

WE BELIEVE

USPG⁺ PARTNERS IN
GLOBAL MISSION

**A SIX-SESSION STUDY
GUIDE BASED ON THE
NICENE CREED**

**WITH REFLECTIONS FROM ACROSS
THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION**

CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Making the most of this study course	2
Session one	
God’s Creation	3
Session two	
Incarnation of Jesus Christ	9
Session three	
Salvation of the Cross.....	15
Session four	
Inspiration of the Holy Spirit	21
Session five	
The Church and Unity	27
Session six	
Hope of the Resurrection	33

INTRODUCTION

2025 marks a significant year in the Anglican Communion and for other global Christian traditions as we mark the 1700th anniversary of the world's first Ecumenical Council. This study guide has been produced to encourage you, in the fellowship of other Christians to prayerfully reflect on the significance of the Council of Nicaea and its legacy in shaping the Christian faith. Convened by Emperor Constantine in 325 AD, the Council profoundly impacted Christian doctrine, but it was also a moment when faith and imperial power intersected in complex ways. While the Nicene Creed was intended to unite the Church and ensure that the divinity of Christ was firmly established, we must acknowledge the historical context in which this took place - within the framework of the Roman Empire.

The Council of Nicaea was convened to address the Arian controversy, which centered on the true nature of Christ—specifically, whether He was fully divine and fully human—and to promote stability within the empire through religious unity. This raises important questions about how imperial power shaped the decisions made at the Council. Unity was as much a political goal as a theological one. While the creed brought Christians together around shared beliefs, we must be aware of the dangers of equating unity with uniformity. When faith becomes entangled with political power, there is always a risk that diversity will be suppressed in the name of order.

As we commemorate the anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, let us think about and pray for a church that embraces unity in diversity, recognising the richness of different expressions of faith without imposing uniformity. In a global context where the church has often been used as an instrument of colonialism and control, we are called to reflect critically on our history and seek a form of unity that respects cultural and theological diversity. We hope that this study guide aids reflection, discussion and prayer for a church that resists the temptation of imperial conformity and instead embodies Christ's message of love, justice and inclusion for all creation.

The Creed originally formulated at Nicaea in 325 AD was revised at the Council of Constantinople in 381 AD. This revised version, the Creed, forms the basis for the following reflections.

The Revd Canon Dr Peniel Rajkumar, Global Theologian and Director of Global Mission, USPG

MAKING THE MOST OF THIS STUDY COURSE

1. Commit to attending all six sessions, which can be held weekly, during Lent, or at another significant time in your church calendar. Alternatively, use the sessions to create a reflective day focused on the Nicene Creed. The guide is adaptable for various needs, including individual reflection, on a weekly or monthly schedule.

2. If you are using this as a group – try and commit to the whole course. The more you can attend, the more you will benefit and the more it will maintain the continuity of the group.

3. Begin each study with a time of silence to help centre and recall God's presence. This might look like five to ten minutes of silence followed by a simple prayer.

4. Commit to sharing honestly and to listening without judgement or trying to 'fix' someone else's reflection. Seek to create a safe atmosphere in which people feel able to share openly. Remember, none of us has all the answers. Our aim is to be authentic and whole - not perfect!

5. In your first session you may want to spend 10-15 minutes discussing your groups guidelines and boundaries as to how you want your time together to work. You could write these down so that the group can refer to them when necessary.

6. Before every session consider the following - what is going on in your community, what are the things you are talking about that you'd like to bring to this study and dialogue?

7. Recognise that everyone's life and faith journey is unique and valuable. Strive to accept one another and the experiences shared.

8. Give space for everyone to speak. If you are someone who tends to share a lot, remember to leave space for others who find it harder to share.

9. Remember that religious and theological words can mean different things to different people. Share your perspective and allow others to hold different perspectives.

10. Commit to act. Each week you will discuss, reflect, pray and act. By changing your habits and raising funds for the world church you will become part of something that is beyond your community and make a real difference.

11. Close each session in prayer.

THE PHILIPPINES

SESSION ONE – GOD'S CREATION

Written by The Revd Jewel B Tumaliuan,
Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI)

The Revd Jewel B Tumaliuan has been an ordained minister for the past eight years in the IFI. She is currently working as programme staff in the central office of the diocese and is a Canon in the IFI Cathedral in the capital city of Manila.

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines is a southeastern Asian country with three major islands, the Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. The capital city of the Philippines is Manila.

It is primarily an agricultural country with many Filipinos living in rural areas and supporting themselves through planting rice, corn, coconuts, and undertaking other agricultural activities. Throughout the islands, there are Indigenous tribes who maintain the Filipino cultural identity, despite the discrimination and marginalisation they're facing.

Filipinos have a unique culture and tradition which has been influenced by colonisation. Christianity was first brought

to the country by Spanish missionaries who arrived in the early 16th century.

It believes its God-sent mission is to work against dehumanisation. IFI is living out its prophetic role as quoted in Micah 6:8: "To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

USPG currently works in partnership with the IFI as part of its Abundant Life and Care for Creation projects which focus on ministry alongside Indigenous people groups.



USPG currently works in partnership with the IFI as part of its Abundant Life and Care for Creation project



GOD'S CREATION

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen

BIBLE READING

GENESIS 1:27

- ²⁷ So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.
- ¹ Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude.
- ² And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done.
- ³ So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.
- ⁴ These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

GENESIS 2: 1-7, 15

Another account of the Creation

- ⁴ In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens,
- ⁵ when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground;
- ⁶ but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground—
- ⁷ then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being.
- ¹⁵ The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

REFLECTION

In the heart of Oriental Mindoro, amidst the lush landscapes and rolling hills, lies the Mangyan community of Sitio Gaang, Panaytayan, Mansalay. The Indigenous people's community, like many others, relies on the land and its resources for their livelihood and sustenance.

Their story is not just one of resilience and survival, but also a testament to the profound connection between spirituality and environmental stewardship.

The Creed affirms us as all as followers of Christ, "We acknowledge that God is our Creator, 'the maker of heaven and earth.'" I also want to make the connection that it calls us to be stewards of God's creation. This commandment is echoed in the Book of Genesis, where God entrusts humanity with the care of all living things, declaring in Genesis 2:15, "The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. The phrase "till it" can mean to work / farm it.

The journey to Sitio Gaang is difficult, requiring a long and arduous trek through rugged terrain. Yet, for those who make the journey, the rewards are immeasurable. On 15 March 2024, I had the privilege of joining the diocesan bishop, The Rt Revd Ronelio Fabriquer, and his programme staff as they dedicated a new chapel for the Mangyan Community. The joy and excitement of the

community were palpable, a testament to their deep faith and resilience.

The Mangyan people's connection to the land goes beyond mere sustenance; it is deeply spiritual and cultural. Their traditional practices, rituals, and beliefs are intricately tied to the natural environment around them. They see themselves not as owners of the land, but as caretakers entrusted with its protection and preservation for future generations. This profound connection to the land shapes every aspect of their lives, from their daily routines to their sense of identity and belonging.

However, their peaceful existence is under threat from various forces, including militarisation, mining activities, and encroachment on their land. Members of the community have tragically lost their lives while defending their rights and ancestral lands. They are victimised by the exploitation of their natural resources, fraudulent practices in the trade of their goods, discrimination, and violations of their basic human rights.

Despite these challenges, the Mangyan people stand firm in their commitment to protecting their way of life and the environment that sustains them. They are stewards of the land and guardians of a way of life deeply intertwined with nature. Their story serves as a poignant reminder of our collective responsibility to care for the environment and protect the rights of Indigenous communities.

The Church, too, plays a crucial role in supporting the Mangyan people in their fight for justice and environmental preservation. It's response, which comes out of God's role as creator of all creation is the "ministry of presence," as exemplified by the Diocese of Romblon and

Mindoro. It embodies Christ's teachings of selfless service and compassion. By standing in solidarity with the Indigenous community, the Church provides strength, hope, and the courage to continue their struggle for rights and dignity.

The journey to Sitio Gaang is not just a physical one but also a spiritual and moral one. It is a journey that calls us to reflect on our role as stewards of God's creation and to act with compassion and justice towards all creation. As we strive to live out the teachings of Christ, may we be inspired by the faith and resilience of the Mangyan people and join hands with them in their quest for justice, peace, and environmental sustainability.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What might we learn from the Mangyan people and their connection to the land? What does it mean to you to have a ministry of presence in regard to the environment around you, and in the places you live and work?
- How does our approach to creation care change when we recognise God as Creator?
- In what ways can churches unite together to respond to the environmental crises/ climate change that the world is facing?
- Consider your church and local community – what are you doing to be stewards of God's creation and what more do you think you could do?

Why not jot down your thoughts and ideas and share them online by tagging @USPGglobal with the hashtag #WeBelieve2025. Let's share and inspire others!



PRAYERS

God the Father, we are at fault in destroying your creation, we lack action to defend and protect the world you have made. Forgive us, for destroying the life of our neighbours, forest, seas, mountains, and the whole earth. Be our light in the dark paths of temptation, selfishness, and greed. Inspire us with your words and actions, so that we may shine your light on others. Remind us to be a good steward of all your creation. Amen

Lord, we are guilty of neglecting the rights of the indigenous peoples whose ways of life are geared toward protecting the environment and their ancestral lands. Guide us O God, to provide them with an equal opportunity to earn a sustainable living. Inspire us with your word to show compassion and solidarity. Amen

THE CARIBBEAN

SESSION TWO – INCARNATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Written by The Revd Thanduxolo Noketshe, Priest in charge of the Parishes of St. Mary and Christ Church, Central Archdeaconry, Island of St. Kitts.

The Revd Thanduxolo is part of USPG's Exchanging Places programme which led to him undertaking a five-year ministry as a priest in charge at St Mary and Christ Church, Diocese of the Northeast Caribbean and Aruba, Province of the West Indies. His role involves overseeing all aspects of church ministry. He is a member of the St Kitts and Nevis Drug Council, representing the Christian Council. An environmental activist, he uses the character and principles of Jesus to transform the community he serves.

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN ST KITTS AND NEVIS

St. Kitts and Nevis are two Island nations between the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea. St Mary and Christ Church are two countryside parishes on the eastern side of St. Kitts Island.

The two churches have congregations of 60-80 people at St Mary and about 40-50 people at Christ Church. Both Islands are predominantly Christian with Rasta communities and other religions.

The Church is currently developing programmes that can reach young and middle-aged groups to offer their talents and gifts in communities and churches.



Mission is not only preaching the good news but living it.

**The Revd
Thanduxolo
Noketshe**



GOD'S INCARNATION IN JESUS CHRIST

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man.

BIBLE READING

JOHN 1:1-14

- ¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- ² He was in the beginning with God.
- ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being
- ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.
- ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.
- ⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.
- ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.
- ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.
- ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.
- ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him.
- ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him.
- ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God,
- ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.
- ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

REFLECTION

The doctrine of the incarnation is one of the foundations of our faith, which comes from the early Christians who had different views on the nature of Jesus, the Christ, and our relationship with him (personally and as Churches).

It was in Nicea around 325 AD that Emperor Constantine convened the council to solve disputes and to use the church as its ally to sustain the empire and its theology. What he did not know was that it would be the birth of the Nicene Creed.

When we look at how the Nicene Creed was penned; we will see that the council was informed by scriptures and reasoning in understanding and interpretation of scriptures. The gospel according to John. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God" (John 1:1-2) Furthermore, John intentionally elevates his statement unapologetically, as he utters a resolute claim. "All things came into being through him, and without him, not one thing came into being" (John 1:3)

Then there is the mystery that even today people struggle to understand, "And the Word became flesh and lived among us..." (John 1:14)

Therefore, this suggests that Jesus is the Word incarnated and he was there from the beginning, and he became flesh. So, the mystery of the incarnation draws our attention to not limit God as our minds would do. We should learn from many attributes revealed in the life of Jesus channelling us to see God's grace, love and complete salvation in Jesus.

In the incarnation of Jesus, writers portray different images of Jesus,

- liberator of those who were/ are oppressed
- servant who became a comforter to the weak and vulnerable,
- healer to the sick and dying. And many other tributes that are evident in the life of Jesus

This leads us to see Jesus as the only being in human history who re-introduced God to his own people perfectly without any stain. The re-introduction used human weakness and limitations to reveal God's power and demonstrate a loving and gracious God to us.



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God's incarnation in Jesus challenges us to get away from triumphalism and assume the actions and mindset of a servant.

God's incarnation in Jesus challenges us to get away from triumphalism and assume the actions and mindset of a servant according to Philippians 2:5-11. It suggests that we need to allow ourselves and preach to others that nothing can separate us from the love of God (Romans 8:31-39). It's our job to acknowledge God's presence, even when it seems God is not. God is Emmanuel: with us all the time. For when we are weak, we find our strength through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is that encounter with our Lord that will allow us to join the council

in saying "We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one Being with the Father.

The incarnation pulls two extremes mortality and divinity into a union, where divinity intervenes in the limitations of mortality. As mortals, we ought to surrender to the divine power of God, for it empowers us to see and demonstrate the doctrine of incarnation to the world.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Life is a gift given to us freely by God's grace. How can we inspire people of faith to embrace change and live life in light of this – extending His grace to everyone and everything—including nature?
2. Can you think of an example when you or someone you know has been in solidarity with people who are weak and vulnerable?
3. How can we be a healing ointment and comfort to people who are sick and dying?
4. Think about the environmental crises, how does the incarnation of God in Jesus challenge us to act?

Why not jot down your thoughts and ideas and share them online by tagging @USPGglobal with the hashtag #WeBelieve2025. Let's share and inspire others!

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you for sending your Son Jesus into the world. May we recognise our calling to love and honour all of Your creation. Open our hearts to perceive and embrace the constant presence of Jesus, Your incarnate Word, so that we may bear witness to Your boundless love and care for all. Lord, strengthen our faith, not only in what is visible but also in what is unseen. Amen.



JERUSALEM & THE MIDDLE EAST

SESSION THREE – SALVATION OF THE CROSS

Written by Susan Rantisi Barhoum

Susan was born in Ramallah on the West Bank, where she grew up under Israeli occupation. She completed her BA degree in biology with minors in chemistry and Christian studies in 1989 from Aurora University in Aurora, Illinois, USA. She completed her master's degree in theology from Faith Seminary in Tacoma, Washington, USA, in 2001, and earned her MBA in 2006 from Haifa University. She married Samuel Barhoum in 1991, Archdeacon of the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem, and they have a daughter, Nelly Anne, and a son, Yousef. They currently live in Nazareth, where she works in development and fundraising on a freelance basis.

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF JERUSALEM

The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem spans: Palestine, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. This geographic spread adds innumerable complications to the work of the Diocese due to the many borders, checkpoints, and national governments involved.

In particular, the divergent laws and politics of each region make administration of its ministries exceedingly challenging. Despite these difficulties, the diocese is responsible for more than thirty institutions, including hospitals, schools, clinics, rehabilitation centres, guesthouses, and retirement homes. As Christians

in an area full of political strife, occupation, and discrimination, we strive to maintain our witness, shining the light of Christ into areas of darkness and offering hope to those otherwise living in despair. Although our numbers have declined, we believe that a little light dispels much darkness.



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CRUCIFIXION – SALVATION

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

BIBLE READING

1 JOHN 4:9-10

- ⁹ God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him.
- ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

REFLECTION

As we recite the Nicene Creed in Church, we affirm our faith. This faith transcends personal conviction and emphasises a shared faith, a community united as members of the body of Christ.

For our sake, he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.

The early Church wanted to dispel doubts about the historical accuracy of Jesus' passion and death in human history, so the Creed mentions the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. This is supported in the Gospels and by the Jewish historian Josephus in his Antiquities.

He suffered death and was buried.

Crowned with thorns, Jesus is lifted on the Cross, where He dies. Crucifixion was considered the worst possible death, long and painful, and a public humiliation reserved for the worst of criminals. Jesus suffered death in such a terrible way to offer the greatest act of love for our sake! Jesus Christ, the sinless one, submitted to the

power of death to redeem us. By His death, Jesus destroyed the barrier separating us from the presence of God, bringing us back into His grace. “Christ died once for our sins, the just for the unjust, that He might lead us to God.” (1 Peter 3:18).

On the third day, he rose again in accordance with the scriptures.

The resurrection changed everything. Because of Jesus’ resurrection in fulfilment of Old Testament promises, we are saved; death is not the end but the beginning of a new life for all of us. The triumph of the resurrection cuts through the darkness of the crucifixion. The empty tomb signifies Jesus’ victory over death and the promise of new life and hope. “For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.” (I Corinthians 15: 22)

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

Jesus’ ascension further strengthens our hope. Triumphant over death, He has gone to heaven to prepare a place for us. In a position of power and authority, He embodies God’s ever-present presence and ultimate plan for humanity.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.

Jesus will return in glory to

judge the living and the dead, establishing a kingdom without end. This shouldn’t be a source of fear but of hope. We are called to live as if every day may be our last on earth so that we may be prepared to meet Jesus, where justice and eternal peace prevail. “Then I heard a voice from heaven say, “Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “they will rest from their labour, for their deeds will follow them.” (Revelation 14:13).

In a world marred by violence and division, particularly in our region, the Nicene Creed offers a message of hope and redemption. It is not simply a historical account; it is a call to action. A call for churches to explore the Creed more deeply so the faithful can understand its richness and not just recite its words. Jesus’ sacrifice compels us to strive for peace and reconciliation, choosing love over hatred, even amidst immense pain. His resurrection inspires hope, even in the most challenging times. This translates into a call for us to work together to build a more just and peaceful future, drawing inspiration from the ultimate message of hope offered by the risen Christ. It reminds us that suffering is not the end; God’s love and justice will ultimately triumph. It is a powerful message of strength and inspiration for reconciliation, forgiveness, and peace.



In a world marred by violence and division, particularly in our region, the Nicene Creed offers a message of hope and redemption.

QUESTIONS

1. How does understanding the Nicene Creed as a shared faith, rather than just personal conviction, strengthen your sense of belonging? And how does it impact how you approach worship and interact with your church community?
2. In your own life, have you experienced a situation where hope seemed lost, but you found renewed hope or a fresh start? How does Jesus' ultimate sacrifice and resurrection impact your understanding of faith and relationship with God and connect to your own experiences?
3. How can you apply the message of hope embodied in the resurrection to your own life, especially in challenging times?
4. The passage concludes with a call to action for a more just and peaceful world. What concrete steps can you take in daily life to embody the message of love, forgiveness, and reconciliation emphasised in the Nicene Creed?

PRAYER

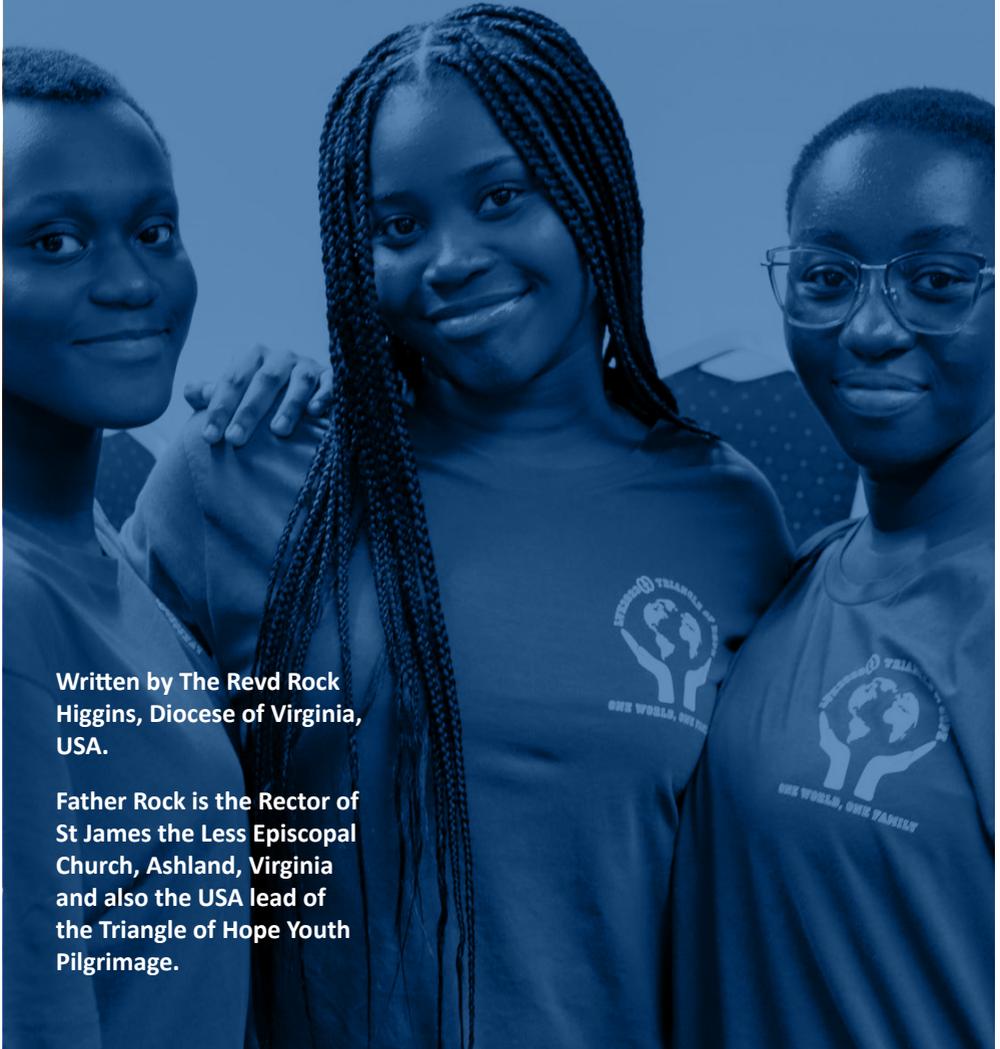
Use these prayer points to guide your time of prayer

- **Deepen your understanding and faith:** Pray for a deeper understanding of the Nicene Creed. Ask God to open your heart to the richness of its message and help you move beyond simply reciting the words. Ask God to open your heart to its message of shared faith and unity within the body of Christ. Reflect on how your actions can contribute to a stronger, more loving church community.
- **Live out the message of hope and redemption:** Reflect on Jesus' suffering and death. Thank Him for offering the greatest act of love for your sake. Pray for the strength to live out the message of hope and redemption in your daily life. Ask God to guide you in choosing love over hate, even in challenging situations. Seek inspiration from Jesus' sacrifice to strive for peace and reconciliation in your community and the world, especially in areas facing violence and division.
- **Find hope in the resurrection:** Express gratitude for the promise of hope and new life offered through Jesus' resurrection. Pray for hope in the face of suffering and challenges, asking God for the strength to believe that suffering is not the end, but that God's love and justice will ultimately prevail. Draw on the message of the Nicene Creed for courage and strength to work towards a more just and peaceful world inspired by Christ's ultimate victory.



TRIANGLE OF HOPE — VIRGINIA, USA

SESSION FOUR – INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



Written by The Revd Rock Higgins, Diocese of Virginia, USA.

Father Rock is the Rector of St James the Less Episcopal Church, Ashland, Virginia and also the USA lead of the Triangle of Hope Youth Pilgrimage.

THE DIOCESE OF VIRGINIA AND TRIANGLE OF HOPE

The Diocese of Virginia is one of nine original dioceses of the Episcopal Church in the United States. The first Anglican Eucharist was held here in 1607 in Jamestown. 12 years later the first enslaved Africans were treated as property in 1619 and sold into bondage at Jamestown.

This legacy haunts us still today. Along with our partners in the Diocese of Liverpool (UK) and the Diocese of Kumasi (Ghana), we are committed to

overcoming the legacy of our shared past and moving toward reconciliation and forgiveness through shared work, prayers, and worship.



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HOLY SPIRIT – INSPIRATION

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

BIBLE READING

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17-18

- ¹⁷ So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!
- ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.

REFLECTION

In this fourth session looking at the Nicene Creed, we are exploring what ‘God the Holy Spirit’ means in our time. It is through the Holy Spirit we are transformed and given hope for something better, for ourselves and for our world.

The transatlantic slave trade is the name given to the forced enslavement and movement of people from Africa to the Americas. Between 1500 and 1800, an estimated 12-15 million people - some historians suggest the figure may have been higher - were trafficked from Africa to be used as enslaved labour in the Caribbean, North, Central and South America. It is estimated that over 2 million Africans died on the journey to the Americas, in a journey known as the Middle Passage.

Our work with the Triangle of Hope is predominantly a ministry of reconciliation. One of the greatest gifts of my life has been the opportunity to work with sisters and brothers on three continents to overcome the nightmares of the transatlantic slave trade. This is something that none of us can do in isolation, but in and through the humility that comes from being transformed by the Holy Spirit working in and through us as “new creations.” We have this model in Christ, coming in and



This season, where can you be about a “ministry of reconciliation?”

showing humanity an alternate path. In our transformation and growth, we can see a way out of the sinful history that all our dioceses participated in and was often done in Christ’s name.

This work comes with much sweat and tears, often stretching us in uncomfortable ways we would not choose. But like all things worth having, we must work to make it a reality. In our pilgrimages in each of our dioceses, we see the legacy of what was done in the past. We cannot wish it away, nor can we ignore it. Nor can we sit comfortably receiving the benefits of these brutal acts without acknowledging the debts we owe, often to unknown matriarchs and patriarchs. Taking the time and effort to pause, remember, and reconcile is the foundation of the ministry of reconciliation. Moving forward into another vision of what could

be the outcome. As we follow the prompting of the Holy Spirit in our lives, we can honestly “worship and glorify” which we promise to do in the Creed.

This season, where can you be about a “ministry of reconciliation? Where can you put in your sweat and tears to help fulfil God’s dream for our hurting and sin-ravaged world? While the Triangle of Hope stretches across continents, your ministry might be with a neighbour or a family member. Begin where you are, let the Holy Spirit guide you to wholeness and healing and bring it about in your context. We have been about this work since the time of Christ, and brick by brick we are building a Temple worthy of our Lord. Focus on the task before you, and in transforming your part of the world, you will be transformed in the process by the Holy Spirit we honour today.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What does true reconciliation look like and what part do you think the Holy Spirit plays in reconciliation?
2. Where is the Holy Spirit nudging you to work towards healing and wholeness? Think about your personal life, your church and your community.
3. With whom do you need to work on reconciliation? How might you draw on the Holy Spirit to enable you to take the first step?

PRAYER

Use these prayer points to guide your time of prayer

- Pray for the work of the Triangle of Hope and our dioceses in Virginia (USA), Liverpool (UK) and Kumasi (Ghana).
- Pray for the Holy Spirit's prompting about your ministry of reconciliation. Pray for the ministry of the Holy Spirit in bringing reconciliation to desperately broken areas in the world.



SOUTH INDIA

SESSION FIVE – THE CHURCH AND UNITY

Written by The Rt Revd Dr Royce M. Victor, Bishop of Malabar, Church of South India.

Alongside being the Bishop in the Diocese of Malabar, The Rt Revd Dr Royce Victor serves as a member of the International Anglican Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM); and is the Anglican Co-chair of the International Pentecostal – Anglican Commission (IPAC). Previously, he served as a member of the International Anglican Reformed Dialogue (IRAD).

DIOCESE OF MALABAR, CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA

India is a nation that has long been celebrated for its cultural and religious diversity and its reputation for tolerance.

Despite this, the country has recently seen a rise in challenges faced by religious minorities, particularly members of the Christian and Muslim faiths. This has resulted in a decrease

in religious tolerance within Indian society. Furthermore, poverty and caste-based discrimination continue to persist as significant issues.



India is a nation that has long been celebrated for its cultural and religious diversity and its reputation for tolerance.



CHURCH – UNITY

*We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.*

BIBLE READING

EPHESIANS 4:1-8

Unity and Maturity in the Body of Christ

- ¹ As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.
- ² Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.
- ³ Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.
- ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called;
- ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism;
- ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.
- ⁷ But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.
- ⁸ This is why it says:
 “When he ascended on high,
 he took many captives
 and gave gifts to his people.”

REFLECTION

The Nicene Creed, a fundamental tenet of the Christian faith, was formulated in the fourth century as a response to the crisis of disintegration that the Church and the Empire were facing due to various heresies.

Its primary objective was to defend the faith and oneness of the Church globally, and it

remains relevant even today in bringing together all who believe in Christ Jesus. Its significance

in fostering church unity is undeniable and is attributable to several key reasons.

Firstly, the Nicene Creed establishes essential theological truths that transcend Christian denominational boundaries worldwide. Its affirmation of belief in one God, the Trinity, and the divinity of Jesus Christ provides a common foundation for Christians across the globe. In the diverse and fragmented religious landscape of today, the Nicene Creed serves as a rallying point, reminding all believers of their shared core beliefs.

Secondly, the Creed addresses theological controversies that persist to this day. The Church of the fourth century carefully formulated the Creed to combat heresies and clarify Christian doctrine, particularly concerning the nature of Christ. In today's context, where theological differences continue to arise, the Creed serves as a reference point for resolving disputes and maintaining doctrinal integrity within the Church.

Furthermore, the Nicene Creed fosters ecumenical dialogue and cooperation among different Christian traditions. By affirming shared beliefs while allowing for diversity in secondary doctrines, it encourages mutual respect and collaboration among various

churches. In contemporary times, interdenominational relations have become increasingly important, and churches are faced with significant challenges from both internal and external sources. The Nicene Creed provides a common language for dialogue and a means of promoting reconciliation in this context. Moreover, the Nicene Creed provides historical continuity and connection to the early Church. By reciting the same words as Christians did centuries ago, Christian believers are reminded of their place in the broader narrative of salvation history. This sense of continuity strengthens the bonds of fellowship among believers and reinforces their identity as part of the universal Church.

In conclusion, the Nicene Creed remains profoundly relevant in fostering unity within the Church today. Its timeless theological truths, historical significance, and ecumenical potential make it an indispensable tool for promoting harmony and cooperation among believers across denominational lines. As Jesus prays for unity in John 17, we as Christians continue to navigate the complexities of a changing world. The Nicene Creed stands as a beacon of unity, guiding them back to the essential truths of their faith.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. All believers have shared core beliefs' – what do you think about this statement? Can you list these core Christian beliefs?
2. What significant challenges do you think the Church is facing currently in your context and how do you think the Nicene Creed responds to them?
3. Do you feel like your Church is uniting your community? Or is your church united with other churches across your community? What practical steps do you think you can undertake to unify?

PRAYER

- Pray for the Anglican Communion across the globe – you may want to specifically pray for any diocesan links you have or partner churches
- Pray for all believers in your community – that core beliefs will unify them
- Pray for the Church of South India as they boldly proclaim Jesus as Lord.

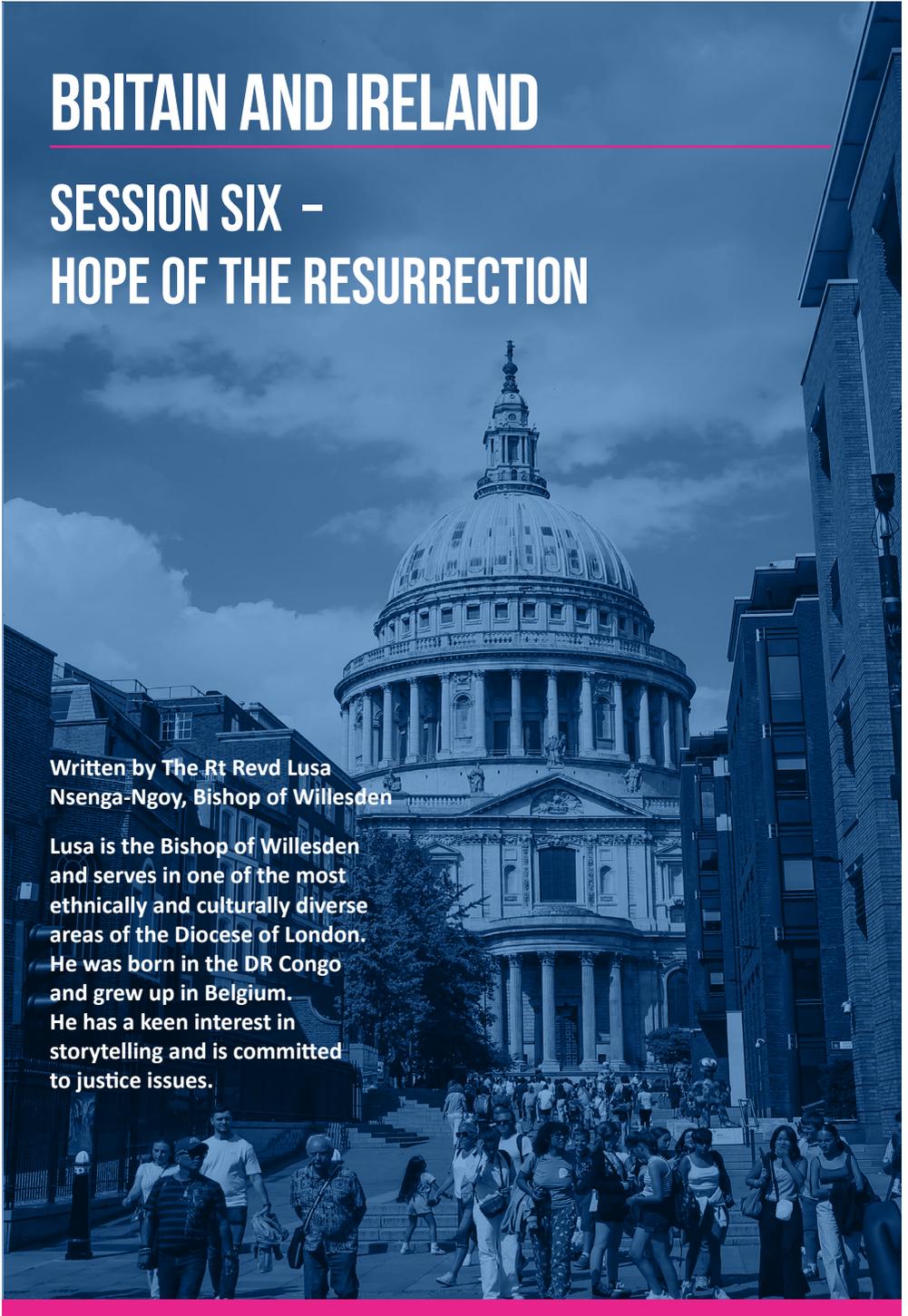


BRITAIN AND IRELAND

SESSION SIX – HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION

Written by The Rt Revd Lusa
Nsenga-Ngoy, Bishop of Willesden

Lusa is the Bishop of Willesden and serves in one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse areas of the Diocese of London. He was born in the DR Congo and grew up in Belgium. He has a keen interest in storytelling and is committed to justice issues.

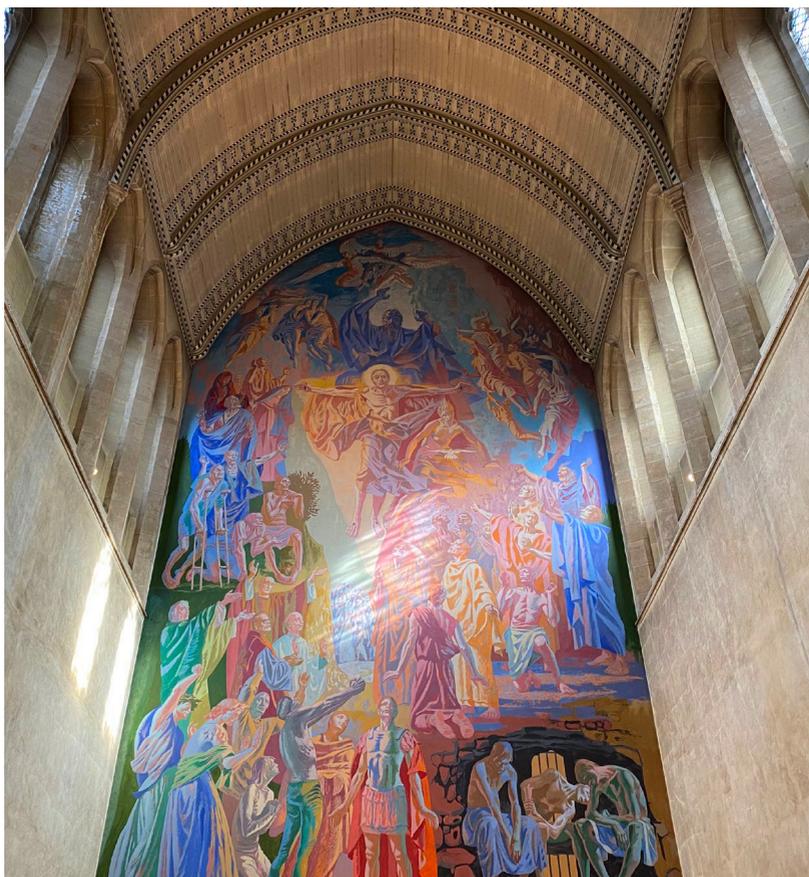


THE DIOCESE OF LONDON AND THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Britain is a culturally rich society with a religious plurality. The depth and breadth of ethnic and cultural diversity is not equivalently distributed and represented in the life, structures and leadership of the church.

For nearly forty years, there has been a succession of reports with recommendations towards greater racial justice. It seems that we are only now seeing a

committed effort to address and redress issues of racial injustice that plague both the church and the nation.



RESURRECTION – HOPE

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

BIBLE READING

REVELATION 7: 9-12

- ⁹ After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands.
- ¹⁰ They cried out in a loud voice, saying,
'Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!'
- ¹¹ And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God,
- ¹² singing,
'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom
and thanksgiving and honour
and power and might
be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.'

REFLECTION

In the spring of 2017, a billboard stirred public controversy in Pittsburgh, with many objecting to the message that stated:

"There are Black people in the future." Through this public artwork, the Afrofuturist artist and writer Alisha Wormsley wanted to address the systemic oppression of black communities through space and time by affirming the presence of black

bodies in a future they are so often not imagined in.

"At first glance, this appears to be a straightforward fact. However, it urges us to confront the deep fractures and divisions in our world, where countless human lives are

overshadowed by discrimination and oppression—treated as less valuable simply because of their ethnicity, culture, creed, or caste.

The first question God asks humanity in the Hebrew scriptures, right after leaving Eden, is “Where is your brother?” (Genesis 4:9). If we truly reflect on this question, it points to the importance of interdependence—calling us to take responsibility for the well-being of others. It challenges us to reject exploitation, oppression, and treating others as mere objects. This isn’t about finding someone’s location; it’s about shifting our focus and reorienting our hearts towards others. It asks us to see the other not just as someone we are connected to, but as someone we embrace and who also embraces us. It’s a move away from transactions and towards genuine relationships. Like the story of Babel, it aims to disrupt our old ways of thinking and redirect our stories towards God’s greater story.

God’s future is precisely the orientation of our Christian narrative. It culminates in the vision portrayed by John of Patmos who describes humanity gathered before God in worship beyond cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and tribal identity (Rev 7:9).

This fellowship of the unlikely is referred to by Martin Luther King as the Beloved Community,

a global community rooted in the Christian principle of love, committed to the liberation of the oppressed by fostering a society free from racial prejudice and oppression. This vision wasn’t just about legal equality but about transforming and aligning hearts and minds to embrace and affirm the inherent dignity and worth of every human story, bearer of the image of God and deserving of love, dignity, and justice.

The Beloved Community affirms its faith in the transformative power of the resurrection—a metaphorical rising from the ashes of injustice to a new life of equity and justice, opening the way to reconciliation and mutual flourishing.

Racial justice offers hope for God’s future. It promises a future where the wounds of the past are attended to, and communities are held in love and solidarity. By dismantling systems of oppression and addressing the root causes of racism, we pave the way for a world where justice and righteousness prevail. Just as Christians pray for God’s kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven, advocating for racial justice is a tangible expression of this prayer. It is a commitment to building a world that reflects the essence of God’s kingdom—a society where love, justice, and equity reign supreme.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Using the Bible reading and the reflection – what do you envision when you think about “beloved community”?
2. What systems of oppression do you believe to exist in the Church today? How do you think we should dismantle them?
3. What is your hope for the future of the Church?

PRAYER

Love incarnate,
Fountain of Mercy and Justice
In a world of inequity and pain
May our actions be our prayer.
We cry out for Shalom, the fullness of life to all.
Let the Spirit of Truth guide us.
Let the Spirit of Love free us.
Give us the compassion, courage and resolve
to become the light, we seek
that many may see life and their dignity restored
Inspire us to embody a world without injustice and prejudice
Form us into channels of your love and peace
Let the river of justice and mercy flood our imperfect world
Quenching the thirst of parched souls and lands.
Abide in us o Liberator that we become the voices of your Word
so that the world may have life, life in all its abundance.
Amen

**Written by The Rt Revd Anderson Jeremiah,
Bishop of Edmonton, Diocese of London**



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