

2025 April 24 – May 22: Thursday Zoom Study

3:00pm – 4:00 pm CDT/4:00pm – 5:00pm EDT

WE BELIEVE: The Nicene Creed 1700th Anniversary

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85773756001?pwd=39tao7OWlVcouwK7tZRYh2GfLfQDbo.1>

April 24: Introduction

See LIVING LUTHERAN ARTICLE We believe in ...

Commemorating the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea

By [H. Ashley Hall](#) from March 14, 2025 ***Separate document**

May 1-22: NICENE CREED HISTORY, DEVELOPMENT, AND USE

The Nicene Creed was originally written in Greek. Its principal liturgical use is in the context of the Eucharist in the West and in the context of both baptism and the Eucharist in the East.

The first version of the Nicene Creed was the product of the First Council of Nicaea, a council of Christian bishops convened in the Bithynian city of Nicaea (now İznik, Turkey) by the Roman Emperor Constantine I. The Council of Nicaea met from May until the end of July 325 and produced, among other teachings, the following text:

We believe in one God, the Father almighty,
maker of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God,
begotten from the Father, only-begotten,
that is, from the substance of the Father,
God from God, light from light,
true God from true God, begotten not made,
of one substance with the Father,
through Whom all things came into being,
things in heaven and things on earth,
Who because of us men and because of our salvation came down,
and became incarnate and became man, and suffered,
and rose again on the third day, and ascended to the heavens,
and will come to judge the living and dead,

And in the Holy Spirit.

But as for those who say, There was when He was not,
and, Before being born He was not,
and that He came into existence out of nothing,
or who assert that the Son of God is of a different hypostasis or
substance,
or created, or is subject to alteration or change
– these the Catholic and apostolic Church anathematizes.

The second and definitive (almost) revision of this creed was the product of the First Council of Constantinople, (381), the second ecumenical council of the Christian church, summoned by the emperor Theodosius I and meeting in Constantinople. Doctrinally, it adopted what became known to the church as the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed (commonly referred to as the Nicene Creed), which effectively affirmed and developed the creed earlier promulgated at the Council of Nicaea in 325 (Creed of Nicaea). The Nicene Creed was, however, probably not an intentional enlargement of the Creed of Nicaea but rather an independent document based on a baptismal creed already in existence. The Council of Constantinople also declared finally the Trinitarian doctrine of the equality of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son. That text is:

We believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only begotten Son of God,
begotten from the Father before all ages,
light from light,
true God from true God,
begotten not made,
of one substance with the Father,
through Whom all things came into existence,
Who because of us men and because of our salvation came down from

the heavens,
and was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became man,
and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate,
and suffered and was buried,
and rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures
and ascended to heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father,
and will come again with glory to judge living and dead,
of Whose kingdom there will be no end;

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and life-giver,
Who proceeds from the Father,
Who with the Father and the Son is together worshipped and together
glorified,
Who spoke through the prophets;
in one holy Catholic and apostolic Church.
We confess one baptism to the remission of sins;
we look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the
world to come. Amen

In the late 6th century, some Latin Churches added the words "and from the Son" (*Filioque*) to the description of the procession of the Holy Spirit, in what many Eastern Orthodox Christians have at a later stage argued is a violation of Canon VII of the Council of Ephesus, since the words were not included in the text by either the First Council of Nicaea or that of Constantinople. The inclusion was incorporated into the liturgical practice of Rome in 1014, but was rejected by Eastern Christianity.

The controversy referring to the term *Filioque* involves four separate disagreements:

- Controversy about the term itself
- Controversy about the orthodoxy of the doctrine of the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son, to which the term refers
- Controversy about the legitimacy of inserting the term into the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed

- Controversy about *the authority of the Pope* to define the orthodoxy of the doctrine or to insert the term into the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed.

Here is the Nicene Creed as published in our worship books today:

The Nicene Creed or the Apostles' Creed may be spoken. The Nicene Creed is appropriate during Advent, Christmas, Easter, and on festival days; the Apostles' Creed during Lent and at other times.

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.

*Or, "who proceeds from the Father." The phrase "and the Son" is a later addition to the creed.

The Augsburg Confession (1530) Article I. Concerning God

In the first place, it is with one accord taught and held, following the decree of the Council of Nicea, that there is one divine essence which is named God and truly is God. But there are three persons in the same one essence, equally powerful, equally eternal: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. All three are one divine essence, eternal, undivided, unending, of immeasurable power, wisdom, and goodness, the creator and preserver of all visible and invisible things. What is understood by the word —personll is not a part nor a quality in another but that which exists by itself, as the Fathers once used the word concerning this issue.

Rejected, therefore, are all the heresies that are opposed to this article, such as the Manichaeans, who posited two gods, one good and one evil; the Valentinians, the Arians, the Eunomians, the Mohammedans, and all others like them; also the Samosatenians, old and new, who hold that there is only one person and create a deceitful sophistry about the other two, the Word and the Holy Spirit, by saying that the two need not be two distinct persons since —Wordll means an external word or voice and the —Holy Spiritll is a created motion in all creatures.

The Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (This article appears in the Churchwide, Synod, and Congregation constitutions)

Chapter 2. CONFESSION OF FAITH

2.01. This church confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

2.02. This church confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.

a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.

b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.

2.03. This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.

2.04. This church accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this church.

2.05. This church accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.

2.06. This church accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.

2.07. This church confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scripture and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

Questions from the Ordination Rite of Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service

The presiding minister addresses questions to the candidate/s.

Before almighty God, to whom you must give account,
and in the presence of this assembly, I ask:

Will you assume this office,
believing that the church's call is God's call
to the ministry of word and sacrament?

Each candidate responds: I will, and I ask God to help me.

**The church in which you are to be ordained
confesses that the holy scriptures are the word of God
and are the norm of its faith and life.**

**We accept, teach, and confess
the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds.
We also acknowledge the Lutheran confessions**

**as true witnesses and faithful expositions of the holy scriptures.
Will you therefore preach and teach in accordance with the holy scriptures and these creeds and confessions?**

Each candidate responds: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you be diligent in your study of the holy scriptures
and faithful in your use of the means of grace?

Will you pray for God's people,
nourish them with the word and sacraments,
and lead them by your own example in faithful service and holy living?

Each candidate responds: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you give faithful witness in the world through word and deed,
that God's love may be known in all that you do?

Each candidate responds: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Almighty God, who has given you the will to do these things,
graciously give you the strength and compassion to perform them.

The assembly responds: **Amen.**