

4 Ordered for Ministry



Anglicans value the ministry of the Whole People of God. We have structured ourselves in ways that allow the gifts and callings of lay people and ordained people to be used to further the coming of God's Kingdom. One of those ways is Synod (more about Synod later).

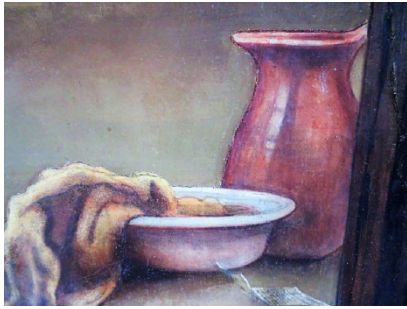
Baptism is the beginning of ministry. After someone is baptised they are told, "may you grow in the Holy Spirit, fulfil your ministry and follow Christ your whole life long." "Ministry" is not just about what happens in church (the rosters!). Our calling is primarily to follow Christ, to live as God's people. Our daily work is an expression of this, and so we're encouraged to find ways of connecting our work with our calling to follow Christ. The ministry of lay persons is first of all in the world, in their places of work and in their homes and communities where they enjoy their leisure, witnessing to Christ using the gifts the Spirit gives them. Within the Church they share in the leadership of worship and in government (for example being liturgist or on vestry).

- ❖ *How do you understand "ministry"?*
- ❖ *How do you live out your faith in the places where you spend most of your time: at work or school, in your leisure activities, and at home?*
- ❖ *How can the church better support and equip you for your ministry in the world?*

Ordained ministry

The first calling on the lives of all Christians is the call to be fully ourselves, to grow into the people that God has made us to be. Our call to be disciples of Jesus is to follow Jesus wherever that leads. Most Christians will exercise their discipleship, their ministry, as lay people. Some men and women, however, will be called to the ordained life, exercising the ministry of a deacon, a priest, or a bishop. They are called and empowered to fulfil this ordained ministry in order to enable the whole mission of the Church.

The ministry of a deacon is to be a servant, both within the church and in the wider community. They serve in the name of Christ, and in doing so they remind



the whole church that serving others is fundamental to all ministry. Deacons have a special responsibility to care for those in need. Some deacons are later ordained to the priesthood (these are known as transitional deacons); others are called to a permanent diaconal ministry – vocational deacons. This is a distinct and equal order of ministry.

Vocational deacons have many and varied roles within the church: as chaplains, community workers, within parishes, and within other organisations.

The ministry of a priest is to build up the body of Christ through the ministry of Word and Sacrament, pastoral care and teaching. This is about strengthening the baptised, and leading them as witnesses to Christ in the world, proclaiming God's word, encouraging others in their discipleship, and taking their part in the prophetic word of Christ. Priests preside at the Eucharist and administer the sacraments. Some, but not all of them, serve as vicars of parishes or as chaplains in schools, hospitals, or other places where people live and work.



The ministry of a bishop is to exercise godly leadership in the part of the church that is committed to their care. They are called to be pastors and shepherds of Christ's flock, teaching the faith, and being a focus of the church's unity and mission in the world. A bishop's symbol of office, the crozier, is modelled on a shepherd's crook. Part of a bishop's role is to confirm, and to ordain, strengthening disciples for witness and service in the world and setting aside people to serve the local congregation in the name of Christ and the universal church.

Some clergy exercise a bi-vocational ministry – being called to work both within the church and in secular organisations. In the Diocese of Waiapu there are a number of these, with roles in both parishes and in other organisations (the Hato Hone St John Ambulance service, for example). This is not just about non-stipendiary ministry (those not dependent on the church for their primary income) but about choosing to work both for the church and in a secular role. St Paul, with his tent-making, is an early example of this model of ministry.

❖ At their ordination, those being ordained deacons or priests are presented by both a priest and a lay person (bishops are presented by a layperson, a priest, and a bishop): what does this say to you?

- ❖ ***What might be some implications of bi-vocational ministry for the ministry of the church as a whole?***

Episcopally led, synodically governed

The basic unit within Anglicanism, as with all episcopal churches, is the diocese. This has been the case for many centuries: an early theologian, Ignatius of Antioch (c35-108CE), emphasised the role of the bishop as the chief authority in each place. We are episcopally led (“episcopal” comes from the word in the Greek New Testament we tend to translate as “bishop” – it originally meant “overseer”): the bishop is the leader of the diocese. Alongside the Bishop is Synod, the representative governing body which comprises lay people, clergy and bishops. That means that while the Bishop leads the diocese, we all have a role to play in its governance. Each diocese has its own Synod, which meets annually, with lay representatives of parishes elected every two years. In between meetings of Synod a representative body known as Standing Committee functions as “Synod out of session” and acts as the governance body for the diocese.

Meetings of Synod are, in effect, the Annual General Meeting for the diocese, in that they receive reports, elect members to some bodies (eg Standing Committee and General Synod) and vote on a budget. Because Synod is a gathering of people from every parish it’s a key forum for discussing important issues and passing legislation which affects the way the diocese operates.



- ❖ ***If you have been part of Synod, what highlights (or lowlights) can you remember?***
- ❖ ***Many organisations have some form of governance body: what does it mean for the church that its body includes people from all three “houses” (bishop, clergy, and laity)?***

A number of dioceses together make up a province (ours is “The Anglican Church of Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia”), and these provinces together comprise the Anglican Communion. It's worth noting that the units within Anglicanism are structural and administrative – but above, all relational.

The Anglican Communion

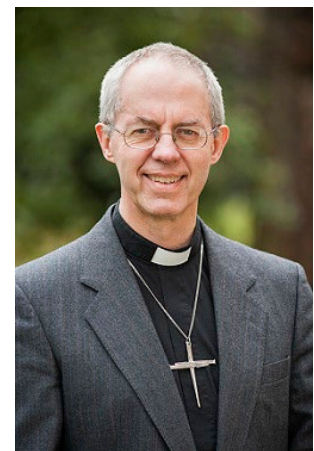
The Anglican Communion is a worldwide family of churches, committed to each other and in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Communion's spiritual head. There's tens of millions of Anglicans, from more than 165 countries, in 41 provinces and 5 extra-provincial areas – it's BIG. The different churches are united through history, theology, worship, and their relationship to the Archbishop of Canterbury. But there's no central authority in the Anglican



Communion: all the provinces are autonomous and free to make their own decisions in their own ways. Such a large body might drift apart and so there are four “Instruments of Unity” that hold it together: the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference, the Primates’

Meeting, and the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC).

The Archbishop of Canterbury is a focus for Anglican unity. He or she is the senior bishop in the Anglican Communion as “first among equals” and calls the Lambeth Conference, chairs the Primates’ Meeting, and is President of ACC. The current Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby (see photo) is the 105th person to hold that position. The Lambeth Conference is held every 10 years, attended (ideally) by all the bishops of the Anglican Communion. It was last held in 2022 – the photo above shows the bishops from Aotearoa New Zealand there. It's not a Synod, and doesn't make binding decisions on doctrine or matters of church discipline. In 2022, 97 of the bishops attending Lambeth were female, up from 18 in 2008, and 11 in 1998 (the first Lambeth Conference to include female bishops).



The Anglican Consultative Council comprises bishops, clergy and laity, members who are appointed or elected by their provinces. It's the only one which includes lay people and which can claim to be representative, and it meets approximately every three years. The Primates’ Meeting is a gathering of the presiding or senior bishops of the autonomous provinces in the Anglican Communion. They get together for “leisurely thought, prayer and deep consultation.” Again, all this is about relationships.

❖ ***How would YOU go about holding such a huge organisation together?***



The Anglican Communion's emblem is the Compass Rose (shown here in a stylised form at Canterbury Cathedral, and on the front of this study). At the centre is St George's Cross, a reminder of the origins of the Anglican Communion and linking the past to the Communion today. Encircling the cross is a band bearing the inscription "The Truth shall make you free" (John 8:32) in the original New Testament Greek. From the band radiate the points of the compass, symbolising the worldwide spread of Anglicanism.

Above the shield, at the north, is a mitre, the symbol of apostolic order essential to all churches and provinces in the Anglican Communion.

- ❖ ***"The Truth shall make you free" on the Compass Rose acts as a motto for the Anglican Communion. What does that say to you?***
- ❖ ***Anglican scholar Richard Giles has said, "As Anglicans we learn to be people on the move, emerging from safe positions to take hold of truth and of life with quiet, unassuming confidence." How does that fit with your experience?***

Some Anglican History

The Anglican Church was started by Henry VIII trying to get a divorce, right? Wrong! It's much older than that.

The foundation of the Anglican Church is often described as having begun with the arrival in 597CE of St Augustine of Canterbury, the first Archbishop of Canterbury. That's why the present holder of that office, Justin Welby, is listed as the 105th in the line, thus emphasising that the *Ecclesia Anglicana* "the English Church" began way back then – and not with Henry VIII.



Anglican roots really go all the way back to the early Church, while our separate identity is usually traced to the Reformation (in particular to the arrangements made under Elizabeth I) and to the post-Reformation expansion of the Church of England. Archbishop Michael Ramsey put it like this: "When an Anglican is asked

‘Where was your Church before the Reformation?’ his best answer is to put the counter-question, ‘Where was your face before you washed it?’” After the on again – off again relationship with Rome during the Tudor period (on, then off, under Henry VIII, off under Edward VI, on again under Mary I, then finally off under Elizabeth I), things settled down. The Elizabethan settlement (1559) was an inclusive middle way between divergent religious positions in English Christianity, positions that had been influenced by theological debates going on in Europe. The 1559 Book of Common Prayer early in Elizabeth's reign was again a middle course between previous catholic (1549) and protestant (1552) versions. The Elizabethan Settlement kept much of traditional catholic faith and practice, but lost the Pope. It allowed some freedom for individual conscience but required uniformity of worship, meaning that faithful Christians with differing theological convictions could find a home in a wide English church. We don't have to believe exactly the same things in order to worship together.



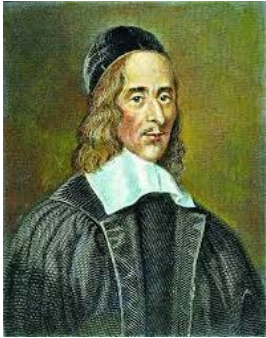
When the English people settled in other places and grew into the British Empire they took their religion with them, and eventually overseas parishes and dioceses of the “Church of England” became autonomous provinces of the Communion. Even after the end of the colonial era, the Anglican church continued to spread by the missionary work of individuals and organisations, and so we have Anglican churches in every part of the globe, bound together by a shared and inherited identity which includes traditions, values and the Book of Common Prayer. Today, “The Anglican Church” means those who worship in churches that are part of the Anglican Communion, and “Anglican” is not just “English.”

- ❖ *That balance between catholic (“high church”) and protestant (“low church”) traditions remains part of Anglicanism today. How have you seen this play out in the lives of Anglicans you have met?*
- ❖ *“There is only one Christ, Jesus, one faith. All else is a dispute over trifles.” (Elizabeth's response to the Catholic/Protestant divide). Do you agree?*

THOUGHTS / QUESTIONS

Meet the Family

George Herbert (1593-1633), Parish priest and Poet



George Herbert was a classical scholar and musician who gave up a promising career to study for the priesthood, believing that the “cure of souls” was the greatest work anyone could undertake. He was ordained deacon in 1626 and priest in 1630; unfortunately, his ministry as a parish priest was brief as he died in 1633. His poems are full of warmth and a genuine love of godliness, and some are still used as hymns: “Teach me, my God and king”; “Let all the world in every corner sing.” He is remembered in the calendar on 27 February under “George Herbert and All Sainly Parish Priests.”

Mary Sumner (1828-1921) Founder of the Mothers’ Union

In 1876 Mary Sumner founded the Mothers’ Union in the parish of Alresford where her husband was rector. She was inspired by her own happy family life and by a vision about the Christian responsibilities of motherhood. Mary gathered together women, many young and inexperienced and from different social backgrounds, for weekly classes. During her lifetime she saw the organisation spread throughout Great Britain and overseas and become an important part of the Anglican Communion.



Frances Perkins (1880-1965) Social Reformer



Frances Perkins was a public servant and prophetic witness who served as President FD Roosevelt’s Secretary of Labor for 12 years (he called her “the cornerstone of his administration”). She was the architect of the “New Deal” – the key social policy legislation – and an advocate for workers. She saw what she did as her ministry, and she remained active in teaching, social justice advocacy, and in the mission of the Episcopal Church until her death.

How is your life (and your parish) ordered for ministry?