



WORSHIP CHANGES LIVES – Supporting Resources

BELIEVING

Creed

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The Apostles' Creed (the profession of faith traditionally made at baptism)

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Common Worship

The Nicene Creed, which is normally used at a celebration of Holy Communion

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,**

**of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Common Worship

Creeds are statements or confessions of the fundamental truths of our faith, reflecting what Scripture teaches and what we believe. Creeds were carefully crafted in the first few centuries of Christianity to respond to and challenge heresies. We use a Creed when we meet to share Communion, because through it we can respond to what we have heard in the Bible readings and sermon, and affirm the faith we share. Used like this, it becomes not just a statement of Christian doctrine, but (especially if sung) a hymn of praise.

Looking AT

- Is there a phrase from a creed, or verse from a hymn, that puts into words a very important aspect of your own faith?
- Have you been at a worship service where a creed was sung or turned into a hymn? Did you find this helpful or not?

Looking IN

- What do you find easiest to believe about the Christian faith? What do you find most difficult to believe?
- How have these responses changed over the years?
- How do you deal with doubts?

Looking OUT

- When might a creed be particularly helpful in our journey of faith?
- How does your church help people understand more about the beliefs in the Creed?
- The Creeds were created hundreds of years ago – how are they still relevant to our worship?

Looking DEEPER

The Creeds and Affirmations of Faith in *Common Worship* are in the main volume (CHP, 200), pp 138-148 and online at

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/liturgy/commonworship/texts/word/creeds.html>

Some musical settings of Creeds can be found in *Music for Common Worship, volume 1* (RSCM, 2000), see

http://www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/liturgy/commonworship/resources/products_rel/rscm.html

An extract from Psalm 107

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is gracious, •
for his steadfast love endures for ever.

Let the redeemed of the Lord say this, •
those he redeemed from the hand of the enemy,

And gathered out of the lands
from the east and from the west, •
from the north and from the south.

Some went astray in desert wastes •
and found no path to a city to dwell in.

Hungry and thirsty, •
their soul was fainting within them.

So they cried to the Lord in their trouble •
and he delivered them from their distress.

He set their feet on the right way •
till they came to a city to dwell in.

*Let them give thanks to the Lord for his goodness •
and the wonders he does for his children.*

*For he satisfies the longing soul •
and fills the hungry soul with good.*

Some sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, •
bound fast in misery and iron,

For they had rebelled against the words of God •
and despised the counsel of the Most High.

So he bowed down their heart with heaviness; •
they stumbled and there was none to help them.

Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, •
and he delivered them from their distress.

He brought them out of darkness and out of the shadow of death, •
and broke their bonds asunder.

*Let them give thanks to the Lord for his goodness •
and the wonders he does for his children.*

*For he has broken the doors of bronze •
and breaks the bars of iron in pieces.*

Thanksgiving is often a discipline. In the Psalms, the writer often tells his / her soul how it should be feeling, or what it should be doing, and giving thanks is an oft-repeated instruction! Jesus had more to say about those living in poverty than any other group in society. We have a choice – we can look inwards, worrying about what we have, or we can look out, thanking God for all we have been given, and relating to others with the same spirit of generosity that God shows to us.

Looking AT

- Have you been to a worship service that felt particularly full of praise? If so, describe it.
- Is there a particular hymn, song or psalm that helps you praise and thank God?

Looking IN

- When did you last say 'thank you' to God?
- How do you tell your Christian story?
- Do you recognise the times in your life where God has been at work?

Looking OUT

- In a consumer society, how might we help others to recognise the good things they have?
- How do we live at peace with what we have, without striving to do more, own more, achieve more?
- Recognising all that we have in the western world, how do we support those living in poverty?

Looking DEEPER

www.christianaid.org.uk

www.tearfund.org

www.pwm-web.org.uk

www.crosslinks.org

www.sams.gb.org

www.uspg.org.uk

www.cms-uk.org

Christ our universal Saviour,
Nature's poet, nature's priest,
Through life's troubled waters bring us
To the eucharistic feast,
Where rejoicing saint and sinner
Praise the Lord of time and space,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Fount of being, source of grace.

Peter Baelz (1923-2000)
© Successor to Peter Baelz

Glory, love, and praise, and honour,
For our food
Now bestowed
Render we the donor.
Bounteous God, we now confess thee,
God, who thus
Blessest us,
Meet it is to bless thee.

He dispels our sin and sadness,
Life imparts,
Cheers our hearts,
Fills with food and gladness.
Who himself for all has given,
Us he feeds,
Us he leads
To a feast in heaven.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

A Post Communion prayer

We thank you, Lord,
that you have fed us in this sacrament,
united us with Christ,
and given us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet
prepared for all peoples. **Amen.**

Common Worship

There are lots of different ways that we can experience 'feasting' together. It might be that your church holds a Harvest Supper, or a Seder meal on Maundy Thursday to remember the Last Supper. It could be that your home group meet to eat together regularly, or you share a meal with those doing the Alpha Course. All these can feel like a feast, but how often is Holy Communion like that?

Looking AT

- Can you describe something that has made you feel particularly joyful at a worship service you have attended?
- What does your church do when it wants to celebrate? Do you know of other churches that celebrate in different ways?

Looking IN

- When was the last time you enjoyed a really wonderful meal – what made it special?
- When was the last time that receiving communion felt like a feast – what made that special?

Looking OUT

- How can we help our local church experience Holy Communion as a feast?
- What might we do to the space, the atmosphere, the ambience of church to help that happen?
- Do you think that would be attractive or off-putting for visitors to the service?

Looking DEEPER

www.crivoice.org/seder

Angela Ashwin, *The Wine Danced: Meditations on Eucharistic Themes* (Eagle, 2002)

Stephen Conway (ed), *Living the Eucharist* (DLT, 2001)

Diane Craven and Mark Stafford, *About to Receive: Resources for exploring the Eucharist*, (Diocese of Southwark, 2005)

Study Leaflets on the Eucharist (Durham Diocesan Liturgical Committee) – downloadable from <http://www.durhamliturgy.org.uk/>

Margaret Withers and Tim Sledge, *Creative Communion* (Bible Reading Fellowship, 2008)

Dot Gosling, Sue Mayfield, Tim Sledge, Tony Washington, *Youth Emmaus 2: Big Issues and Holy Spaces* (CHP, 2005) <http://www.chpublishing.co.uk/product.asp?id=2390845>

Magnificat (The Song of Mary, Luke 1.46-55)

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;
he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed;
the Almighty has done great things for me
and holy is his name.

He has mercy on those who fear him,
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm
and has scattered the proud in their conceit,

Casting down the mighty from their thrones
and lifting up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.

He has come to the aid of his servant Israel, “
to remember his promise of mercy,
The promise made to our ancestors, “
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.

Common Worship: Evening Prayer

Sometimes things happen to us that leave us gobsmacked; things so awful or so wonderful that we are rendered speechless. When we run out of words, the prayers that the Church gives us help us find a way to talk to God. Clergy are expected to say prayers in the morning and evening, and they often use a set of prayers called ‘an office’. Lay people may find it more difficult to find the time, but short forms of daily prayer are available in books or on the web, as are Bible notes to help us regularly study Scripture, and these help us to grow in our Christian faith.

Looking AT

- Have you ever used a daily form of set prayers? If so, describe the main features of this.

Looking IN

- Do some forms of prayer help you to pray more readily than others?
- What happens to your prayers when big things happen in your life?
- How often do you talk to other people about your prayer life, and how close you feel to God?

Looking OUT

- How could you help people in your church to pray daily?
- What resources might they need?

Looking DEEPER

There are lots of websites offering daily prayer on the web, including www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/dailyprayer daily prayer from the Church of England for today, tomorrow and yesterday

Time to Pray (CHP, 2006) offers a simple and accessible pattern of daily prayer, using some of the resources from *Common Worship: Daily Prayer*

<http://www.chpublishing.co.uk/product.asp?id=2391877>

Reflections for Daily Prayer (Quarterly, CHP) provides short but challenging comment on one of the daily readings for Morning Prayer.

<http://www.chpublishing.co.uk/feature.asp?id=2393697>

The Church of England believes that there are five key values for a missionary church:

- ***A missionary church is focused on God the Trinity***

Worship lies at the heart of a missionary church, and to love and know God as Father, Son and Spirit is its chief inspiration and primary purpose...

- ***A missionary church is incarnational***

It seeks to shape itself in relation to the culture in which it is located or to which it is called...

- ***A missionary church is transformational***

It exists for the transformation of the community that it serves, through the power of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit...

- ***A missionary church makes disciples***

It is active in calling people to faith in Jesus Christ...it is concerned for the transformation of individuals, as well as for the transformation of communities.

- ***A missionary church is relational***

It is characterized by welcome and hospitality. Its ethos and style are open to change when new members join.

Mission-shaped Church (CHP, 2004)

In this, the final section of the book *Worship Changes Lives*, we have been looking at believing. We have looked at ways that we can sustain our belief and grow in faith, even when the going gets tough. Sometimes it can feel as though *transformation* is very slow, and we are not growing at all. But we are called to believe even in the desert places, and to give thanks even when we don't feel like it. These things, the Creed, the Office, and Holy Communion are disciplines that sustain us – thanksgiving and looking out in mission remind us that the world is out there, longing to hear the good news about Jesus.

Looking AT

- Describe anything you have seen done differently to try to make worship services more “stranger-friendly” (either in your church or elsewhere)
- List examples of worship services that have taken place away from a church building. Have these welcomed those who do not go to church?

Looking IN

- Do you think of church being all about you, or about the congregation, or about the people who haven't joined you yet?
- When you leave church on Sunday, do you feel excited about telling your friends, family and colleagues about God?
- How else might you share your faith with people in ways that can help them respond freely to the Gospel (good news) of God's love in their lives?

Looking OUT

- How scary is it for a stranger to come to your church for the first time – how welcoming are you?
- How would your church respond to an addict, asylum seeker or homeless person coming into your service?

Looking DEEPER

www.cofe.anglican.org/faith/mission/missionevangelism

Partnership for World Mission - www.pwm-web.org.uk

CPAS - www.cpas.org.uk/evangelism/content/

Mission-Shaped Church (CHP, 2004)

Paul Bayes, *Mission-Shaped Church* (Grove Evangelism Series 67)

Hilary Brand, *What am I doing here* (CHP, June 2008)

Jim Currin, *How to develop a mission strategy* (Grove Evangelism Series 68)

Alison Gilchrist, *Creating a culture of welcome in the local church* (Grove Evangelism Series 66)

Fresh Expressions – a Church of England and Methodist Church initiative encouraging people hoping to establish new or different forms of church for a changing culture. - www.freshexpressions.org.uk