them, also, in light of fundamental commonalities in the faith Christians share that point to the truth of the confession, “We believe in one holy catholic church.” It was a way of reading critically, not dismissively, texts which were dense and did not allow for fast reading and easy comprehension. The texts gave me pause to stop and think further about what it means as a spiritual practice, intra-Christianly, to see the Christian community in its diversity as being part of the “one holy catholic and apostolic church.” In light of that fundamental commitment, I read the documents through the Confessional lens grounded in the Lutheran heritage, particularly the doctrine of justification. In what follows, I will share some primary insights I gained from

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select “statements of faith” to which I was drawn, some of which gave me pause.

In reading and pondering the text, *Unitas Fratrum*, from the Moravian Church in America, the section titled, “The Ground of the Unity in 1995,” was particularly illuminating:

The *Unitas Fratrum* recognizes in the creeds of the church the thankful acclaim of the body of Christ. These creeds aid the church in formulating a scriptural confession, in marking the boundary of heresies, and in exhorting believers to an obedient and fearless testimony in every age. The *Unitas Fratrum* maintains that all creeds formulated by the Christian Church stand in need of constant testing in the light of the Holy Scriptures. It acknowledges as such true professions of faith—the early church, the early Christian witness: “Jesus Christ is Lord!” And also especially the ancient Christian creeds and the fundamental creeds of the Reformation.⁹

Here in this Moravian articulation, there are resonances with what Lutherans actually confess. In my own research as a spiritual practice, I found myself thinking about the need to attend with care to the questions of truth, identity, and belonging in the name of Jesus Christ. This commitment calls for vigilance in discerning and naming the enticing challenges that distort the Gospel when there is a succumbing to the dangerous propensity to draw lines quickly around communities on the basis of their practices of the faith that are different from ours, and to do so without having taken time to see whether at the heart of the life of the community is the one gospel that is confessed. Where the confession of the one gospel is evident, we are presented with the unavoidable challenge to share in the common work of showing that together we are part of the “one holy catholic and apostolic church.”

The unity of the church is both gift and task. Consequently,

9. *Unitas Fratrum* (Moravian Church in America), *The Ground of the Unity*, 1995, in *Creeds and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition*, I X Q U S, eds. Jaroslav Pelikan and Valerie Hotchkiss (New Haven, Connecticut, & London: Yale University Press, 2003, vol. 3), 858.

theological-confessional differences do matter. Thus, I am calling attention to the task that is present when divisions arise in the Christian community—"the one holy catholic and apostolic church." Here, I am making the plea: Do not see the differences and draw a line and not pursue the question, "What is the fundamental commonality we share?" It is a common phenomenon for individuals and communities, including the church, upon seeing differences, to draw a line that ends up with our showing a preference for people who look like ourselves and who come from the backgrounds we have, on the one hand, and to our not paying attention to the fact that people who are ethnically, racially, culturally, socially, etc., different from us are also making confession, explicitly or implicitly, of faith in the "one holy catholic and apostolic church." This cannot be taken for granted, as we hear in Jesus' high priestly prayer in John 17, "I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (vv. 20-21). Differences have been and are to be transcended by the one confession of faith in Jesus Christ who gave his life for the world, indeed, for the whole creation.

Attending with care to reading the texts of confession of faith is crucial to the spiritual practice of understanding even more what it means to declare humbly, "We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church." This is a crucial insight and conviction which has shaped and continues to shape my own vocation as a teacher of the church, who is routinely confronted with the challenge from students who explicitly or implicitly voice the questions: Why are we spending all this time and money to participate in a process of theological and pastoral formation that includes the indispensable and primary practice of reading, academically and theologically, challenging texts, with the call to think deeply? Should we not give primacy to being with the people, who are longing for attention and care that they may feel good about themselves?

The kind of openness for which I am calling necessarily includes seeing, acknowledging, and giving due attention to differences. That will mean from time to time, as best as we can, with courage and humility, we will have to say "no" to some teachings and practices which contradict the confession of the "one holy catholic and apostolic church." With that in mind, the question has to be faced: When we draw the line to determine who are "our own" people, do we end up with a homogeneous group that looks like us because we have not gone deeper into understanding what people believe, teach, etc., even if we may end up identifying differences?

In relation to the "[*First*] *London Confession* of Particular Baptists, 1644," it is instructive and illuminating to read that faith is "the gift of God wrought in the hearts of the elect by the Spirit of God," and that "[t]hose that have this precious faith wrought in them by the Spirit, can never finally nor totally fall away"¹⁰

10. *Creeks and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition*,

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Confessionally, Lutherans say the sinner, whose will is in bondage, turns away; the sinner cannot but turn away. Undoubtedly, the first part of the [*First*] *London Confession*, "Those who have this precious faith wrought by the Spirit can never finally totally fall away,"¹¹ points to a crucial difference in understanding of the Christian faith, especially about whether a Christian can turn away from faith in Jesus Christ. At the same time, there is also the fundamental commonality which is shared: "That faith is ordinarily begot by the preaching of the Gospel, or word of Christ, without respect to any power capacity in the creature, but it is wholly passive, being dead in sin and trespasses, doth believe, and is converted by no less power than that which raised Christ from the dead."¹² This calls to mind Luther's explanation to the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed in his Small Catechism, "I believe that by my own understanding or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him, but instead the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, made me holy and kept me in the true faith, just as he calls, gather, enlightens, and makes holy the whole Christian church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one common, true faith...."¹³

Further, it is intriguing to ponder the following statement,

paragraph 56.

11. *Creeks and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition*, paragraph 56.

12. *Creeks and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition*, paragraph 24.

13. *The Book of Concord*, eds. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2000), 355-356.

If I, a Lutheran theologian, simply were to dismiss what is said in the Baptist statement of faith because the language used does not “sound” Lutheran, the chance would be missed for mutual conversation about both what is held in common and what is different in our understanding about the Christian faith.

which speaks about the gospel and the law: “That the tenders of the gospel to the conversion of sinners is absolutely free, no way requiring, as absolutely necessary, any qualifications, preparations, terrors of the law, or preceding ministry of the law, but only and alone the naked soul, as a sinner and ungodly to receive Christ as crucified, dead, and buried and risen again, being a Prince and a Savior for such sinners.”¹⁴ What is said about the law in this text led me to this reflection, “If I were sitting with my friends from the Brethren Church, the Baptist Church, or the Assemblies of God, I would say, ‘You know, Lutherans would speak thus about what the law does: as we stand before God, we stand condemned.’” Here, calling attention to the two statements of doctrine would be an occasion for conversation. If I, a Lutheran theologian, simply were to dismiss what is said in the Baptist statement of faith because the language used does not “sound” Lutheran, the chance would be missed for mutual conversation about both what is held in common and what is different in our understanding about the Christian faith. Again, it needs to be pointed out that in such a conversation, the participants would reflect diversity of ethnicity, race, color, class, country of origin, culture, etc.

In the document, “A Statement of Fundamental Truth, 1916,” by the Assemblies of God, it is important to note that that statement is not intended as a creed for the church, nor as a basis of fellowship among Christians; instead, it is held as the basis of unity for the ministry alone. The opening paragraph declares:

This Statement of Fundamental Truths is not intended as a creed for the church, nor as a basis of fellowship among Christians, but only as a basis of unity for the ministry alone (i.e., that we all speak the same thing, 1 Cor 1.10; Acts 2.42). The human phraseology employed in such statement is not inspired nor contended for, but the truth set forth in such phraseology is held to be essential to a full gospel ministry. No claim is made

that it contains all truth in the Bible, only that it covers our present needs as to these fundamental matters.¹⁵

It needs to be acknowledged that here we have a different way of understanding the creed and confessions, for this statement of faith is not regarded as a creed in the historical, ecumenical sense. Once again, the foregoing is a timely call to the spiritual practice of listening to and hearing, and not walking away from, expressions of the Christian faith that are fundamental to the identity of being part of the “one holy catholic and apostolic church.”

The image of Baptists as being formally non-creedal and non-confessional is a common one. Yet, as Pelikan and Hotchkiss in their introduction point out, it is quite remarkable to note the number of confessions which Baptists have composed. It is instructive to keep in mind “[t]he five prefatory explanations of Baptist attitudes toward confessions....”¹⁶

Baptists approve and circulate confessions of faith with the following understanding, namely:

1. That they constitute a consensus of opinion of some Baptist body, large or small, for the general instruction and guidance of our own people and others concerning those articles of the Christian faith which are most surely held among us. They are not intended to add anything to the simple conditions of salvation revealed in the New Testament, namely, repentance towards God and faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
2. That we do not regard them as complete statements of our faith, having any quality of finality or infallibility. As in the past so in the future Baptists should hold themselves free to revise their statements of faith as may seem to them wise and expedient at any time.
3. That any group of Baptists, large or small, have the inherent right to draw up for themselves and publish to the world a confession of their faith whenever they may think it advisable to do so.
4. That the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Confessions are only guides in interpretation, having no authority over the conscience.
5. That they are statements of religious convictions, drawn from the Scriptures, and are not to be used to hamper freedom of thought or investigation in

15. The Assemblies of God, “A Statement of Fundamental Truth, 1916,” in *Creeks and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition*, vol. 3, eds. Pelikan and Hotchkiss, 427.

16. Southern Baptist Convention. “Baptist Faith and Message, 1925,” in *Creeks and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition*, vol. 3, eds. Pelikan and Hotchkiss, 437.

14. *Creeks and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition*, vol. 3, eds. Pelikan and Hotchkiss, 56.

other realms of life.¹⁷

The foregoing statement about Baptist attitudes toward confessions gives us pause to ponder this question: Are there (not) many Lutherans across the world—for example, first and second-generation Christians—who talk about the faith within the Lutheran church in language that is resonant with what the Baptists have declared? When family and community see outward indications of the effect of the Spirit's work in the lives of the new Christians—who are part of the Lutheran ecclesial communion—there is the “call” to make confession of faith in Christ *vis-à-vis* what their lives have been. They must explain the change. For them, the exhortation in 1 Peter 3, “[B]ut in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence” (vv. 15-16), is very difficult to avoid. To the church in the West, the question is: What might we learn from “new” siblings in Christ that would edify us today that we might be faithful to the Gospel in our own contexts? This question becomes more acute when it is considered with this Baptist statement in clear view, “Justification is God’s gracious and full acquittal upon principles of righteousness, of all sinners who believe in Christ. This blessing is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but through the redemption which is in and through Jesus Christ.”¹⁸

It is fitting to turn our attention to the Second Vatican Council (1962 to 1965). In the last century, arguably it was the most radical transforming gathering in the church, not only the Roman Catholic Church, but the Christian church, because its continuing effects have gone beyond the Roman Catholic Church. In one of the documents from that Council, titled “Lumen gentium: Dogmatic Constitution of the Church” (often referred to by its name or *LG*), there is this crucial, illuminating statement (paragraph 15) on how Vatican II views other churches and ecclesiastical communities:

15. For several reasons the church recognizes that it is joined to those who, though baptized and so honored with the Christian name, do not profess the faith in its entirety or do not preserve the unity of communion under the successor of Peter. For there are many who hold the Sacred Scripture in honor as the norm for believing and living, and display a sincere religious zeal. They lovingly believe in God the Almighty Father and in Christ, the Son of God and Savior. They are marked by baptism, by which they are joined to Christ; and indeed there are other sacraments that they recognize and accept in their own churches or ecclesiastical communities. Several among them possess the episcopate, celebrate the sacred eucharist, and foster devotion to the Virgin Mother of

17. Southern Baptist Convention. “Baptist Faith and Message, 1925,” 438.

18. Southern Baptist Convention. “Baptist Faith and Message, 1925,” 439.

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God. In addition to this, there is a communion in prayers and other spiritual benefits. Indeed there is a true bond in the Holy Spirit, since it is he who is also at work in these persons with his sanctifying power through gifts and graces, and he has strengthened some of them to the point of the shedding of their blood. In this way the Spirit arouses in all of Christ’s disciples desire and action so that all may be peacefully united, in the way established by Christ, in one flock under one shepherd. To obtain this the church does not cease to pray, to hope, and to work, and it exhorts its children to purification and renewal so that the sign of Christ may shine more clearly over the face of the church.¹⁹

One cannot miss the clear distinction made here concerning how Christian communities are viewed. At the same time, we note the imperative to proclaim and bear witness to the Gospel in “Lumen gentium”: “By preaching the Gospel the church draws its hearers to faith and the profession of faith.”²⁰ Yes, this is language from the Roman Catholic Church. This is not from a joint statement from “evangelicals”; this is the language of the Roman Catholic Church. Further, through the compelling power of the Holy Spirit, in the preaching of the gospel, hearers come to faith in Jesus Christ. Thus,

[I]t disposes them for baptism, draws them out of servitude to error, and incorporates them into Christ, so that through charity, they may grow to fullness in him. The result of its activity is that the good seed that is found in people’s hearts and minds, or in the particular rights and cultures, is not only saved from destruction but is made whole, raised up, and brought to completion

19. 5.1 “Lumen gentium: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church; Roman Catholic Church,” *Doctrinal Decrees of the Second Vatican Council, 1962-65*, in *Creeks and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition*, vol. 3, eds. Pelikan and Hotchkiss, 586.

20. 5.1 “Lumen gentium: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church; Roman Catholic Church,” paragraph 17: 588.

to the glory of God, the confusion of the devil, and the happiness of humanity. The duty of spreading the faith is incumbent on every disciple of Christ in so far as he or she can. However, though anyone can baptize those who believe, it is the task of the priest to complete the building up of the body through the eucharistic sacrifice, fulfilling the words of God spoken through the prophets: "From the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the nations, and in every place sacrifice is offered to my name, and a pure offering" (Mal 1:11).²¹

The evangelical thrust of witnessing is very pronounced in the text, even as we learn about who can administer the Sacraments. For the Roman Catholic Church, "Lumen gentium" is official teaching. There is the clear call to the whole church, lay and ordained, to *evangelize*; there is a clear sense to *attend to the cultures*: to listen and see that God is at work; and there is clear sense of what it means to be the church with the ordained priest as the Eucharistic minister.

Conclusion

It should be unmistakably evident that my sabbatical work has taught me to think further about what is confessed by others who are part of the "one holy catholic and apostolic church," about what we hold in common, even as it is necessary that we attend to differences in the profession and confession of the Christian faith. We are to keep in mind that some of the very people in relation to whom we would draw lines and say, "There are those 'decision theology' people; we don't believe like they do," are people of different backgrounds in terms of ethnic, racial, cultural, social, and gender identities. We need to consider the question: Might those who are identified in relation to such, and other differences, be responding to the Spirit's calling and leading in the hearing of the one Gospel? It is sobering and vital to keep in mind that "keeping company" with people who are different can be a timely reminder by the Spirit that it is God in Christ through the Spirit who has called and sustains the "one holy catholic and apostolic church."²² Thanks be to God!

We need to consider the question: Might those who are identified in relation to such, and other differences, be responding to the Spirit's calling and leading in the hearing of the one Gospel?

21. 5.1 "Lumen gentium: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church; Roman Catholic Church," paragraph 17: 588.

22. In this regard, it would be sanguine and illuminating to read and discuss both *Confessing the One Faith*, rev. ed., "[w]ith a new Introduction by Dame Mary Tanner" (Geneva: WCC Publications; Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publ., 2010), and *Evangelicals and Nicene Faith*, ed. Timothy George (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2011).