

# WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN ANGLICAN

The Scriptures and the Gospels, the Apostolic Church and the early Church Fathers, are the foundation of the Anglican faith and worship. The basic tenants of being Anglican are:

- \* We view the Old and New Testaments 'as containing all things necessary for salvation' and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.
- \* We understand the Apostles' Creed as the Baptismal symbol, and the Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith.
- \* The two sacraments ordained by Christ himself - Baptism and the Supper of the Lord - are administered with unfailing use of Christ's words of institution, and the elements are ordained by him.
- \* The historic episcopate is locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of his Church.

Anglicans trace their Christian roots back to the early Church, and their specifically Anglican identity to the post-Reformation expansion of the Church of England and other Episcopal or Anglican Churches. Historically, there were two main stages in the development and spread of the Communion. Beginning with the seventeenth century, Anglicanism was established alongside colonisation in the United States, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa. The second state began in the eighteenth century when missionaries worked to establish Anglican churches in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

As a worldwide family of churches, the Anglican Communion has more than 77 million adherents in 38 Provinces spreading across 161 countries. Located on every continent, Anglicans speak many languages and come from different races and cultures. Although the churches are autonomous, they are also uniquely unified through their history, their theology, their worship and their relationship to the ancient See of Canterbury.

Anglicans uphold the Catholic and Apostolic faith. Following the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Churches are committed to the proclamation of the good news of the Gospel to the whole creation. In practice this is based on the revelation contained in Holy Scripture and the Catholic creeds, and is interpreted in light of Christian tradition, scholarship, reason and experience.

By Baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, a person is made one with Christ and received

into the fellowship of the Church. This sacrament of initiation is open to children as well as to adults.

Central to worship for Anglicans is the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, also called the Lord's Supper or the Mass. In this offering of prayer and praise, the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are recalled through the proclamation of the word and the celebration of the sacrament. Other important rites, commonly called sacraments, include Confirmation, Holy Orders, Reconciliation, Marriage and Anointing of the Sick.

Worship is at the very heart of Anglicanism. Its styles vary from simple to elaborate, or even a combination. The great uniting text is The Book of Common Prayer, in its various revisions throughout the Communion. The Book of Common Prayer, alongside additional liturgies gives expression to the comprehensiveness found within the Church whose principles reflect that of the via media in relation to its own and other Christian Churches.

The Book of Common Prayer (1662) is a permanent feature of the Church of England's worship. It is loved for its beauty of language and the services which it contains are widely used (in their entirety or in adapted form). It is also the foundation of a tradition of common prayer and is a fundamental source of Church of England doctrine.

The Scottish Church made certain modifications to The Book of Common Prayer and its wholehearted retention by the new Episcopal Church of the USA as well as the emerging dominions and dependencies, ensured its place as a key ingredient of the growing Anglican Communion.

The Lambeth Conferences of the 1950s and 1960s called for more up-to-date national liturgies and this is going on today. No matter how distinctive each is, they are all clearly of the lineage of The Book of Common Prayer.

Another distinguishing feature of the corporate nature of Anglicanism is that it is an interdependent Church, where parishes, dioceses, and provinces help each other to achieve by mutual support in terms of financial assistance and the sharing of other resources.

To be an Anglican is to be on a journey of faith to God supported by a fellowship of co-believers who are dedicated to finding Him by prayer and service.

## HOW WE WORSHIP

### The Place of Worship

As you enter, you will notice an atmosphere of worship and reverence. Anglican churches are built in

many architectural styles; but whether the church be small or large, elaborate or plain, your eye is carried to the altar, and to the cross. So our thoughts are taken at once to Christ and to God whose house the church is.

On or near the altar there are candles to remind us that Christ is the "Light of the world" (**John 8:12**). Often there are flowers, to beautify God's house and to recall the resurrection of Jesus.

On one side at the front of the church, there may be a lectern-pulpit, or stand, for the proclamation of the Word; here the Scriptures are read and the sermon is preached. In many churches, however, the lectern is separate from the pulpit and stands on the opposite side of the church.

### The Act of Worship

Anglican church services are congregational. In the pews you will likely find the Book of Common Prayer, though some countries use supplementary prayer books (Canada, for instance, uses the Book of Alternative Services regularly.) This enables the congregation to share fully in every service. In the Book of Common Prayer, the large print is the actual service. The smaller print gives directions to ministers and people for conduct of the service.

You may wonder when to stand or kneel. Practices vary---even among individual Anglicans. The general rule is to stand to sing---hymns (found in the Hymnal in the pews) and other songs (many of them from the Holy Bible) called canticles or chants and printed as part of the service. We stand, too, to say our affirmation of faith, the Creed; and for the reading of the Gospel in the Holy Eucharist. Psalms are sung or said sitting or standing. We sit during readings from the Old Testament or New Testament Letters, the sermon, and the choir anthems. We stand or kneel for prayer to show our gratefulness to God for accepting us as children or as an act of humility before God.

### The Regular Services

The principal service is the Holy Eucharist (Also called The Lord's Supper and Mass). In some Anglican churches it is celebrated quite simply, without music, early on Sunday morning. Weekday celebrations also are frequently without music, and without sermon. When celebrated at a later hour on Sundays, or on other great Christian days such as Christmas, music and a sermon are customary.

Another service is Morning Prayer (Mattins). The parallel evening service is Evening Prayer (Evensong).

These services consist of psalms, Bible readings, and prayers; and may include a sermon. They may be with or without music. Mattins and Evensong are said daily by the clergy.

While some parts of the services are always the same, others change. At the Holy Eucharist, for example, two or three Bible selections are read. These change each Sunday. So do the psalms. Certain of the prayers also change, in order to provide variety. Page numbers for parts of the service printed elsewhere in the Book are usually announced or given in the service leaflet. But do not be embarrassed to ask your neighbour for the page number.

You will find the services of the Anglican Church beautiful in their ordered dignity, God-centered, and yet mindful of the nature and needs of human beings.

### **Before and After**

It is the custom upon entering church to kneel in one's pew for a prayer of personal preparation for worship. In many churches it is also the custom to bow to the altar on entering and leaving the church as an act of reverence for Christ.

Most Anglicans do not talk in church before a service but use this time for personal meditation and devotions. At the end of the service some persons kneel for a private prayer before leaving. Others sometimes sit to listen to the organ postlude.

### **Coming and Going**

If there are ushers they will greet you, and may escort you to a pew. If you desire, they will answer your questions about the service. Pews are usually unreserved in Anglican churches. Following the service the pastor greets the people as they leave.

### **What Clergy Wear**

To add to the beauty and festivity of the services, and to signify their special ministries, the clergy and other ministers wear vestments. Choir vestments usually consist of an undergown called a cassock (usually black) and a white, gathered overgown called a surplice. The clergy may also wear cassock and surplice.

Another familiar vestment is the alb, a white tunic with sleeves that covers the body from neck to ankles. Over it (or over the surplice) ordained ministers wear a stole, a narrow band of colored fabric. Deacons wear the stole over one shoulder, priests and bishops over both shoulders.

At the Holy Eucharist a bishop or priest frequently wears a chasuble (a circular garment that envelopes the body) over the alb and stole. The deacon's corresponding vestment has sleeves and is called a dalmatic. In some parishes the Priest and Deacon wear a Maniple (a small band of colored fabric worn over the left arm). The Maniple is a symbol of servanthood. Bishops sometimes wear a special headcovering called a mitre.

Stoles, chasubles, and dalmatics, as well as altar coverings, are usually made of rich fabrics. Their color changes with the seasons and holy days of the Church Year. The most frequently used colors are white, red, violet, and green.

### **The Church Year**

The Anglican Church observes the traditional Christian calendar. The season of Advent, during which we prepare for Christmas, begins on the Sunday closest to November 30. Christmas itself lasts twelve days, after which we celebrate the feast of the Epiphany (January 6).

Lent, the forty days of preparation for Easter, begins on Ash Wednesday. Easter season lasts fifty days, concluding on the feast of Pentecost.

During these times the Bible readings are chosen for their appropriateness to the season. During the rest of the year--the season after Epiphany and the long season after Pentecost (except for a few special Sundays)--the New Testament is read sequentially from Sunday to Sunday. The Old Testament lesson corresponds in theme with one of the New Testament readings.

### **You Will Not be Embarrassed**

When you visit an Anglican church, you will be our respected and welcome guest. You will not be singled out in an embarrassing way, nor asked to stand before the congregation nor to come forward. You will worship God with us.

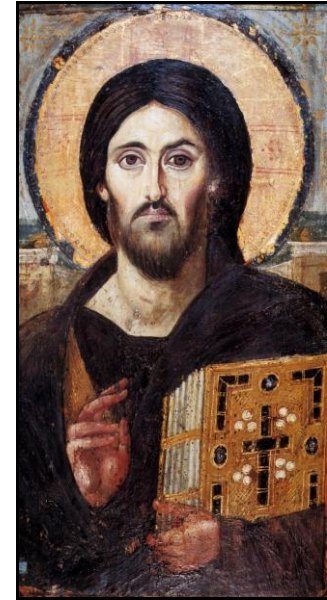
Should you wish to know more about the Anglican Church or how one becomes an Anglican, the priest will gladly answer your questions and suggest the way to membership.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE:**

A Welcome to the Anglican Church of Canada  
A Brief History of the Anglican Communion & ACC  
A Brief History of the Church of England

*You will find these Brochures at the back of the church*

## **WHAT IS AN ANGLICAN & HOW WE WORSHIP**



**ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA  
DIOCESE OF QUEBEC  
DEANERY OF ST FRANCIS  
ST FRANCIS REGIONAL MINISTRY**

**THE RIGHT DENNIS DRAINVILLE  
BISHOP OF QUEBEC**

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FOR SERVICE TIMES, CONTACTS FOR THE VARIOUS  
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