

Living as an Episcopalian 1. History

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1. 16th Century

1.1. Reformation in England

1.1.1. Introduction: A Gradual Protestantization

The Reformation in England:

- involved a "gradual Protestantization" of the English church and people over the reigns of four monarchs
- can be thought of as an act of state imposed from above by a willful king, which was received in a ground of political rebellion, movements for church reform

1.1.2. Calls for Reform Before Henry VIII

Calls for reform in the English church were present before Henry VIII:

- John Wyclif and the Lollards
- Erasmus visited **1499, 1506**, and lectured at Cambridge **1511-1514**. Knew:
 - John Fisher (**1459-1535**) bishop of Rochester
 - Sir Thomas More (**1478-1535**)
- **1520**: group of Cambridge scholar routinely gathered at White Horse Inn, "Little Germany," to discuss the new doctrines of Martin Luther

1.1.3. Henry VIII, Defender of the Faith

Henry VIII:

- had an impressive intellect
- was a strong leader
- was well-read in Scholastic theology and humanism
- popular
- appointed Thomas Wolsey (**1474?-1530**) as Lord Chancellor,
 - a superb diplomat
- initially was a strong defender of the Catholic faith:
 - **1515**: Pope Leo X made Wolsey a Cardinal
 - use of Luther's writings forbidden
 - **1521**: Henry published *Assertion of the Seven Sacraments* against Luther. Pope called Henry "Defender of the Faith"

1.1.4. Henry's Marriage to Catherine of Aragon

- **1509**: Henry married **Catherine of Aragon**, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain
 - Pope Julius II gave special dispensation for the marriage, as Catherine had been married to Henry's older brother Arthur
- they had six children; only **Mary** survived infancy
- **1527**: Henry began to have scruples about the validity of marriage (Lev 20:31)
- Lord Chancellor and Cardinal Wolsey favored divorce; he saw a potential French alliance; Henry infatuated with **Anne Boleyn**, sister of his mistress Mary Boleyn
- Wolsey tried to get annulment from **Pope Clement VII**
- In ordinary circumstances, historians have suggested the Pope might have granted the annulment request. However Pope Clement VII was under extraordinary pressure when he received the annulment request:
 - **1525**: King **Francis I** of France and Pope Clement VII had allied and declared war on Emperor **Charles V** of the Holy Roman Empire.
 - Charles V had been King Charles I of Spain before his election as Holy Roman Emperor.
 - **1527**: Imperial troops of Charles V invaded Italy and marched on Rome. When Pope Clement received the request to annul Henry marriage to Catherine of Aragon, Rome was surrounded by the forces of Charles V -- and Catherine of Aragon was Charles V's aunt.

- **Thomas Cranmer:** suggested getting opinions from Catholic Universities on annulment question. The most prestigious of them agreed the marriage had been invalid. His suggestion spawned a lasting friendship with Henry
- **Jan 1531:** Henry declared himself the “sole protector and supreme head of English church” with the caveat: “as far as the law of Christ allows”
- Pope Clement VII appointed **Thomas Cranmer** archbishop of Canterbury under Henry's threat of losing annates

Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556)

- born Asclacton, Nottinghamshire
- educated at Cambridge
- Lutheran in his theology
- preferred reformation by general persuasion
- firmly believed in Luther's idea of a “godly prince”
- Writings:
 - *Great Bible* (1538)
 - *Litany* (1545)
 - *Prayer Books* of 1549 and 1552

1.1.5. Henry's Marriage to Anne Boleyn. Split with Rome

- **Jan 1533:** Henry secretly married **Anne Boleyn**
- **May 1533:** Thomas Cranmer annulled marriage to Catherine; declared the marriage to Anne lawful
- **Sep 1533** Henry and Anne had daughter Elizabeth
- **Jul 1533:** Pope threatened excommunication
- **Nov 3, 1534:** Parliament passed the Supremacy Act, declaring the king as “the only supreme head in earth of the Church of England” -- with no caveat as in Jan 1531.
 - mastermind of the “Reformation Parliament” was **Thomas Cromwell (1485-1540)**, the King's secretary and vicar general ecclesiastical affairs

Reaction to the Supremacy Act:

- **May 1535:** monks of the Carthusian order were barbarously executed for denying King's supremacy
- **June and July 1535:** Bishop John Fisher and Sir Thomas More beheaded.
 - More's last words: “the king's good servant, but God's first”
- monasteries dissolved (800 between **1536-40**); monies given to state

1.1.6. Henry's Marriage to Jane Seymour. Heir at Last

- **1536:** Henry tired of Anne Boleyn, who had not produced a male heir. Anne was charged with adultery
- **May 17, 1536:** Cranmer pronounced marriage null and void
- **May 18:** Anne Boleyn beheaded
- **May 30:** Henry married Jane Seymour
- **Oct 12, 1537:** Edward born.

1.1.7. Edward VI

Edward VI (1547-1553)

- Became king at age nine
- actual rule was by the head of the privy council
- During his reign, England moved towards a more radical Protestantism:
 - **1548:** images removed from churches
 - **1549:** marriage of clergy made legal
 - **1549, 1552:** mandated books of Common Prayer (largely by Cranmer)

July 6, 1553: Edward VI died of tuberculosis at age 15

1.1.8. *Mary Tudor*

Mary Tudor (1553-1558)

- Was Catholic, the daughter of Catherine of Aragon
- imprisoned Cranmer (who had annulled the marriage of her mother and Henry VIII)
- public worship restored to what it was last year of Henry VIII's reign
- married Philip (soon to be King Philip II of Spain), son of Emperor Charles VI,
- **late 1553-middle 1555:** 800 Protestant leaders left for German and Swiss cities
- **1554:** Parliament restored papal authority
- **Mar 21, 1556:** Cranmer had signed recantation of Protestantism, but then publicly repudiated just before he was burned at stake
- called "Bloody Mary:" 300 persons burned at the stake
 - she considered the absence of Philip her husband, who had left England **Nov 1555;** her childlessness as the judgment of God that she was not doing enough to restore Catholicism

1.1.9. *Elizabeth I*

Elizabeth I (1558-1603)

- a moderate Protestant
- daughter of Anne Boleyn
- proceeded cautiously with change
- **Apr. 29, 1559:** New Supremacy Act (king the "Supreme Governor" of the church)
- modified the Prayer Book of **1552**
- Act of Uniformity: all worship in new liturgy, with vestments and ornaments from the 2nd year of Edward VI
- new Anglican episcopate established

Except for a brief period during the **Puritan Commonwealth**, Anglicanism as established by Elizabeth I continued as the official church of England

1.2. Changes, Continuity in the English Church after the Reformation

1.2.1. *Changes*

The Changes of the English Reformation included:

- authority of the pope to teach and define new Christian beliefs rejected
- new authority given to the bible
- rejection of the "added" teachings / customs of the Roman church:
 - clergy celibacy
 - masses for the dead
 - indulgences
 - invocation to the saints
- monarch and Parliament governed the church: the laity had more control
- new emphasis given to the importance of preaching

1.2.2. *Continuity*

Continuity within the English Church:

- threefold ministry of bishops, priests deacons continued
- apostolic succession continued = bishops continue in historic succession from the earliest apostles
- centrality of baptism and the Holy Eucharist upheld
- ancient creeds remained the foundation of the church's teachings

- doctrines of Trinity, Incarnation, work of the Holy Spirit

1.2.3. *The Articles of Religion*

The changes of the English Reformation were embodied in the *Articles of Religion* ("Thirty-Nine Articles"). The Articles were eclectic, making room for different theological views.

1.2.4. *The Continuation of the Church Founded by Augustine of Canterbury*

The Church of England considered itself the continuation of the English Catholic church founded by Augustine of Canterbury.

2. 17th century

2.1. Church of England Under Fire from Puritans and Roman Catholics

In the 17th century, the Church of England came under fire from two sides:

- 1, Puritans within the Church of England
 - distrusted the clerical hierarchy
 - felt the sole authority of the bible is individual conscience
- 2, Roman Catholics
 - accused that the church was drifting from the faith and tradition of the early church

2.2. Richard Hooker Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity

In response to the pressures from from the Puritans and Catholics, Richard Hooker outlined three laws of ecclesiastical polity:

- 1. the Anglican middle way
- 2. the "three-legged stool" of the authority of scripture, tradition, and reason
- 3. our sacramental sharing in divine life through God's incarnation in Jesus

2.2.1. *The Anglican Middle Way*

The church could both:

- maintain continuity with the past,
while still:
- accommodating changes that a new situation might require

Anglicanism: a way between the extremes of radical Protestantism and Roman Catholicism: *via media*

2.2.2. *"The Three Legged Stool"*

Scripture is the "oracle of God."

However, we must bear in mind that scripture is read:

- in the light of human understanding and experience ("reason")
- in the context of a tradition of worship and belief

We therefore learn about God through "the three-legged stool" of

- scripture
- tradition
- reason

2.2.3. *Sacramental Sharing in the Divine Life*

Emphasized the importance of the **Incarnation** in Anglican theology.

God becoming incarnate in this world = taking on human form:

- gave holiness to the world,
- allowed us to become part of the divine life, the life of God
- is one of the basis for the sacramental actions of Baptism and the Eucharist, the means of grace through which we grow into God, become the children of God

2.3. Back in the Colonies

Meanwhile, back in the colonies . . .

In the South:

- Anglicanism is the state church
- In the Middle colonies* (NJ, Delaware, Maryland, Pa)
- Anglicanism is one religious choice among many

In New England:

- Christianity is dominated by Puritans
- Anglicanism however is spiritually more vital than elsewhere in the colonies

3. 18th century

3.1 Two major Influences in the 18th Century

There were two major influences on the 18th century Anglican church in the America:

- 1. theological movement of Deism
- 2. American Revolution

3.2. Deism

Deism asserted:

- that faith above all must be reasonable
- God is all powerful and dispassionate
- God ruled over an orderly universe governed by deterministic Newtonian laws
 - discounted possibility of divine intervention through miracles
 - questioned the possibility of divine revelation
- The purpose of religion was to teach obedience to moral law
- “Religious emotion” should be looked down upon

Effects of Deism in the church:

- the Eucharist was neglected
- Baptism became a private affair, perfunctory in character
- muted the Anglican theology of the Incarnation

3.3. American Revolution

3.3.1. A New Form of the Church of England

At the start of the Revolution: Anglicanism was the second largest religion in the colonies (behind Congregationalism)

After the Revolution, a new independent church was formed, with its own form of church government, its own book of Common Prayer.

1789: General Convention adopted principles of William White’s (Pennsylvania) *The Case of the Episcopal Churches in the United States Considered*

- acknowledged the **threefold ministry** of bishops, priests, deacons
- said the church should be governed democratically through councils of clergy and laity

- American church would be a new form of the Church of England

3.3.2. *Compromise Between Churches of New England and Virginia*

A conflict arose between:

- New England
 - emphasized the role of bishop
 - they had been overseen by missionary societies from Britain
- Virginia and other southern churches
 - emphasized role of laity
 - the laity had done most of the church work, they had been doing without bishops

A compromise was reached in which there would be two houses in the governance of the church:

- House of Bishops (review, veto, but cannot initiate)
- Lower House (all dioceses represented by equal numbers of laity and clergy)

3.3.3. *The First Bishop of the American Church, Samuel Seabury*

First Bishop of the American : Samuel Seabury

1784: Seabury arrived in London to seek ordination by other bishops of the Church of England.

Problems arose:

- an oath of loyalty to the English king was required of the new bishop.
- English bishops felt it unwise to ordain an American bishop when the US government was not going to impose taxes to support Seabury

Seabury instead went to the small Scottish Episcopal Church for ordination.

- origin of the Cross of St. Andrew on the seal of the Episcopal Church U.S.A.
- shaped the American Prayer Book to be like the Scottish
 - included an invocation to the Holy Spirit in the Eucharistic Prayer, taken from the Eastern Orthodox liturgy

4. 19th century

4.1. Three major movements in the 19th Century

The 19th century saw three major movements in the American Episcopal church:

- 1. Evangelical Movement
 - emphasis on personal piety, outreach mission
- 2. Catholic Revival = Oxford Movement
 - return to the catholic traditions and fundamental beliefs of the early church
- 3. "Broad Church Movement"
 - sought to discover the presence of God within the culture and science of the day

4.2. Evangelical Movement

The **1820's** and **1830's** were decades of great Evangelical bishops

Missionary work a major emphasis:

1821: Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society formed

1835: General Convention voted to send bishops as missionaries

- episcopate bishops seen as like apostles, rather than simply heads of established congregations
- **Jackson Kemper** first missionary bishop; traveled throughout the "Northwest Territory"
- **1841:** joined by three deacons, among them **James Lloyd Breck**, Native American mission to the Chippewa in Minnesota

Social reform, care for the poor, personal reform also major emphases of the time

- in England:
 - Sunday school movement,
 - better working conditions in factories
 - abolish of slavery
- in America:
 - education of slaves

4.3. Catholic Revival or Oxford Movement

The Catholic Revival or the Oxford Movement began among Oxford dons in *Tracts for the Times*
They called for a return to the doctrinal tradition and practices of the ancient church

The movement emphasized:

- the church is a *divine society* with a sacramental relationship to God expressed through baptism and the Eucharist
- the centrality of the sacraments
- that we become sons and daughters of God through the grace of the *Incarnation*
 - the church is “the extension of the Incarnation,” the spiritual presence of the incarnate Christ
- catholicism means the universality of the church. It includes:
 - a universal claim that includes all
 - a continuity with the doctrinal traditions of the first centuries

4.4. The Broad Church Movement

A crisis of faith challenged the church in the late 19th century. The source of this crisis was from:

- scholarly biblical criticisms: a real Flood? real Exodus? three authors of Isaiah, prophecies interpretations of contemporary events. Did miracles really occur?
- science: bible: man as made in the image and likeness of God. Darwinian evolution: man evolved from monkeys

In response, the church tried to assimilate the new scholarship and science into Anglican theology
The guiding principle behind this assimilation was that the truth of God must incorporate all human truth.

Theologians struggled with questions of

- how does God work in history?
- how can Christian belief remain faithful to its past while embracing the present and the future?

The Episcopal Theological School Cambridge was a major center of the Broad Church Movement.

A major work of this movement: *Lux Mundi: A Series of Studies in the Religion of the Incarnation*, editor Charles Gore (later bishop of Oxford) 1889

- emphasized the Incarnation
- presented a strong sense of God’s activity in history

5. 20th and 21st Centuries

5.1. Major movements in the 20th and 21st centuries

Major movements in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries in the Episcopal church include:

- 1. increasing recognition of the responsibility of the church in social justice
- 2. increasing role for women
- 3. growth of the ecumenical movement
- 4. the growth and diversity of the Anglican Communion

5.2. Social Justice

The rationale for a commitment to social justice in the Episcopal church:

- All social structures and institutions of society are subject to Christ
- Incarnational faith calls for the transformation of the “secular” world in Christ: the distinction between “secular” and “sacred” is specious

5.3. Increasing Role of Women

After WWII: women began to serve on vestries

1970: first women served as delegates to the General Convention

1976: Convention voted to admit women to the priesthood

1988: first woman bishop elected, Barbara Harris, Suffragan Bishop in Massachusetts

5.4. Ecumenical Conversations with other Churches

In **1886**, the House of Bishops in Chicago defined the principles of unity with other churches in the *Chicago Quadrilateral*

In **1888**, this was accepted by Lambeth Conference as the *Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral*
Ideas were based on a book by William Reed Huntington, *The Church Idea: An Essay Towards Unity*,

1870. Among them, was that Episcopal church should move beyond its English heritage

The principles of the *Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral*:

- 1. Holy Scriptures are the revealed Word of God
 - “the rule and ultimate standard of faith”
- 2. Apostles and Nicene Creed are statements of the Christian faith
- 3. sacraments of baptism and Eucharist ordained by Christ himself
- 4. “historic episcopate” is the basis for church’s unity = the unbroken chain that links bishops and ministers of today with the earliest apostles.

The fourth principle of the Chicago-Lambeth -- the historic episcopate -- has often proven to be the greatest point of contention in ecumenical dialogues.

5.5. The Anglican Communion

In **1867**, the first meeting of Anglican bishops was held in London, at Lambeth Palace, the residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

A Lambeth Conference has since been held every 10 years (except during WWII)

Issues are discussed, resolutions considered, passed. The resolutions are *not binding* on the individual communions.

The Anglican Communion is a communion or fellowship:

- from the Greek *koinonia*: the fellowship human beings ordinarily have with one another
- the New Testament meaning: communion Christians have in Christ and through Christ with God

Thus: a community or fellowship we have in Christ that transcends our differences

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