AFFIRMATIONS OF FAITH

The historic creeds are agreed statements of our common faith based on the Trinity, and as such link us with Christians in all times and places. Therefore when a statement of faith is called for in the services in this book, normally one of the historic creeds should be used. However, there may be occasions when a different statement of faith is called for. The selection of such occasions, and of the alternatives, must be made carefully. Several alternative statements of faith are presented in this section.

**An alternative version of the Apostles’ Creed.**

The following version of the Apostles’ Creed seeks to address the two most contentious issues in the common English translations of the creed. The descent of Jesus into hell has been the cause of debate in the history of the creed. The version in the main text of *Sunday Services* reflects the view that Jesus descended to the dead, which could mean that he well and truly died, or that he went to ‘the lower regions’. This version retains the descent into ‘hell’ as an expression of the punishment Jesus underwent on the cross. In dying for our sins, he descended into hell.

The translation of the word ‘catholic’ has also been debated, because the popular, contemporary meaning generally describes the Roman Catholic Church, rather than the church which is ‘according to the whole’, the one true church in all places and at all times. Attempts to reflect the meaning of ‘catholic’ by such words as ‘universal’ have not been well received. The choice of ‘apostolic’ as a replacement for ‘catholic’ seeks to reflect the unity and orthodoxy of the church in its apostolic roots.

 We believe in God, the Father Almighty,

 creator of heaven and earth.

 We 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.

 On the cross he descended into hell.

 On the third day he rose again;

 he ascended into heaven.

 He is now seated at the right hand of the Father

 and will come again to judge the living and the dead.

 We believe in the Holy Spirit,

 the holy, apostolic Church,

 the fellowship of the saints, the forgiveness of sins,

 the resurrection of the body, and life eternal. Amen.

**An alternative version of the 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 humans and for our salvation

 he came down from heaven,

 was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary

 and became 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.

**An affirmation of faith**

 We believe in one God

 **Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**

He is the true and living God,

 **worthy to receive glory and honour and power.**

 He created all things,

 **by his will they existed and were created.**

 We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ;

 **all things came into being through him.**

 He is the image of the invisible God

 **the firstborn of all creation.**

 In him all things in heaven and on earth

 **were created.**

 He himself is before all things,

 **and in him all things hold together.**

 Beingin the form of God, he emptied himself,

 **he took the form of a slave,**

**and wasborn in human likeness.**

 Being found in human form, he humbled himself

 **he became obedient to the point of death**

**- even death on a cross.**

Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures;

 **he was buried;**

**he was raised on the third day**

**according to the Scriptures.**

 God also highly exalted Jesus:

 **he gave him the name that is above every name.**

 God has put all things under his feet:

 **he made him the head over all things for the**

**church, which is his body.**

 We believe that Jesus died and rose again:

 **through Jesus, God will bring with him**

**those who have died.**

 As all die in Adam,

 **so all will be made alive in Christ.**

 Thanks be to God

**who gives us the victory through our
Lord Jesus Christ.**

 **An affirmation of faith based on Colossians 1:15-20**

 Christ is the image of the invisible God,

 the firstborn of all creation.

 For in him all things in heaven and on earth were created:

 things visible and invisible,

 whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers;

 all things have been created through him and for him.

 He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

 And he is the head of the body, the church;

 he is the beginning, the firstborn from among the dead,

 so that he might come to have first place in everything.

 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,

 and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things,

 whether on earth or in heaven,

 by making peace through the blood of his cross.

**Affirmations for the young**

1. With all Christians everywhere

 we believe in one God,

 who made everything.

 The Father sent his Son Jesus

 to die on the cross.

 Jesus rose again as Lord of all,

 that we might live forever with him.

 God sent his Holy Spirit to live in us

 that we might grow more like Jesus. **Amen.**

2. We believe in God the Father,

 maker of all things.

 We believe in his Son Jesus Christ,

 Lord and Saviour of the world.

 We believe in the Holy Spirit,

 giver of life and light.

 We belong to the Church,

 God’s family everywhere. **Amen.**