

The longest section of the Apostles' Creed is devoted to the Son of God, Jesus Christ. This is because at the heart of the Christian faith is a person: Jesus Christ, God's Only Son, our Lord. Great Swiss theologian Karl Barth declared that "with these words we step into the great centre of the Christian creed" (*Credo*, 39).

### Dwelling in the Word

Prayerfully read John 1:1-5, 14, 16-18; Hebrews 1:1-3; and Colossians 2:9-10 and ask: 1) What words, phrases, or images stood out to you? 2) What does this say about what God desires to accomplish in you? 3) How could you respond to what God says in this passage?

### Beginning the Conversation

1. At the heart of the Christian faith is a person, not just a set of ideas. How does focusing on a relationship with a person change the way you approach your faith compared to just following a philosophy or a "higher power"?
2. The Creed piles up titles for Jesus: Messiah (Christ), God's only Son, and Our Lord. Which of these titles feels most personal to you, and which feels most challenging for you to explain to someone else?

### Digging Deeper

1. The name "Jesus" (Yahweh saves) roots him in history as a first-century human, while "Christ" (anointed one) roots him in the promises of God to Israel. Why is it important for our faith to be grounded in both history and God's promises to his people?
2. The Creed uses the Greek word *monogenes* ("only Son") to describe Jesus' unique relationship with the Father. How does Jesus being the "one and only Son" differ from the way we are called "sons and daughters" of God through spiritual adoption?
3. To confess "Jesus is Lord" (*kurios*) was the earliest Christian confession. Since *kurios* was the word used to translate the revealed name of God (Yahweh), what does it mean for us to acknowledge that Jesus shares the very identity of God?
4. The doctrine of the Incarnation teaches that Jesus is fully human and fully God. Reflecting on the quote, "what is not assumed cannot be redeemed," why was it necessary for the Son of God to take on actual human flesh to save us?
5. The sermon suggests that the Lordship of Jesus creates an "egalitarian ethic" where none of us is lord over another. How does the confession "Jesus is Lord" challenge the way we view status, power, and hierarchy within our own church and community?

### Living it Out

1. Just as Jesus did not remain distant but was "born of the Virgin Mary" to dwell among us, we are called to incarnational living. Identify a "messy" part of your community or a neighbour in need this week. How can you practically move toward them with a "ministry of presence" rather than serving from a distance?
2. To confess Jesus as "Lord" is to set him above all other allegiances. Take time this week to audit your loyalties (to career, politics, or personal comfort). Is there a specific area where you need to re-declare Jesus as the ultimate Lord of your life?

### The Apostles' Creed\*

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

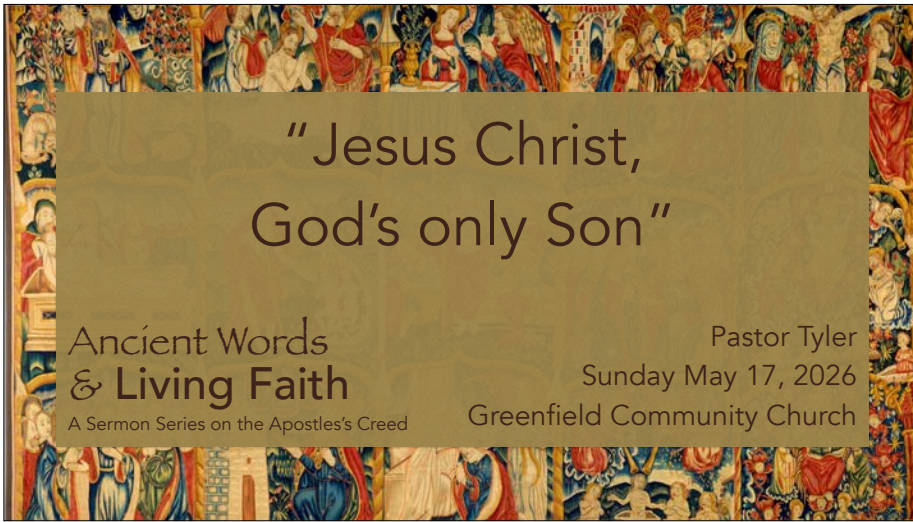
**I believe in Jesus Christ,**  
God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,**  
the holy catholic<sup>[a]</sup> Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

#### Notes

[\*] This version is based on the translation of the ELLC.

[a] Catholic (small case c) means "universal."




**"Jesus Christ,  
God's only Son"**

Ancient Words  
& Living Faith

A Sermon Series on the Apostles' Creed

Pastor Tyler  
Sunday May 17, 2026  
Greenfield Community Church

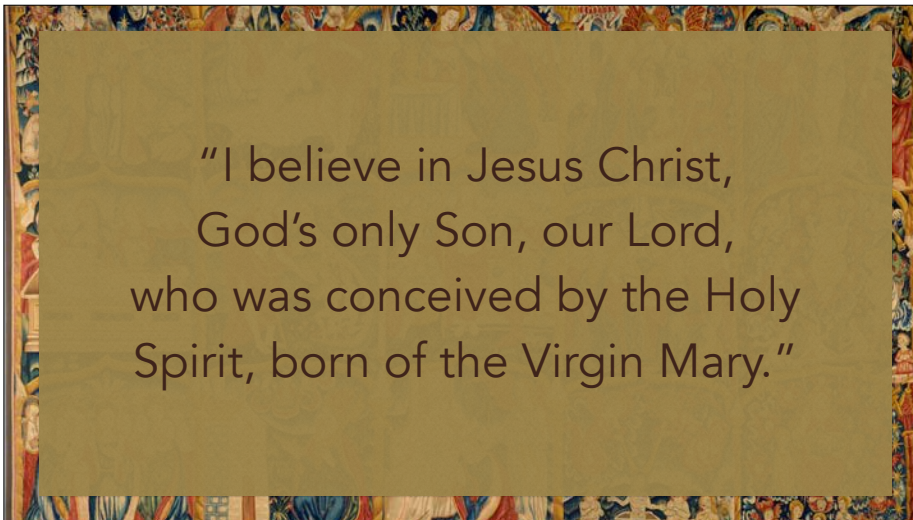


**I believe in Jesus Christ...**


The longest section of the Apostles' Creed is devoted to the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

It falls into three sections:

- ♦ Incarnation & Birth
- ♦ Crucifixion & Death
- ♦ Resurrection & Ascension



**"I believe in Jesus Christ,  
God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy  
Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary."**



**I believe in Jesus Christ...**

The Creed proclaims three titles for Jesus:

- ♦ He is the Messiah/Christ
- ♦ He is God's only Son
- ♦ He is our Lord



## “Jesus”

Jesus (Greek: *iesous* Ἰησοῦς; Aramaic: *yeshua* ישוע; Hebrew: *yehoshua* יהושע).

- Jesus’ birth name (Matt 1:21, 25; Luke 1:31; 2:21); means “Yahweh saves” (Matt 1:21).
- Often with the toponym as “Jesus of Nazareth” (Matt 2:23; Mark 10:47, 16:6; Acts 2:22; etc.).
- Roots Jesus in history.



## “The Christ”

Christ/Messiah (*christos* Χριστός; Hebrew: *meshiach* משיח).

- Means “anointed one” – used for priests/kings, and for the anticipated Davidic figure who would restore Israel.
- Early shift from a title (“Jesus the Christ”) to a personal name (“Jesus Christ”). “Jesus Christ” (or “Christ Jesus”) became commonplace or just “Christ” alone.
- Roots Jesus in the promises of God & Israel’s hopes.



## “God’s Only Son”

The Creed highlights how Jesus was uniquely God’s Son.

- God confirms, “you are my beloved son” at his baptism (Mt 3:17; Mk 1:11; Lk 3:22) and the transfiguration (Mt 17:5; Mk 9:7; Lk 9:35).
- Language derived from John’s descriptions of Jesus’ relationship to God (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1John 4:9).
- Greek *monogenes* (μονογενής) – being the only one of its kind or class, unique. Translated as “only”; “one and only”; “only begotten.”
- While we are “sons and daughters of God” through spiritual adoption (2Cor 6:18); Jesus is uniquely *the one and only* Son of God.



## “Our Lord”

The last title is personal: “*Our* Lord.”

- Earliest Christian confession was “Jesus is Lord” (1Cor 12:3; Rom 10:9).
- “Lord” (*kurios*) translates the name of God in the LXX: Yahweh. In the NT, Jesus is revealed as the one who bears that name (1Cor 8:6; Phil 2:11).
- We confess Jesus as *my* Lord, because we recognize him as *the* Lord.



## The Virgin Birth (Conception)

“Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary” — These two biblical phrases tell us source and reason for Jesus’ absolute uniqueness.

- Jesus’ conception is both a miracle and a mystery.
- Underscores that the incarnation of God’s one and only Son came about through *both divine & human agency*.



## “Conceived by the Holy Spirit”

The specific language come from Luke’s account of the conception of John the Baptist (Luke 1:24) and Jesus (Luke 1:31, 36; 2:21).

- The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and announced to her, “You will *conceive* [*sullambano*] and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus” (1:31); later clarifies, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you” (1:35).



## “Born of the Virgin Mary”

Concisely summaries both gospel accounts of Jesus’ birth (Matt 1:18-25; Luke 1:27).

- A fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy: “All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ‘The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel’ — which means ‘God with us’” (Matt 1:22-23, quoting LXXIsa 7:14; see also Luke 1:27, 34).
- Reminder that our faith has deep roots in Israel’s story.



## The Virgin Birth (Conception)

The virginal conception of Jesus is *not* a Christianized version of pagan mythology, but is firmly rooted in the OT.

- “At the great turning points in history, we find a woman, pregnant, and an infant child brought into the world by the powerful promise of God. Israel’s story is a story of miraculous births.... Against this backdrop it should come as no surprise to find Israel’s Messiah entering the world by means of a miraculous pregnancy” (Ben Myers, *The Apostles Creed*, 51, 53).



## The Virgin Birth (Conception)

The two statements together assert that in the conception and birth of Jesus,

- ♦ "God and human became *one*... Jesus was and is God and human; but always both of them, not one without the other" (Karl Barth, *Credo*, 64).



## Incarnation

Jesus is both fully human & fully God:

- ♦ **Fully Human** because *salvation requires solidarity*: "what is not assumed cannot be healed" (Gregory Nazianzus, *Letter 101*; Heb 2:14, 17; Rom 8:3).
- ♦ **Fully God** – the incarnation understood as an act of addition: The Son did not give up his divinity to become human, but took on humanity while retaining his divinity (Col 2:9; Phil 2; 1Tim 2:5).



## Incarnation

"In this moment we see the astonishing love of God, expressed by the willingness not only to create and sustain, but to become one among those creatures who alone choose not to recognize or accept the very source of their being" (Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Creed*, 160).



## Implications

The universal lordship of Jesus gives rise to a truly egalitarian ethic (Rom 3:22; Gal 3:28).

The incarnation not only tells us about Jesus, but also tells us how to live in this world.



## Invitation

Invite you to make the confession "Jesus Christ,  
God's only Son, our Lord" your own...