

St. Saviour's Voice

Issue 212, June, 2019



We believe

“I invite you to stand as you are able, and join with me in the words of the Nicene Creed on page 358.” While the rubric in the Prayer Books says simply, “*On Sundays and other Major Feasts there follows, all standing...*” I’m aware that many of us struggle with the creed, and thus in worship I prefer to issue an invitation rather than a command. Some folks stand or sit quietly; some say parts of the Creed but carefully avoid or modify specific clauses with which they have some scruple. I believe that most of us believe what we say in the Creed, but I am frequently surprised at the number of people who recite it every week, but when asked, say something like, “Oh, we don’t really believe that anymore, do we?”

The Creeds are historical documents, in the sense that we know something about where and when they were composed, and in what historical context. The Creed we read every Sunday was drafted at the Council of Nicaea (today called Iznik, Turkey) in 325 AD, and adopted with considerable revision at the Council of Constantinople (Istanbul) in 381 AD. These Councils were convened by the Emperors Constantine and Theodosius, who invited all the Christian bishops in the Empire to come together and hammer out a clear statement of belief. This was important if Christianity was to be an Imperial religion: the Empire needed to know what the main stream of Christians believe.

However one thinks about the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Creeds were drafted by human beings in the midst of spiritual and political struggle. The goal of the Councils was to define orthodox belief, so by definition some ways of interpreting Christ were excluded and labeled heresy. Much has been made of this process of “silencing minority voices,” but one need not see a cynical conspiracy. This is the Church working out our answer to Jesus’ question to the Disciples: “Who do you say that I am?”

In fact, the largest part of the Creed, the second paragraph that talks about who Jesus is, treads a careful line to avoid foreclosing hard questions with easy answers: Jesus is eternally and cosmically God *and also* a human being who was born to a specific woman and who was killed under the administration of a specific Roman governor. The historic heresies are not excluded because they said something challenging about Jesus that the Church couldn’t handle. They are excluded because they say something that is too little, too easy: That Jesus was simply a good man and a good teacher, but not God (the Arians), or that the man that we know as Jesus was only some sort of spiritual projection of God, and thus not a human who suffered (the Gnostics and Docetists).

Some will say that “Jesus did not come to establish a Church.” That may be true, but the fact is that the Church is the historical human body, full of human limitations and weaknesses, that has been given the gift and the responsibility of maintaining and furthering the Good News that Jesus left us. The Creed is a statement of our corporate identity: we are people who try to follow Jesus, and this is what we as a *community* say about who Jesus is, who God is, who the Holy Spirit is.

The community part is key. Some of you may have heard an interview a few years ago with the late Yale professor Jaroslav Pelikan on the National Public Radio talk show, “On Being.” Pelikan highlights the fact that the Nicene Creed is composed in the first-person plural: “We believe...” This is not only a statement of group identity (something of which individualistic Westerners are suspicious), but also a statement of continuity – through history and through our own lifetimes. Pelikan says,

To know that in the Philippines this morning this was the creed that was recited at mass and to know that the Emperor Justinian in the 6th century and Thomas Aquinas in the 13th, and my late father and grandfather all affirmed this. It's 'we' all of us together.... My faith and my faith life, like that of everyone else, fluctuates. There are ups and downs and hot spots and cold spots and boredom and ennui and all the rest can be there. And so I'm not asked of a Sunday morning as of 9:20, what do you believe? And then you sit down with a 3x5 index card and say, "Now, let's see. What do I believe today?" No, that's not what they're asking me. They're asking me, "Are you a member of a community which now for millennium and a half has said, 'We believe in one God.'” And so that's what I affirm when I sing it.

(The full broadcast and transcript of this program is available at

<https://onbeing.org/programs/jaroslav-pelikan-the-need-for-creeds/>)

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The Creeds are ultimately not checklists of propositions to which we give intellectual assent, or to which we pledge allegiance, as are some of the Lutheran and Calvinist Confessions. The point of the Creed is not to differentiate ourselves from other Christian traditions (we have plenty of ways of doing that), but to affirm that in spite of differences we are all part of one tradition (the one holy catholic and apostolic Church), however diversely lived and expressed in different times, places and cultures, that covenants to wrestle with these holy mysteries.

That shared tradition is the reason the Eastern Church found it so shocking when the Western Church added a single word to the Creed in the seventh century, proclaiming that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son as well as from the Father. Ironically, respect for shared tradition is also why many visitors to St. Saviour are so shocked by our previous rector's decision to strike out the words "and the Son" from the creed in our prayer books. Our affirmation of shared faith is brought up short by a stark example of a break in our tradition, and we find ourselves stumbling over the words and the rhythm. An effort at inclusivity has become a shibboleth.

That shared tradition is also why I have resisted paraphrased, modern language versions of the Creed for liturgical use (as opposed to new translations from the original languages). Fresh metaphors and images for the persons of the Trinity can be helpful and soul-expanding, and are necessary if mystery is not to harden into rote formula. Poetic elaboration of theology is also an ancient tradition, and has a place in worship as hymnody and other liturgical texts – the *Gloria in excelsis* is essentially a poetic paraphrase of the Creed. But the moment in the service when we are invited to stand as we are able and read together from page 358 is meant to be a straightforward, unadorned affirmation of the minimum our community has agreed we can say together about God. In the words of St. Augustine, as quoted by Professor Pelikan: "We have said this not in order to say something, but in order not to remain altogether silent."

On the other hand, I would never say that the Creed is a litmus test for salvation. I do not believe that God judges us on whether we believe the right things about God or about anything else (but of course, I could be wrong in that belief!). When scripture and tradition talk about faith in Christ, I hear that as a call to be *faithful* to Christ, to *keep faith* in our relationship with God, and to trust that God will remain faithful to us. Whether we accept the words of the Creed as history or mystery is less important than that we are willing to engage with the truth that they represent.

So why bother with the Creed? Do we really believe this stuff anymore? Is it more intellectually defensible to stand silent while others recite it? In a world where it is far too easy to divide ourselves from one another, to demonize those with whom we disagree, and to parse every utterance for the possibility of offense, what could be more challenging and rewarding than to stand weekly with a diverse community of Christians around the globe and to say together, "We believe in one God..."

Feedback? I hope you will call or e-mail me to continue the conversation.

Yours in Christ, Tim+

From The Organ Bench!



Guess who is the new permanent Music Director of the Acadia Choral Society? Yep! Our own Dr. Daniel Pyle!!!!

To Bishop Steve and Gretchen Lane at the Celebration of their Ministry in Maine. Saturday, May 11.

We're sorry that you're leaving Maine.
When you first started your journey as Bishop and took your seat.
Then you gathered together your fleet.
The first convention in your new position.
We had an annual tradition.
2 days of work and fun.
Our work with you had just begun.
Adaptive change you introduced.
Now look at what it produced.
One day for convention then spring training.
That is something that's still sustaining.
Churches grow and churches go, but life goes on in Maine.
So what's next for Bishop Steve and Gretchen Lane.
Retirement perhaps, oh! yes indeed.
You now become a part of a special breed.
On the National level you took on gun control and Immigration.
You know and communicate the situation .
Your sermons were great and your letters were to.
We say thanks to the both of you.
Now Gretchen a word about what you do.
Your by his side when schedules permit.
With charm and grace and also some wit.
You sang in the cathedral choir.
To all the congregation to inspire.
That's just a snippet of what you've done.
Back to Rochester NY where it all had begun.
So thanks for the memories of days gone by.
Come back sometime just to say hi.
Good luck and best wishes.
Don't forget the loaves and fishes.
On behalf of the people in the Diocese of Maine.
Written in gratitude for Bishop and Gretchen Lane.

From and by Geoffrey C. Schuller
Author



Above, a beautiful quilt made for the Lanes with squares from every parish in the Diocese!

Right: Bishop Lane giving the last wonderful sermon we will hear from him as our Bishop,

Below, the Rev. Peggy Day, Deacon and Bishop Lane performing his last Eucharist for us as Bishop of Maine. :-)





Parking in both of our lots is by permit only from Memorial Day to the end of October.
Permits for church members and groups who use our facilities are available in the office during office hours. Keep in mind that Muffet will be away until June 17.

Here are the new coin or credit card operated parking kiosks.



Thanks to a generous parishioner for moving our Rose of Sharon!

Birthdays and Anniversaries we celebrate at St. Saviour's!

Marriage Anniversaries

June 12 Frank and Diane Zito

Please let Muffet know in the office if you don't see

Birthday Greetings

June 5	Jack Drake
June 6	Grace Tweedie
June 8	Emily Samuel
June 13	Sarah Cleaves
June 22	Debbie Parlee
June 24	Melia Antiqua Parlee
June 26	Windy Brown

Summer Choir! Through the summer months, the choir rehearses each Sunday morning at 9:00 am, before the 10:00 Eucharist, to prepare an easy anthem and the service music for the day. Anyone who would like to sing in the choir during the summer are invited to **come at 9:00 am and take part, on any Sundays** that you are able..

ALL ARE WELCOME!

	6/9	6/16	6/20	6/27
	Pentecost	Pentecost 2	Pentecost 3	Pentecost 4
First Reading	Acts 2:1-21	Proverbs 1:1-4, 22-24	1 Kings 19:1-4, (7), 11a	2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14
Psalms	104	Canticle 1	Psalms 42	Psalms 77:1-2, 11-20
Second Reading	Romans 14-17	Romans 1-3	Galatians 2-3	Galatians 1, 1-2
Gospel	John 1:26-27, 16:4b-15	John 16:12-15	Luke 26-29	Luke 9:1-62
Celebrant	Rev. Tim Fleck	Rev. Regina Christianson	Rev. Tim Fleck	Rev. Tim Fleck

Free Meals in our community.

Mondays from 3-6 pm Everybody Eats — in the Parish Hall of St. Dunstan's Church, 134 State Street, Ellsworth.

Wednesdays from 3-6 pm –
Welcome Table - First Congregational Church -
2 Church St., Ellsworth

Thursdays:
Holy Redeemer Church—21 Ledge Lane Avenue,
Bar Harbor from 4-7pm, sponsored by Chris Brown

Prayer List: We pray for Nancy Stumpp, Mary T., Audrey Duzek, Lucinda Dudley, Anne Zaslau, Ray McDonald, Emily O'Connor, Ellie Batchelder, Geoff Schuller, Nancy (Place) Camerario, Haji Avila, Jack Drake, Sarah Cleaves, Kathy and Robin, Barbara Dube, Nicholas, Linda Carman, Ted Tibbetts, Bradley Seavey, Janet Flood, Rachel, Kendra Riley, Bob Frazier, Gretchen Lane, Mimi, George Swanson, Charlie, Sarah B., Dickie, Alex, Tristram Colket, Anne Cleaves and Pauline Hartin.

(Please let the office know of any updates.)

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web site: www.stsaviours.me
Facebook Friend: St Saviour



Services at St. Saviour's
Morning Prayer
Tuesday and Thursday at 8:30 am
in the Chapel

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Holy Eucharist  
Wednesdays at 12 Noon in the Chapel  
Sundays at 7:30 and 10:00 am

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Contemplative Prayer
Fridays at 11:30 am in the Rectory Library

**St. Saviour's
Annual Meeting and brunch
will be on Sunday,
June 30
immediately
following the 10:00 am
service**

The mission of St. Saviour's Parish of Bar Harbor is to put Jesus Christ first in our lives, to spread the Good News of salvation through worship, education and ministry, building on the gifts and heritage of our congregation, and to provide a welcoming atmosphere of love and compassion.

The Most Reverend Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop
The Right Reverend Stephen Lane, Bishop of the Diocese of Maine
The Rev. Tim Fleck, Rector Tim@mdi-episcopal.org
Dr. Daniel Pyle, Music Director
Margaret Stewart, Parish Administrator

St. Saviour's uses 100% gluten free bread and de-alcoholized wine.
The Sanctuary and Parish Hall are handicap accessible

Senior Warden: Jim Vallette; Junior Warden: Wayne Parlee; Treasurer: Sarah Flood; Clerk: Linda Foster;
Vestry Members: Dan Gatti, Lee Garrett, Pat Samuel, Tammy Bloom, Seasonal: Diane Zito.