

This week's portion of the Creed declares belief in "the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints" (Note the word "catholic" means universal and is not a reference to the Roman Catholic church).

Dwelling in the Word

Prayerfully read Ephesians 1 and ask: 1) What words, phrases, or images stood out? 2) What does this say about what God desires to accomplish in us? 3) How could we respond to what God says in this passage?

Beginning the Conversation

1. When you hear the word "church" what initial thoughts or associations come to mind, are they primarily positive?
2. In our modern culture that often views faith as mostly a private, individual journey, why is it healthy for us to publicly confess our belief in a communal "Church" and a "communion of saints"?

Digging Deeper

1. Read Luke's account of the birth of the church in Acts 1:4—8, 14 and 2:1—4. How does the order in the Creed, with the phrase about the church being right after the confession of belief in the Holy Spirit affect how you understand it?
2. The Creed describes the Church as "holy" and its members as "holy ones" (saints). The sermon emphasized that this holiness flows from the Spirit who is Holy. This shifts the motivation for ethical living from sterile personal rule keeping to living in to who we *already are* in Christ, ones set apart to reflect him to the world. What difference does this make for you?
3. The working definition of the church as "A people who are being reclaimed by Christ, re-enlivened by the Spirit, and re-formed into the image of God." Is more around *being* than *doing*. Are there any other aspects that you might add to it to fill it out further?
4. How does confessing the "communion of saints" (which affirms our connection to the people of God who lived centuries before us and also those in different cultures today) affect your own sense of inclusion? How does the sense of there being "one flock" under one Good Shepherd change how we see the global church?
5. Of the 7 Biblical motifs explored in the sermon, Flock, Olive Tree, Vine Branches, Spiritual House, Body, Family, and Bride, which one resonated most with you and why? How might defining the "church" as the people of God broadly through these metaphors change our preconceptions?
6. This statement was made near the close of the sermon: "We can (and should) still believe in an ideal community of faith, one that is holy, fruitful, and alive; Not because of who we are, but because of *whose* we are." Do you find this believing in an ideal to be easy or difficult? Why?

Living it Out

1. Practice your belief in the "universal church" by spending time this week praying for the global body of Christ. Specifically, pray for a community of believers in another part of the world facing different challenges than your own, acknowledging that you are part of the same spiritual family.
2. The continuum of church engagement was suggested from being intrigued, to interested, to involved, to invested. Does this reflect your experience? Where might God be calling you to dig in deeper within his body of followers?

The Apostles' Creed*

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

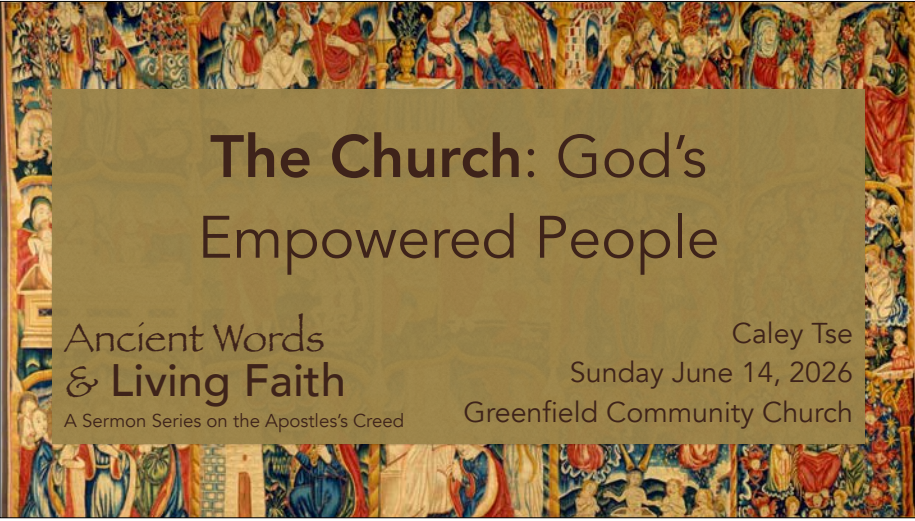
I believe in Jesus Christ,
God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of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

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic^[a] 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."



The Church: God's Empowered People

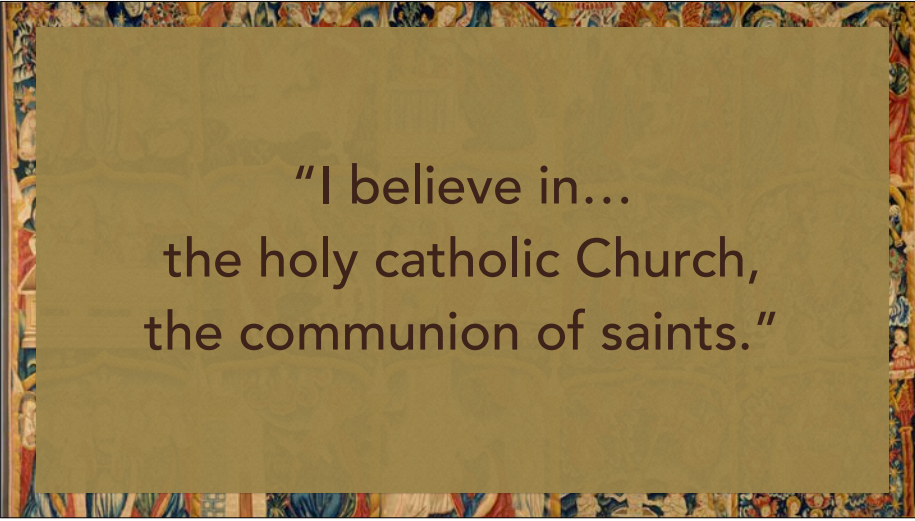
Ancient Words
& Living Faith

A Sermon Series on the Apostles's Creed

Caley Tse

Sunday June 14, 2026

Greenfield Community Church

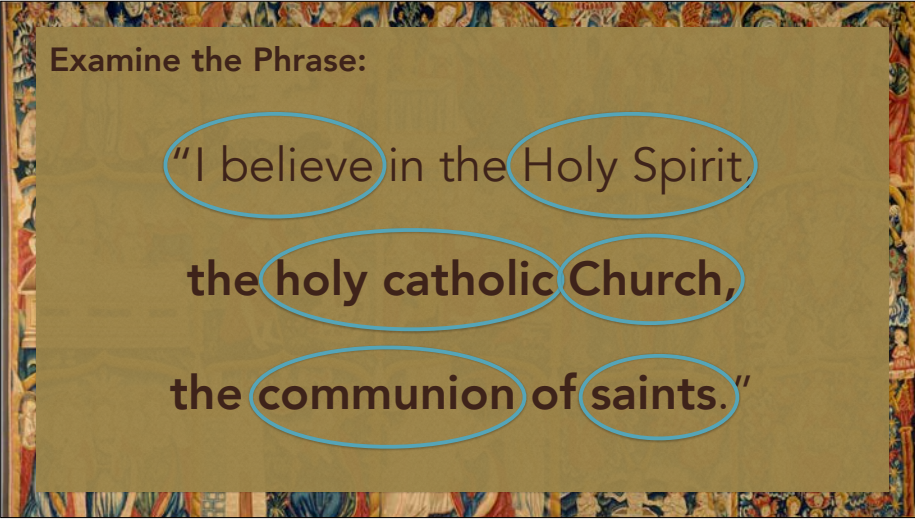


"I believe in...
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints."



Today's Roadmap:

- ♦ Examine the Phrase
- ♦ Explore Biblical Motifs
- ♦ Contemplate our Response



Examine the Phrase:

"I believe in the Holy Spirit
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints."

Examine the Phrase:

"I believe in the **Sanctum** Holy Spirit,
Sanctam holy catholic Church,
Sanctorum the communion of saints."

ἀγιον
 ἁγίαν
 ἁγίων

≠ "Christianity"

≠ A 21st C. Reality

What is "the Church"?

≠ A Business or non-profit

≠ A Local Place

Who are "the Church"?

A People who are being reclaimed by **Christ**, re-enlivened by the **Spirit**, and re-formed into the image of **God**.

Explore Biblical Motifs:

Explore Biblical Motifs: **A Flock**



The **Flock** of God's People is made significant because their **Guardian** is God and their **Good Shepherd** is Jesus Christ himself.

Explore Biblical Motifs: **An Olive Tree**



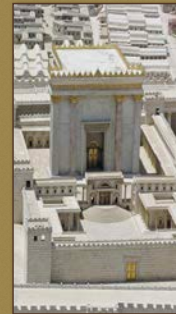
The **Olive Tree** of God's People is made significant because their **Grower** is God and their **Root** is Jesus Christ himself.

Explore Biblical Motifs: **Vine Branches**



The **Vine Branches** of God's People are made significant because their **Gardener** is God and their **Vine** is Jesus Christ himself.

Explore Biblical Motifs: **A Spiritual House**



The **Spiritual House** of God's People is made significant because their **Builder** is God and their **Cornerstone** is Jesus Christ himself.

Explore Biblical Motifs: **A Body**



The **Body** of God's People
is made significant because their
Creator is God and their
Head is Jesus Christ himself.

Explore Biblical Motifs: **A Family**



The **Family** of God's People
is made significant because their
Father is God and their
Brother is Jesus Christ himself.

Explore Biblical Motifs: **A Bride**



The **Bride** of God's People
is made significant because their
Home is with God and their
Bridegroom is Jesus Christ himself.





Contemplate Our Response:

We can (and should) still believe in
an *ideal* community of faith,
one that is **holy**, fruitful, and **alive**;
Not because of who we are,
but because of **whose** we are.



Contemplate Our Response:

INTRIGUED
INTERESTED
INVOLVED
INVESTED

