



# ANGLICAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

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## Fact sheet

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### What we stand for

Members of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) embrace Anglican orthodoxy – the biblically-faithful, authentically-Anglican way of following Jesus and being part of the “One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church”. This orthodoxy is defined by and centered on the classic formularies – or foundational principles of the Anglican tradition throughout the world.

### Theological Statement

*This Theological Statement was issued by the Common Cause Partnership – the precursor to the Anglican Church in North America – and was adopted in 2007 by all founding partners of ACNA.*

We believe and confess Jesus Christ to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no one comes to the Father but by Him. Therefore, the Common Cause Partnership identifies the following seven elements as characteristic of the Anglican Way, and essential for membership:

1. We confess the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired Word of God, containing all things necessary for salvation, and to be the final authority and unchangeable standard for Christian faith and life.
2. We confess Baptism and the Supper of the Lord to be Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself in the Gospel, and thus to be ministered with unfailing use of His words of institution and of the elements ordained by Him.
3. We confess the godly historic Episcopate as an inherent part of the apostolic faith and practice, and therefore as integral to the fullness and unity of the Body of Christ.
4. We confess as proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture the historic faith of the undivided church as declared in the three Catholic Creeds: the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian.
5. Concerning the seven Councils of the undivided Church, we affirm the teaching of the first four Councils and the Christological clarifications of the fifth, sixth and seventh Councils, in so far as they are agreeable to the Holy Scriptures.
6. We receive The Book of Common Prayer as set forth by the Church of England in 1662, together with the Ordinal attached to the same, as a standard for Anglican doctrine and discipline, and, with the Books which preceded it, as the standard for the Anglican tradition of worship.
7. We receive the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion of 1562, taken in their literal and grammatical sense, as expressing the Anglican response to certain doctrinal issues controverted at that time, and as expressing the fundamental principles of authentic Anglican belief.

In all these things, the Common Cause Partnership is determined by the help of God to hold and maintain as the Anglican Way has received them the doctrine, discipline and worship of Christ.

"The Anglican Communion," Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher wrote, "has no peculiar thought, practice, creed or confession of its own. It has only the Catholic Faith of the ancient Catholic Church, as preserved in the Catholic Creeds and maintained in the Catholic and Apostolic constitution of Christ's Church from the beginning." It may licitly teach as necessary for salvation nothing but what is read in the Holy Scriptures as God's Word written or may be proved thereby. It therefore embraces and affirms such teachings of the ancient Fathers and Councils of the Church as are agreeable to the Scriptures, and thus to be counted apostolic. The Church has no authority to innovate: it is obliged continually, and particularly in times of renewal or reformation, to return to "the faith once delivered to the saints."

To be an Anglican, then, is not to embrace a distinct version of Christianity, but a distinct way of being a "Mere Christian," at the same time evangelical, apostolic, catholic, reformed, and Spirit-filled.

## Jerusalem Declaration

In June 2008, the Global Anglican Future Conference issued the GAFCon statement which contained the Jerusalem Declaration. The Jerusalem Declaration has come to be a foundation for fellowship in the global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans, a movement initiated by GAFCon.

In the name of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit:

We, the participants in the Global Anglican Future Conference, have met in the land of Jesus' birth. We express our loyalty as disciples to the King of kings, the Lord Jesus. We joyfully embrace his command to proclaim the reality of his kingdom which he first announced in this land. The gospel of the kingdom is the good news of salvation, liberation and transformation for all. In light of the above, we agree to chart a way forward together that promotes and protects the biblical gospel and mission to the world, solemnly declaring the following tenets of orthodoxy which underpin our Anglican identity.

1. We rejoice in the gospel of God through which we have been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. Because God first loved us, we love him and as believers bring forth fruits of love, ongoing repentance, lively hope and thanksgiving to God in all things.
2. We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God written and to contain all things necessary for salvation. The Bible is to be translated, read, preached, taught and obeyed in its plain and canonical sense, respectful of the church's historic and consensual reading.
3. We uphold the four Ecumenical Councils and the three historic Creeds as expressing the rule of faith of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
4. We uphold the Thirty-nine Articles as containing the true doctrine of the Church agreeing with God's Word and as authoritative for Anglicans today.
5. We gladly proclaim and submit to the unique and universal Lordship of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, humanity's only Saviour from sin, judgement and hell, who lived the life we could not live and died the death that we deserve. By his atoning death and glorious resurrection, he secured the redemption of all who come to him in repentance and faith.
6. We rejoice in our Anglican sacramental and liturgical heritage as an expression of the gospel, and we uphold the 1662 Book of Common Prayer as a true and authoritative standard of worship and prayer, to be translated and locally adapted for each culture.
7. We recognise that God has called and gifted bishops, priests and deacons in historic succession to equip all the people of God for their ministry in the world. We uphold the classic Anglican Ordinal as an authoritative standard of clerical orders.
8. We acknowledge God's creation of humankind as male and female and the unchangeable standard of Christian marriage between one man and one woman as the proper place for sexual intimacy and the basis of the family. We repent of our failures to maintain this standard and call for a renewed commitment to lifelong fidelity in marriage and abstinence for those who are not married.
9. We gladly accept the Great Commission of the risen Lord to make disciples of all nations, to seek those who do not know Christ and to baptise, teach and bring new believers to maturity.
10. We are mindful of our responsibility to be good stewards of God's creation, to uphold and advocate justice in society, and to seek relief and empowerment of the poor and needy.
11. We are committed to the unity of all those who know and love Christ and to building authentic ecumenical relationships. We recognise the orders and jurisdiction of those Anglicans who uphold orthodox faith and practice, and we encourage them to join us in this declaration.
12. We celebrate the God-given diversity among us which enriches our global fellowship, and we acknowledge freedom in secondary matters. We pledge to work together to seek the mind of Christ on issues that divide us.
13. We reject the authority of those churches and leaders who have denied the orthodox faith in word or deed. We pray for them and call on them to repent and return to the Lord.
14. We rejoice at the prospect of Jesus' coming again in glory, and while we await this final event of history, we praise him for the way he builds up his church through his Spirit by miraculously changing lives.