

ACT OF INAUGURATION JOINTLY DECLARED BY COVENANTING MEMBER CHURCHES OF THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

1. **Preamble** (Revelation 2-3, Ephesians 4:1-16)

We, the Churches of the Anglican Communion, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, in order to maintain the unity in the Spirit in the bond of peace, and to grow up together as a worldwide Communion to the full stature of Christ, solemnly establish this Covenant, entered on our behalf by designated signatories and to which we shall adhere as authorised by communion laws enacted for these purposes and to an agreed standard by each of our member Churches.

2. **Our Confession** (1 Timothy 3:15-16)

Each member Church, and the Communion as a whole:

- (a) is part of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, worshipping the one true God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;
- (b) professes the faith uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds, which faith the Church is called upon to proclaim afresh in each generation;
- (c) led by the Holy Spirit, has borne witness to Christian truth in its historic formularies, the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, the 1662 book of Common Prayer, and the Ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons;
- (d) affirms our loyalty to this inheritance of faith as our inspiration and guidance under God in bringing the grace and truth of Christ to this generation and making Him known to our societies and nations.

3. **Our Commitment to Confession of the Faith** (2 Timothy 3:10-4:5; John 8:32, 10:10, 14:15-17)

Each Church shall:

- (a) uphold and act in continuity and compatibly with the catholic and apostolic faith, order and tradition, and biblical moral values and vision of humanity received by and developed in the fellowship of member Churches;
- (b) primarily through its bishops and synods, ensure that biblical texts are handled faithfully, respectfully and coherently, building on our best scholarship believing that scriptural revelation must continue to illuminate, challenge and transform cultures, structures and ways of thinking;
- (c) commit itself to a common pilgrimage with other members of the Communion to discern truth, that peoples from all nations may truly be free and receive the new and abundant life in the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. **Our Anglican Heritage** (Ephesians 2:11-3:20)

Communion is a gift of God: that His people from east and west, north and south, may together declare his glory and be a sign of God's Kingdom. We gratefully acknowledge God's gracious providence extended to us down the ages, our origins in the undivided Church, the benefits we have received through the Reformation, and our growth through the various mission initiatives.

As the Communion develops into a family of worldwide autonomous churches, we also face challenges and opportunities for mission at local, regional, and international levels. We cherish our faith and mission heritage as offering us unique opportunities for mission collaboration, for discovery of the life of the whole gospel and for reconciliation with sister Churches throughout the world. It is with all the saints that we will comprehend the fuller dimensions of Christ's redemptive and immeasurable love.

5. Our Instruments of Unity (1 Peter 4:7-11, 5:1-11)

We recognize that from 1867, the Lambeth Conference has served as an instrument in guarding the faith and unity of the Communion. From the late 1940s, the Archbishop of Canterbury's office is enhanced due to his historic role. With the birth of the worldwide Communion in the last decades in the twentieth century, the Primates' Meeting and the Anglican Consultative Council began to serve as collegial vehicles for common life and discernment. We recognize the central role of bishops as custodian of faith, leader in mission, and as visible sign of unity. In particular, the Primates' Meeting should exemplify this role and responsibility. The Archbishop of Canterbury together with the Primates should work in full collaboration in all decisions that have Communion-wide implications.

6. Unity of the Communion (1 Corinthians 12, 2 Corinthians 13:5-10)

Each autonomous Church has the right to order and regulate its own affairs through its own system of government and law. At the same time, in essential matters of common concern, each Church shall in the exercise of its autonomy have regard to the common good of the Communion.

Where there is an issue threatening the unity of the Communion, we will adhere to the counsel and direction of the Instruments of Unity. Failing to do so will lead to the necessary steps including exclusion from the worldwide communion.

7. Our Declaration (Jude 24)

With joy and with firm resolve, we declare our Churches to be partners in this Anglican Covenant, releasing ourselves for fruitful service and binding ourselves more closely in the truth and love of Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit be glory for ever. Amen.