

For the

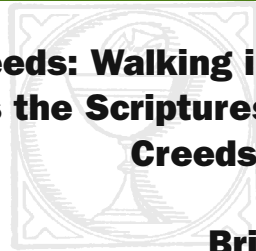
# LIFE of the WORLD

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I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

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Whoever will be saved shall, above all else, hold the catholic faith. Which faith, except everyone keeps whole and entire, without doubt will perish eternally. And the catholic faith is this, that we believe in one God in three persons and three persons in one God, neither of the substance.

## the Creeds:

# What Are They All

## Orthodox.

The standard definition is “right teaching or right belief.” However, a closer examination of the word indicates that this is a derived meaning. The word actually means “right splendor or right praise.” While it may appear that we have mistranslated the word or misunderstood the word, the reality is that right praise and right teaching and belief go together. They are joined and really cannot, or ought not be, separated. The joining of right praise and right belief is, perhaps, best seen in the use of the

of the creeds in the service is that they be sung. Sing the creed? The didactic text of the creeds do not seem to lend themselves to singing. Yet, when the great composers of the church, including J. S. Bach, prepared music for the Divine Service, they

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world”) to music. The music for the creed was invariably provided and invariably sung.

The close connection of the creeds to singing and praise was something that was retained at the time of the Reformation with many settings of the creeds being composed. Dr. Martin Luther provided hymn settings for the verified form of the Apostles’ Creed, We All Believe in One, True God. Even the 1948 The Music for the Liturgy for The Lutheran Hymnal supplied a simple chant line and musical accompaniment for both the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds. As



creeds of the church, specifically in the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds.

Both of these creeds, used in the Divine Service, speak of the true Scriptural faith that we believe and confess and the true praise of God in which we join. What we believe and confess cannot be separated from the true praise and thanksgiving of the Lord expressed in the Divine Service of Word and Sacrament. They belong together and ought to be inseparably joined together.

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late as the mid-twentieth century we still acknowledged that in the creeds both right belief and teaching were linked to the right praise of the Lord.

If we examine the Divine Service we discover that creed and praise of the Lord do go together. The service is an exposition or expansion of the creed, or put another way, the creed summarizes what we have been singing and praying through the entire Divine Service. “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” With the words of the

# About?

By the Rev. Dr. Roger D. Pittelko

baptismal formula we begin the service. Those baptismal words are a shorthand form for the entire Apostles' Creed, the creed that summarizes the Christian faith in the Rite of Holy Baptism. What is the faith, the belief, the teaching into which the candidate is being baptized? Here it is summarized in the Apostles' Creed. It is imposed and given in the dominical words, "In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." With those creedal words the service begins.

The litany form of the Kyrie ("Lord have mercy") expresses several parts of creed in the language of praise. "For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord." Those words take us to the middle of the Nicene Creed, "Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven ... " Here the work of redemption is expounded.

The litany continues, "... for the well-being of the Church of God ... " propelling us into the third article and the work of the Holy Spirit who fills the "one, holy, Christian and apostolic Church" with His power and presence. That same thought is continued in the next petition which prays for the local assembly of believer, that is, "this holy house and all who offer here their worship and praise."

It is in the Gloria in Excelsis ("Glory to God in the Highest") that we see the welding of creedal expressions of praise and thanksgiving. In the Gloria the work of salvation is presented to us in the form of thanksgiving as it reflects the creeds of the church. The work of the Father as the Creator/King is expressed in one short phrase, "Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father." As the Nicene Creed says it, "I believe in God the Father, almighty maker of heaven and earth." Just

as the creeds move quickly from the first article expounding the work of the Father to the work of God the Son, so the Gloria move quickly into the praise of the Lord for our salvation. Christ our Lord is the only Son of the Father. It is He who takes away the sin of the world and having done so sits at the right hand of the Father. The import of the teaching of our creeds on salvation is expressed in this summary manner. Again, the person of the Holy Spirit is set forth in praise as He is linked to Jesus Christ in the glory of God the Father. The teaching of the creeds becomes confession and praise on our lips in the words of the Gloria.

While the Proper Prefaces in the Service of Holy Communion focus on vari-

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ous aspects of our Lord's saving work for us, the expressions of our praise are in words that echo and re-echo the language of the creeds. Witness these examples: mystery of the word made flesh; being found in fashion as a man; on the tree of the cross you gave salvation; has taken away the sin of the world; in their sight was taken up to heaven; poured out on this day as He had promised the Holy Spirit. In the confession of the only true God, we worship the Trinity in person and Unity in substance. Here creed and praise fuse into one song of thanksgiving to the Lord.

As the Service of Holy Communion culminates in the consecration and reception of the Lord's body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins, careful readers of the creeds will point out that there is nothing about the Sacrament of the Altar in our creedal formulations. How could such an important teaching of our faith by ignored by omission? It is suggested by some scholars of the creeds that our English translations may have led us in a wrong direction. When we confess, "I believe in the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints ..." we may in fact be speaking about the sacraments. While we let the scholars argue about masculine or neuter gender, we understand that the Words of Institution take us back to the second article and summarize Christ's saving work for us.

The service began with the baptismal formula summary of the creeds, "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The service ends in a similar fashion. It takes us back to the Old Testament to the very words that the Lord gave to Aaron the first high priest with which he was to bless the people of Israel. We close with those same words of blessing, a triple-fold use of the Lord's name. "The Lord bless ... the Lord make ... the Lord lift up His countenance and give you peace. Amen." Amen, so be it. At the end of the creeds we shout that same word, Amen. So be it! So we believe. So we worship. Orthodox—right praise which leads us to right belief and confession.

*The Rev. Dr. Roger D. Pittelko is Adjunct Professor of Pastoral Ministry & Missions at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., and former District President of the English District of the LCMS*