

TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN COMMUNION

CONCORDAT

*Adopted and Entered into on the Feast of Saint Michael and All Angels
September 29, 1990 at Victoria, British Columbia, Canada*

*As Amended by the College of Bishops – 1992, 1995, 2003, 2014; and
Ratified by the Churches and Provinces of the Traditional Anglican Communion*

PREAMBLE

DETERMINED to maintain the unbroken continuity of our tradition within the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ from its inception to the present day, especially as expressed in the precepts of the Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church;

ESTABLISHED in our particular identity of history, character and purpose within the constant tradition of the Church from its arrival in the British Isles in the earliest Christian centuries, and as expressed in its traditional formularies; and

REMAINING in Communion with all such Churches, Provinces and Dioceses throughout the world which have been established in and are faithful to the same constant tradition, to which the historic Chair of St. Augustine at Canterbury is called to bear witness:

WE, the Bishops of continuing Anglican Churches in full Communion with each other, with expressions of concurrence of the clergy and laity thereof, hereby unite in a worldwide Communion of orthodox Churches in the Anglican Tradition, and invite all faithful Bishops, Churches and Provinces which uphold the principles set forth in the Fundamental Declarations herein to participate in this our solemn purpose and act.

WE further declare that the Churches, Provinces and Dioceses of this Communion desire to be in full Communion with the whole of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ, and in endeavoring to promote Christian Unity shall continue to regard as the minimum basis for such unity the sharing of common Scriptures, Creeds, Sacraments and Ministry as identified in the *Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral* of 1886-88.

1. NAME

1.1 This Communion, which is the continuation of the body formed provisionally at Orlando, Florida, in the United States of America on February 3, 1989, by common action of the Bishops of the Churches identified in Section 2.1 below, is known as 'The Traditional Anglican Communion'.

1.2 The term 'Traditional' as used in this context refers to that living witness of the Spirit within the Church by which her continuity is assured from age to age. It is described in a letter of 1718 AD from the Eastern Patriarchs to the English Non-Jurors:

"We preserve the Doctrine of the Lord uncorrupted, and firmly adhere to the Faith He delivered to us, and keep it free from blemish and diminution, as a Royal Treasure, and a monument of great price, neither adding any thing, nor taking any thing from it;"

and by St. John of Damascus:

"We do not change the everlasting boundaries which our fathers have set, but we keep the Tradition, just as we received it."

2. MEMBER CHURCHES

The Churches forming this Communion are those admitted from time to time in accordance with Section 8 of this Concordat and set out in Schedule 1.

3. FUNDAMENTAL DECLARATIONS

3.1 In the firm conviction that "we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ," and that "there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved," we acknowledge our duty to proclaim Christ's saving Truth to all peoples, nations and tongues.

3.2 We acknowledge that rule of faith laid down by St Vincent of Lérins: "Let us hold that which has been believed everywhere, always and by all, for that is truly and properly Catholic." Accordingly, we declare our intention to hold fast the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Faith of God and to transmit the same unimpaired to our posterity.

3.3 We affirm as integral to the history and essential to the formation of this Communion all of the doctrinal, moral and other theological principles set out in the Declaration of loyal Anglicans gathered in the Congress of St. Louis, Missouri, United States of America in the year 1977, generally known as *The Affirmation of St. Louis*.

3.4 Each member Church or Province of this Communion shall have authority to adopt its own Fundamental or Solemn Declarations consistent with *The Affirmation of St. Louis*, provided that each member Church or Province of this Communion does and shall disclaim expressly any authority to amend or depart in any substantive manner from the Fundamental Declarations hereof, or to derogate from Holy Scripture, or to determine unilaterally any question of Faith or Order, the authority for determining such residing in the College of Bishops of this Communion acting with such competent advice as may be available to it.

4. RULING PRINCIPLES

4.1 This Communion retains and approves the formularies of the classical Anglican tradition authorized prior to the emergence, within some Churches or Provinces of 'The Anglican Communion,' of those departures from orthodox Faith and Practice which made necessary and precipitated the Congress of St. Louis.

4.2 The standard of Faith and Worship of this Communion is that expressed in the first *Book of Common Prayer*, and Ordinal, of Edward VI and in the following revisions:

(A) The Church of England, use of 1662, and its authorized translations;

(B) The Anglican Church of Canada, use of 1962;

(C) The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, use of 1928, and its several authorized translations, in particular the *Oración Común*, use of 1928;

(D) The Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon, use of 1963 with its authorized *Supplement*;

(E) The Church of Ireland, use of 1926, with the Canons as amended in 1989/90 (but excluding Canon 21a);

(F) The Church of the Province of South Africa, use of 1954;

(G) The Scottish Episcopal Church, use of 1929; and

(H) The Church in Wales, bilingual use of 1984.

4.3 The Church of England *Deposited Book* of 1928 and such other editions or revisions of the *Book of Common Prayer* where such have been ordered by lawful authority may continue in use in any Anglican Church, Province or Diocese admitted to this Communion, provided that the said editions or revisions conform to the standards of Faith and Worship set out in this Concordat.

4.4 This Communion acknowledges and respects the right and responsibility of each member Church or Province to order its own internal legislative and administrative affairs in accordance with local law and custom, and not inconsistently with the Preamble, Fundamental Declarations and Ruling Principles set out in this Concordat.

4.5 Other than the final authority to determine questions of Catholic Faith and Apostolic Order (which authority resides by virtue of the nature of the episcopal office in the College of Bishops acting, however, not independently of the whole Church but with the counsel and advice of the clergy, and with the assent of the whole body of the faithful through the appropriate Synods or equivalent bodies of the member Churches and Provinces), this Communion does not take to itself any power to establish any legislative or judicial authority inhibiting member Churches and Provinces from establishing such local synods and tribunals or adopting such local constitutions and canons as may be appropriate to their good order and government.

5. THE PRIMACY

5.1 There shall be a Primate of this Communion who shall preside in charity among the Bishops thereof, not as a prelate, but in the Patristic sense as an elder brother, holding a title of honor not of jurisdiction. The Primate shall be the chief executive officer of the College of Bishops and shall, in the exercise of his office, act only by and with the advice and consent of the College.

5.2 The Primate shall be elected by the College of Bishops of this Communion from among such of its members as are Bishops Ordinary of one of the member Churches or Provinces thereof.

5.3 In any election of a Primate, the name of every Bishop Ordinary in this Communion shall appear on the first ballot paper. Following a method of voting agreed upon by the College of Bishops, three ballots shall be held. The first will reduce the number of candidates by one-half. The second will reduce the number of remaining candidates to two. The third will determine the election. Should the third ballot be a tie, further ballots shall ensue until an election is determined. Unanimity on the first or second ballot shall determine the election and eliminate the need for further balloting.

5.4 The newly elected Primate shall serve for a term of five years, or until he retires or resigns as a Bishop Ordinary, dies or is otherwise removed from office by a vote of no fewer than two-thirds of the College of Bishops. He shall be eligible to be re-elected for one additional five-year term to a maximum of ten years in his lifetime.

5.5 Each member Church or Province of this Communion shall contribute to the temporal support and maintenance of the Office of the Primate and the Office of the Secretary of the College of Bishops according to its ability. The Scriptural standard of ten percent of Church or Provincial revenues should guide the member Churches and Provinces in determining the level of support to be provided.

6. THE COLLEGE OF BISHOPS

6.1 There shall be a College of Bishops of this Communion, consisting of all Bishops in good standing and actively holding Episcopal jurisdiction in any member Church or Province thereof.

6.2 Each Bishop in good standing and actively holding Episcopal jurisdiction in any member Church or Province of this Communion shall have one vote in the College; and, in addition, each member Church or Province shall have one vote to be determined among the Bishops thereof by such method as they shall choose. Concurrent majority votes, both among the Bishops and among the member Churches or Provinces, shall be required to determine an action of the College.

6.3 The College of Bishops of this Communion shall meet in conference upon the summons of the Primate, but in any case not less often than once every five years, and not twice consecutively within the geographical borders of any one member Church or Province (unless for good cause waived by a vote of a majority of the College). The College shall meet also within six months of any petition to meet signed by a majority of its members being served upon the Secretary of the College of Bishops.

6.4 The Primate shall preside at all meetings of the College of Bishops. In the event the Primate is unable or unwilling to preside at a meeting of the College, the Bishops present shall elect from among those present a Bishop to preside at that meeting of the College.

6.5 Subject to this Concordat, the College of Bishops may order its proceedings as it sees fit.

6.6 In exercising its pastoral responsibilities and authority as provided in this Concordat, the College of Bishops, by consensus, may meet together at the places they think fit to conduct business, and may also conduct business by means of telephone, facsimile, electronic mail, or other electronic means of communication, and the same shall be as valid and effective as if conducted and determined at a face-to-face meeting of the College. All such proceedings shall be duly recorded by the Secretary.

6.7 The College of Bishops shall elect one of its number to be its Secretary who shall hold office for a term of five years unless prior to that time he retires, resigns, dies or is otherwise removed from office by a vote of a majority of the College. He shall be eligible to be re-elected for one additional five year term. The Secretary shall be the chief administrative officer of the College and shall be responsible to the College through the Primate for the administration of the College and its pastoral responsibilities and authority as provided in this Concordat.

6.8 The College of Bishops may from time to time establish committees, and shall in like manner appoint their members and prescribe their terms of reference, and the time and manner of their reporting back to the College. Subject to their terms of reference, the members of a committee may meet and dispatch business, adjourn and otherwise regulate their meetings and proceedings, as they see fit, including by means of telephone, facsimile, electronic mail, or other electronic means of communication.

6.9 There shall be a standing committee of the College of Bishops called the Finance Committee which shall be appointed by and be responsible to the College for the financial administration, raising of funds, and operating budget of the Office of the Primate and the Office of the Secretary of the College of Bishops. The membership of the Finance Committee shall comprise the Treasurers (or equivalent) from time to time of the member Churches or Provinces, one of whom shall be appointed by the College to chair the Finance Committee and be the chief financial officer of the College of Bishops.

6.10 In order to provide for mutual support and confidence in and amongst the episcopal *collegium* it shall be competent for the College of Bishops to consider any credible allegation of dereliction of consecration vows in the life or teaching of one of its members where such dereliction, if proved, could constitute a threat of impairment to the relationship of *communio in sacris* amongst the members of this Communion.

- (A) Any such accusation must be presented first within and according to the canonical or other procedures of the national Church or Province of the Bishop accused. If that Church or Province fails or refuses or is unable to hear the matter, any Bishop who is a member of this College of Bishops may bring the accusation before the College.
- (B) The Primate shall then appoint a Tribunal consisting of three members of the College of Bishops (other than the accused). One shall be a bishop chosen by the accused; one shall be a bishop of a member Church of this Communion other than that of the accused Bishop; the third shall be the Primate, who shall chair the Tribunal.
- (C) The Tribunal so appointed shall examine the charges and recommend appropriate disposition to the full College of Bishops. Final disposition of the matter shall be made by the College of Bishops upon a vote of no fewer than two-thirds of the College.
- (D) The Tribunal shall proceed according to recognized and customary procedures of ecclesiastical tribunals in the Anglican tradition. Should the Primate be the accused, the next senior Bishop Ordinary in order of consecration shall fulfil his duties under this provision.
- (E) Any Bishop of this Communion who is charged and tried by a Tribunal of his own Church or Province, having exhausted all available procedures of appeal within that Church or Province, may appeal a decision of such Tribunal to the College of Bishops of this Communion. The College, functioning according to the provisions of this Section, shall act as the final Appellate Tribunal in such cases.
- (F) The member Churches of this body commit themselves to abide by such decisions as shall be made under this provision.

7. ADVISERS AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

7.1 Member Churches and Provinces of this Communion may, and are encouraged to, select Clerical and Lay Advisers to meetings in conference of the College of Bishops. Each member Church or Province may select up to three Clerical and three Lay Advisers to such meetings. Alternates may be provided for if desired. Each member Church or Province may determine its own method of selection or designation of Advisers.

7.2 The College of Bishops of this Communion may also appoint as many as three such Advisers, Clerical or Lay, from among the member Churches and Provinces.

7.3 The sole function of the Advisers provided for in Sections 7.1 and 7.2 shall be to provide consultation and advice to the College of Bishops meeting in conference, upon matters referred thereto by the College or by the Primate or by the appropriate Synods or equivalent bodies of the member Churches or Provinces.

7.4 The College of Bishops shall establish an Advisory Committee to advise the College of Bishops and the Primate on matters of importance between meetings in conference of the College of Bishops. This Advisory Committee shall consist of one Clerical member and one Lay member selected by and from each member Church or Province of this Communion. The Executive Director of the International Anglican Fellowship shall meet with the Advisory Committee and have seat and voice therein.

7.5 Selection of members of the Advisory Committee by the member Churches and Provinces of this Communion shall be by such method as each member body may determine. Those responsible are requested to seek as wide a diversity of expertise among the members of the Advisory Committee as may be practicable.

8. ADMISSION TO MEMBERSHIP

8.1 Only Churches and Provinces (and other appropriate jurisdictions) which accept the terms and principles of the Preamble, Fundamental Declarations and Ruling Principles of this Concordat may be admitted into membership in this Communion.

8.2 Petition for membership shall be made in the first instance to the Primate and should be supported by evidence of an authoritative synodical resolution or other appropriate evidence that the decision so to petition was lawfully taken in the petitioning body, together with a certified copy of that body's Constitution or other governing statute(s).

8.3 Upon receipt of such petition and supporting documents, the Primate shall refer the petition without delay to the College of Bishops. Before accepting the petition for membership, the College shall take particular care to ascertain the continuity and integrity of Faith and Order within the petitioning body, making such inquiries as may be necessary in a spirit of charity.

8.4 Upon due consideration, the College of Bishops shall determine, by vote of no fewer than three-fourths of the College, whether or not to admit the petitioning body to this Communion.

8.5 Upon an affirmative vote of the College of Bishops in accordance with section 8.4, the Primate shall admit the petitioning body concerned to provisional membership in this Communion.

8.6 Bishops in good standing and actively holding episcopal jurisdiction in the petitioning body so admitted shall have seat and voice, but not vote, in the College of Bishops until the provisional membership shall cease and full membership commence.

8.7 For any Church or Province (or other appropriate jurisdiction) so admitted into this Communion, provisional membership shall cease and full membership commence upon ratification of such admission by at least three-fourths of the appropriate Synods or equivalent bodies of the full member Churches and Provinces of this Communion, provided always that such ratification of admission shall be in accordance with the Constitution and Canons or other provisions of each such member Church or Province relating to the establishment, recognition and determination of *communio in sacris*.

8.8 Ratification of the membership of any petitioning body so admitted by the College of Bishops shall be brought before the highest Synod of any existing member Church or Province during a period of three years following the admission of the new member. A positive vote to withhold ratification (according to the voting rules of each member body) by more than one-third of the member Churches or Provinces which were members prior to the admission of the new body, will annul the reception of the new body in question into membership in this Communion.

9. WITHDRAWAL FROM MEMBERSHIP

The Churches enumerated in Section 2 above pledge themselves, and any Church or Province or other appropriate jurisdiction seeking membership in this Communion shall likewise pledge itself, that no member Church or Province of this Communion shall withdraw itself from the same except by a concurring vote of two-thirds of the full membership of each House of its highest Synod or equivalent body.

10. EXPULSION FROM MEMBERSHIP

10.1 Where it becomes evident to the College of Bishops that any member Church or Province, or any Bishop thereof, is responsible for promoting or endorsing any doctrine, teaching or other activity contrary to the Fundamental Declarations or Ruling Principles of this Concordat, it shall be competent for the College of Bishops to deal with such matter by means of:

(A) Education and moral suasion; and/or

(B) Reduction of the membership of the Church or Province concerned from full to provisional; and/or

(C) Suspension or expulsion of any or all of the Bishops of the Church or Province concerned from membership in the College of Bishops; and/or

(D) Suspension or expulsion of the Church or Province concerned from membership in this Communion, as the case may require, and as hereinafter provided.

10.2 No cause for reduction in membership, suspension or expulsion shall be entertained unless supported by a formal written statement submitted to the Secretary of the College of Bishops, signed by at least three members of the College.

10.3 This Communion relies upon its College of Bishops to take such measures as may be proper and necessary to protect the integrity of the Faith and Order of Christ's Church throughout the Communion, and to conduct any inquiries pertinent thereto with propriety, charity and equity, including reliance upon such assistance as may be rendered by the Advisory Committee.

11. CREATION OF NEW BISHOPRICS

11.1 Without prejudice to the domestic good order and government of the Churches and Provinces of this Communion, but having regard to:

- (A) The tradition of assent to the expansion of the episcopate, and
- (B) The need to provide for cohesion and stability in the development of this Communion and its several constituent Churches and Provinces, and in the affairs of its College of Bishops;

The Bishops of this Communion agree that no new diocese or bishopric shall be created in any member Church or Province without prior consultation with and the subsequent advise and consent of the College of Bishops of this Communion.

11.2 (A) Upon the election of a man (not already a member of the College of Bishops) to the episcopate or to a vacant or new bishopric in any member Church of Province, the name of the said Bishop-elect shall be forwarded to the Secretary of the College, together with

- (1) his curriculum vitae providing satisfactory evidence that he is
 - (a) a man of significant pastoral experience at the parish, deanery and/or diocesan level;
 - (b) a man of spiritual discipline in private prayer, the daily offices and the regular resort to the Sacraments of the Church; and
 - (c) a man who has studied and demonstrated competence at an academic level such that he is able to participate capably in international and ecumenical discussion and debate on theological topics;

and

- (2) Profession of Faith signed by the Bishop-elect set out in Schedule 2.

(B) The Secretary of the College of Bishops shall forward these documents to each member of the College.

(C) Within 30 days of receipt of the notice of election and accompanying documents from the Secretary of the College, each Bishop shall forward to the Secretary his *votum* (which shall not unreasonably be withheld), or his refusal to approve, regarding the Bishop-elect.

(D) Upon receipt of favorable *vota* from a majority of the members of the College, the Secretary of the College of Bishops shall confirm the election, and the Primate, in the name of the College, shall issue documents of Confirmation of the election and (where needed) a Mandate for Consecration, to the appropriate officials of the member Church or Province involved.

12. COMMON LIFE AND WITNESS

12.1 Acknowledging that "We who are many are one body in Christ, for we all share in the one bread," and recalling the Apostolic injunction to do good unto all men and especially unto them that are of the household of faith, the Churches and Provinces of this Communion rejoice in the opportunities that our common life may provide for common effort and witness in the areas of evangelism, education, works of mercy and other imperatives of the Gospel, for the greater glory of God and the salvation of all men.

12.2 Towards these ends we rely upon the Primate, with the advice and consent of the College of Bishops of this Communion, to continue all efforts to establish relationships of intercommunion with other ecclesial bodies attempting in good faith to maintain traditional and orthodox Faith and Order with a view to eventual full union in this Communion.

12.3 Upon the Primate, with the advice and consent of the College of Bishops, we also devolve specific responsibility for entering into and initiating such conversations with Bishops of other orthodox communities within the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church as may promote that Unity which is Christ's will for His Church.

13. AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONCORDAT

13.1 Proposals for alterations, additions or amendments to this Concordat may originate from:

- (A) The Primate;
- (B) The College of Bishops;
- (C) A Bishop Ordinary of any member Church or Province of this Communion;
- (D) The Advisory Committee; or
- (E) The National or Provincial Synod or equivalent body of any member Church or Province of this Communion;

and should be lodged in writing with the Secretary of the College of Bishops.

13.2 Upon receipt of any such proposal the Secretary of the College of Bishops shall refer it to each member of the College and of the Advisory Committee.

13.3 Each member of the College of Bishops may refer any such proposal to such appropriate advisory body or bodies as may exist within his jurisdiction.

13.4 At its next meeting in conference following the receipt of any such proposal the College of Bishops may consider the proposal together with any report furnished by the Advisory Committee, and subject to the provisions of Section 13.5 below, may alter, add to or amend this Concordat as it sees fit by a three-fourths concurrent majority vote, both among the Bishops and among the Churches or Provinces; or it may defer consideration of any such proposal until its next subsequent meeting pending further consultation and advice.

13.5 (A) Ratification of such amendment shall be brought before the highest Synod or equivalent body of any member Church or Province during a period of three years following its enactment.

(B) If an objection is lodged during that period by any of the said Synods or equivalent bodies, the amendment objected to will not go into effect, but instead will be considered again at the next subsequent meeting of the College of Bishops, at which meeting it may be withdrawn, amended or re-adopted. If amended or re-adopted, the amendment will then be in full effect only after a subsequent period of three years has elapsed without objection by the highest Synod or equivalent body of any member Church or Province, since its most recent consideration and enactment by the College of Bishops.

(C) If the amendment has not gone into effect within six years after its initial enactment, it shall have failed.

14. EFFECTIVE DATE AND DEFINITIONS

14.1 This Concordat shall come into effect upon ratification, endorsement or similar indication of acceptance by at least two-thirds of the appropriate Synods or equivalent bodies of the initial member Church and Provinces of this Communion as set forth in Section 2 herein, by such procedure as shall be established in each such member body.

14.2 (A) Where the phrase, "appropriate Synods or equivalent bodies of the member Churches and Provinces" is used in this Concordat, it refers to the highest legislative body of each such Church or Province by whatever designation, such as 'Provincial Synod,' 'Holy Synod,' 'General Synod,' 'Bishop-in-Council,' 'General Council,' or the like.

(B) The expressions, "Churches and Provinces" and "Church or Province" may be read to include such single dioceses (or where necessary even isolated congregations or groups of congregations in need of episcopal oversight) or other appropriate ecclesiastical jurisdictions as may become member bodies of this Communion.

SCHEDULE 1

The Churches of the Traditional Anglican Communion are:

- (A) The Anglican Catholic Church in Australia;
- (B) The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada;
- (C) The Anglican Church in America;
- (D) The Anglican Church of India (being the legitimate successor to the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon);
- (E) The Anglican Church in Latin America;
- (F) The Anglican Church of Southern Africa (Traditional Rite);
- (G) The Church of Ireland (Traditional Rite);
- (H) The Church of Umzi Wase Tiyopiya (South Africa);
- (I) The Continuing Anglican Church in Zambia;
- (J) The Traditional Anglican Church in Britain; and
- (K) The Church of Torres Strait.

SCHEDULE 2

TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN COMMUNION

PROFESSION OF FAITH

To be made by those elected or nominated to the OFFICE OF BISHOP IN THE CHURCH OF GOD

I,

with firm faith believe and profess everything that is contained in the Symbol of faith:
namely:

The Faith of the Apostles

I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen. I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made, one in Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation, he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Faith in Holy Scripture

With firm faith, I also believe that the Word of God revealed in the Old and New Testaments contains all things necessary for Salvation.

Teaching Office of Bishops

In fulfilling the charge entrusted to me in the name of the Church, I shall hold fast to the deposit of faith in its entirety; I shall faithfully hand it on and explain it, and I shall avoid any teachings contrary to it.

Affirmation of Saint Louis

And I furthermore hold with a steady and firm faith the doctrinal and moral teaching of the *Affirmation of Saint Louis*:

"In the firm conviction that "we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ," and that "there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved," and acknowledging our duty to proclaim Christ's saving Truth to all peoples, nations and tongues, I declare my intention to hold fast the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Faith of God.

I acknowledge that rule of faith laid down by St. Vincent of Lerins: "Let us hold that which has been believed everywhere, always and by all, for that is truly and properly Catholic."

I. PRINCIPLES OF DOCTRINE

The Nature of the Church

We gather as people called by God to be faithful and obedient to Him. As the Royal Priestly People of God, the Church is called to be, in fact, the manifestation of Christ in and to the world. True religion is revealed to man by God. We cannot decide what is truth, but rather (in obedience) ought to receive, accept, cherish, defend and teach what God has given us. The Church is created by God, and is beyond the ultimate control of man.

The Church is the Body of Christ at work in the world. She is the society of the baptized called out from the world: In it, but not of it. As Christ's faithful Bride, she is different from the world and must not be influenced by it.

The Essentials of Truth and Order

We repudiate all deviation or departure from the Faith, in whole or in part, and bear witness to these essential principles of evangelical Truth and apostolic Order:

Holy Scriptures

The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the authentic record of God's revelation of Himself, His saving activity, and moral demands - a revelation valid for all men and all time.

The Creeds

The Nicene Creed as the authoritative summary of the chief articles of the Christian Faith, together with the "Apostles' Creed, and that known as the Creed of St. Athanasius to be "thoroughly received and believed" in the sense they have had always in the Catholic Church.

Tradition

The received Tradition of the Church and its teachings as set forth by "the ancient catholic bishops and doctors," and especially as defined by the Seven Ecumenical Councils of the undivided Church, to the exclusion of all errors, ancient and modern.

Sacraments

The Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, the Holy Eucharist, Holy Matrimony, Holy Orders, Penance and Unction of the Sick, as objective and effective signs of the continued presence and saving activity of Christ our Lord among His people and as His covenanted means for conveying His grace. In particular, we affirm the necessity of Baptism and the Holy Eucharist (where they may be had) -- Baptism as incorporating us into Christ (with its completion in Confirmation as the "seal of the Holy Spirit"), and the Eucharist as the sacrifice which unites us to the all-sufficient Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross and the Sacrament in which He feeds us with His Body and Blood.

Holy Orders

The Holy Orders of Bishops, Priests and Deacons as the perpetuation of Christ's gift of Apostolic ministry to His Church, asserting the necessity of a Bishop of Apostolic Succession (or Priest ordained by such) as the Celebrant of the Eucharist - these Orders consisting exclusively of men in accordance with Christ's Will and institution (as evidenced by the Scriptures), and the universal practice of the Catholic Church.

Deaconesses

The ancient office and ministry of Deaconesses as a lay vocation for women, affirming the need for proper encouragement of that office.

Duty of Bishops

Bishops as Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Shepherds and Teachers, as well as their duty (together with other clergy and the laity) to guard and defend the purity and integrity of the Church's Faith and Moral Teaching.

The Use of Other Formulae

In affirming these principles, we recognize that all Anglican statements of faith and liturgical formulae must be interpreted in accordance with them.

Incompetence of Church Bodies to Alter Truth

We disclaim any right or competence to suppress, alter or amend any of the ancient Ecumenical Creeds and definitions of Faith, to set aside or depart from Holy Scripture, or to alter or deviate from the essential pre-requisites of any Sacrament.

Unity with Other Believers

We declare our firm intention to seek and achieve full sacramental communion and visible unity with other Christians who "worship the Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity," and who hold the Catholic and Apostolic Faith in accordance with the foregoing principles.

II. PRINCIPLES OF MORALITY

The conscience, as the inherent knowledge of right and wrong, cannot stand alone as a sovereign arbiter of morals. Every Christian is obligated to form his conscience by the Divine Moral Law and the Mind of Christ as revealed in Holy Scriptures, and by the teaching and Tradition of the Church. We hold that when the Christian conscience is thus properly informed and ruled, it must affirm the following moral principles:

Individual Responsibility

All people, individually and collectively, are responsible to their Creator for their acts, motives, thoughts and words, since "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ . . ."

Sanctity of Human Life

Every human being, from the time of his conception, is a creature and child of God, made in His image and likeness, an infinitely precious soul; and that the unjustifiable or inexcusable taking of life is always sinful.

Man's Duty to God

All people are bound by the dictates of the Natural Law and by the revealed Will of God, insofar as they can discern them.

Family Life

The God-given sacramental bond in marriage between one man and one woman is God's loving provision for procreation and family life, and sexual activity is to be practiced only within the bonds of Holy Matrimony.

Man as Sinner

We recognize that man, as inheritor of original sin, is "very far gone from original righteousness," and as a rebel against God's authority is liable to His righteous judgment.

Man and God's Grace

We recognize, too, that God loves His children and particularly has shown it forth in the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that man cannot be saved by any effort of his own, but by the Grace of God, through repentance and acceptance of God's forgiveness.

Christian's Duty to be Moral

We believe, therefore, it is the duty of the Church and her members to bear witness to Christian Morality, to follow it in their lives, and to reject the false standards of the world."



On the eve of my call to the ministry of Bishop in the Holy Church of God, free of any consideration of Simony or coercion, calling on the help of Almighty God and of the whole company of heaven, I profess this faith.

Dated.

Signed.

Witnessed.