

The Nicaea & Creation Course

How to Guide

Beginnings : The Nicene Creed

It is helpful to begin here, with the Nicene Creed, a foundational Christian text that we are celebrating this year. Your group may wish to begin the first study session, or indeed every session, by affirming together:

**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.**

The Nicene Creed

We are thinking about the Nicene Creed this year because 2025 marks the 1700th anniversary of the convening of the Council of Nicaea, a key moment in the history of Christian faith and for the journey towards Christian unity. In 325 AD, the Council of Nicaea brought together for the first time bishops from all over the then Christian world to establish key doctrines of the faith. This meeting of hearts and minds began a process that was eventually to lead, roughly sixty years later, to the formulation of what is now called the Nicene Creed, regularly used by millions of Christians, including Anglicans, to proclaim their faith Sunday by Sunday. An additional significance for us is that the historic location of Nicaea, modern-day Iznik, Turkey, is located here in this Diocese in Europe.

We warmly commend the “Celebrating Nicaea: seeing afresh the faith which holds us together” course, authored by Revd Dr Donald McFadyen for Lent, as a foundational introduction to the Creed which can be used at any time of the year. This accessible course explores the Nicene Creed in five sessions within the context of a group study. [Please visit the diocesan website to access this free resource.](#)

The “Celebrating Nicaea” course provides excellent background for this Creationtide course and can be read by individuals or done in groups. But if you haven’t done the “Celebrating” course, don’t let this be a barrier: if you do not have a foundational familiarity with the Creed, you can always fill that in after engaging with the Creationtide course.

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If you have already explored the Creed, you know already what a vital aspect of our Christian practice the Creed offers. One of the key ways in which the Creed impacts our life in the church and in the wider world is its very direct link to our theology of creation and our practice of ecological care. Many churches will observe the Season of Creation (Creationtide) between 1 September and St Francis’s day on 4 October, a special time for Christians to come together in prayer and action for the earth. With this season in mind, this course of study features four sessions to share in a group context, online or in-person. We should note that for those who are unable to gather in a group, the study resource can be used individually.

The sessions are titled:

One God : *we believe in one God*

Jesus Christ : *through him all things were made*

Holy Spirit : *the giver of life*

Resurrection & Life : *the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come*

How is the course run?

The course will need a facilitator, who can be any person with the confidence to lead a small group discussion. The material is intended to be accessible for a group of people with various levels of interest in the theology, but as previously stated, familiarity with the Nicene Creed will be very useful, and so we commend to you the 5-week “Celebrating Nicaea: seeing afresh the faith which holds us together” course if the group is not already familiar with the background of the Creed. Regardless of whether you have been able to study that resource yet, here is an overview of the sessions available in this “Nicaea & Creation” Creationtide course.

Each session consists of:

- A deeper look at a specific doctrine within the Nicene Creed, and examining how that doctrine relates to our theology of creation. Anyone can read or lead this teaching section, or the group could arrive having read it already and simply discuss what stood out, what was significant, what was challenging, etc.
- A few discussion questions. These are optional. Your group may have their own questions with which they prefer to engage.
- An idea for worship as a way to bring the Creed alive in our prayers for creation. It may be effective to designate one person to lead the worship for each meeting of the group. The words in bold are for the whole group to share. The hymns can be read as poems, sung aloud as a group, or listened to as recordings if singing together is not preferred. If you would like to listen to the hymns, it may be an idea to have a phone or a speaker available from which to play recordings of the hymns.
- For the third session on the Holy Spirit, it would be lovely to have a candle that you can light during the “Worship”.
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If you are looking for practical ways to live out your worship of God, to express your worship by taking action on behalf of Creation, we warmly commend the resources developed by the Diocese in Europe’s Caring 4 Creation group. You can find out more on the Diocese in Europe website here: [Care for Creation](#).