


	<p>of the baptismal gown. No other symbols of identity or nationality are supposed to be placed on the coffin. The idea is to show that all our identities are subsumed into our identity of being in Christ. This doesn't mean that our various social, political, sexual and national identities aren't important just that they aren't of ultimate importance. Does this idea of being "in Christ" resonate with you? Why/why not?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Susan suggests that to be made in the image of God is to those things which God does – identify with the poor and outcast, work for change and justice – what might this look like for you?
	<p>O God, we rejoice in you, for you have given us being, have made us in your image, and shared our humanity to bring us to glory. May our living this day, and all our days, reflect the glory of Jesus, in whom you dwelt in fulness and in whose life, death and rising we see your image and your grace. To you be all glory, praise and adoration, now and evermore. Amen.</p>

Over our reflections on the URC's Statement of Faith we've discussed and prayed together. Now we're going to ask you to jot down some ideas about what you might include if you were to create a statement of faith. You might want to do this in pairs or as a whole group. What would a statement of faith look like for your church?

daily devotions

from the United Reformed Church

The United Reformed Church's
Statement of Faith



photo credit Alex Shute Unsplash.com

Many of our members don't realise we have a Statement of Faith. We use the longer *Statement on the Nature, Faith and Order* at ordinations and inductions of Elders and Ministers and at the Commissioning and Induction of Church Related Community Workers but we don't often use Statements, or Affirmations, of Faith in worship and, when we do, we rarely use the URC one. The Rev'd Dr Susan Durber wrote this series of reflections for the URC's Daily Devotions several years ago and it's a joy to turn them now into a small group resource. We've created three sessions, each starts with a hymn to a well known tune – even if the hymn isn't well known – then there are some pieces to read and some questions for discussion. In the last session you're asked to, in groups, think about what you might put into a contemporary statement of faith for your church. We hope these studies help enrich your discipleship.

Andy Braunston
Minister for Digital Worship
June 2023

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The URC Statement of Faith

adopted at General Assembly 1997 alongside the earlier 1972 Statement.


We believe in the one and only God, Eternal Trinity,
 from whom, through whom and for whom all created things exist.
 God alone we worship; in God we put our trust.

We worship God, source and sustainer of creation,
 whom Jesus called Father, whose sons and daughters we are.

We worship God revealed in Jesus Christ,
 the eternal Word of God made flesh;
 who lived our human life, died for sinners on the cross;
 who was raised from the dead,
 and proclaimed by the apostles, Son of God;
 who lives eternally, as saviour and sovereign,
 coming in judgement and mercy, to bring us to eternal life.

We worship God, ever present in the Holy Spirit;
 who brings this Gospel to fruition, assures us of forgiveness,
 strengthens us to do God's will,
 and makes us sisters and brothers of Jesus, sons and daughters of God.

We believe in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church,
 united in heaven and on earth: on earth, the Body of Christ,
 empowered by the Spirit to glorify God and to serve humanity;

	<p>by God (in God's image) and in our recreation, through Christ, in whom the fulness of God 'was pleased to dwell'. The biblical writers are at one in believing that God has a great purpose for human beings, that we are beloved and honourable, that we have a high calling within creation. What else could it mean to be in the very 'image of God'? We have all seen, however, that such an understanding can lead to a distorted sense of our place in creation, one that causes us to take powers over creation that we should never have, that can make exploiters of us and that reveal not glory but depravity. We are not gods and we are not and never can be the owners of our world or of other people. We are not in the image of god in that sense, and should never deceive ourselves into seizing a power and role that is not rightly ours.</p> <p>It is Jesus who shows us what it truly means to be 'in the image of God', the real glory of a human being fully alive. To be in the image of a God of love is to love. To be in the image of a God who shares our life is to join with those who are suffering. To be in the image of the God who offers life in fulness is to enjoy the gift of life and to share it generously with others. To be in the image of God who created the earth is to live in it as our common home.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christians believe not only that humanity is made in God's own image but that Jesus came and shared our humanity. What might those ideas mean for the value and dignity of humans? Even humans we don't like! • In the Catholic tradition babies, when they are baptised, are clothed in a baptismal gown (I'm told that the Churches of Christ used to give gowns to those to be baptised by immersion too). At a Catholic funeral it is usual to drape the coffin in a plain pall – reminiscent

Statement of Faith 8

We rejoice in God who has given us being, who shares our humanity to bring us to glory, our source of prayer and power of praise; to whom be glory, praise and adoration, now and evermore.



So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

Genesis 1: 27

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.

Colossians 1:15-19



The 2nd Century theologian Irenaeus said, famously, something like 'The glory of God is a human being fully alive'. It's a great quotation to take into the day. The word 'glory' comes here, in this final part of our statement, twice. The last thing we do as we say these words is to give glory to God, with praise and adoration. But we also affirm that God brings us to glory. The one who created us in the very image of God came in Christ to share our human life for the purpose of bringing us to glory.

There is a connection between the first story of our creation

in heaven, eternally one with the power, the wisdom and the love of God in Trinity.

We believe that, in the fullness of time, God will renew and gather in one all things in heaven and on earth through Christ, and be perfectly honoured and adored.

We rejoice in God who has given us being, who shares our humanity to bring us to glory, our source of prayer and power of praise; to whom be glory, praise and adoration, now and evermore.

Session 1

We All Believe In One True God

Tobias Clausnitzer (1671) translated by Catherine Winkworth
Metre 77 77 77 Tune Dix (As With Gladness Men of Old)



We all believe in one true God,
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
ever-present help in need,
praised by all the heav'nly host,
by whose mighty pow'r alone
all is made and wrought and done.

2 We all believe in Jesus Christ,
Son of God and Mary's Son,
who descended from his throne
and for us salvation won,
by whose cross and death are we
rescued from all misery.

3 We all confess the Holy Ghost,
who from both fore'er proceeds,
who upholds and comforts us
in all trials, fears, and needs.
Blessed, holy Trinity,
praise to you eternally!

Statement of Faith 1

We believe in the one and only God, Eternal Trinity, from whom, through whom and for whom all created things exist.



Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 6: 4-9



We believe in the one and only God. In one translation, Deuteronomy 6:4 reads, 'The Lord our God, the Lord is one.' The writer exhorts us to remember these words, to recite them to our children, and talk about them. Make these words part of you. This is what a statement of faith is like, or what it could be. It's not so much about proposition or philosophy, but worship and praise. This is the language not only of theology, but of doxology – words to sing and shout and hold onto in prayer with all your might. The voice that calls to us from Deuteronomy asks us to take some words and make them our praise of God. The words that we call our Statement of Faith in the United Reformed Church deserve the same. We all have times in our life when we need to know exactly where we stand, not so that we can pass a scripture test, but so we can say with confidence who God is and give God praise.

It is wonderful that our Statement of Faith begins, 'We believe in the one and only God'. It has a theological weight


that human effort, if we all screw up our courage, could yet be enough. But perhaps this astonishing piece of scripture is right (and our Statement of Faith too), that God is with us, that this is God's home as well as our home, and that together we will do this. In the fulness of time. And may that fulness come soon.





- Susan implies that belief in God's sovereignty means that it is only God who can save and redeem the world and sites this in the context of the climate emergency. Do you agree that this is God's work to sort out or is it something that humanity (which got itself into this mess) needs to sort out?
- The Revelation passage, and the quotation from our Statement of Faith, imply that, in God's good time, God will dwell with humanity. It's a reading often used at funerals as we look forward to a renewed heaven and earth where we will live in harmony with God and each other. For you is this a pious myth or a firm hope?
- What do you think our faith has to say about the climate emergency?



O God, we pray for renewal and unity:
for people everywhere to come together
in peace and in common purpose,
so that earth and air, sea and sky,
may be renewed and blessed.
We will give this our time and our full commitment,
and we trust that in the fulness of your time,
all things, in heaven and on earth,
may be made new and good and whole,
and give you perfect honour and praise, Amen.

	<p>every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.'</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Revelation 21: 1-4</i></p>
	<p>'In the fulness of time'. This is the kind of thing a parent says to an impatient child, or that we say to one another when we know we can't deliver whatever it is just yet. 'In the fulness of time'. It comes with a sense that waiting has to be done, that the good things we long for can't come all at once, or that the timescale is in someone else's hands.</p> <p>Right now the timescale for the renewal of earth and atmosphere is pressing hard at our heels. If we don't cut carbon emissions enough by.... then we are doomed and the damage caused by climate change is irreversible. Perhaps it already is in some ways. In this sense we don't want time to be 'full', we want there still to be time for life to change and earth to be healed.</p> <p>Perhaps the truth is that we can only trust that the renewal of earth is in God's hands and that, though we must do everything we can, and use every moment we have, to change our lives and cut emissions and mitigate the impact of the climate change on the poorest of the world, it is ultimately only God who can save us and redeem the world, only God who will make suffering and death pass away and bring a new heaven and a new earth.</p> <p>There are some in this world who think we should just keep burning carbon and see what happens, since God will see the righteous right. There are others who think</p>

	<p>that places us in the great tradition in which Jesus stood, that there are not many gods but one God. But it's hard to say that phrase 'one and only' without raising a cheer or a hand in praise or beginning to sing. This is more than correct doctrine or a ticking the box monotheism – this is praise! We worship, we believe in, we trust in 'the one and only' God.</p> <p>I once went to Sunday worship in a monastery in Romania. The priests did most of the singing and speaking. But the people in the congregation said the Creed; and they didn't mumble, but shouted it – they said it like they meant it, as praise. The one and only God be praised!</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many churches recite a creed as part of Sunday worship – this is more rare in the URC (though the <i>Worship Notes</i> often offer an affirmation of faith for congregational use). What are the positives and negatives about using or not using a statement of faith in worship? • Susan locates statements of faith in our praise – do you think that recitation of a credal statement is like praise? Why? Why not?
	<p>O God, the one and only God, Holy and Eternal Trinity, from whom, through whom and for whom all created things exist, we give you praise for it is our purpose and our joy. We give you glory as we celebrate your unique beauty and your gracious presence in all creation. May we live this day in praise, knowing our origins in your love, our source in your creating. Amen</p>

Statement of Faith 2

God alone we worship; in God we put our trust.



'God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.'

John 4:24



That telling phrase 'God alone we worship', somehow suggests a back story. If we say we worship God alone, are we suggesting that others might worship something else? It's a strong part of our Reformed tradition to work hard at resisting temptation to worship anything less than God, to stand against idolatry. It's led us down some paths that few respect us for; all those defaced rood screens, those headless statues and empty niches, artworks destroyed and walls whitewashed. Those in whose steps we follow wanted to let nothing tempt them into confining God to an image or a sculpture, or into implying that God could be persuaded by mounting up prayers or good deeds, or that God could be controlled by the levers of our piety. God is sovereign over all, God is more than we can imagine, God alone we worship – nothing else, nothing smaller or lesser or more containable.

We will always need to heed this voice calling us to true worship, worship that trusts God to be God and does not rely on human images or words, that is not so shaped by sacred buildings or holy texts that it cannot go beyond them, that refuses to accept that we can ever fully know the one we truly praise. God alone we worship; in God we put our trust.

In our prayers today, perhaps we could give thanks for all those things that help us to pray; familiar words, glorious

We Believe in God the Father

Timothy Dudley Smith © Hope Publishing Company
Metre 8787D Tune: Abbots Leigh

We believe in God the Father,
God almighty, by whose plan
earth and heaven sprang to being,
all created things began.

We believe in Christ the Saviour,
Son of God in human frame,
virgin-born, the child of Mary
upon whom the Spirit came.

2 Christ, who on the cross forsaken,
like a lamb to slaughter led,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
he descended to the dead.

We believe in Jesus risen,
heaven's King to rule and reign,
to the Father's side ascended
till as judge he comes again.


3 We believe in God the Spirit; in one Church, below, above:
saints of God in one communion, one in holiness and love.
So by faith, our sins forgiven, Christ our Saviour, Lord and friend,
we shall rise with him in glory to the life that knows no end.



Statement of Faith 7

We believe that, in the fullness of time, God will renew and gather in one all things in heaven and on earth through Christ, and be perfectly honoured and adored.



Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe

	<p>further than many other branches of the Church – has this helped or hindered our sense of belonging to the Church Catholic?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What might we learn from other Christian traditions? What might other Christian traditions learn from us?
	<p>Thank you, Jesus, for calling us to be part of your Church, your body in the world, one with the community of heaven. Give me grace to see and live the blessing of my local church and also the blessing of the whole Church, so that I may find my own place in the body and take part in your mission of love to the world. Amen.</p>

	<p>buildings, soaring music, Bible verses – but then seek the silence of the praise in which we simply trust God to be with us. Let our worship be emptied of all but praise – our spirits lifted to the Spirit of God. It can't be done, and we are not true worshippers yet, but the day is coming and is now here....</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What other things or people do we trust in aside from God? • What other things are we tempted to worship? • What might trusting God to go beyond the hymns, prayers, buildings and texts mean for us?
	<p>O God, I long for a prayer where my spirit is touched by yours and lifted beyond the everyday. I long to worship you in spirit and in truth, to catch your awesome wonder. Give me the gift of trust to let you be God, and nothing and no-one else, and to find my place in the community of praise. Amen.</p>

Statement of Faith 3

We worship God, source and sustainer of creation, whom Jesus called Father, whose sons and daughters we are.



‘Pray then in this way:
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And do not bring us to the time of trial,
but rescue us from the evil one.

Matthew 6: 9-13



Jesus called God Father. When we take it on its own and treat ‘Father’ as God’s name then it is dangerous, as though it claims some special dignity for people who are male and parents. But it does not come alone, this calling of God using the most intimate form of ‘Father’. It isn’t about privileging masculinity, but about holding intimacy alongside awesomeness. It’s about the wonder that the creator of all things, the source and ground of all being, loves the life that is created in us, in each one of us, in all the amazing ways that a human parent might love their child.

In the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples, his students, to pray, he calls God Father (Pa?), but also says that God is ‘in heaven’ and that God is holy, with a Kingdom to come and a will that is strong and good and deserves to be done. And this God, who is also our father, can rescue us even from the evil one, since this God is all good. The great God of heaven



postcode. And when it says in the notices one Sunday that the service will be at another local church next week, even another local URC church, we know that some people won’t go there. When it happens that a particular local church closes its building we notice that some people just stop belonging to any church at all. Our celebration of the local church is both our treasure and our tragedy. We know how to do committed and contextual belonging, but we sometimes lose a sense that we part of the church catholic (through time and across the world), that the church we are part of is the same church as the community of those first apostles and of Christians in centuries to come, and that we belong to an earthly community that is also in communion with heaven.

Our Statement of Faith declares that we believe in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, united in heaven and on earth. If we could make that declaration part of our daily and weekly reality, it might transform so much: the way we experience belonging to the church and serving within it, our approach to ecumenism, our sense of our place in the world and in history, and our hopefulness about the story of the great Church. The Church is entirely present and real in each of our local churches, but it is also more than any of us can imagine. Thank God.



- What difference might it make to us locally if we really behaved in ways which reflected we are united in the Church with Methodists, Anglicans, Baptists, Catholics, Orthodox, Pentecostals and Independents?
- The URC stands in traditions which leave much to the decision of local congregations and which pioneered women’s ministry and the inclusion of LGBT people in membership and ministry. In many ways we’ve gone

Statement of Faith 6

We believe in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, united in heaven and on earth: on earth, the Body of Christ, empowered by the Spirit to glorify God and to serve humanity; in heaven, eternally one with the power, the wisdom and the love of God in Trinity.



I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Ephesians 1:15-23

In the United Reformed Church we are generally stronger on the local than the universal church. We value and we understand a sense of belonging to one local church community that we come to know well, with its rootedness in a particular context, with people we know and a history we can tell. For many of us if you ask us to say which church we belong to we answer with a name, a street and a

and earth, the God whose will is done, the God who can save the world, this God – is also our father.

Our own Statement of Faith picks up this great duet as well. We worship God who is the source and the sustainer of all that is, and discover, through Jesus, that this same God is a parent to us and loves us as sons and daughters. ‘Parent’ is a rather bleak, abstract kind of word, and it cannot do justice to this miracle that the God of all creation loves us so intimately and personally. Yesterday we longed to worship the awesome and sovereign God. And today we find that same God loving us tenderly.



- Does calling God “father” mean we think that God is male?
- If we don’t think God is male why is there so much male language about God?
- What other metaphors for God might we use?



Thank you,
for revealing, through Jesus your son,
that we, like him,
are your beloved children,
with whom you are well pleased, whatever.
Give us, as any father might,
or any mother too,
such an experience of your love
that we will at last believe that we are so loved,
as we live our lives
being part of your awesome creation. Amen.

Session 2

We Saw Thee Not When Thou Didst Come

Anne R Richer 1851 Meter 88 88 88 Tune Sussex Carol
(On Christmas Night All Christians Sing)





We saw thee not
when thou didst come
to this poor world
of sin and death;
nor yet beheld thy cottage home,
in that despised Nazareth;
but we believe thy footsteps trod
its streets and plains,
thou Son of God.

2 We saw thee not
when lifted high
amid that wild and savage crew;
nor heard we that imploring cry,
"Forgive, they know not
what they do!"
But we believe the deed was done,
that shook the earth
and veiled the sun.

3 We gazed not in
the open tomb
where once thy mangled body lay;
nor saw thee in that "upper room,"
nor met thee on the open way;
But we believe that angels said,
"Why seek the living
with the dead?"

4 We walked not with
the chosen few
who saw thee from
the earth ascend;
who raised to heaven
their wondering view,
then low to earth
all prostrate bend;
but we believe that human eyes
beheld that journey to the skies;

	<p>God, then we shall need to find our peace in the midst of new storms. We may be comforted, but not so much in the sense of being let off any kind of hook, but prepared with the strength we shall need effectively to be those who remain in the world once Jesus has ascended. If the Holy Spirit is truly the way in which God is always present in the world, then there is no avoiding the impact of that. If the Gospel is brought to fruition by the Spirit, then this is the same Gospel that challenges inequality and pain, that rises up against the things that harm and hurt. To keep the memory of Jesus alive, to become so close to him that we are as good as his brothers and sisters, means that we shall have trouble. And we shall need the Holy Spirit to give us grace to be at peace with that.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much do we talk about the Holy Spirit in church? What type of things are said or preached about the Spirit? • Susan holds that the Spirit comforts us by giving us the tools we need to do Jesus' work now he's ascended. What work might that be? • Should the Church, should Christians, get in or cause trouble? If so, what type of trouble?
	<p>Come Holy Spirit, remind us of Jesus, teach us to know him, and help us to bear the cost of that searing memory of an overwhelming Gospel, and world changing power. Give us grace to be at peace with what follows from following him, and give us your strength to endure and embrace whatever comes, as we join our spirits to yours and as you anoint us each new day, Amen.</p>

Statement of Faith 5

We worship God, ever present in the Holy Spirit; who brings this Gospel to fruition, assures us of forgiveness, strengthens us to do God's will, and makes us sisters and brothers of Jesus, sons and daughters of God.



Jesus said: 'I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.'

John 14: 25-27



Our URC Statement of Faith seems to be closer to John's Gospel when it comes to the Holy Spirit than the story told in Acts 2. In Luke's second act to his Gospel, we have a sound like the rush of a violent wind, tongues like fire, bewildered crowds, the appearance of intoxication and sermons about 'the last days'. In John's Gospel the Holy Spirit is an all-round quieter spirit: a 'helper', a teacher, a restorer and sustainer of memory, a comforter and peace bearer. In Acts 2 there is a great deal of trouble, in John 14 a sense of trouble quelled and overcome.

But of course if the Holy Spirit really does remind us of all that Jesus ever said, and if the Holy Spirit really does make us sisters and brothers of Jesus, sons and daughters of

Statement of Faith 4

We worship God revealed in Jesus Christ, the eternal Word of God made flesh; who lived our human life, died for sinners on the cross; who was raised from the dead, and proclaimed by the apostles, Son of God; who lives eternally, as saviour and sovereign, coming in judgement and mercy, to bring us to eternal life.



Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2: 5-11



This portion from Paul’s letter to the Philippians is probably one of the earliest portions of the New Testament and it gives a glimpse into very early Christian thinking about who Jesus was. It’s probably older than the letter itself, something Paul is quoting, perhaps a form of words that he was clinging to in his imprisonment, as we might a much loved hymn.

From earliest times Christians have celebrated and affirmed that in Jesus was seen the very presence of God, emptied (or poured out) into a human life, a life with the low status of an enslaved person, who died a terrible death, and who was then lifted high, exalted, risen, his name above every name. Christians have tried to put this story into words over centuries and the URC Statement of Faith is one more go. It reminds us of the words we read at Christmas from the start of John’s Gospel, of the Word made flesh, and then tells the story of how the Word lived our human life, died on the cross, was raised, and now lives eternally, raising us up to eternal life.

I wonder which part of the great story of Jesus stirs your heart and your faith most deeply? And does it puzzle you, as it puzzles me, that the teaching of Jesus is so little mentioned in statements like these and why the lectionary and the liturgical year leave so little space for us to explore what Jesus said? It matters to me that it was someone ‘in the form of God’ who spoke parables to change lives, who released many from inner pain with words of forgiveness, and who commanded us to love our enemies. We worship the God revealed in that voice and that body, in the whole of the story. And our faith is built on the whole story.



- Susan notes that ideas about Jesus feature more in Christian creeds and affirmations of faith than reflections on his teaching. He is “of one being with the Father” “God from God, light from light, begotten not made” but nothing is said about his message. If you were asked what would you sum up Jesus’ teachings as saying?
- Why do you think Jesus was executed?
- What’s the most important part of the story of Jesus for you? His birth, life, miracles and message, death and resurrection or ascension and coming in glory? (Why is this important for you?)



Jesus,
let me learn your story and may its wonder shape my life.
Can it be true that, in you, God took flesh and shared our life?
And died upon a cross for love of all the world?
And are you now risen, lifted up, raising us up too?
I treasure the words you said,
the stories you told
and the stories told about you,
but let me live by your whole story,
from the beginning at creation,
to the fulfilment at the end of time,
Jesus, Son of God,
my Saviour and my sovereign. Amen.