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## 2.5 THE DECLARATION OF FAITH FOR THE CHURCH IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

The Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa approved the Declaration of Faith for use in 1973. It adopted an amended version as a subordinate standard in 1986 (and amended it again in 1993 and 1994). The Declaration was not meant to replace the traditional ecumenical creeds or to be a summary of the whole Christian faith, but to express the Christian response to two contemporary problems in the Church and society. The first problem was racial discrimination and segregation and the ideology that underpinned this. The second was the way of thinking that excluded political issues from the concern of the gospel and the Church and from Christ's sovereignty. In that the privatization of the gospel and racial prejudice still disfigure Church and Society, this historic declaration remains pertinent.

The declaration is cast in the Trinitarian form of a brief creed, longer than the Apostles' Creed but shorter than the Nicene. This is so that congregations can use it as a common statement of faith in response to the Word of God, read and proclaimed, in services of worship, as an alternative to the traditional ecumenical creeds.

We believe in the one true God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We believe in the Father,  
who created and rules all the world,  
who will unite all things in Christ  
and who wants all his people to live together  
as brothers and sisters in one family.

We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son,  
who became human and lived  
and died and rose in triumph  
to reconcile both the individual and the world to God,  
to break down every separating barrier  
of race, culture or class,  
and to unite all God's people into one body.  
He is exalted as Lord over all,  
the only Lord over every area of life.  
He summons both the individual and society,  
both the Church and the State,  
to seek justice and freedom for all  
and reconciliation and unity between all.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the foretaste of God's coming reign,  
who gives the Church power  
to proclaim the good news to all the world,  
to love and serve all people,  
to strive for justice and peace,  
to warn the individual and the nation of God's judgement  
and to summon them both to repent  
and trust and obey Jesus Christ as  
the King who will come in glory.