

## How to Book

By far the easiest way to book a place on this course is to use the online booking facility at the [www.EarlyChurch.co.uk](http://www.EarlyChurch.co.uk) website which ensures that the administration overheads are minimal – please use it if possible!

To book a place using the website, you simply need to select the course, supply an email address and indicate the number of places you wish to book. There is no need to send any money beforehand – just pay on the day.

## How else can I book?

If you do not have Internet access, then please send a note of your name and the number of places you wish to book to: Russell Jefford, One Bell Cottage, 109 Church Street, Chesham, Bucks. HP5 1JD

Please note: unless an SAE is enclosed, no booking confirmation will be sent.

## EarlyChurch.co.uk Website

The website also contains suggestions for further reading, extracts from the writings of various Early Church figures, and the opportunity to join the mailing list.

## Thanks To...

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## All Hallows Convent

The Chapel, All Hallows Convent,  
Ditchingham, Bungay, Suffolk NR35 2DT



## St Michael and All Angels Church

St Michael and All Angels Church, Sycamore  
Road, Amersham, Bucks HP6 5DR



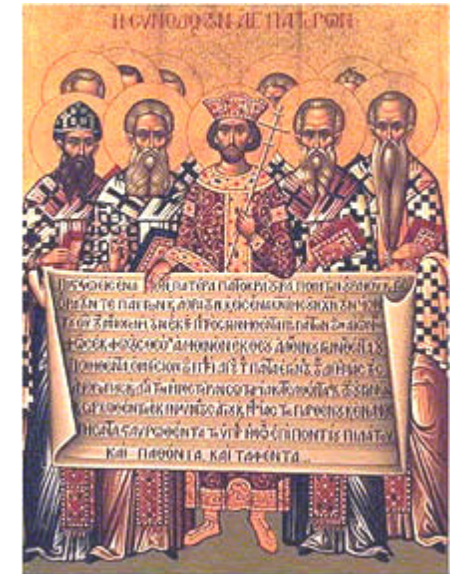
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[www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/getamap](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/getamap)

**EarlyChurch.co.uk**

## The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God

*The formation of the doctrine of the Trinity  
in the fourth century*



**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2005**

1.30pm – 5.00pm

*St Michael and All Angels Church  
Amersham, Bucks*

and

**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2005**

10.30am – 4.00pm

*All Hallows Convent  
Ditchingham, Suffolk*

## The Importance of the Early Church

The Early Church period (c.100–500 AD) saw the clarification and formulation of the essential Christian doctrines accepted by all mainstream churches today.

But besides being occupied with doctrinal issues, the leading figures of the Church of the time were also engaged in taking the teaching passed on by the first apostles and working out its implications for the culture in which they found themselves.

The study of the events & people of the Early Church period is, therefore, not merely of academic interest, but can also provide inspiration for us in the continuing task of wrestling with the message of Christ in contemporary society.

This course is one of a series aiming to introduce some of the major people and events from Early Church history to a wider audience, especially to those with no previous background in the subject. You'll find the presentation style informal but clear, the coffee fairly traded, and the biscuits rather nice...

Additional courses are planned for later in 2005 covering such figures as the three Cappadocian Fathers.

If you'd like to be notified of new courses as they're scheduled, you can use the "Stay in Touch" feature on the [EarlyChurch.co.uk](http://EarlyChurch.co.uk) website (see overleaf).

## The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God

*January 15<sup>th</sup> (Amersham) 22<sup>nd</sup> (Ditchingham)*

The Christian doctrine of God as Trinity was hammered out in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, following the condemnation of the preaching of a popular Alexandrian priest (Arius).

The course will commence by providing an overview of what Arius taught and why, before examining the initial response of the Church (at the council of Nicaea in 325AD) and the text of the *original* Nicene creed.

However, within a few years, the "consensus" reached at Nicaea was rejected by a number of different groups within the Church, and over more than 50 years, the search for alternative formulations continued.

Numerous councils were held during this time, often resulting in one or more "better" creeds which were received with varying degrees of success. An overview of a number of these additional councils, and their alternative formulations, will be provided, in order to bring out the different sides of the debate.

The end of this period of intense debate & controversy was marked by the classical expression of Trinitarian faith in the creed produced at the council of Constantinople (in 381AD). The course will therefore end with a comparison of this creed with the one produced at Nicaea.

## Course Outline

The course will be divided into several sessions, with breaks for refreshments, each session consisting of a period of teaching with time for questions. The longer day at Ditchingham allows for a lunch break and time for reflection in the convent grounds.

We shall use English translations of key documents (such as Arius' own letters) as an aid to understanding the sometimes alien language and concepts used during the debate. Active participation will be encouraged!

### Who is the course aimed at?

Anyone who's read this far and is still interested! A complete lack of previous experience or study is assumed, although clergy, lay readers or others with some knowledge will still find much of interest.

### How much does the course cost?

The full cost is £10 per person at both locations. At Ditchingham, a concessionary rate of £7 is also available.

### Lunch

Please bring a packed lunch for the day at Ditchingham.

### Speaker

*Russell Jefford* holds an MA in Patristics (Early Church history), is an Associate of All Hallows, and sees much in the writings of the Early Church Fathers which is inspirational and of relevance to contemporary Christianity.