

## Our Statement of Beliefs

Riverside Church affirms the classic belief statements of the early Church that define historic Christian orthodoxy. Specifically, we look to the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Chalcedonian Creed (copies of the Creeds are available below).

Many churches, denominations, and Christian organisations (especially those from an evangelical Protestant background) publish their own Statements of Faith. We have chosen not to do so, for three main reasons:

- We want to avoid unnecessary repetition or overlap with the Creeds.
- Statements of Faith vary widely in their language and content, hence their value for defining Christian faith is unclear.
- We want to be as inclusive as possible in identifying with fellow Christians in other churches, focusing on what we share in common.

## Our values and emphases

In addition to affirming Christian beliefs as classically defined, Riverside Church has certain values and emphases that inform how we understand the nature and character of God, his plans, purposes, and activity in this world, and how he wants us to 'do' church and mission together. Since these are more easily 'caught' than 'taught,' we invite you to come along in person to get a feel for the kind of church we are. We always welcome questions, so do please come and chat to us. That said, understanding some of our core values and emphases ahead of time may be helpful, since these may differ from other similar churches you may have experienced.

*Riverside Church is a charismatic church;* meaning, we believe in the present-day activity of the Holy Spirit in this world. We aim to be 'naturally supernatural,' without hype or weirdness. Worship is a core value and so is practical biblical teaching.

*Riverside Church is an evangelical church;* however, we're conscious that the word has attracted some negative connotations in recent times, so it's worth explaining what we mean by the word 'evangelical,' reflecting its original sense:

- We believe in the Bible.
- We believe that as Christians we are called to be active in both mission and compassion, doing what God asks us to do in this world.
- We believe in introducing people to a personal relationship with God.
- We believe in the unique centrality of the person and work of Jesus – his incarnation, life, ministry, death on a cross, and resurrection, making that relationship possible.

Our belief in the Bible as God's gift to us, uniquely inspired by the Holy Spirit, is nuanced by the recognition that it must be read well. In other words, it needs to be rightly interpreted under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and using the gifts of understanding and scholarship that God has given to his people. Scripture should not be weaponised or deployed oppressively.

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*Riverside Church is a welcoming church; we extend a warm welcome to everyone to 'come as you are,' without regard to race, colour, age, economic circumstances, life circumstances, gender, or sexual orientation. We aim to be a church that is inclusive of all, including LGBTQ+ individuals and couples. We believe that same-sex relationships should be viewed on an equal footing with opposite sex relationships.*

*Riverside Church is a compassionate and generous church; we believe that as Christians we are called to love God passionately and love one another passionately. This draws us to reach out to those who are in need, marginalised, and underprivileged and to champion justice in an unjust world for Jesus' sake.*

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### **The Apostle's Creed**

I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.  
And in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord;  
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary;  
Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and 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 shall come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit;  
A holy catholic Church, the communion of saints;  
The forgiveness of sins;  
The resurrection of the body;  
And the life everlasting.

### **The Nicene Creed**

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.

Who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets. And I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

## **The Chalcedonian Creed**

We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood;

truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body; consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood;

in all things like unto us, without sin;

begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood;

one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ;

as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning Him, and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.

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