

**Living as an
Episcopalian.
The Church:
Organization,
Ministry and
Mission**

Living as an Episcopalian

1. History
2. Worship
3. The Church's Teaching and the Bible
4. Spirituality
- 5. The Church: Organization,
Ministry and Mission**

The Church: Organization, Ministry and Mission

What is the Church?

Ministry

Organization

Mission

**What is the
Church?**

What is the Church?

essence:

“wherever Christ is, there is also the
catholic church”

- Ignatius of Antioch, 1st century

What is the Church?

“wherever Christ is. . .”

“Is” in what way? What kind of presence?

1. Christ is present through the proclamation of the Word of God
2. Christ is present sacramentally. The Church is a kind of a sacrament

What is the Church?

1. Christ is present through the proclamation of the Word

the church is the community that comes into being wherever the word of God is faithfully proclaimed and received

- “Wherever two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them” Matt 18:20

the church is thus fundamentally an “event;”
the institution is secondary / incidental

What is the Church?

2. Christ is present sacramentally

The church is a sacrament of Christ, or like a sacrament.

- Church is the visible and historical sign of Christ present in the world
- Church is “the prolongation of Christ in time and space”

church is thus the community of people in communion with God

the institution has fundamental importance
(but not its particular structure)

What is the Church?

Implications of the Church as where Christ is present sacramentally and in the Word

The Church is the People of God

- the new people of God continuous with Israel

The Church is Communion or Fellowship

- a sharing of a common life:
 - between God and each believer
 - between individual believers

What is the Church?

True Church as Visible vs. Invisible

Invisible:

- people who are / will be saved, the elect
- known only to God

Visible:

- people distinguished by outward signs of baptism, affirmation of a creed, participation in the Eucharist
- a community of fallible, imperfect, flawed human beings
- Article XIX: affirms true church is the visible church

What is the Church?

The “notes” or “marks” of the Church

One

Holy

Catholic

Apostolic

What is the Church?

“Notes” or “Marks”

One

unity that we can affirm:

- theological unity “where Christ is, there is also the church”
- “biological” or “organic” unity.

Historical evolution of the church like the development of branches of a tree (still a single tree)

disunity:

- sociologically, culturally
- organizationally
- cannot share the Eucharist together

What is the Church?

“Notes” or “Marks”

Holy

holy = being set apart by God for God
there is no mention in the New Testament of
“institutional holiness”
the only holiness is the holiness of the
individual
therefore: the church can be holy only to the
degree that the individuals making it up
are holy

What is the Church?

“Notes” or “Marks”

Holy

*Since all individuals are also sinful,
we must say:*

- the community of the church is *holy and sinful at the same time*
- the church is part of the battlefield between God’s Spirit and evil in the world
- front runs not only through the holy church and the unholy world
- but also through the middle of the human heart

What is the Church?

“Notes” or “Marks”

Catholic

catholic: referring to the universal, total, entire church as distinct from the local church

catholic church: a community concerned with the whole, universal, world-wide church

What is the Church?

“Notes” or “Marks”

Apostolic

call to live in accord with the testimony of
the apostles

- made concrete in the exercising of the
apostolic ministry

Ministry

Ministry

The general ministry of the people of God

The special ministries or Orders (“The Holy Orders):

- bishops
- presbyters
- deacons

Ministry

The General Ministry of the People of God

the general ministry of the people of God:
the continuation of the work of Christ
(St. Paul: the work of reconciliation)

- *service* to fellow human beings
- *proclamation* and witness
- *sacrifice* and self-giving

the whole church (membership through baptism) is a royal priesthood and kingdom of priests (I Peter 2:5,9, Rev 1:6, 5:10, 20:6)

mission: outgoing, expanding aspect of ministry

Ministry

The Special Ministries

early second century: *threefold ministry*

bishop in each town

presbyter in charge of each house church

deacons assisting

third century

Apostolic Tradition by Hippolytus:

- bishops ordained by other bishops
- presbyters ordained by bishops with assistance of other presbyters
- deacons ordained by bishops alone

presbyters called priests (mid 3rd century)

Ministry

The Special Ministries

specific ministry of the clergy is additional
to the general ministries

“guardian of the word and sacraments”

- faithfully proclaim the word
- faithfully administer the sacraments

Ministry

The Special Ministries

involves:

- inner call
- supplemented by outward call of the Church (selection, recommendation)
- inward and outward calls are “completed” in ordination by a bishop
- a sacramental act
 - divine dimension = “conferring of grace”
 - *new way of being* in the Church

Organization

Organization

The Parish Church

Church Members

Prayer Book:

- “The Church is the Body of which Jesus Christ is the Head and of which all baptized persons are members”

Members of Episcopal Church:

Canon Law:

- baptized in the Episcopal Church, or baptism in another church recorded in the Episcopal Church
- Communicant members: have received communion at least 3 times in previous year

Organization

The Parish Church

Governance:

Annual Parish Meeting

- elects Vestry
- report of rector
- report of Wardens
- treasurer's report

Organization

The Parish Church

Vestry

senior officers: Wardens (elected by
parish or Vestry)

management of finances and property of
the church

Rector

conduct of the services
teaching of the faith

Organization

The Parish Church

Choosing Clergy Leadership

Search Committee formed

Vestry with advice of bishop chooses
interim priest

National Church and diocese provides
names of priests to Search Committee

Resumes reviewed, interviews conducted

Recommendation made to Vestry

Vestry elects new priest

Bishop must approve selection

Organization

The Parish Church

Removing Clergy Leadership:

possible only with:

- due cause
- bishop's consent

Organization

The Parish Church

Parish self-supporting:

- priest is “**rector**” (Latin for “ruler:”
presides over Vestry Meetings)

non self-supporting congregations

(“missionary congregations”):

- priest is “**vicar**” (one who represents
another [the bishop])

Organization

The Diocese

size: ranges from ~20 parishes to nearly 200 parishes

provides:

- resources and guidance
- means of working in common mission

each parish assessed certain monetary amount to pay for work of diocese

Organization The Diocese

work directed by **Bishop** and **Diocesan
Council**

- administers budget and programs

Organization The Diocese

Annual Convention

delegates

- each parish sends lay delegates
- all priest are delegates

adopts yearly budget and programs

elects **Diocesan Council**

votes on important issues and election of
individuals requires majority approval of
both lay and clergy delegates

Organization

The Diocese

other bishops:

- **Suffragans** - additional bishops elected to assist diocesan bishop
- **Assisting Bishop** – a clergy who is already a bishop who is appointed by diocesan bishop to assist him/her.
- **Coadjutor** - bishop elected to serve with a retiring bishop in interim period

Organization

The Diocese

Selection of New Bishop

Nominating Committee formed

Special Diocesan Convention Held

- all priests
- lay delegates from each parish
- candidate must have majority vote of
all clergy and all laity

election of bishop must have approval of
majority of the other dioceses

each bishop consecrated by at least three
other bishops

- as required at Council of Nicaea **325**
A.D.

Organization

The National Church

diocese grouped into 9 provinces

overseas / special dioceses:

- Navajoland
- Convocation of parishes in Europe
- Bishop for the Armed Services
- dioceses in Episcopal Church of Mexico
- dioceses in Virgin Islands, Haiti,
Dominican Republic, Honduras,
Columbia, Ecuador

Organization

The National Church

work directed by **Presiding Bishop** and
Executive Council

Presiding Bishop:

chief pastor and executive of the church
charged to “speak God’s words to the
Church and to the world, as the
representative of this Church and its
episcopate in its corporate capacity”

visit every diocese

consult with bishops and diocesan
representatives

Organization

The National Church

General Convention of the Episcopal Church

- held every three years
- elects Presiding Bishop and Executive Council
- two houses:
 - House of Bishops* (all bishops)
 - House of Deputies* (four lay members and four clergy from each diocese)
- adopts budget, resolutions on matters of concern to church

Organization

The Worldwide Anglican Communion

from the “Church of England” established in former colonies of the British empire from missionary work in non-colonial countries

1867: first Lambeth Conference

- residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lambeth Palace
- 87 bishops attended

held every ten years since (except WWII)

1998 Lambeth Conference

- about 800 bishops attended

Organization

The Worldwide Anglican Communion

Lambeth Conference for “conferring” not
“legislating”

statements issued on consensus opinions
each national church free to make its own
decisions about common life

Organization

The Worldwide Anglican Communion

Anglican Congresses

- held twice in last half 20th century
- delegates: priests, bishops, laity

Anglican Consultative Council

- elected membership bishops, priests, laity
- provides regular consultation between members of the Communion

Anglican Executive Officer

- facilitate communication among the Churches

Mission

Mission

Foreign Mission

Volunteers for Mission

- Episcopalians with particular skills sent in response to requests from other Anglican Churches

Partners in Mission

- Churches of Anglican Communion exploring ways of older and younger churches working together, sharing resources