

# **Anglican Terms**

## **ANGLICAN**

The word "Anglican" means "English" or "of England". The term is used to denote the church planted in England. Tradition has it that Christianity was introduced into Britain as early as A.D. 61, possibly by St. Paul or Joseph of Arimathea, but more probably by the Roman soldiers encamped in Britain.

## **ANGLICAN COMMUNION**

A fellowship of independent Churches throughout the world which trace their origin to the Church of England. These Churches share a common Faith, Order and Worship.

## **APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION**

The original bishops were by legend consecrated by one of the 12 apostles, to be their successors. These successor bishops later consecrated more bishops, so that there would always be bishops. This chain of consecration is called "apostolic succession." There is documentation tracing the chain of consecration back to the early 2nd century, to people who were no doubt the successors of the Twelve, but no scholarly proof exists to document the chain of succession during the very earliest days of the church.

See also "[BISHOP](#)".

## **ARCHBISHOP**

An Archbishop is a [Bishop](#) who has additional responsibilities. Some archbishops have "metropolitan authority" over other bishops, while other archbishops are simply the chairman of the House of Bishops, with no special powers. In some Provinces the term "Presiding Bishop" is used.

## **ARTICLES OF RELIGION (39)**

Thirty-nine statements of religious belief first published in 1549 and revised in 1604. They are printed in the back of the Book of Common Prayer.

## **AUTONOMOUS CHURCH**

An autonomous church is a church that governs itself. The Anglican Communion consists of a number of autonomous churches, most of which are associated with specific countries and are therefore often called "national churches."

## **BISHOP**

A Bishop is a successor to one of the Twelve Apostles, who has been consecrated by other Bishops. The unbroken chain of consecration of Bishops reaching back to the Twelve is called Apostolic Succession. The word "Episcopal" is derived from the Greek word for "Bishop", which is Episcopos. The phrase "epi skopos" in Greek means "over sight." In Latin it became "episcopus", in Old English it was "biscop", which came to be pronounced "bishop" and later spelled that way too.

## **BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER**

The Book of Common Prayer is the primary source of worship material and liturgy in the Anglican church. The first Book of Common Prayer was compiled in 1549 by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer. It was revised in 1552, with subsequent minor revisions in 1559, 1604, and 1662. The 1662 BCP, which remains the official Prayer Book of the Church of England, is the basis of Prayer Books adopted by national church throughout the world, including the American Prayer Book of 1928. See [http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/1928/BCP\\_1928.htm](http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/1928/BCP_1928.htm) for more information.

## **CANON**

A Canon, in the singular, is either a law or rule (see below) or a person. A person referred to as a Canon may be a member of a chapter or college of priests, typically the chapter of a cathedral. It is sometimes used as an honorary title bestowed on a person who is not a priest but who does faithful work in support of the church.

## **CANONS**

The *canons* of the church are its laws or rules.

## **CATHEDRAL**

A Cathedral is a Church that is the home church, or "see", of the bishop of a diocese. Cathedrals are usually administered by a priest who is referred to as the Dean of that Cathedral. In some places the Dean of a Cathedral is known instead as its Provost.

A Cathedral is the church that contains the official stall or seat of the diocesan bishop. This stall is called the *throne* or *cathedra*, from which derives the adjective "cathedral" as in "cathedral church", which later in common usage became a noun.

## **CHURCH OF ENGLAND, THE**

The Established Church of the English nation. The origins of Christianity in England are lost in antiquity. It has a continuous history since the third century. The See of Canterbury was founded by Augustine in 596.

## **COLLECT FOR THE DAY**

A short prayer appropriate to the day of the Church Year and one which "collects" or sums up the thought of the Day or Season. It is said in the Holy Communion service in connection with the reading of the Epistles and the Gospel and also in Morning and Evening Prayer and other services of the Prayer Book.

## **COMMUNION**

The word "Communion" has two different but related meanings here. The most common meaning is as the name of the Christian sacramental meal, equivalent to the Lord's Supper; often called *eucharist*. The second meaning is as part of the phrase Anglican Communion. The link between these two meanings of the word is that in order to be "in communion with" someone you must be willing to share communion with them.

## **CURATE**

A curate is an assistant to the person in charge of a parish, which person is normally a vicar or rector or priest-in-charge.

## **DEACON**

The first of three Sacred Orders of ministry. The word comes from the Greek and means "servant". A Perpetual Deacon is one who does not expect to be advanced to the office of Presbyter (Priest).

## **DEANERY**

A deanery is an organizational unit that is larger than a parish and smaller than a diocese. Not every diocese is divided into deaneries, but some are. If a diocese has more than one bishop, sometimes each bishop is responsible for a separate deanery.

## **DIOCESE**

A geographic area which is under the charge of Bishop. Parish churches go together to form a diocese.

## **EPISCOPAL**

At its most basic level, *Episcopal* refers to a church that has bishops or overseers. After the 1776 war of independence from England, the US got its first bishop, but he was consecrated in Scotland for various reasons. The Scottish church was at that time generally known as Episcopalian. Because any word that reminded people of England was unpopular in the U.S. at the time, the Anglican Church in America was called "Episcopal" after the Scottish usage. The full name adopted in 1789 was "Protestant Episcopal", "Protestant" to distinguish it from the Roman Catholic Church, "Episcopal" from various religious bodies having other forms of church government.

In more recent time, a number of U.S. Episcopalians have begun to referring to themselves as Anglicans in order to show solidarity with orthodox and Bible believing Churchmen around the globe.

## **EPISTLE SIDE**

That side of the Holy Table (Altar) from which the Epistle is read at Holy Communion, namely, the left of the Priest as he faces the congregation.

## **EUCHARIST**

Coming from a Greek word meaning "thanksgiving", *Eucharist* is another name for the meal ordained by Christ on the night before his crucifixion. Other names include: the Lord's Supper, and Holy Communion; it is also known as the Divine Liturgy, and the Mass.

## **GAFCON**

The GAFCON movement is a global family of authentic Anglicans standing together to retain and restore the Bible to the heart of the Anglican Communion. The first Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) was held in 2008 in Jerusalem. Over 1,300 delegates from 38 nations and 27 Provinces of the Anglican Communion were present. The Jerusalem Statement and Declaration was produced at this meeting. (<https://www.gafcon.org>)

See also "[JERUSALEM STATEMENT AND DECLARATION](#)".

## **GENERAL CONVENTION**

A meeting of lay and clerical delegates of a national church at which church business is conducted.

## **GENERAL SYNOD**

In some provinces or national churches, "General Synod" is used in place of General Convention.

## **GOSPEL SIDE**

That side of the Holy Table (Altar) from which the Gospel is read at Holy Communion, namely, the right of the Priest as he faces the congregation.

## **GUILD**

As used in connection with the Church, a group of people organized to do some special kind of local work – as an Altar Guild or a sewing guild.

## **HOLY ORDERS**

The term "holy orders" is a way of referring to ordination: an ordained person such as a priest or deacon is spoken of as "being in holy orders," meaning that the person has received the laying-on of hands and has been admitted (by a bishop) into one of the levels of ordination (ministries).

## **JERUSALEM STATEMENT AND DECLARATION**

A statement produced at the 2008 GAFCON Conference setting forth principles for a unified and renewed Anglican family. For the complete text: <https://www.gafcon.org/resources/the-complete-jerusalem-statement>.

## **LAMBETH**

Since 1190 the official London residence of the Archbishops of Canterbury. **Lambeth Conferences** are assemblies of the bishops of the Anglican Communion held about once every ten years. The first Lambeth Conference was held in 1867.

## **LAY**

From Greek for "people." Those members of the Church who are not in Holy Orders.

## **LAY READER**

A lay person who assists in divine services. A lay reader may read Morning and Evening Prayer excluding the Absolution for a congregation.

## **MISSION**

A congregation that is considerably supported by the Diocese or some parish church. The Bishop is the rector of a Mission. The mission clergy serve as his representatives.

## **NARTHEX**

A vestibule at the entrance of church.

**NAVE (from L., Navis, "ship")**

The body of the Church building where the congregation sits.

**ORDINATION**

The service of admission to holy Orders. The term "Consecration" is usually used of Ordination to the Episcopate.

**PARISH**

A parish is the smallest unit of administration within the Anglican church. Most parishes have just one church, called the parish church. Parishes combine into dioceses.

**PASCHAL CANDLE**

A large white candle placed in a large candlestick and lit on Easter Even and burned throughout the Great Forty Days of Eastertide. It is extinguished following reading of the Gospel on Ascension Day.

**POSTULANT**

A man who has been accepted by the bishop for preparation for the ordained ministry.

**PREACHING SCARF (TIPPET)**

A black scarf worn by the minister during Morning and Evening Prayer and at some other services.

**PRIEST**

"Priest" is a shorten form of the word "Presbyter" or elder. Most priests exercise their ministry by serving as the rector of parish church or vicar of mission. A person becomes a priest by being ordained by a bishop. Priests typically train at a theological college or seminary.

**PROPER FOR THE DAY**

The Epistle and Gospel along with the Collect printed chronologically according to season and day in the Prayer Book.

## **PROVINCE**

A "Province" is an administrative division of the church that is bigger than a diocese. A *transnational province* is one that spans more than one country.

## **RECTOR**

A rector is a priest who is the spiritual leader of a parish church. In the U.S., one

## **RUBRIC (from L. for "red")**

A rule or direction as to the conduct of the services printed in the Prayer Book. Formerly these directions were printed in red. Now they usually are in italics.

## **SEASONS OF THE CHURCH YEAR**

The nine seasons of the Christian or Church Year are: (1) Advent, (2) Christmas, (3) Epiphany, (4) Pre-Lenten – Septuagesima, Sexagesima and Quinquagesima, (5) Lent, including Holy Week, (6) Eastertide, (7) Ascensiontide, (8) Whitsuntide, (9) Trintiytide.

## **SEXTON (from "Segestan," a contraction of "Sacristan")**

A lay officer of the Parish whose duties it is to open and shut the church buildings, keep them clean, ring the bell, etc., under the direction of the Rector.

## **STOLE**

A long band or scarf which is worn by a presbyter (priest) principally at Holy Communion. The color of the stole is according to the season of the Church Year.

## **SURPLICE**

The white, loose flowing garment with broad, full open sleeves worn by the Presbyters, Deacons and Lay Readers during the church services.

## **VERGER**

One who carries the verge or staff in procession. Today, one the principal duties of a vergger is providing hospitality.

## **VESTRY**

The word *vestry* has two meanings. A vestry is a room in which people put on vestments, or robes. The word also refers to the board charged with managing the business affairs of parish church. Members of the Vestry are elected from the congregation.

## **VICARAGE / RECTORY**

A house occupied the clergyman and his family.

## **WARDENS**

The Senior (Rector's) and Junior (People's) Wardens, with the Rector, are the chief officials of the Vestry.