

# Apostles Creed

## “I Believe in the Holy Catholic Church”

Week 10 | August 20th, 2023  
Community Group Discussion Guide

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

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#### **South CLT Neighborhood Cookout**

*Saturday, August 25 | 5pm-7pm*

One of our values as a church is that of presence, the ability to show up and engage with one another who live, work, and play close to us. To that end, we are hosting a South Charlotte Neighborhood Cookout on August 25th to connect people within our broader church family who live in that area.

If you live in Ballantyne, Pineville, Steel Creek, Fort Mill, LoSo or any of the surrounding area, come join us and meet others who call Citizens home!

Please RSVP for location and further details!

### [MORE INFO + REGISTRATION](#)

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#### **Membership Class**

*Sunday, September 17th | 4pm-6:30pm*

We believe the church is central to all God is doing in the world. When you read the New Testament, wherever the gospel is proclaimed, people believe, disciples are made, and then churches are formed. When you put your faith in Jesus, you don't just get God as your Father, but you are now put in relationship with other Christians who are your brothers and sisters in Christ. You are now a part of the larger global Church, lived out in small local expressions, such as Citizens Church Charlotte.

This is why membership is so important. It's you committing to play your role in the larger family of God through a particular local congregation.

Our Membership Class is the first step towards membership at Citizens Church. If you're interested in becoming a member at Citizens, or just interested in finding out more about who we are, join us Sunday, September 17th from 4pm-6:30pm.

Coffee + light refreshments are provided. Childcare is also provided, but please register in advance.

### [MORE INFO + REGISTRATION](#)

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## **Family Vacation**

*November 10-12, Black Mountain, NC*

Registration for this year's Family Vacation is now open! We value the chance to get away, retreat, rest, and spend time together as a church family, and we'd love for you to join us this year! On November 10-12, we are heading to the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly in Black Mountain, NC. We will be staying in two cabins on the property, and will have a main meeting area for family style meals and sessions.

Family vacation is open to all Citizens Church members, members-in-progress (have taken membership class), and children of current members. The cost of the trip is \$100/adult and \$25/child. Scholarships are available if needed, but please talk to Dan about that sooner rather than later.

If you're planning to attend, please register ASAP. The earlier you register, the easier it is for us to plan for the weekend. You can register and get more details by clicking the graphic below.

**[MORE INFO + REGISTRATION](#)**

## SERIES RECAP

For the past 1,800 years, millions upon millions of Christians worldwide have recited the Apostle's Creed as part of their corporate worship. Written shortly after the death of Christ, the Apostles' Creed summarizes foundational Christian beliefs. It is a helpful statement which unites the church, instructs the believer, protects against false doctrine, and points to a glorious God and what He desires for His people. Over the course of this series, we will explore the ancient creed together seeking to deepen ourselves in our ancient historic faith and, more importantly, in the God of our faith.

**Let us read the Apostles Creed together to start the evening.**

***"I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen."***

## PRAYER + SCRIPTURE

**Open with a brief word of prayer:** "God, we thank you for this time together. We open our hearts to how you might want to meet with us. Allow us to hear your voice and experience your work among us. Come Holy Spirit."

**1-2 minutes of silent reflection.**

**Read *Ephesians 2:13-22***

*13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility 15 by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. 17 And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. 18 For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.*

**1-2 minutes of silent reflection.**

**Close with this short prayer:** "God, we know that you have called us to be a holy people, set apart by you and for our good. We thank you for Jesus Christ who is the cornerstone of the church, and the reason we can be a family. Holy Spirit, we pray that you would help us be an interwoven family under God's grace.

**As you reflect on *Ephesians 2:13-22* what is the Holy Spirit showing or teaching you?**

## **SERMON DISCUSSION**

*Let's have a discussion around these main points from Sunday's teaching:*

### **WHAT THE CHURCH IS MEANT TO BE**

*In Ephesians 2, we see two metaphors given for the church – the household of God and the temple. These images point us to two beautiful images of what God intends the church to be – A family who loves and cares for one another and a dwelling place for His presence and power in the world.*

**Regardless of your prior church experience, how are these two pictures from the Scriptures compelling to you?**

### **SIN-FUELED DIVISION**

*In Ephesians 2, we saw that the primary reason the church does not live into this identity of family and temple is sin-fueled division. Sin inside of each of us keeps us from walking in the unity, vulnerability, and sacrifice needed to engage fully in the Church as God calls us to.*

**How do you see sin playing a role in keeping you from living into the identity of family or temple with God's people?**

### **CHRIST JESUS IS OUR HOPE**

*Ephesians 2 tells us that Christ came and shed his blood to tear down this dividing wall. Not only that, but even now the Holy Spirit is building us together with God's people into a dwelling place for God. That means our hope for our future church participation is not in the Church and what it offers, but in Christ Jesus, the cornerstone. So the invitation for us is to believe the gospel and keep believing the gospel.*

**How does the gospel (the good news of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection) give you hope for how you can view and live into the Church in the future?**

## **SERIES PRACTICE**

One of our key discipleship values as a church is that of practice. Moving forward, we are going to begin emphasizing one of our key spiritual practices during each sermon series. This practice is meant to coincide with the theme of the series, and something we invite our church to practice as a part of their spiritual formation.

During the Apostles Creed series, we are emphasizing the practice of Scripture. Getting into God's Word and getting God's Word into us is vital for helping form our doctrine and fuel our discipleship.

Spend some time before you close talking about what group members are reading, and how you can press into Scripture as a group this summer.

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

Pray over what was shared in the discussion, for your group to be united in the gospel, and for help from the Holy Spirit to be shaped to be more like Jesus as we put God's ways into practice.