

**19. What is the purpose of the creeds?**

The purpose of the creeds is to declare and safeguard for all generations essential truths about God, the Church, and the world, as revealed in Holy Scripture. (*Deuteronomy 7:9-11; Psalm 145:4-13; John 20:30-31; 2 Timothy 1:13-14; Hebrews 2:1-4*)

**20. What does belief in the creeds signify?**

Belief in the creeds signifies acceptance of God's revealed truth and the intention to live by it. To reject any element of the creeds signifies a departure from the Christian faith. (*Matthew 16:13-20; 2 Timothy 3:14-15; 4:1-5; James 2:10-26*)

**21. Which creeds has this church received?**

This church believes the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed. (*Articles of Religion, 8*)

**22. Why do you receive and believe these creeds?**

I receive and believe these creeds with the Church because they are grounded in Holy Scripture and are faithful expressions of its teaching. (*Proverbs 13:14; 1 Corinthians 15:3-11; Philippians 2:5-11*)

**23. Why should you know these creeds?**

I should know these creeds because they state the essential beliefs of the Christian faith. (*Deuteronomy 11:18-19; 1 Timothy 6:20-21; 2 Timothy 1:13-14*)

**24. What is the Apostles' Creed?**

The Apostles' Creed says:

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.  
He 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,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again 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.**

## CONCERNING HOLY SCRIPTURE

### 25. What is Holy Scripture?

Holy Scripture is “God’s Word written” (*Articles of Religion*, 20), given by the Holy Spirit through prophets and apostles as the revelation of God and his acts in human history, and is therefore the Church’s final authority in all matters of faith and practice. (*Psalms 19:7–11; Jeremiah 36:1–8; 2 Timothy 3:14–17; Revelation 1:1–11*)

### 26. What books are contained in Holy Scripture?

The thirty-nine books of the Old Testament and the twenty-seven books of the New Testament together form the whole of Holy Scripture. (*Articles of Religion*, 6)

**27. What is in the Old Testament?**

The Old Testament proclaims God's creation of all things; mankind's original disobedience; God's calling of Israel to be his people; his Law, wisdom, and saving deeds; and the teaching of his prophets. The Old Testament bears witness to Christ, revealing God's intention to redeem and reconcile the world through Christ. (*Luke 24:44; 1 Corinthians 10:1-4; Hebrews 11*)

**28. What is in the New Testament?**

The New Testament proclaims Jesus Christ's birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension; the Church's early ministry; the teaching of the apostles; the revelation of Christ's eternal kingdom; and the promise of his return. (*Luke 24:45-49; Acts 1:1-11; Philippians 2:5-11*)

**29. How are the Old and New Testaments related to each other?**

The Old Testament is to be read in the light of Christ, and the New Testament is to be read in light of God's revelation to Israel. Thus the two form one Holy Scripture, which reveals the Person of Jesus Christ and his mighty works. As Saint Augustine says, "The New is in the Old concealed, the Old is in the New revealed." (*Augustine of Hippo, Questions in the Heptateuch 2.73; see also Matthew 5:17-18; Luke 24:25-27*)

**30. What does it mean that Holy Scripture is inspired?**

Holy Scripture is "God-breathed," for the biblical authors wrote under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit to record God's Word. (*Deuteronomy 8:3; Matthew 4:4; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21*)

**31. What does it mean that Holy Scripture is the Word of God?**

The Old and New Testaments are inspired by the Holy Spirit and are therefore the Word of God written. God is revealed in

his mighty works and in the incarnation of our Lord, which are made known through the inspired writings of the biblical authors. God “has spoken through the prophets” (*Nicene Creed*) and continues to speak through Scripture today. (*Psalm 33:4–9; Jeremiah 1:9; Ezekiel 2:1–3:4; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 3:15–16; Hebrews 1:1–2*)

**32. Why is Jesus Christ called the Word of God?**

The fullness of God’s revelation is found in Jesus Christ, who not only fulfills the Scriptures, but is himself God’s Word, the living expression of God’s mind. The Scriptures testify about him, “In the beginning was the Word,” and “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (*John 1:1, 14*). Therefore, “ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ.” (*Jerome, Commentary on Isaiah, prologue; see also Genesis 1:26–27; Psalm 33:1–12; Colossians 1:15–19*)

**33. How should Holy Scripture be understood?**

Because Holy Scripture was given by God to the Church, it should always be understood in ways that are faithful to its own plain meaning, to its entire teaching, and to the Church’s historic interpretation. It should be translated, read, taught, and obeyed accordingly. (*Nehemiah 8:1–8; Psalm 94:8–15; Acts 8:26–35; 18:24–28; Jerusalem Declaration, Article 2; Articles of Religion, 20*)

**34. How does the Holy Spirit use Holy Scripture in your life?**

Through Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit will teach, rebuke, correct, and train me in the righteousness that God desires. The prayerful study of Scripture forms me for life in Christ and the service of God and my neighbor. (*Psalm 119:105; John 14:26; 2 Timothy 3:16–17; Hebrews 4:12–13; see questions 227–32*)

35. **What are the Apocrypha?**

The fourteen books of the Apocrypha, historically acknowledged by this church, are pre-Christian Jewish writings that provide background for the New Testament and are included in many editions of the Bible. They may be read as examples of faithful living but “not to establish any doctrine.” (*Articles of Religion, 6*)

THE APOSTLES’  
CREED, ARTICLE I

“I BELIEVE IN GOD”

36. **Who is God?**

God is one divine Being eternally existing in three divine Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This is the Holy Trinity. (*Deuteronomy 6:4–7; Psalm 86:8–10; Isaiah 44:6–8; Matthew 3:16–17; 28:19; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14*)

37. **What does Holy Scripture tell us about the character of God?**

God is both loving and holy. God mercifully redeems fallen creation, while righteously opposing all sin and evil. The Lord Jesus Christ is the fullest revelation of God’s holy love. (*Exodus 34:6–7; Psalm 145; John 1:14–18; 14:9–10; Romans 5:6–11; Hebrews 1:1–3*)

“THE FATHER ALMIGHTY”

38. **Who is God the Father?**

God the Father is the first Person of the Holy Trinity, from whom the Son is eternally begotten and the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds. (*Psalm 104; John 1:1, 14; 15:26; 1 Corinthians 2:10–16; 1 Peter 1:10–12; Nicene Creed*)

**39. Why do you call the first of the three divine Persons “Father”?**

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the only divine Son of the Father. He called God “Father” and taught his disciples to do the same. God gives believers his Holy Spirit and adopts us as his children, enabling us to call him “Father.” (*Deuteronomy 32:4–9; Psalm 2; Matthew 6:6–9; John 5:17–23; Galatians 4:1–7*)

**40. What do you mean when you call God “Father”?**

When I call God “Father,” I declare that I was created for relationship with him, that I trust in God as my Protector and Provider, and that I put my hope in God as his child and heir in Christ. (*Genesis 1:26–27; Psalms 68:4–6; 103:13–14; Matthew 6:25–34; Romans 8:17–21*)

**41. Why do you call God the Father “Almighty”?**

I call the Father “Almighty” because he has power over everything and accomplishes everything he wills. Together with his Son and Holy Spirit, the Father is all-knowing and ever present in every place. (*Psalm 139:1–16; Isaiah 40:12–26; Daniel 4:34b–37; Luke 1:34–37; Revelation 4:8b–11*)

**“CREATOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH”**

**42. Why do you call God the Father “Creator”?**

I call God the Father “Creator” because he made all things. He creates and sustains all things through his Word, and gives life to all creatures through his Spirit. (*Genesis 1:1–2:3, 7; Psalm 104:24–30; John 1:1–3; Acts 17:24–28; Colossians 1:16–18*)

**43. How does recognizing God as Creator inform your understanding of his creation?**

I acknowledge that God created for his own glory everything that exists. He created human beings, male and female, in his image

and appointed us stewards of creation. God's creation is thus a gift to enjoy as we work and care for it. (*Genesis 1:27-28; 2:15; Psalm 8:5-8; Luke 19:11-27; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2*)

**44. What does it mean that God created both heaven and earth?**

It means that all things, whether visible or invisible, physical or spiritual, were brought into being out of nothing by the Word of the eternal God. (*Genesis 1:1-8; Psalm 33:6-8; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16*)

**45. Was the world that God created good?**

Yes. God created all things and called them "very good" (*Genesis 1:31*). However, through sin, evil and death have come into the world and corrupted it. (*Genesis 3:1-8; Psalm 14:1-3; Matthew 15:18-20a; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Timothy 4:4-5*)

**46. If God created the world good, why do we sin?**

Adam and Eve rebelled against God, thus bringing upon all humanity pain, toil, alienation from God and each other, and death. I have inherited this fallen and corrupted human nature; consequently, I too sin and fall short of God's glory. (*Genesis 3:16-4:26; Psalm 51:3-5; Romans 3:23; 5:12; 7:14-25*)

**47. What are the consequences of sin?**

Because of sin, those apart from Christ are spiritually dead, separated from God, under his righteous condemnation, and without hope. (*Genesis 3:16-19; Psalm 90:3-12; Isaiah 53:6; John 3:36; Romans 6:20-23; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 2:1-3*)

*A Prayer for the Father's Love*

Gracious Father, I come to you through the saving work of your Son Jesus Christ upon the Cross. Thank you for adopting

me as your child through the Holy Spirit. Grant me the grace to know the fullness of your fatherly love, that I may delight in the promises of your eternal Kingdom, both now and in the age to come. **Amen.**

## THE APOSTLES' CREED, ARTICLE II

### “I BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST”

#### 48. Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the eternal Word and Son of God, the second Person of the Holy Trinity. He took on human nature to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world, the only Mediator between God and fallen humanity. (*Psalm 2; Malachi 3:1; John 1:1-18; Philip-  
pians 2:5-11; 1 Timothy 2:5-6*)

#### 49. What does “Jesus” mean?

“Jesus” means “God saves” and is taken from the Hebrew name *Yeshua* or Joshua. In Jesus, God has come to save us from the power of sin and death. (*Joshua 1:1-9; Psalm 20; Matthew 1:18-25; Romans 8:1-2*)

#### 50. What does “Christ” mean?

*Christos* is the Greek term for the Hebrew title *Messiah*, meaning “Anointed One.” Old Testament kings, priests, and prophets were anointed with oil. Jesus the Christ was anointed by the Holy Spirit to perfectly fulfill these roles, and he rules now as Prophet, Priest, and King over his Church and all creation. (*Exodus 40:12-16; 1 Samuel 16:11-13; 1 Kings 19:15-16; Psalm 89:19-29; Luke 3:21-22; 4:14-21; Acts 10:38; Hebrews 4:14-5:10*)