

## CORE BELIEFS

- We affirm the traditional creeds and tenets of orthodox Christianity.
- We believe God is the good creator of all things who longs for the redemption of all creation.
- We believe Jesus Christ is the living, resurrected Son of God, our model in life, our means of salvation, and the completion of all things.
- We believe that through the Holy Spirit, the church is called to participate in this salvation, both for itself and for the world around it.
- We believe in the authority of scripture in all matters of faith and practice.

## WE AFFIRM THE TRADITIONAL CREEDS AND TENETS OF ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY

The Apostle's Creed and Nicene Creed have their origins in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries, respectively. They have been unifying statements for Christians across time, nations, and denominations. We affirm them as a statement of unity with historic Christianity and the larger Body of Christ.

### THE APOSTLES' CREED

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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.

## NICENE CREED

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 of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human.

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 worshiped 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.

\* "Catholic" here means universal, rather than referring to the Roman Catholic Church.

## GOD IS THE GOOD CREATOR OF ALL THINGS WHO LONGS FOR THE REDEMPTION OF ALL CREATION

God the Father

*Genesis 1:1; Deut. 6:4; John 1:12, 3:16; Ephesians 1:3-8; 1 John 1:3*

+ God the Father, united with the Son and the Holy Spirit, is one, and is the dynamic, eternal, holy, perfect, righteous, just, sovereign, always present, all-knowing, and all-powerful Creator. The Father's love for his Creation is demonstrated in sending his only begotten Son to the world, in order to reconcile all Creation to himself. While the Father is distinct from creation, he is not distant, but is present amidst the joy and pain of humanity.

Eschatology

*Romans 8:18-27; 1 Corinthians 15; Revelation 20-21:1-5*

+ The kingdom has already begun, but it has yet to be completed. The completion of the future hope of the world is found in the final coming of Christ, the renewal of all creation, the resurrection of believers, the redemption of their bodies, and the Triune God's dwelling on earth with redeemed humanity.

**JESUS CHRIST IS THE LIVING, RESURRECTED SON OF GOD, OUR MODEL IN LIFE, OUR MEANS OF SALVATION, AND THE COMPLETION OF ALL THINGS**

God the Son: Jesus the Christ

*John 1:1-18, John 3:16, Romans 1:1-6, 1 John 3:8*

+ Jesus the Christ, the Truth and incarnate Word of God, united with the Father and the Spirit, is the Lord of all creation, through which the Father reveals himself and his love to humanity, and Christ is our great moral example in both his teaching and his life, and in his death on the cross and resurrection. Jesus is the great victor over Death, who has been given all authority over the entire cosmos, and who will reign eternally. The Scriptures testify of him, and we believe Christ's message of love is the good news of God's kingdom, is available to all—those in the margins and mainstream—and is a direct challenge to the systems of oppression in our society.

## Salvation

*John 1:12-13; Romans 10:9-10, 11:29; Ephesians 2:8-9*

+ God, by his grace, gives salvation to those who receive it through belief and confession in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We understand salvation to be the holistic deliverance of individuals from the grip of death and the transferring of such into the community of Christ, his Church. Through grace, God grants the forgiveness of sin, the purification of the believer and the Church, and the assurance of eternal relationship with God. Beginning with the moment of salvation, the believer comes into Eternal Life. Salvation will be fully and finally realized when Christ returns, our bodies are resurrected, Creation is renewed, and the people of God live and reign with God forever.

## THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE CHURCH IS CALLED TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS SALVATION, BOTH FOR ITSELF AND THE WORLD AROUND IT

### God the Holy Spirit

*John 7:37-39; Romans 8:18-27; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13, 5:18*

+ The Holy Spirit, united with the Father and the Son, is equally God, given as a gift from the Father, and leads the Church into all truth. In an act of grace, the Spirit provides individuals within the Church certain gifts in order to advance the good news of Jesus Christ. The Spirit comforts, is the seal of salvation, and is present within the Church—individually and corporately. The Spirit also guides us in hope and longing as we await the renewal of God's Creation.

### The Church

*Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21*

+ The Church, comprised of followers of Jesus Christ, is sent into all the world to witness to the reign of Christ. The Church is to be the aroma of Christ and a foretaste of the coming Kingdom of God. The Church proclaims

the Word of God and takes up the ministry of reconciliation in order to reshape the world and to be in the midst of its pain. While the Church is sent into the world it is also set apart from the world. In her commitment to the values of the gospel, the Church is called to uphold unity and truth, and to remain in faith, hope, and love; the greatest of these is love.

## THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE IN ALL MATTERS OF FAITH AND PRACTICE

The Bible

*John 5:39; 2 Timothy 3:16-17*

+ The Bible, as the Word of God, testifies of Christ, is God-breathed, authoritative for the Church in all things, and used by the Holy Spirit to transform the Church into the Image of God.